

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

KATHERINE TINGLEY, EDITOR

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*“His good deeds and his wickedness,
Whate'er a man does while here;
'Tis this that he can call his own,
This with him take as he goes hence.
This is what follows after him,
And like a shadow ne'er departs.*

*“Let all, then, noble deeds perform,
A treasure-store for future weal;
For merit gained this life within,
Will yield a blessing in the next.”*

—Translated by Warren from the
Samyutta-Nikāya, a Buddhist scripture

The writings of H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge contain so much that is applicable to present-day problems that I feel sure the members of the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society and other readers of THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH will be glad of the opportunity of benefiting by their wise teachings. I trust soon to meet my readers through these pages again.

KATHERINE TINGLEY, *Editor*

THEOSOPHICAL KEYNOTES: THE NEW CYCLE*

H. P. BLAVATSKY



THE principal aim of our organization, which we are laboring to make a real Brotherhood, is expressed in the motto of the Theosophical Society, “There is no religion higher than truth.” As an impersonal Society we must be ready to seize the truth wherever we find it, without permitting ourselves more partiality for one belief than for another. This leads directly to a logical conclusion. If we acclaim and receive with open arms all sincere truth-seekers, there can be no place in our ranks for the bigot, the sectarian, or the hypocrite, enclosed in Chinese Walls of dogma, each stone bearing the words ‘No admission.’ What place indeed could such fanatics occupy

*Extracts from an article published in the first number of *Révue Théosophique* (Paris), 1889.

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in them, fanatics whose religions forbid all inquiry and do not admit any argument as possible, when the mother idea, the very root of the beautiful plant we call Theosophy, is known as — absolute and unfettered liberty to investigate all the mysteries of nature, human or divine!

With this exception the Society invites everyone to participate in its activities and discoveries. Whoever feels his heart beat in unison with the great heart of humanity; whoever feels his interests are one with those of every being poorer and less fortunate than himself; every man or woman who is ready to hold out a helping hand to the suffering; whoever understands the true meaning of the word 'egotism'; is a Theosophist by birth and by right. He can always be sure of finding sympathetic souls among us. . . .

We have already said elsewhere, that "Born in the United States the Theosophical Society was constituted on the model of its mother country. That, as we know, has omitted the name of God from its Constitution, for fear, said the fathers of the Republic, that the word might one day become the pretext for a state religion: for they desired to grant absolute equality to all religions under the laws, so that each form would support the State, which in its turn would protect them all. The Theosophical Society was founded on that excellent model . . . [and] provided all remain united in the tie of Solidarity or Brotherhood, our Society can truly call itself a 'Republic of Conscience.'"

Though absolutely free to pursue whatever intellectual occupations please him the best, each member of our Society must, however, furnish some reason for belonging thereto, which amounts to saying that each member must bear his part, small though it be, of mental or other labor for the benefit of all. *If one does not work for others one has no right to be called a Theosophist.* All must strive for human freedom of thought, for the elimination of selfish and sectarian superstitions, and for the discovery of all the truths that are within the comprehension of the human mind. That object cannot be attained more certainly than by the cultivation of unity in intellectual labors. No honest worker, no earnest seeker can remain empty-handed; and there is hardly a man or woman, busy as they may think themselves, incapable of laying their tribute, moral or pecuniary, on the altar of truth. The duty of the presidents of the sections and of branches will be henceforth to watch that there are no drones in the Theosophical beehive who do nothing but buzz.

In the present condition of the Theosophical history it is easy to understand the object of a Review exclusively devoted to the propagation of our ideas. We wish to open therein new intellectual horizons, to follow unexplored routes leading to the amelioration of humanity; to

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offer a word of consolation to all the disinherited of the earth, whether they suffer from the starvation of soul or from the lack of physical necessities. We invite all large-hearted persons who desire to respond to this appeal to join with us in this humanitarian work. Each co-worker, whether a member of the Society or simply a sympathizer, can help. We are face to face with all the glorious possibilities of the future. This is again the hour of the great cyclic return of the tide of mystical thought in Europe. On every side we are surrounded by the ocean of the universal science,— the science of Life Eternal — bearing on its waves the forgotten and submerged treasures of generations now passed away, treasures still unknown to the modern civilized races. The strong current which rises from the submarine abysses, from the depths where lie the prehistoric learning and arts swallowed up with the antediluvian giants — demi-gods, though with but little of mortality — that current strikes us in the face and murmurs: “That which has been exists again; that which has been forgotten, buried for aeons in the depths of the Jurassic strata, may reappear to view once again. Prepare yourselves.”

Happy are those who understand the language of the elements. But where are *they* going, for whom the word ‘element’ has no other meaning than that given to it by physics or materialistic chemistry? Will it be towards well-known shores that the surge of the great waters will bear them, when they have lost their footing in the deluge which is approaching? Will it be towards the peaks of a new Ararat that they will find themselves carried, towards the heights of light and sunshine, where there is a ledge on which to place the feet in safety, or perchance is it a fathomless abyss that will swallow them up as soon as they try to struggle against the irresistible billows of an unknown element?

. . . The strife will be terrible in any case between brutal materialism and blind fanaticism on the one hand, and philosophy and mysticism on the other; — mysticism, that veil of more or less translucency which hides the eternal Truth.


But it is not materialism that will get the upper hand. Every fanatic whose ideas isolate him from the universal axiom that “There is no religion higher than Truth” will see himself by that very fact rejected, like an unworthy stone, from the archway called Universal Brotherhood.



“The unwritten laws Divine that know no change!
They are not of today nor yesterday,
But live forever, nor can man assign
When first they sprang to being.”— SOPHOCLES

THE END OF THE WORLD FROM A THEOSOPHICAL VIEWPOINT

C. J. RYAN

HE panic that seized upon thousands of superstitious persons last December in connexion with the preposterous rumor that the end of the world would come on the 17th, was not the first of such scares, but it was significant of the unrest and lack of mental balance so noticeable since the great war. The world-wide outburst of crime, and the extraordinary spread of psychic practices which threaten (and often result in) grave mental disturbance, are also symptoms of the loss of self-control in the nations.

The notion that the world was approaching its final catastrophe has prevailed in the Christian world at various times. The most extensive and overwhelming collective hallucination of this kind took place about the year 1000, when great social disturbance was caused by the preaching that the end of the first millennium after Christ must mean the destruction of everything. Thousands parted with their goods at nominal prices and there was great suffering, except among the skeptics who profited hugely by the folly or simplicity of the credulous. When nothing unusual happened, it was announced that a respite had been granted and that the real crash would come later. This prophecy caused further alarm, but as it also came to nothing such scares went out of fashion for a while; however the misinterpretation of Biblical teachings has always kept alive the impression that the earth has a very short life before it. In recent times the alarmist prophecies of the notorious Dr. Cumming about 1871, and of Baxter some years later, created considerable excitement. Cumming aroused ridicule by taking a house on a long lease at the moment he was announcing that his calculations proved the almost immediate destruction of the earth. A mysterious character called Mother Shipton, alleged to have lived during the Middle Ages, was credited with the statement that the end of the world would take place in 1881. Great excitement was aroused among the simple in England, and a large crowd assembled on a high hill to get a good view of the proceedings; they went away greatly disappointed. About sixty or seventy years ago the Millerites caused great excitement in this country by a similar frenzy.

The recent scare appealed to many because of the apparently scientific foundations upon which it was reared; certainly, the majority of the planets were more or less in a line about the middle of December,

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but a little examination into astronomical records brings out the fact that as recently as September, 1901, all the planets except Neptune were in line, yet nothing untoward happened to the earth, and the official record for the month reported that there were no spots at all on the sun.

Astronomy gives no definite information about the destruction of planets. We have never witnessed the end of one, though it is only reasonable to suppose that everything that has a beginning will have an end when its usefulness is over. The moon is a worn-out world, but its energies have not perished; they have been transferred to another condition. The Temporary Stars we occasionally see blaze out from almost invisibility into great brilliance, and then slowly fade away, have been supposed to be the last flicker of some perishing sun going out like a candle, or even a catastrophe of enormous magnitude as the result of a collision between two celestial bodies; but our information is not sufficient to allow any definite conclusion, for the known facts can be interpreted in several ways.

For many years it has been popular in scientific circles to lament rather sentimentally over the alleged rapid cooling of the sun and the approach of the period when the earth would be a frozen mass, a dismal cemetery of dead hopes, uselessly spinning round a cold, dark sun; but the newer school has ceased to worry (though many less-informed writers continue to publish pessimistic references), for geological and other evidences have been discovered which make it practically certain that the sun's energies were much the same hundreds of millions of years ago as they are today, and no valid reason has been advanced to show that they are likely to weaken for long ages — for periods lengthy enough to give humanity all the time it needs for evolution into what perfection is possible in this material plane before passing onward into higher conditions.

The irrational fear of the world coming to an end suddenly in the full vigor of its life is a relic of Medieval ignorance, and is quite contrary to the ancient belief in the reign of law, of the divine governance in which, to quote a Theosophical writer in the New Testament, there is "no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Some modern thinkers have partially declared the reign of law; we say partially, because you must study the Theosophical teachings to find justice between man and man, and man and nature, placed in the forefront of wisdom. The principle of divine justice is outraged and made ridiculous by the suggestion that the end of the world could possibly arrive when it is so imperfect, and when mankind has hardly begun to decipher the A B C of the mysteries of his higher nature. Think of the millions of years in which the earth

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has been preparing for intelligent, thinking beings; of the ages when the fishes, the reptiles, even perhaps the plants, were the highest forms of life: at last man, "made in the image of God," appears — quite recently in comparison with the age of the earth — and begins painfully to crawl up the course of evolution, a course marked by enormous cycles of rise and fall, until he reaches the present state of so-called civilization, which we know well enough is far from being a true civilization. The curious notion that the end of the world could arrive — under *any* conception of Divine Law — when man, the crown of evolution, is, in the expressive if familiar term of the eminent preacher, the Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, only "half-baked"; when man has hardly learned the alphabet of the language in which the glorious book of nature, open before him, is written; when he has hardly begun to make the feeblest study of the mysteries and marvels of his own divine nature, — this curious idea is an example of the limitations of outlook which confine the mind.

The study of Theosophy and the practice of it illuminates and widens the mind in ways that nothing else can do, for it shows us how to bring the light of the soul into action. The sense of eternal Law, which is Mercy too, becomes irresistible. We have been taught, by those who have misinterpreted the ancient Hebrew scriptures, that the Divine Law can be evaded, that the wise saying, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," can be juggled with; but Theosophy declares that there is no escape from the consequences of any action, and that the sooner we realize the overwhelming majesty of law the better for our peace of mind. How very uncomfortable those who repudiate the law of justice or karma in spiritual matters would feel if the laws of *material* life were changeable to please some individual preferences: if water could be occasionally persuaded to run up hill, even for a good purpose perhaps! There would be no certainty in anything; we should never be sure what would happen next, and life would become a nightmare.

What do we mean by declaring that Theosophy is the only definite teaching which presents in its fulness the principle of absolute justice between man and man, and man and Nature, and thereby lifts our conception of the Divine government of the universe onto a higher level than is accepted by all but a few? Time will not permit me to give more than one illustration of justice and law according to Theosophy, and so I have chosen Reincarnation or the re-embodiment of the unseen spirit of life in material form as sufficient to prove that Theosophy teaches the reign of law more forcefully and more significantly than any other system, whether religious or scientific, before the western world today.

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There are two commonly-accepted theories of human life prevailing today. One is the materialistic one which prevails very widely and which is easily shown to be very popular — by merely looking around at the conditions of life,—and this is, that we are simply more intelligent animals, governed by heredity modified by environment, our whole make-up explained by chemico-physical laws, and that death extinguishes us like a candle-flame. The rival theory is, that an immaterial soul was put into the body at birth, created for the purpose, and that after a life of a few minutes or a hundred years it leaves the earth for ever to spend eternity in heaven or elsewhere! Neither of these views can stand before the searchlight of law and justice. As it is probable that those who come to these meetings are not convinced materialists, we may, to save time, confine ourselves to the consideration of the single earth-life followed by an eternity of spiritual existence. In this theory — enforced by the churches, though the Founder of Christianity is reported in the New Testament never to have discountenanced the prevailing belief in Reincarnation, and to have even taught it himself when the question was definitely asked in the case of John the Baptist — in this theory, the one-life theory, we are asked to believe that children born either into the most miserable conditions or into the most fortunate have no share in choosing their fate, but have to put up with what comes to them fortuitously, without any apparent reason. Chronic ill-health, an inherited tendency to waywardness, a mind innately unable to rise from degraded conditions, poverty, criminal surroundings, on the one hand; on the other, birth into an honorable family with desirable conditions, good health, an active intelligence, a good moral character, and so forth. If a perfectly new soul, specially created “fresh from the mint of God,” as somebody says, not deserving punishment for any previous acts, is plunged into body, brain, and environment of the degraded kind, what kind of law or justice is that which ordains that it shall suffer eternal penalties for the acts and thoughts of a single lifetime so heavily handicapped, or how can even human, imperfect, justice utterly condemn such a one for being an ‘undesirable citizen’? And, on the other hand, what extraordinary merit has the spoiled child of Fortune in leading a reasonable life, and why should he be supposed to have laid enduring foundations for a happy eternity in one short life in which he was protected by the so-called accident of birth from the inevitable failure of his brother? There is plenty of Theosophical literature dealing with the problems which are solved by the application of the general principle of Reincarnation, but the simple illustration just given is enough to draw your attention to the lawlessness of the one-life theory, and the justice and mercy of the true state of things. The Reincarnation of the human soul

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is governed by the law of Karma, which means that the conditions of your life are the just recompense of your acts and thoughts in former lives, and that the seeds you are sowing today will produce harvests of those particular varieties and not of some whose seeds you have neglected to plant. We cannot pick figs from thistles or grapes from thorns.

Reincarnation means that there is an immortal soul in man which learns by experience gained in many lifetimes on earth. One life does not begin to exhaust the possibilities of learning. In the intervals between earth-lives the soul withdraws into a condition invisible to us, where it rests and enjoys the fruition of the spiritual development it has made on earth. When it reincarnates it takes up the thread of life where it left off, and proceeds on its evolution. The causes set in motion bring forward their natural and lawful effects. Madame Katherine Tingley, the Leader of the Theosophical Movement, says:

“But when one studies Madame Blavatsky’s wonderful book, *The Key to Theosophy*, and especially her two great works, *The Secret Doctrine* and *Isis Unveiled*, and her other writings, one will see that she opens up a vista that is very wonderful in the spiritual sense; that she lifts the veil on the future of man and outlines to him, in such a logical way that one cannot get away from it, the fact of his possibilities in the line of spiritual attainment. She shows that a human being must have a larger field than one earth-life to work out its soul-fulfilment; and hence it returns again and again, through schools of experience, until it attains a state of perfection. . . . What is this mystery of death? How can it be explained? What is the meaning of life after all? Theosophy is optimistic, and we all know we cannot have too many optimistic ideas now; it shows most clearly that the soul in seeking its goal moves to other conditions, and here we Theosophists define death as rebirth. The body, when it ceases to be useful and is worn out, drops away from the soul, . . . the soul according to Theosophy, goes into a state of rest through rebirth into another world, and there, through the essential power of its divine nature, works on a line of self-improvement — self-evolution — in a condition that belongs to that state; and then, when ready, it returns and is reborn on earth, that it may continue the path it began ages ago.”

Reincarnation is the pivot upon which the teachings of Theosophy regarding man and his destiny turn, for it is the natural and logical explanation of the mystery of evolution. It shows that something permanent — a spiritual ego — evolves through all the changes of time and place. Science has deliberately ignored the soul-life in its researches and speculations, and has tried to explain everything, including man’s constitution and heredity, in complete disregard of the spiritual causes. A public opinion has been created adverse to the natural and reasonable belief in the pre-existence of the immortal principle in man — an impenetrable fog, through which the sunshine of common sense and truth can hardly pass, but there are signs that the fog is lifting. Still, it is yet pretty thick, and the mental atmosphere of ignorance in regard to Reincarnation is on a par with that which for centuries obscured the facts of astronomy. The ancients knew that the earth was round and that it moved, just as they knew of Reincarnation and other facts about

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the nature of man of which the popular learning of our time is ignorant.

Reincarnation is, however, being discussed and recognised far more widely than was formerly the case. An editorial writer of an article which appeared in many newspapers some time ago, made a well-reasoned appeal for Reincarnation, from which I will quote a few interesting points. In considering the difficulty in getting evidence for immortality, he says there is:

“Not much, alas! Probably because we are still so undeveloped that it would be, for many reasons, unsafe to let us know how great a future is before us.”

Well, if so, this is our own fault, and is capable of remedy. After criticizing the threadbare argument of materialism, that the idea of the soul as a real thing is the outcome of the dreams of primitive savages, and after pointing out the significant fact that no great mind has ever advanced a single conclusive argument against immortality, he begins to reason on quite Theosophical lines:

“This earth would make a very good heaven -- properly improved and managed. Why should we not come back here again and again, taking varying human forms, doing our duty well or badly each time according to our start in life, and finally enjoying perfect terrestrial happiness here as a finished race of immortal beings — immortal in the sense of being indestructible and of possessing the gift of perpetual reincarnation?”

Theosophy, however, does not stop here; its philosophy of Reincarnation is built on larger and more spiritual lines. The Higher Self, which is the real immortal man, is passing through only part of his experience in physical matter. Having gradually descended from more spiritual planes through conditions of less and less ethereal substance until it reached the present density, we have again to return to the primeval source, enriched by experience in many lives and illuminated by the recollection of what has been passed through. The writer just quoted speaks thus of the loss of the memory of past lives, which is always brought up in criticism of Reincarnation:

“But it is possible to be in too much of a hurry. Let us suppose that as yet we are not sufficiently developed to carry from one existence to another the memory of former existences. Suppose the time is to come when we shall suddenly advance as far beyond this intellectual stage as this stage of intellect is beyond that of the Bushman. Is it not conceivable that we may suddenly be enabled to recall all former existences and to remember all the various happenings of our former lives? . . . We may not have reached a stage enabling us to grasp continuous reincarnation.”

Again Theosophy would say, That is our own fault; the memory of former lives is preserved in the picture-galleries of the astral light, but our brains are so clogged with wrong habits of living that the keys will not turn in the locks which open the doors. In regard to the memory loss, let us think for a moment of a fact which has recently been positively

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established by recognised processes of science, *i. e.*, that within the region of mind exists an enormous stock of memories, as well as obscured faculties or powers, lying below the common level of consciousness. These are capable of being drawn out under special conditions. In certain dream states, under the partial influence of anaesthetics, or in the moments following the apparently drowning man's struggle for breath, the mysterious depths of the mind are sometimes sounded with startling results. The proved existence of the enormous extent of our memory, in which every event of life is recorded in minute detail, and of other hidden faculties, shows that we are much more than we believe, and that the utilization of these obscured powers will immensely enlarge the sphere of our activities and of our responsibilities. As the personal brain-mind holds the comprehensive memory of the events of this life, so the higher and immortal Ego holds the key to the records of past incarnations. The study of the principles of Reincarnation and Karma does not lead away from the practical concerns of life; on the contrary, it is the first step to a proper understanding of the meaning of life and of the reality of human brotherhood, and therefore to wisdom in dealing with men and women, and to the true kind of education of children which will bring out the soul and suppress the animal. Think out Reincarnation in the light it throws upon the inequalities of birth, of character, of position in life, and upon the problems of heredity. Reflect upon its illumination of the ancient teaching of all the Saviors of humanity — that what you sow that shall you reap, and what you are reaping is what you have prepared for yourself.

Now, to return to the End of the World and what it means to us. Will it come in our time? What did Jesus mean by saying some should not taste of death till they saw the kingdom of God come with power and the Son in glory? This saying is frequently brought up by critics to disprove the prophetic knowledge of Jesus or to throw discredit upon the Gospels, for it has always been taught that this refers to the end of the world. But the whole thing turns on the meaning of the "kingdom of God" and the "Son in glory," and it seems very simply explained if we study the New Testament in the light of Theosophy, remembering that Jesus and his true followers were only re-stating the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom that, as Augustine says, have never been absent from the beginning of the world. In the plainest possible language Jesus said: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or lo there! for behold, the kingdom of God is within you." (*Luke* xvii, 20-21) And, "My kingdom is not of this world." (*John* xviii, 36) What could be plainer? And in regard to the coming of the Son, could words speak more convincingly than those of Paul, "My

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little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you"? (*Gal. iv, 19*) That is straight Theosophy, and makes the meaning of the End of the World perfectly clear.

To be sure, the End of the World will come to each of us in another sense when we reach the close of this incarnation, but that will only be the closing of our eyes for a night's rest; they will open again to a new day. Unless we have taken the kingdom of heaven "with violence," we shall find ourselves going through the same old grind. And yet human life, properly understood, is a thousand times richer than we dream while we are shut in by our lower personal desires and imaginings. We had some gleams of a brighter and more beautiful life when we were children, for then the sense of personality was not so strongly accentuated; we were nearer nature. The Wise Teacher who said: "Except ye become as little children ye can in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven," knew that to the child the world is not drab and monotonous; but something happens, and the wonder "fades into the light of common day." (*Wordsworth*) When we can keep hold of the simplicity and naturalness of the child-state throughout our lives, we shall have found that the End of the World has come, and that a new world of infinitely greater value is taking the place of what we mistakenly believed to be reality.

Those who have heard Madame Katherine Tingley speak or who have read her addresses must have been struck by the apparent simplicity of her message, by the frequency with which she urges us to awaken to the fact of the divinity of man. This is the Lost Word which we must find. It includes everything of permanent value, and it must be sought through the practice of brotherhood. The Christian scripture says: "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." Till we can truly say that our judgments on matters personal, social, industrial and international can stand the test of correspondence with the principle of brotherhood, we are still in the lower state of evolution and are not truly alive. The strength of the principle of brotherhood arises from the fact that we all share in the divine life, whether we know it or not.

In some of the ancient sacred books the curious statement is made that few men are alive in the true sense of the word. Curious it may be, but, if we follow it up, we shall find that is important to us. When once the realization comes, even for a moment of time, that there is a possibility for us - - yes, for each one who wills it - to enter into a life far more real and splendid than the state in which we are immersed, no longer can we be satisfied to mark time and put off the Great Adventure to some vague unknown future. And when the Path leading to the real life is entered, it is found to demand no extremes, no weird practices,

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no departure from our simple duties and our natural ties and wholesome enjoyments, but those who have experienced even the foretaste of knowledge of the Central Self from which illumination comes, say that the end of the Unreal World has indeed come for them. Ancient allegories tell how man fell from a state of light and peace into darkness and strife. He was driven from a Garden of Paradise, abandoned the Golden Age, and death came into the world. But there is also the promise of redemption, and the great Teachers have always tried to remind fallen man that he may find the illumination again, find truth and beauty in life, if he will only search with all his heart, through the practice of universal brotherhood. Do unto others as you would they should do unto you, is the oldest teaching in the world for gaining liberation. Jesus only repeated the gospel of the ages.

One of the most important activities of the Theosophical Movement is the establishment of centers of education where children and youth can be trained on lines which will preserve their natural simplicity of heart and help them to find the real joy of life, while fitting them for the duties and responsibilities they will have to face in the world. 'Give us something practical,' is the cry today. The Râja-Yoga System of Education, in which the Theosophical principles of spiritual development are applied to daily life, has been fully tested in its twenty years of activity at Point Loma and elsewhere, and those who have graduated after a complete course are now examples of well-rounded characters — earnest, active, and desirable citizens, very much alive. I will close with a few inspiring words by Madame Katherine Tingley, the Leader of the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society:

"Oh! that every atom in my being were a thousand-pointed star to help men to see the divine everywhere, to know their limitless power, to feel while in the body the exhaustless Joy of Real Life, to wake and live instead of dreaming the heavy dreams of this living death, to know themselves as at once part of and directors of Universal Law. This is your birthright of Wisdom and the hour of attainment is *now* if you will. Tarry no longer in the delusion of the 'Hall of Learning.' Feel, Know, and Do."



"The Kabala, repeating the time-honored revelations of the once universal history of our globe and the evolution of its races, has presented it under the legendary form of the various records which have formed the Bible."

— H. P. BLAVATSKY: *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 235

REINCARNATION

KEENNTH MORRIS



NUMBER of curious things are to be noted about that familiar creature, Man. He is not the simple proposition he appears: there are depths. You cannot reform him by Act of Congress, or save his soul with tracts. No doubt for countless thousands of years he has been using copybooks; yet all the wisdom of their page-headings has so far failed to make him noticeably wise. He is capable of shaming the angels with his sublimity, and of shaming the tiger and the pig with his cruelty and filthiness. More; one may find the same man doing both in the same half hour. — One day in the week he believes that you ought to love your enemies and do good to them that hate you; six (or seven) days in the week he busies himself, commonly, in showing the world just in what peculiar fashion he thinks this text should be interpreted. Heaven is within him, and hell is within him; and also within him, you may say, is Berkeley Square,— where the celebrated Tomlinson gave up the ghost. Bottom was right when he said that man is a patched fool; Hamlet was right in comparing him with gods and angels.

Sometimes, out of the long dreary sordidness of his miserable history, immortal deeds flare up from him like white beacons in the night. They are indications of possibilities that lie within him; we cannot sum him up, or understand what he is, without taking them into account.

He is a thinking animal; and what passes through his mind, he will put down with a pen (or its equivalent) on paper (or something that serves the same purpose). This has been so in all ages: the story of the human mind, its experiments, guesses, and adventures, goes on being recorded incessantly. One uses the word *mind* in the largest sense: for the whole sphere of our conscious selves. The inward non-physical part of us is continually being reflected in written words; and 'literature' is the glass in which we may see mirrored all in us that is unseen by the physical eye. In it we can very conveniently examine and dissect the stuff of which humanity is made: just as astronomers can best examine the nebulae and the far stars in photographs taken through a telescope.

It is an infinite world that is revealed: one to give us pause and set us thinking. Here is a daily newspaper: what of the inner humanity can we read in it? — Common day, and the trivialities of the most

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outward levels of our mental being. Stuff like the waves on a shore, in a place especially where there are many cross-currents and fumbings of ineffectual tides. The little waves run in; they rise as if they had some great business to perform; you may watch them, and find yourself watching a long time, your eyes so held by the motion and hurry that you do not realize that you are watching nothing,— a great pother and nothing at the end of it; — that nothing is being done; that you and the waves are both wasting your foolish time. Motion, hurry, bluster, fumbling, fuss, *Nothing!* and then over and over again: Motion, hurry, bluster, fumbling, fuss, *Nothing!* So we may read here: So-and-so is spending a vacation somewhere; Mrs. Such-and-such is giving a garden party; A has been born; B and C have been married; D and E divorced; F has died; — *Nothing!* Elections,— this party winning, that party losing; — *Nothing!* — War declared, battles fought, victories won,— *Nothing!* Ants scampering about on the anthill; lifting a grain,— huge exertion,— lugging it three inches,— dropping it,— and about face, and scampering off elsewhere; — *Nothing!* — These are the common reaches of human ‘thought’ and activity.

But is this a faithful and complete picture of Man? Does it show you all there is of him? No: on the same pages you can read of fearful crimes and abuses; to tell you, if you think at all, that we are living on the brink of a horrid precipice; that we are skirting ghastly quicksands, and every now and then one of us — and it may be you or I, or someone near and dear to us,— sinking in. The newspapers, rightly considered, are reading frightening enough.

But is that all? Have we yet got a true picture of the inner worlds? — No; for we can go to our bookshelves, and take down our *Hamlets*, our *Les Misérables*,— we can turn to our last chapter in *Ecclesiastes*, or to our *Upanishads*,— and read there lines breathless with grandeur, tremendous with the pressure of the Unutterable; — not the stumblings and futilities of the little shorewaves, but the vast calm and profundities of the sea, or the immense ocean-riding billows that break the ships and astound the heavens; — and all this, too, is a reflexion of what is within Man: all this is mirrored from the Human Soul.

The petty motives of common life; the small cheateries of business; the little shams of society; the meannesses and trumpery hypocrisies, faltering motives, or sordid and determined greeds; the animalities cloaked with respectability; the mediocrity sneaking and shouldering towards its own coveted successes; the wickedness in high places and low places; — everything that makes the angels blush and the fiends chuckle and snigger: — all these things are Man, and elements of which he is compounded. O God, you say, he is a crawling worm too contemptible

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for any self-respecting Almighty to bother to exterminate him, — and therefore he continues to exist!

The grand deeds of the heroes; the flaming strictures of the prophets; the loftiest visions of the poets; the long self-sacrifice of unknown and humble people; — the funeral-pyre of Joan; the Cross on Calvary; Caucasus, and the Titan chained there; a Buddha, with heart large enough to inwrap in its burning compassion all sentient existence; a Confucius, with infinite courage pitting his ideal of a regenerated humanity against the world and the times and years on years of inevitable piteous failure: — nobility to shame any gods or archangels we can imagine; sublimity more wonderful than that of a night of stars: — all these things are Man, and some of the elements of which he is compounded. Ah, you say, he is a God, sacred and sublime; bow down, Cherubim and Seraphim! you say; dethrone yourselves, you that sit crowned in the Pantheons; you cannot hope to rival Man!

It is all true; and shows us how enormous is the scope of human nature: what infinity of possibilities lies within it, what unimaginable heights there are to climb. The poles of good and evil are within Man. He creates Gods out of the stuff of his imagination; and he is able to do so, because God or Infinite Goodness is part of him, a factor in his being. He imagines desperate hells; because within his own consciousness he can find the stuff of which hells are made. Have you ever stopped to think that nothing ever imagined of God or devil, heaven or hell, could possibly have been imagined unless it had been a quality lying within the scope of human nature? Human imagination cannot travel beyond the limits of human being. If we soar in thought to the Heaven of heavens: if we conceive this Earth of ours peopled with a divine race, a humanity made perfect; each individual endowed with godlike wisdom, with universal compassion,— absolute power of the will, and absolute forgetfulness of self: we are only able to do so because within ourselves lie all these things as potentialities. Somewhere in our hidden natures they are actual; and we could uncover them. There is no conceivable sublimity or exaltation that is outside the possibility of human attainment. Man could not imagine, could not conceive of it, if the seeds, the rudiments of it were not within the vast and scope of his own being.

For example: take a man — and you need not hunt through the streets with a lighted lantern to find him — whose whole consciousness has become thoroughly sordid; who is for self, frankly and always. Confront him with noble actions and disinterested living, and the first questions he will ask will be: “What is their game?” “What are they trying to get out of it?” For him, all men and all behavior are necessarily sordid. He cannot believe in, because he cannot conceive of, disinterestedness.

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He is shown some great effort for human weal, and knows quite well that it must be a money-making scheme, or a cloak for indulgence, or something of the kind; and generally goes to work to 'expose' it: — attacks it in the law-courts, or in the press, or by private slander. Within his own consciousness there is nothing noble or clean; he has never opened up the decent sides of his own being,— they are fields which he has never entered, or into which he has quite forgotten the way: he cannot imagine nobility in himself, and cannot see it when it appears in other people. For him, the great crucified Saviors will always be hypocrites embarked on the quest of notoriety; an H. P. Blavatsky, exchanging fame, fortune, and comfort for unlimited persecution and obloquy, will always have made the exchange for some such mean motive as would actuate himself.

Again: you cannot explain the difference between two colors to a man born color-blind: if he has it not in him to know pink from blue, all the eloquence and art in the world will never be able to teach him. So this is quite axiomatic: we can only see, only imagine, what lies within us to see and imagine; and the fact that we can — that some men can — imagine gods and demigods and beings perfect in wisdom, in compassion and courage, selfless and passionless,— is proof that the potentiality of such perfection lies within the limits of our human nature. Human nature, as we know it, is a field in which the seeds of it are lying latent, and in which they might be made to grow. Nothing can come out of the consciousness of any man, but what is within the sphere of Man's being.

Out of the consciousness of Man immortal deeds and sayings have come; and therefore, in Man inheres a certain quality of immortality. Like begets like: there is a mortal part of us, which produces the mortal things; and a part that is immortal, from which come the immortal things. The newspapers reflect the one, the Upanishads reflect the other. Here are Mrs. So-and-so's social activities, Mr. Such-and-such's petty chateries; here are the wisdom and compassion of a Buddha: these make no ripple in Time; those illumine the world for twenty-five hundred years. Out of Man are the ephemeralitys that pass and are forgotten; out of Man the grandeurs that are immortal and endure. So there is a part of us that dies and is done with; and a part of us that cannot die: a part more lasting than the mountains, and a part that fades as quickly as the mown grass-blade in summer.

What do we mean by 'immortal,' — an 'immortal part'? — Something not subject to change and decay, outside the sovereignty of death, owing no allegiance to fate and time. There is that in Man; it is a part of human nature. So then this is what human nature is: half immortal, august, divine,— half ephemeral, trivial and contemptible. Unless you

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can prove that you are not human, you share in it; from which we may argue this startling truth: somewhere hidden within your being, yet developable, yet revealable, is genius greater than Shakespeare's, greater than Napoleon's; all the highest qualities are there, of all the bright Beacon-Men who have lighted with the grandeur of their lives and thought the dark history of mankind.

But — there is infinite baseness too, the possibility of it. If you could find today one man utterly fallen, completely cruel, possessed by all the legion of the vices,— unless you could prove that that man was not and never had been human, was not born of human parents, but a sudden and frightful phenomenon in the world; — he would be proof that the potentiality of all evil inhered in human nature. In most of us undeveloped, but quite within the bounds of possibility to be developed sometime: — so in those who have never faced, never searched into or made an effort to conquer their own natures. In others again, active not far below the surface, and with the better side of the man facing them in a life-and-death struggle; — still in others, in some few, rooted out, conquered, and no longer even the remotest peril. But in all cases, something inherent in human nature, a part of the heirloom of incarnate Man.

The depths are within us; the peaks are within us. We cannot reach the one, until we have conquered and transmuted the other.

Not long ago I talked with a man who had just been talking with a thief. There was a great deal of human nature in that thief: of the divine side of it, as well as the other. He was perhaps nearer the divine than ninety-nine per cent. of the most respectable citizens you should find in church of a Sunday evening. He said he had been in jail a number of times, and thought it likely he would be a number of times again. Because his will was as weak as water; and when he saw anything he wanted, the chances were that he would take it. But each time there was something that resisted; which something he was cultivating, and proposed to cultivate; because he believed it to be his real self. He was out of jail when my friend saw him. He said that, while in prison, he had come across Theosophical magazines and read them. "You needn't think," he said in effect, "that I am here to cadge help or sympathy from you Theosophists now. When Madame Tingley gave me the knowledge of Reincarnation, she gave me the biggest help I ever had or wanted to have: she gave me something to keep me hoping and fighting through life. Before that I was a thief hopelessly and forever; now,— I shall stick to it and make good."

That man realized, because he was in the struggle and waging the great war, that it might take a long time for him to overcome a weak

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will and an old habit, and make an upstanding man of himself. The majority of us never have this fact — of the long time needed — brought home to them; because they have not yet roused up the demon-self in them to fight for its life. Nevertheless that demon-self is there; — and hence it comes that no family is secure against the ravages of tragedy. Tragedies are always occurring, and striking at the lives and hearts of the most conventionally fortified. As a rule we will not see the gulf below; and then, as if in revenge, it suddenly opens to swallow a son of ours, or a daughter; and those who found life very comfortable before, and walked very easily, go gray-haired and bowed down, after, until they die.

But look now at the other pole of life: the Buddhas, Confuciuses, Platos, Nazarenes. They too were human. That they contacted, the divinest of them, the lower side of human nature within themselves, is assured us in the legends told of them, in stories of temptations beneath the Bo-tree, or in the wilderness. As they represent a far finality in human evolution, those legends of their lives are symbolic, in part, of the whole story of the human soul. If they had been created perfect, immune from all human weakness and the huge possibilities of human sin, there would be nothing whatever to admire in them; their lives would be quite valueless to us others. They would not be our grand examples and helpers; they would be advertisements of the huge injustice of things, that can make one man, through no merit of his own, perfect and sinless, and another, through no fault of his own, destined to bear the whole sorrow of an utterly evil nature. We must reject that view; because it is false, and because it is utterly immoral and bad for us to believe. Bad,— because a distorted, sidelong, neck-twisted belief, likely to put the stamp of distortedness on, and twist the neck of, the mind that is nourished on it. We must take the sane plain view that within the nature of these great saints and sages of the world there had been, sometime, potentially, all the evil that is in human nature; that their greatness consisted in the fact that they had fought and conquered it; — that the difference between them and us lies in their having discovered the highest peaks of human nature within themselves, and battled their way to those peaks, and achieved dwelling on them habitually; — whereas we are content to potter about in the middle and trivial spheres of our being. But the peaks are necessarily within us too, and we might reach them.

You laugh at that; and very wisely. What! you say; we shall die within the next seventy years or so; and were we to put the most tremendous pressure on ourselves, and do our very utmost, minute by minute, it would take us thousands of years (we know ourselves too well!) to

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attain such genius, such loftiness of motive and character. — That is, probably, very true; but then, it took those others thousands of years to attain it. It took them many lives of the hardest kind of hard work.

There is a theory of life, half noble, half faulty, that was much worked up by Browning in his day: it is that all these highest possibilities are indeed within us; but that, do what we will, we can never make them actual 'here below' as they say; that man is bound to be, howsoever he may strive upward, a very imperfect creature while he remains on this earth and embodied; but that death will admit him into another world or phase of existence, heaven, in which the noblest part of him will become actual and develop indefinitely: that he who was mere John Smith here, with his soul (a 'star apart') covered over and dimmed almost to obscurity by the petty faults and conventional smallnesses of his John-Smithery, so to call it, will blossom out there *tout de suite* into something like Christhood or Buddhahood; not so much changing his nature, however, as sloughing off the lower, and evolving the higher part of it *ad lib*. The idea was an attempt to graft evolution on the old Christian dogmas, and to show man to be an evolving being, after a fashion, in the spiritual sense. But it is disproved by this: the Christs and Buddhas, the men whose highest potentialities have been made actual, have appeared *in this world*, born as we were born, wearing the flesh as we wear it, and dying as we die. They were blossoms of this human tree; and they were put forth, as natural science and common sense would lead you to expect, precisely where this human tree grows,— in this particular planet called Earth, in this particular solar system. That theory of Browning's is all very well; he saw that Justice demanded something, that Evolution demanded something, which the teachings current in his day did not supply; and out of the nobility of his nature he attempted to supply it; but he missed the significance of the lives of the World-Saviors. Because Saviors there have been: Perfect Men, and not one only Perfect Man. If there had been but one, we could invent a special theory to account for him, and say he was the only-begotten Son of God, a being of another order than ourselves,— and, as I said, an advertisement of the devilish injustice of things. When we knew nothing to speak of about human history — and even in Browning's day it was very easy to blink one's eyes to most of it; — when history was narrowed down for us into the little story of one corner of the globe — Palestine, Greece, Rome, and then Medieval and Modern Europe,— we might hold such theories. But the horizon has broadened, and we are to see men rise in the old ages of China, of India, of Persia, of ancient Mexico, from whom the same kind of words came, and the same kind of actions; about whom the same super-human light shone, as shone about the Nazarene. Their lives show us

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what human stuff may be wrought into; their words were all directed to showing us how to do it.

How could they have become what they were, unless they had had many lives in which to work up to it? Reincarnation supplies the only possible solution of the riddle of life. Between a John Smith and a Buddha there is a distance as great as that which separates Sirius from San Diego; — and yet it is no gulf unspannable; both are within the vast universe called Man, and every step of the way between them has to be traversed. From that star to this city, light, they say, takes so many centuries to travel; from this mediocrity to that divine humanity — is it possible to journey in the three score years and ten of one lifetime?

It is perhaps unnecessary to argue that this is the path that has to be traveled: that this is the purpose for which man exists. Can you suggest any other? The chief end of man, says the old Westminster Confession, is to glorify God; and if you consider that glorifying God does not mean singing indifferent hymns or metrical Psalms on the Sabbath, but manifesting, in the flesh and to the world, the glory of God, — why, then the Westminster Confession's dictum is adequate enough, I should say, and exact. The tree exists to produce its fruit; the soul of man exists to come to its fruition in perfect life. All nature is there to tell us that evolution is the method of the Scheme of Things. We find implanted in us, and ineradicable, the thirst for happiness. As we grow, this happiness we so long for comes to wear different guises. At the lowest there are the animal pleasures; but they pall and bring bitterness close in their train. We conceive then that happiness means fame or wealth or social standing; but presently the unsatisfying nature of these is seen. Then it seems to us that happiness lies in working for others, in helping the race; and by this time we are on the right track certainly; though at first it appears there is so little we can do. But the way opens up as we go; the selfish nature, which is our limitation and the bar that keeps us from our goal, falls off from us little by little; and we enter, little by little, upon greater fulness of joy. Joy is the opening up of our own unknown and higher being, the discovering within us of new powers and insight. The thirst for happiness is the driving force of evolution: it will not leave us in peace until we have attained command of all our possibilities. Life after life it brings us back to Earth, to pursue phantoms until we see that the phantoms can never give us what we desire. Divine in our inmost and ultimate nature, we are the Stars of Morning that sang together, the Sons of God who shouted for joy, — in the beginning, when we went forth upon the quest, upon the great adventure for whose sake these universes are. We have forgotten our

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divinity and birthright; and yet the reminiscence of it remains and haunts us: it is this thirst for happiness which leads us on. When we have conquered all the chaos and hell within us; when we have attained the full wisdom, the selfless compassion, the mightiness proper to our divine origin and destiny;— then we shall have captured the happiness we pursue. This Earth, where we are embodied in the flesh, and confronted with the necessity of mastering it; where we are wrapped round with these foggish human minds, this sense of separateness, this selfishness,— and egged on by the thirst for happiness to transcend all these limitations: this Earth is the field of our agelong adventure. Consider that there is a divine economy in the Scheme of Things: which uses a man-bearing planet for all it is worth, and provides it as a school for souls, which none shall leave until he has learnt all the lessons taught there. Re-incarnation makes what seemed cruel chaos, a beautiful cosmos of law.

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KENNETH MORRIS

OVER the sea-rim, Day like a ghost in flight
Flickering dims, and the hushed forms of the trees
Wake into warlock life on the brink of Night.

It is a deeper self than the daylight sees
Dusk reveals in them: thought nor speech nor dream,
But an ancient darkness mute with mysteries.

Those two pines by the pathway yonder seem
Mysteriously important gestures, thrown
From worlds where still the brands of the Pantheons gleam.


Over the path with its ruts and footprints strown,
I know not now what giant wars roll by,
Arthurian, portent-laden, not to be known. . . .

And I think in my heart, and I know not well, not I,
If the world that by light of the day-sun shone so clear
Be more than a flickering phantasm,— now so nigh
The antique and vaster Worlds of the Soul appear.

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WHAT IS THEOSOPHY?

R. MACHELL

 HE student of Theosophy is continually met by the very natural and reasonable inquiry, 'What is Theosophy?' and those who ask the question invariably seem to expect a precise and definite answer to all their own personal doubts and difficulties, of which the Theosophist is naturally not fully informed. So the answer is seldom satisfactory. For while a sincere student of Theosophy may know what the subject means to him, he cannot know what lies behind the inquiry, which sounds so simple.

And yet every genuine student of Theosophy must be most anxious to answer the question, even if it be only to satisfy his own mind. He may know that in finding Theosophy he has found an open door that has allowed him to escape from a prison-house of pessimism out to an open land, where the sun shines and the air is fresh and free: but to say so is no answer to the persistent query, 'What is Theosophy?' He may feel that he has gained a new point of view, from which to judge the whole problem of life, and he may feel confident that the knowledge of the existence of Theosophy would end the pessimism of any earnest investigator. But to make such declaration would seem like an evasion of the apparently simple and straightforward question that meets us at every turn.

The word 'Theosophy' is composed of two Greek words, *θεός* and *σοφία*, which may be interpreted in various ways: for it is quite open to question whether our words 'God' and 'wisdom' are sufficient or equivalent to the two Greek words; and when they are combined, the possibility of misunderstanding increases. 'God-wisdom' is not explanatory, for the word 'God' may be taken to mean a god, one of many, or God the supreme intelligence of the universe; it may mean a great soul supreme in the spiritual world, an entity, even a personality; or it may be regarded as a pure abstraction incapable of definition. And the word 'wisdom' is also capable of widely different interpretations.

Certainly, to tell an inquirer that Theosophy is divine wisdom, will be to convey an idea of ridiculous arrogance on the part of the student of Theosophy, who will seem to be claiming for himself god-like wisdom. And yet the name is a good one dating back to the time of the Greek philosophers, who, by their interminable discussions, at least familiarized the public of their day with the use of such terms, even if their

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lucubrations served more to confuse the subject than to enlighten the general public.

Of course an earnest inquirer will soon find out for himself what Theosophy is; at least he will find out what it means to him: but before entering upon a serious consideration of a subject, any person is likely to ask what it is, before deciding to examine it for himself. And, as a vague or an unsatisfactory answer may serve to discourage further inquiry or more serious study, it is well to try to formulate in one's own mind some simple answer to the question. Indeed, I think that a true student will be trying to do this all the time.

When one has read one's first handbook on any subject, one is apt to feel that one knows all about it; and it is at this elementary stage that the most misleading as well as the most positive explanations are generally offered: for a little knowledge makes a man bold; much study makes him cautious.

Then another consideration comes to check the too ready answer, that words have widely different meanings to different minds; and that the simplest form of words may be the most confusing. To people who are not sure whether Theosophy is a new food or a new religion, a diet or a cult, it may be sufficient to say that it is the whole philosophy of life: but to those who are aware that there are many religions in the world, each claiming to be a sufficient and inclusive philosophy of life, the answer will not be very helpful. And yet assuredly Theosophy is just that: for it is the fundamental philosophy of life, from which spring all religions and all philosophies, all arts and sciences, all systems of society and all civilizations, together with the vital energizing principle that transforms all these, and in time transmutes their outer bodies, eternally renewing and rejuvenating the form that man's mind invents for the expression of the yearning and the aspiration of his soul.

Does that seem too big a claim to make? Not if the one who makes it is careful to realize that Theosophy itself is not to be contained in any mind, being identical with that from which all separate minds emanate.

A man may be an honest devotee of Truth, but if he believes that he himself knows truth, or even that he knows the whole truth of anything, then he is but a fool. For this reason no true Theosophist would try to bind men's minds by any creed or final formula. An earnest student of Theosophy will guard against dogmatic utterances; and in doing this he may appear uncertain and doubtful, where in reality he is simply trying to avoid forcing his own conviction on another mind that should be encouraged rather to find its own formulas, and to convince itself by its own study and experience. Therefore we must declare

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that Theosophy is unsectarian; and though all the great religions of the world may have sprung from various aspects of Theosophy, yet that great parent of all philosophies, religions, and sciences is not itself a religion; for it has no creed.

In founding the Theosophical Society, in 1875, Madame Blavatsky gave it the subtitle of Universal Brotherhood; and membership in the Society involved acceptance of this great ideal. When the third Leader of the Theosophical Movement, Katherine Tingley, took control of the Organization, she formulated a constitution for the Universal Brotherhood, in which it was declared that one of the objects of the Organization was to "demonstrate that Brotherhood is a fact in nature"; and acceptance of this ideal is a prerequisite to membership in the Society today.

But the acceptance of an ideal is not the same as the enforcement of a creed, for tolerance of the beliefs of others is also a principle in this constitution: and it is always necessary to remember that Theosophy itself is one thing and a Theosophical society is another. The latter must necessarily have rules and regulations for the conduct of its business; and one of the rules of the Theosophical Society has always been that members "shall show the same tolerance for the beliefs of others which they expect for their own."

Theosophy being, as its name implies, divine wisdom, is necessarily beyond the scope and limitations of a creed. The Theosophist is always open to more light from the source of wisdom, and must never look upon any declaration of belief as a final formula. He is a learner, a student, and not a dogmatist. He is told that the path of wisdom lies through his own heart to the heart of the Universe. And, while he may accept as his Teacher a human being whom he knows or believes to be more spiritually evolved than himself, yet that Teacher is regarded as one who having traveled the path is able to act as guide to other and less experienced travelers who are in search of the light of divine wisdom. Theosophists recognise spiritual teachers, and aspire to the attainment of the same wisdom, which they regard as a mark of a more highly evolved human being. They look upon all mankind as potentially divine, and conceive of evolution as a process of growth towards perfection; in the course of which spiritual enlightenment comes to the human intellect and endows it gradually with true wisdom, which is acquired by means of experience aided by instruction. This growth or evolution is considered as an unfoldment of inner possibilities latent in all.

Thus, while the Theosophist may have a deep respect for his Teacher, he does not mistake a human personality for the Supreme wisdom; and while he highly values the teachings he may receive, he will have no desire to encase them in rigid forms and thus turn them into a creed.

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That this has been done in past ages is proved by the existence of sectarian religions today; and that it will be attempted in the future is to be expected from past experience. But the true Theosophist will ever regard creeds and formulas as no more than sign-posts on the road, to be studied perhaps by those who have lost their way, who have not kept the light burning in the heart, and who consequently are in spiritual darkness.

I have seen sign-posts that fell into decay and became illegible; others that had been removed; others that survived long after the path had been abandoned or diverted; others again I have seen preserved as curiosities in museums. And they always make me think of the creeds and dogmas of the churches.

A sign-post is useless to those who are in the dark. What the student wants is light, and Theosophy teaches him to find the light in his own heart. His teachers may give him advice as to how he may find that light, which in most people is obscured by prejudice and ignorance. But if he attempts to guide his steps by the light of any other, he will not get far along the path. A man must do his own growing: he must eat his own food and digest it too. There are many things that a man must do for himself, and traveling along the path of wisdom is one of them.

A flock of sheep will jump over an imaginary barrier if the leader jumps and the barrier be then removed. Cattle will follow their leader and make a tortuous path, having faith in the wisdom of the head of the herd: and human beings act like animals in many ways, being as yet little more than potential humanity. But one who even desires to know what Theosophy is, is already at least approaching the human state, and has developed a certain degree of individual responsibility that differentiates him from the mass who have not yet begun to think for themselves.

As soon as a man begins to wake up from his age-long dream of mere existence, he has to think for himself. Then he wants to know things. And he begins to ask questions, believing that if his questions are honestly answered he will gain the knowledge he desires. That seems reasonable; and yet it is no more reasonable than to suppose that the sight of a dinner will suffice to feed a hungry man. If the man does not eat his food he will die of starvation. And if a man does not assimilate his mental food he will remain ignorant, for all his store of acquired information.

So the man who asks 'What is Theosophy?' must not expect that any answer he may receive will do more than help to put him on the path that will lead him to self-knowledge if he will follow it. He will have to do his own thinking, and his own reading, and his own living;

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for thinking and reading alone will not suffice for the gaining of wisdom. He must apply his information and instruction to his own life before it can become knowledge to him.

The reason for this becomes apparent to one who accepts the teachings of Theosophy as to the nature and constitution of man: for he will there learn that man, who seems separate from the universe in which he lives, is actually a manifestation of the same laws and the same forces as those that produce that universe: and that all the laws of nature can be, and indeed must be, studied in himself as well as in the world around him; for brotherhood, which is a fact in nature, is but the outer expression of the inward identity of essence of himself and all creatures and the universe that they inhabit.

When first this great idea of human possibilities breaks on the mind, a man may shrink from the vastness of the prospect and think doubtfully of his small personality as a mere mockery of such a revelation. This kind of self-contempt was fostered by many religious orders which sought to separate spirit and matter, debasing man for the greater glory of God — a misconception of humility that is disastrous in its application, and which is really a perversion of a partial truth.

But if the inquirer recovers from this relapse into pessimism and should decide to follow up his first inquiry with a little serious study of the subject, he will promptly encounter the doctrine of continued existence, with its natural corollary of reincarnation or continuous rebirth on earth, insuring a continuity of experience without which all individual progress might seem impossible.

This doctrine of reincarnation presents itself in many ways to many minds. Some grasp it eagerly, as so reasonable and so convincing a solution of innumerable problems, that there is difficulty in understanding how it could have been dispensed with for so long. Others resent it bitterly, as an attack upon their supposed right to enter upon an eternity of bliss, once that this earth-life shall have become unbearable through misunderstanding of its opportunities and through misuse of its experiences. Others again are fascinated with the prospect it affords of endless progress, of evolution, and of perfectibility: but they are not able to accept it on its own merits, and on their own judgment; they want proof, regardless of the impossibility of proving such a theory in any ordinary sense of the word 'proof.' They may see no other theory that will begin to explain the apparent injustice of life, and they may long to be able to believe that reincarnation is a fact, but they ask repeatedly, 'If it be so, why do we not remember our past lives?' A question that should need no more answer than a little reflexion would supply: for memory must necessarily be seriously interfered with by the loss of one body and the

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acquiring of another, with all that must intervene. Seeing that we generally have no memory to speak of concerning the events that occurred to us in infancy, how can we expect to remember events that happened before the birth of that infant body?

But, though the doctrine of reincarnation seems almost essential to an understanding of man's place in nature, and the purpose of existence, together with the evolution of the race and the position of the individual in the scheme of evolution; yet acceptance of the teaching is not obligatory. There are plenty of people whose minds are so constituted that they seem able to accept doctrines that are entirely unreasonable and even self-contradictory, while another mind must be able to see a good reason for every step in the path of progress. So while reincarnation seems to many a most vital feature of Theosophic teachings, yet it is not to be regarded as a dogma, but rather as a stepping-stone to knowledge.

The mind is so strangely constituted that different individuals are able to reach similar conclusions by entirely different mental paths. Some can pass lightly over unbridged gaps of thought and so reach true conclusions; while others seem unable to look beyond the next step. So it is useless to dogmatize and to imagine that all must accept the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation, which may seem so essential to some of us. To some it is sufficient to know that the real self of man is pure spirit, that all souls are one in essence; that all material existence is illusory; and that the really vital fact in life is the brotherhood of Being with all that it implies. To others the brotherhood of man seems to depend upon a succession of well-reasoned theories, each of which must be separately established by proof as well as argument before it can be finally accepted.

To some minds no form of thought can appear as a final formula of truth; and still less can a form of words or a creed be accepted as anything more than a temporary expedient, a stepping-stone, to be used and left behind as soon as stepped upon. To others each step must be final, each new formula for expression of truth must be absolute.

To such minds conscious progress is impossible and undesired; it is even, to them, unthinkable; because each step to them is final. The continuity of life, to them, is entirely unconscious, or subconscious. Evolution, progress, expansion of consciousness, all such ideas are meaningless to these people, who look for truth to be revealed suddenly, miraculously, in some complete and final form; after which there remains an infinity of bliss. Such minds must dogmatize, until the light breaks in and shows the distant heights.

The student of Theosophy does not dogmatize; but a Theosophic

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teacher may speak positively, and may formulate very definite teachings for the use of disciples who have not yet learned to stand on their own feet. The teachings of Theosophy in themselves preclude the formulation of dogmas as finalities; for, if the spirit of man is an emanation from the Supreme Spirit of man's universe, then it must follow that the personal mind of man is liable to receive light, through the individual soul, from the supreme source of all. It follows that such illumination must adapt itself to the mentality through which it passes, and must be modified in its final expression by the character of the man's personality. That is to say, each man will have to interpret the internal revelation according to his personal state of development.

So long as he is content to have his thinking done for him he must remain outside the pale of true humanity, one of the mass of beings with human forms and with human possibilities, but with the human quality still latent. Such are the unthinking masses, who may be wealthy and able to make a show of superficial knowledge, but who are not individualized by the awakening of the soul within.

Many people mistake selfishness for individuality. Selfishness is the survival of an animal instinct intensified by contact with a human mind in a human body. Individuality is a recognition by the mind of the superior dominating consciousness of the soul and of the essential unity of the individual soul with the Supreme.

Selfishness is not eliminated by intellectual development; far from it. There are too many evidences of the contrary. Nor is individuality born of 'head-learning': rather is it the fruit of soul-wisdom, which may exist where there is little or no intellectuality of the usual kind. For wisdom is a quality of the soul, and it may be found in people who are relatively ignorant as far as ordinary education is concerned. So Theosophy may appeal in very different ways to different minds, and may be studied and pursued by many different methods. All of which goes to make it hard to answer the simple question, 'What is Theosophy?'

When Madame Blavatsky first tried to call attention to the existence of the ancient philosophy known as the Secret Doctrine, she gave credit for all that she wrote on the subject to her Teachers, who were at that time often alluded to as "the Brothers"; for they seemed to her like the elder brothers of humanity. She spoke of them with reverence and affection, as men who had traveled far on the path of wisdom and true knowledge, and whose lives were devoted to the helping of humanity. She said she was their messenger, and that her task was to awaken the so-called civilized world to the existence of Theosophy, or that sacred science, the Wisdom-Religion, which she also called the "Secret Doctrine," and from which all sciences and all religions have come down.

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She was at once met with demands for evidence of the existence of these Teachers, and for proofs of their superior wisdom, and she endeavored to meet these demands in various ways.

The result of her efforts was to attract to herself numbers of followers, who at once recognised the truth of her mission and of her teachings. Also there flocked around her a swarm of intellectual adventurers, who were eager for the acquirement of strange knowledge, and for the acquisition of occult powers. Besides these followers she attracted a host of enemies, who made it their business to defeat her object, and to discredit her in the eyes of the public, while vigorously denying the existence of her Teachers and the reality of their knowledge.

Generous and trusting as she was, her indignation was deeply stirred by the insults to those Teachers, for whom she had so true a veneration and such deep gratitude. She thought to convince the world of their reality by evidences that were rejected as trickery, and by assertions that were declared falsehoods. But a few devoted followers remained unshaken in their devotion to the Teachers, whose disciple she claimed to be.

The efforts of her enemies to destroy the new revelation of the ancient truths pursued her to the end of her life, but in no way checked her efforts to fulfil her mission. She worked unceasingly, producing monumental literary works: which stand today as mountains of treasure, from which all may dig wealth of science and philosophy as well as of history and psychology.

As this mass of Theosophic literature increased, the study of the doctrines of Theosophy became possible to all, through efforts of her followers and disciples to spread the teachings and to simplify the abstruse treatises in which those teachings were conveyed.

As some of the Teachers of Madame Blavatsky were of Eastern race, and as their teachings came from the source from which sprang the oldest language known to us, so at first many Sanskrit words and oriental terms were used, for which English equivalents were not available. A new vocabulary was needed, and it has been gradually evolved: so that at present it is possible to present some aspects of Theosophy in plain language — that is to say, in language that may be easily understood if not altogether familiar. And students of Theosophy are constantly endeavoring to make the teachings simpler in their expression. But all such efforts are necessarily liable to create difficulties as well as to remove them.

Try to explain any simple thing to a mixed audience, and then get some of them to say just what they have understood of it, and you will stand aghast at the result of your efforts. All teachers may know this;

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though I think many are so self-satisfied that they refuse to see the fact that human minds are infinitely diverse and infinitely varied: so that the clearest explanation will result in some confusion and in some misunderstanding.

Therefore the effort of a Theosophic Teacher will vary continually in the manner of presenting the teaching. And the Teacher may possibly appear to be giving no instruction at all, when actively engaged in making for the students an atmosphere in which the soul of the inquirer may expand under the influence of the divine light that shines from the spirit within.

Inquirers into Theosophy are those who no longer are content to follow a beaten track that seems to lead back to the place from which it started. They have begun to think for themselves: and they must go on as they have started. They must study Theosophy for themselves: and they must find the path in themselves. Following the inward path they will find that they are nearing the central heart of all humanity, and so are coming closer to their fellows by sympathy with the inner self of all. From this inward inspiration will spring the only real love of humanity that will stand the test of actual experience. This awakening of the true heart is the beginning of true wisdom, which is Theosophy.

MALTA, OR MELITA

F. J. DICK, M. INST. C. E.



RECENT archaeological discoveries in Malta add new interest not only to its varied history, but likewise to the archaeology of the Mediterranean basin and Europe in general, touched upon in H. P. Blavatsky's great works, *The Secret Doctrine* and *Isis Unveiled*. We have only space to take up briefly a few points.

Gigantia, in Gozo, was excavated in 1827; Hagar Kim and Mnaidra in 1840. Hal Saflieni was accidentally discovered in 1902, and the work of excavation was begun in 1906. Tarxien was found in 1913. The two latter are among the most remarkable neolithic structures yet unearthed, as the illustrations accompanying an article in *The National Geographic Magazine* for May clearly show. Further discoveries may follow, for other subterranean chambers exist, judging by the hollow sound of some of the floors.

The age or ages of these temples may be a moot question, but one

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is tempted to inquire how it came to pass that the serpents' pit at Hal Saflieni resembles a similar structure in ancient Peru. As to the neolithic period, inferences regarding it — particularly in connexion with the antiquity of man — have been mainly confined to its traces

“*in Europe*, a few portions only of which were barely rising from the waters in the days of the highest Atlantean civilizations. There were rude savages and highly civilized people then, as there are now. If, 50,000 years hence, pygmy Bushmen are exhumed from some African cavern together with far earlier pygmy elephants, such as were found in the cave deposits of Malta by Milne-Edwards, will that be a reason to maintain that in our age all men and all elephants were pygmies? . . . ‘Seek for the remains of thy forefathers in the high places. The vales have grown into mountains and the mountains have crumbled to the bottom of the seas.’ . . . Fourth Race mankind, thinned after the last cataclysm by two-thirds of its population, instead of settling on the new continents and islands that *reappeared* while their predecessors formed the floors of new Oceans — deserted that which is now Europe and parts of Asia and Africa for the summits of gigantic mountains, the seas that surrounded some of the latter having since ‘retreated’ and made room for the table-lands of Central Asia.”

— Cf. *The Secret Doctrine*, II, pp. 709-30

The name of Malta — *Melita* — is said to be from the Greek word for honey. But as these crypts were at one time, if not originally, devoted to a variant of the Persian-Chaldaeo-Mithraic Mysteries, primarily based upon the hypostatic Tetrad or Arba-il — Anu, Bel, Hoa, united in the Virgin-goddess Mylitta — the latter word may be the more probable original.

The carved outlines of horned bulls on the plate found in Hal Saflieni, and in the ‘bull sanctuary’ at Tarxien, belong to archaic symbolism.

“The bull *Nandi*, the *vāhana* of Śiva, and the most sacred emblem of this god, is reproduced in the Egyptian Apis, and in the bull created by Ormazd and killed by Ahriman. The religion of Zoroaster, entirely based upon the ‘secret doctrine,’ is found held by the people of Eritene (in Bactria); it was the religion of the Persians when they conquered the Assyrians. From thence it is easy to trace the introduction of this emblem of LIFE, represented by the Bull, in every religious system. The college of the Magians had accepted it with the change of dynasty; Daniel is described as a Rabbi, the chief of the Babylonian astrologers and Magi; therefore we see the Assyrian little bulls and the attributes of Śiva reappearing under a hardly modified form in the cherubs of the Talmudistic Jews, as we have traced the bull Apis in the sphinxes or cherubs of the Mosaic Ark; and as we find it several thousand years later in the company of one of the Christian evangelists, Luke.”— *Isis Unveiled*, II, pp. 235-6

But as always happens, pure symbolism became externalized in all ages by the unthinking populace; and whenever we find practices associated with cruelty, whether to animals or human beings, it may be inferred that religion — brotherhood — has been replaced by mere sacerdotalism. There nevertheless remains the possibility that some of these Maltese temples were at one time or another employed for the lofty purposes of the ancient Wisdom-Religion.

“The ever unknowable and incognisable *Kāraṇa* alone, the *Causeless Cause* of all causes, should have its shrine and altar on the holy and ever untrodden ground of our heart — invisible, intangible, unmentioned, save through ‘the still small voice’ of our spiritual consciousness.

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Those who worship before it, ought to do so in the silence and the sanctified solitude of their Souls; making their spirit the sole mediator between them and the *Universal Spirit*, their good actions the only priests, and their sinful intentions the only visible and objective sacrificial victims to the *Presence*.”— *The Secret Doctrine*, I, p. 280

For instance, we read of the true and original Knights Templar that:

“For long centuries these had remained unknown and unsuspected. Holding their meetings once every *thirteen* years at Malta, and their Grand Master advising the European brothers of the place of *rendezvous* but a few hours in advance, these representatives of the once mightiest and most glorious body of Knights assembled on the fixed day, from various points of the earth. . . . Founded in 1118 by the Knights Hugh de Payens and Geoffrey de St.-Omer, nominally for the protection of the pilgrims, its real aim was the restoration of the primitive secret worship. The true version of the history of Jesus and of early Christianity was imparted to Hugh de Payens by the Grand-Pontiff of the Order of the Temple (of the Nazarene or Johannite sect), one named Theocletes, after which it was learned by some Knights in Palestine from the higher and more intellectual members of the St. John sect, who were initiated into its mysteries. Freedom of intellectual thought and the restoration of one and universal religion was their secret object. Sworn to the vow of obedience, poverty and chastity, they were at first the true Knights of John the Baptist, crying in the wilderness and living on wild honey and locusts. Such is the tradition and the true kabalistic version. It is a mistake to state that the Order only later became anti-Catholic. It was so from the beginning, and the red cross on the white mantle . . . had the same significance as with the initiates in every other country.”— *Isis Unveiled*, II, pp. 385, 382

As to the circle and surrounding dots on a pillar at Tarxien, the explanation may be found in the following:

“In the pre-Christian Mithraic Mysteries the candidate who fearlessly overcame the ‘*twelve* Tortures,’ which preceded the final initiation, received a small round cake or wafer of unleavened bread, symbolizing, *in one of its meanings*, the solar disk and shown as the heavenly bread or ‘*manna*,’ and having figures traced on it. . . . The *seven* rules or mysteries were then delivered to the ‘*newly-born*’—represented in the *Revelation* as the seven seals which are opened in order (see ch. v, vi). There can be no doubt that the Seer of Patmos referred to this ceremony.”— *Isis Unveiled*, II, pp. 351-2

Many Masons probably know that in the Mithraic ceremonies a preliminary scene of death was simulated by the neophyte. But the following is not so well known:

“When Maximus, the Ephesian, initiated the Emperor Julian into the Mithraic Mysteries, he pronounced as the usual formula of the rite, the following: ‘By this blood, I wash thee from thy sins. The Word of the Highest has entered unto thee, and His Spirit henceforth will rest upon the **NEWLY-BORN**, the *now*-begotten of the Highest God. . . . Thou art the son of Mithra.’ ”— *Isis Unveiled*, II, p. 566

It may be noted here that the word ‘blood’ had an inner meaning, representing the basis of physical life, called in the East *prâna* — the life-principle.

In the article referred to, allusion is made to a small hole in the wall connecting with an inner sanctuary at Hagar Kim, and a similar arrangement occurs at more than one place in Hal Safieni, as well as a screen or curtain in front of an impressively designed recess at the latter place.

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These things recall a notable statement found in a Graeco-Demotic MS. of the first century,

“and most probably one of the few which miraculously escaped the Christian vandalism of the second and third centuries, when all such precious manuscripts were burned as magical, [wherein] we find . . . one of the principal heroes of the manuscript, who is constantly referred to as ‘the Judaeon Illuminator’ or Initiate, is made to communicate but with his *Patar*; the latter being written in Chaldaic characters. Once the latter word is coupled with the name *Shimeon*. Several times the ‘Illuminator,’ who rarely breaks his contemplative solitude, is shown inhabiting a *Krupte* (cave) and teaching the multitudes of eager scholars standing outside, not orally, but through this *Patar*. The latter receives the words of wisdom by applying his ear to a circular hole in a partition which conceals the teacher from the listeners, and then conveys them, with explanations and glosses, to the crowd. This with a slight change was the method used by Pythagoras, who, as we know, never allowed his neophytes to see him during the years of probation, but instructed them from behind a curtain in his cave.”

— *Isis Unveiled*, II, p. 93

This may throw a side-light on the purposes of the sound magnification and reflexion which characterize one of the remarkable chambers in Hal Safieni.

“The great hierophant of the ancient Mysteries never allowed the candidates to see or hear him personally. He was the *deus ex machinâ*, the presiding but invisible Deity, uttering his will and instructions through a second party; and 2000 years later we discover that the Dalai-Lamas of Tibet had been following for centuries the same traditional program during the most important religious mysteries of lamaism. If Jesus knew the secret meaning of the title bestowed by him on Simon, then he must have been initiated, otherwise he could not have learned it; and if he was an initiate of either the Pythagorean Essenes, the Chaldaean Magi, or the Egyptian Priests, then the doctrine taught by him was but a portion of the ‘Secret Doctrine’ taught by the Pagan hierophants to the few select adepts admitted within the sacred adyta.”— *Ibid.*

It has been stated in the encyclopaedias that tradition still points out in Malta the grottos of Calypso. Thanks to H. P. Blavatsky, Homer will be read understandingly before the twentieth century closes. Let us cite an item on this point:


“The myth of Atlas is an allegory easily understood. Atlas is the old continents of Lemuria and Atlantis, combined and personified in one symbol. The poets attribute to Atlas, as to Proteus, a superior wisdom and a universal knowledge, and especially *a thorough acquaintance with the depths of the ocean*: because both continents bore races instructed by *divine* masters, and because both were transferred to the bottom of the seas, where they now slumber until their next reappearance above the waters. Atlas is the son of an ocean nymph, and his daughter is Calypso — ‘the watery deep’: Atlantis has been submerged beneath the waters of the ocean, and its progeny is now sleeping its eternal sleep on the ocean floors. The *Odyssey* makes of him the guardian and the ‘sustainer’ of the huge pillars that separate the heavens from the earth. He is their ‘supporter.’ And as both Lemuria, destroyed by submarine fires, and Atlantis, submerged by the waves, perished in the ocean deeps, Atlas is said to have been compelled to leave the surface of the earth, and join his brother Iapetos in the depths of Tartaros. . . . Atlas is Atlantis which supports the new continents and their horizons on its ‘shoulders.’”

— *The Secret Doctrine*, II, pp. 762-3

Altogether the discoveries in Malta suggest many lines of investigation.

THE MAN AND THE MASK

H. TRAVERS, M. A.

N the story 'Markheim,' by R. L. Stevenson, occurs the following passage, where the hero, a man who has gone from bad to worse and has just committed his first murder, is communing with a mysterious visitor.

“ ‘Know me!’ cried Markheim. ‘Who can do so? My life is but a travesty and slander on myself. I have lived to belie my nature. All men do; all men are better than this disguise that grows about and stifles them. You see each dragged away by life, like one whom bravos have seized and muffled in a cloak. If they had their own control — if you could see their faces, they would be altogether different, they would shine out for heroes and saints!’ ”

What is the disguise that grows about a man and stifles him, if not the *personality* that he has created about his Soul — about his real Self — during his incarnate life? Life, we are told, is play-acting; the very word ‘personality’ is derived from *persona*, which means first a mask worn by players, secondly a part played by an actor, and thirdly the character which anyone sustains in the world. But, if the personality is the character sustained by a man in life, who is the man — he who sustains the character? He must be the real Self; and, in the case of the great majority of people in this age, he remains in the background, hidden beneath his mask and beneath the weight of clothing which he has put on in order to play his part.

The *duality of human nature*, an everlasting problem, and one that has been made clear by Theosophy, is here beautifully illustrated.

This outer shell of our nature, this mask of personal character, this house in which our Self dwells, is meant for our instrument and obedient servant. It can become our master and tyrant.

People cavil at fate and destiny, and wonder how and why they are so bound and make such a failure of their lives. Here we see the reason; we can trace the gradual process from its beginning. And, in looking back to that beginning, we at once think of the persons who influenced our earliest and tenderest years: what a responsibility was theirs! How much we were at their mercy! And did they understand these truths about the duality of human nature? Did they strive to guard the freedom of our Soul and to prevent this vampire-tyrant of selfish personality from growing up around it and throttling it? Perhaps they were ignorant and heedless of this sacred duty; perhaps, in their folly and weakness, they even pampered and fostered the foe. They held, it may be, before our young eyes, a fond and fanciful ideal of what they wanted us to be,

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thus creating a fictitious part for us to play, a false ideal for us to live up to. They yielded to our desires and pampered our self-love, requiring only a decent semblance of good behavior; so that we soon learned to wear a decent mask in their presence, and to take off the muddy boots of our character in their drawing-room.

All through life, from the earliest beginnings of responsibility (and how early those are!) we are confronted each moment with two roads, a right and a left; and we may acquire the *habit* of choosing the left every time. What wonder then if we find ourselves ever verging more and more widely to the left. What wonder that the man in the story, always choosing pleasure before duty, went gradually from innocent indulgence to the culminating point of murder for money.

Between the responsible self-conscious Man and his environment there is continual action and reaction. Pessimists say that we are at the mercy of environment. This is what they *say*; and we all know the fable of the fox who, having lost his tail in a trap, tried to persuade all the other foxes to discard their tails. If I found myself a failure in life, what a temptation it would be to me to save my vanity by trying to persuade myself and others that it could not be helped! It was destiny; hence the blame is on destiny, not on Me! And, if I found my pride vexed by the example of one who had stood where I had fallen, what a wicked delight I would take in striving to prove that that one was in reality as bad as I, that he was a hypocrite, that his success was unstable and only temporary!

Those that seek to persuade themselves and us that we are helpless victims of circumstances are foxes that have lost their tails. If we keep the center of our being weak and negative, the electric currents (as it were) will flow in from the outside; but if we make ourself positive, the current will flow the other way.

The great truths that give the key to the problems of life are found to be unexpectedly simple — provokingly simple, we might say; for people are apt to feel irritated when told of them, like Naaman when he was told to bathe in the Jordan for the cure of his leprosy. That irritation also comes from the fact that, when the real cure is proposed, the little devil in us takes alarm, because it feels that its empire is now threatened in earnest. Hence people often decline to adopt these simple remedies. They are like a patient who would rather take bottles of medicine than leave off some favorite food: his little devil knows that it has nothing to fear from the medicine, but it dreads the homelier treatment.

And so the problem of how to run our life is subject to just such a simple remedy, just such a homely and unwelcome remedy. It is a question of being able to resist minute temptations, tiny attractions,

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that come to us every moment. It is these little failures that make things so hard when the big trials come.

Turn again to the initial quotation: "I have lived to belie my nature. All men do." Is this too pessimistic? Can no man ever express his real Self, and must every man be dragged away by the currents of life? What are the facts? That some men are dragged away more than others; not all men fall from petty dishonesty to theft, from theft to burglary, and from burglary to murder. Hence the question is one of degree. Our lives may belie our real nature, but they may belie it *more or less*. The very man in the above story does actually repent and reform: he refuses to escape and reap the fruits of his crime, and he gives himself up to justice.

In this story, as in the same author's celebrated 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,' the important points are (1) the distinction between the Real and the fictitious self, (2) the terrible danger that the fictitious self, by constant feeding, may gain power enough to dethrone the real Self from the empire of body and mind. These two points we should do well to keep ever before us.

The first requisite, then, is *discrimination*, that we may distinguish the real Self from "this disguise that grows about and stifles" us. This is best done by action: we must follow duty, not desire. Thus alone can we purify our motives and be sure that the real Self is acting and not the man of desire. Life gives us plenty of chances to choose between duty and desire; it rests with us which we will choose in each case. Thus we shall strengthen either the real man or the fictitious man, according to our choice.

The Theosophical teachings were given to help us follow the path of duty, not to feed our desires. The former path means liberation and mastery over life; the latter means servitude and failure. Yet there are those who seek to make Theosophy minister to ambition and the desire for personal attainments; these are those who have failed to understand Theosophy, or who are propagating bogus Theosophy for their own ends.

A drama depicting the horrors and failures of human life would be incomplete did it not also show, or at least foreshadow, man's inherent power to save himself. This he does through his faith and trust in that divine fount which is the center of his being. He thus summons to his aid a power which is superior to the attractions and snares of circumstance. Circumstance; and what is circumstance after all, if not a word for our own weak desires? The power of circumstances lies not in themselves but in our reaction to them. To rise superior to circumstance is to rise superior to our own weakness.

Self-respect, then, is another requirement; self-respect, which eschews alike vanity and despondency. Vanity and self-abasement are twin evils



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THE ROSETTA STONE
In the British Museum



Lomaland Photo & Engraving Dept.

ARSINOË III, MOTHER OF PTOLEMY V

PTOLEMY V, SUBJECT OF THE ROSETTA STONE

THE ROSETTA STONE

that succeed and reproduce each other; in neither is strength or constancy. Self-respect esteems not what is personal but what is impersonal; it means confidence in the efficacy of right motive and in the law of eternal justice (Karma); and this is quite a different thing from vainglory.

Let us then not keep our real Self as a mere vain regret, but let it shine forth in our conduct, so that it may save us from being dragged down to despair by 'this disguise that grows up around us.'

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A Chapter of Egyptian History

P. A. MALPAS



THE scene is in Egypt in the fall of 332 'B. C.' After a national 'day' of glory, so long and so great that modern history is still afraid to look at it with unveiled eyes, the age-old Kingdom of the Nile was speeding towards the twilight of its days. The Persian domination was cordially hated from the Delta to the Pyramids and their taxes were a burden hard to be borne, rich though the country was from the bounty of the Nile and the precious trade with India. Either at this time or at some approximate historical period, the wise Indian rulers had decreed that Egypt should send only one merchant ship yearly to their ports. The Egyptians met the law by building a ship of such remarkable size and capacity that its cargo of precious Indian gems and spices and other wares was worth the burden of a fleet of argosies. There was a ship, which perhaps never left the Nile, with a complement of 4000 rowers and 4000 crew; double-prowed and double-sterned, the oars rose in twenty banks above the broad decks that spanned the two keels. She was built at a later date, but now the Persian yoke proved such an incubus that the splendid enterprise of a race that could do these things was stifled, and sentiment more than interest made the Persians odious, and those bearing gifts from the Queen of the Nile to the Empire of the East.

The Persians exploited but did not properly protect Egypt. Military incursions had done the country much damage and made the people apprehensive of Persian inability to prevent future attacks. Piratical enterprises had also alarmed them and caused much loss.

When, therefore, the young Macedonian conqueror, Alexander the Great, entered the harbor of Pelusium, he was welcomed as a deliverer rather than as a new oppressor, though he could, and did, levy the same

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taxes as the Persians. The intruder not only met no opposition, but his progress up the Nile to Memphis was a triumphal advance.

Alexander acted with sense. Making no attempt to wound the religious susceptibilities of the Egyptians or to attack their particular form of the religion of humanity, he accepted recognition at the hands of the priesthood as a son of Ammon and therefore a legitimate King of Egypt. Sonchis of Saïs declared to Solon that, before the memory of Greek history began, the Greeks were a mighty nation allied to the Egyptians by peculiarly close religious ties. All they now did was to recognise within the Macedonian form the kindred Egyptian soul and to treat Alexander as an exiled prince coming into his own kingdom. His divinity was acknowledged, and he respected and honored the religion of his new country, receiving certain degrees of initiation in their temples, such as suited his standing.

The new conqueror founded a new capital on the Mediterranean, and called it after himself, Alexandria, destined later to be famous for its glorious Theosophical School and infamous for the persecutions of the martyrs of that school, culminating in the savage attack on Hypatia, when Cyril's Christians scraped the flesh from her bones with oyster shells in church at Easter-time. He had stolen the church plate, and now he was responsible for robbing the Neo-Platonic School of Philosophy of its brightest gem. But all that was in the later karma of the city of Alexander.

Alexander died in 323 B. C., some nine years later. There was no question as to who would succeed to the throne of Egypt. Ptolemy had fought his way to the front from being an obscure military officer, and had attained the highest and most trusted position in the army, besides being a favored and familiar friend of the mighty Alexander. He demanded and obtained Egypt as his share in the Empire, thus founding the dynasty of the Ptolemies.

The next scene is a hundred and twenty years later. The ancient glory of the spiritual kings was fast fading in a dull red light and the court was about as corrupt as it could well be. Ptolemy IV had not much character to recommend him, and the character of his associates, especially the favorite minister Agathocles, was abominable. One star shone unsullied over the court, Queen Arsinoë III. Her childhood had been so beset with thorns and suffering that there was something noble about her, which was more than could be said for any others at the court. The people looked to her for a possible restoration some day of a semblance of morality and justice in high places, when maids, wives, and widows might once again feel safe from the attentions of the dissolute satellites

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of Agathocles and the circle of which he was the mainspring. There was another, the great soldier Tlepolemus, whom they counted upon for relief, but he was not at the time in Alexandria.

Then the Fourth Ptolemy died — which was hardly surprising, considering the way he lived.

Agathocles immediately consulted with his equally infamous sister Agathocleia, and they concealed the royal death until their plans should be ready. She had been the evil genius of Ptolemy IV, and now she became her brother's tool and instigator. The excellent Arsinoë was murdered as a matter of course, and the murderer was given a colonial governorship to get him out of the way. Then having the young Ptolemy V, her son and the new king, in their power, together with the royal treasury, Agathocles and his vile sister laid their cards on the table. They announced that the King Ptolemy IV was dead and that they had become the guardians of the little five-year-old son, whose baby brow was too tender to bear the heavy weight of the double crown of Upper and Lower Egypt. So far the matter seemed sufficiently straightforward, but when it was announced that Arsinoë also was dead, the wrath of the people knew no bounds. It had been calculated that with Tlepolemus out of the city, there would be no leader to carry the Alexandrian mob to extremes and that their possible resentment could be propitiated. As for the Macedonian guards, it was easy to pay them for their loyalty.

Both calculations went wrong. The mob was so exasperated that they spontaneously broke out into a violent sedition, and on an appeal being made to the Macedonians, the latter proved hostile. Was it not obvious that if a Macedonian king or queen could be murdered, the lives of all Macedonians were unsafe under the self-appointed regent? The soldiers resisted all bribes and handed Agathocles and his sister and all his relatives over to the mob, who tore them to pieces.

The third century B. C. was drawing to its close when the boy-king began his reign. Sosibius was the next to obtain possession of the child's person, but as soon as Tlepolemus returned to the city he naturally and as of right assumed the administration of affairs. He was a first-class soldier and very popular, and was pre-eminently the man for the position, with the exception that he was not a statesman in any sense of the word. He was just a soldier to whom a good javelin-throw or a shrewd sword-thrust were of greater importance than all the wearisome routine of government. He would as likely as not have preferred to settle all differences by letting the rival disputants fight it out on the drill-ground while he acted as umpire. Devoted to athletics and the arts of war by day, he spent his evenings in convivial banquets. As a result the affairs of the kingdom naturally fell quickly into the utmost disorder and chaos.

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What rulers had been more friendly towards Egypt than Philip of Macedon and Antiochus III of Syria while Ptolemy IV was on the throne? What more natural than that now they had to deal with a little boy in his place, his baby son, they should conspire together to dispossess him and divide his kingdom between them? Political friendships are unstable things, and selfish opportunities are a severe test of sincerity. Antiochus invaded Coele-Syria and Philip reduced the Cyclades and the Egyptian cities in Thrace without so much as a by-your-leave or a thank-you.

Fortunately there were wise men in Egypt and one of the wisest, Aristomenes, became the adviser of the young King. The Egyptian generals were doing their best, but the aspect of affairs was somewhat critical. Skopas, the Aetolian general sent out by the Egyptians, dislodged Antiochus from Coele-Syria at the great battle of Panion in 198 B. C. when Ptolemy was about twelve or thirteen years of age and had reigned six or seven years.

Philip was countered by the Rhodians and Attalus of Pergamon, who gave his fleet such a rough handling that further attempts against Egypt were paralysed.

The ministers had appealed to Rome. They sent an embassy offering to place Egypt under Roman protection. The senate accepted the proposition and sent an embassy to Egypt consisting of C. Claudius Nero, M. Aemilius Lepidus, and Publius Sempronius Tuditanus, to take charge of affairs. Lepidus seems to have assumed the title of Guardian of Ptolemy.

The Romans crushed the power of Philip at Cynoscephalae in 197 B. C., and they stopped Antiochus from making further advances against Egypt.

Antiochus was wily enough to save appearances by declaring that the war against Egypt was finished, and assured the Romans that not only had he no designs on the country but had arranged to betroth his daughter Cleopatra to the young King Ptolemy, with a promised dowry of half the revenue of Coele-Syria. The marriage actually took place in 193 B. C., some six years later.

Those seven years at the close of the third century and the opening of the second 'B. C.' had been full of bitter trouble and anxiety for Egypt. But the wise minister Aristomenes had, by the Roman intervention, brought his young sovereign out of all other foreign difficulties. In the natural course the King would have come of age, legally, at fourteen, but it appears that he was at least provisionally crowned before that, and his majority was perhaps anticipated in a similar manner to that which obtains in some countries at the present day.

When the great Aristomenes died, there died with him the good genius

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of the King. Ptolemy V went downhill, and when his wise minister was no longer with him his life produced nothing of interest or importance. He became harsh and unjust, and when he died in the twenty-ninth year of his age and the twenty-fourth of his reign, the old fire of the closing years of the previous century and the beginning of the new seems to have been almost forgotten. He died unregretted.

But that was later. And the great decree of the priests of Egypt, which they had promulgated in celebration of the happy issue out of all their country's afflictions in the spring of 196 B. C., still bore witness in the temples to the deeds that had been done in his name, while standing as a monument of the first commemoration of the coronation of the young Ptolemy. Perhaps its most fitting description would be that it was so promulgated as marking the age when he would in the ordinary course of law attain his majority.

The story next concerns Napoleon and his conquest of Egypt at the very end of the eighteenth century 'A. D.' As in the case of Alexander, the circumstances were not auspicious. The glory had departed from the public eye to the hidden recesses of the rocks and subterranean crypts. Egypt seemed a dead country and a dying nation, superficially, at any rate.

The English were attacking the French, who in the course of their defense found it necessary to repair the earthwork known under the name of the Bastion de St.-Julien. The superintendent of the work was an artillery officer named Bussard who either possessed some imagination, or by one of those curious 'accidents' that occasionally happen, made a discovery whose results have been far-reaching. In the progress of the work there came to hand a block of black syenitic basalt with some sort of inscription upon its surface. The point that thrust itself upon the officer's attention was that the inscription was in three sections, one hieroglyphic, that strange unknown language (if it was a language), another unrecognised script, and the third Greek.

The flash of intuition suggested that if all three inscriptions should prove to be the same in different languages, of which the Greek was known, there might be a key to the profound mystery of the hieroglyphics and the soul of old Egypt. It was the possible gate to a new world.

The block of stone was carefully packed, in preparation for its removal to Paris. But before this could take place the French signed the Capitulation of Alexandria. By this instrument it was specified in the sixteenth article that all curiosities were to be given up to the captors, the English. The stone had been found at Rashid or Rosetta, and the French claimed that this Rosetta Stone, as it is still called, was not public property

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and a curiosity to which the clause in the capitulation could be applied. It was private property in the possession of a French General, possessing the curiously archaic Egyptian name of Menou. The ways of soldiers are not the ways of delicate negotiation, and Lord Hutchinson clinched his arguments by sending General Turner with a devil-cart and a detachment of artillerymen to the residence of General Menou with orders to bring the stone to the British headquarters without further discussion. This was done.

The dispute had not lessened the interest in the stone, and General Turner, being "determined to share its fate," embarked with it in the frigate 'Égyptienne.' After a prosperous voyage, the ship arrived at Portsmouth in February, 1802, just two years short of a couple of millenniums since the lettering on it was carved, as subsequent research showed. In March of the same year the stone was placed in the Antiquarian Society's Rooms, where it remained some time before being deposited in the British Museum.

In April, 1802, a month later, the Rev. Stephen Weston presented a translation of the Greek to the Antiquarian Society, and in July the Society ordered four plaster casts to be made and sent to the British Universities, while engravings of the Greek were distributed. A French translation appeared shortly afterwards from the pen of 'citizen du Theil' of the Institut National of Paris. When Napoleon was in Egypt he took a body of learned men with him for the study of such historical monuments as were available. They took the greatest interest in the stone, as did Bonaparte himself, and two Frenchmen, Marcel and Galland, were brought from France to make copies of the inscription, which these lithographers did by rolling it up with printing ink and so taking impressions on paper. Two of these impressions were taken by General Dagua to Paris, and he gave them into the care of du Theil. The latter announced that the stone was a "monument of the gratitude of some priests of Alexandria, or some neighboring place, towards Ptolemy Epiphanes."

So far, progress was satisfactory. But there remained the other two inscriptions, or versions of the same inscription, as deeply wrapped in mystery as ever. It was known that one was the hieroglyphic writing of the temples and the other was the cursive hand derived from the hieroglyphic and much used at the time of the Ptolemies, called the Demotic, or popular character. It is also called the enchorial.

Students were quite alive to the fact that here was a probable key to the vast mass of Egyptian literature which was as little understood as is the Mexican today. If a relation could be established between the Greek and the other two, what a world might not be opened to the longing

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eyes of the world of scholarship! What a burning of the midnight oil was there among those ambitious of the honor of being the first to decipher the footprints of a dead world recorded on the Rosetta Stone!

Silvestre de Sacy and Åkerblad were the first to publish studies of the Demotic text, basing their conclusions upon the theory that the cartouche or oval in the Hieroglyphic and its equivalent in the Demotic contained royal names. They made out several names and even a few other words, but the first investigators were terribly handicapped by the groundless assertion on the part of some scholars that the hieroglyphics were not phonetic. Being in the form of pictures it was supposed the meaning would be related to the picture rather than to any possible sound assigned to the picture. Yet it is the fact that the English alphabet is a series of conventionalized pictures representing sounds, a circumstance probably unknown to them. And indeed, in their origin in the dim Atlantean (?) past, many of the Egyptian hieroglyphics were taken to represent the sound of the initial letter of the name of the object they pictured.

So we have these European savants poring with towed heads over the meaning of the keystone to the arch through which entrance was to be sought to the realm of ancient Egyptian literature. It was Dr. Thomas Young who was the first to grasp the fact that the figures represented sounds, and to utilize it in his decipherings. In 1818 he prepared an article for the *Encyclopedia Britannica* which gave several correct interpretations of signs. He proved that the theory of the oval or cartouche containing royal names was correct, and on the Rosetta Stone deciphered the name of Ptolemy, and on another monument that of Berenice. About the same time Bankes deciphered the name of Cleopatra on an obelisk he had discovered at Philae. Small results for twenty years' work perhaps, but for twenty centuries there had been no results at all, and these three drops of rain were the precursors of the hurricane that has since deluged us with the life of Egypt and proved that our civilization is not necessarily advanced in the things that the wise men of old regarded as essentials, while they despised the things we think most valuable.

The giant intellect of Egyptology now appeared on the scene in the person of the great Champollion. In his youth something had stirred him to study Coptic, which is in reality the modern form of the old Egyptian. There is a vast literature in Coptic, chiefly religious, since the Copts who survived were in great part descendants of early Egyptian converts to Christianity. This Champollion had studied until he had

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become an expert, and his knowledge of the language was invaluable in the restoration of the Egyptian. In parenthesis, it is remarkable that in the same decade containing the discovery of the Rosetta Stone, the famous Count Cagliostro was persecuted to the point of death, and one of the greatest complaints that could be made against him was that he called himself the "Great Copt," or to spell it as Goethe did in the play he wrote about him, "Kophta." This only meant that that much-maligned philosopher and freemason was a representative of the Egyptian school of philosophy. Ignorance made the title a fantastic claim of an adventurer, while in reality it was a very sober description of what he was. This then is the language, the Coptic, which Champollion used to such effect that he founded the science of Egyptian grammar and decipherment, besides giving the phonetic values of syllabic signs, and to all intents and purposes restoring the lost language of Egypt in such form that later scholars had but to exercise patience to decipher and translate the silent voice of the Ancient Land of the Nile.

The study of the method by which the name of Ptolemy on the Rosetta Stone was deciphered letter by letter is fascinating to those who are interested in such details, and the monumental works of Sir Ernest Budge, the Egyptologist of the British Museum, bring the story within the compass of the least learned minds. Five times the name is repeated, and as the name is that of a king of the Greek dynasty it follows that the Egyptian form of the name could hardly be much different in sound. Following the clue yet further, it was found that the figures in the hieroglyphic cartouches supposed to correspond to the letters of the name Ptolemaios, when applied to other cartouches gave portions of such names as Cleopatra and Alexander; the odd letters being supplied gave yet other names in other cartouches, and gradually the whole alphabet became clear. When Champollion added his knowledge to this lettering, the whole of the Egyptian language became easy to translate for those who had the patience to do it.

This is the Decree (on the Rosetta Stone) of the priests, in honor of Ptolemy V, made in 196 B. C. and deciphered in 1802 A. D., while the next hundred years were devoted to the rebuilding of the whole vast structure of the Egyptian literature out of the information supplied by the hieroglyphic and demotic portions:

"In the reign of the youthful king, who received the kingdom from his father, Lord of Diadems, greatly glorious, who has established Egypt and, pious towards the gods, is superior to his enemies; who has set right the life of men; Lord of the feasts of thirty years, like Hephaestos the great, king, like the sun, the great King, both of the Upper and Lower countries, offspring of the gods Philopatores whom Hephaestos (Ptah) approved, to whom the Sun (Ra) has given victory, the living image of Zeus (Ammon); son of the Sun, PTOLEMY, ever-living beloved of Ptah; in the ninth year when Aetus, son of Aetus, was priest of Alexander

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and of the Gods Soters, of the Gods Adelphi, of the Gods Evergetae, of the Gods Philopators and of the God Epiphanes Eucharistus; the Athlophorus of Berenice Evergetes being Pyrrha, daughter of Philinus; the priestess of Arsinoë Philadelphus being Areia daughter of Diogenes; the priestess of Arsinoë Philopator, being Irene daughter of Ptolemy; of the month Xandicus the fourth, but according to the Egyptians, the 18th of Mechir: DECREE:” —

It is interesting to note the correspondence of the Greek and Egyptian Gods, as indicated by Plato when he quotes the conversation of Solon with the priests of Saïs. The Egyptians and Athenians in archaic times were so closely related that their gods were really the same, the names being translated from one to the other without losing much of their character. Corrupt as was the everyday Egypt of the Ptolemies, there is a reminiscence of the times of old in the recognition of the God within the Sovereign. First, we are told, there were Gods that reigned over the nation as Gods, known and loved. Then they reigned in human form, assuming human bodies for convenience, but losing nothing of their unclouded divinity. Then as darker ages came they retreated, and it is to be presumed that only the purified and qualified priests were capable of recognising them and talking with them face to face. Later still, it is probable that priests merely claimed the power to recognise the Gods and used their prestige for political ends. It may have been at this stage that the Ptolemies were recognised as Gods and given god-names as above, ending in the Philopators, parents of Ptolemy V, and in himself as the god Epiphanes Eucharistus; or, on the other hand, these names may possibly represent that power which endeavored through these kings to govern Egypt as well as the degenerated condition of life would allow.

The Decree continues:

“The chief priests, prophets, and those who enter the temples for the arraying of the gods, and the feather-bearers and sacred scribes, and all the other priests who have come from the temples throughout the land to Memphis into the presence of the King for the ceremony of the reception, by Ptolemy, the everliving, beloved of Ptah, god Epiphanes Eucharistus, of the crown which he received from his father, being gathered together in the temple at Memphis on the day aforesaid, decreed:

“Since that King Ptolemy (etc.) has in many things benefited the temples and those connected with them, and all those living under his sway, that, being a god, born of a god and a goddess, like Horus the son of Isis and Osiris, who avenged his father Osiris, of a liberal disposition towards the gods, he has offered to the temples revenues both of money and provisions and has undergone great expenses in order to bring back Egypt to peace and establish the temple observances and has been generous with all his own means; of the taxes and imposts existing in Egypt, some he has entirely remitted, others he has lightened, that the people and all others might be in prosperity under his rule; he has remitted to all the crown debts which those in Egypt and the rest of his kingdom owed, being very considerable; he has released from the claims against them those shut up in prison for such debt, and those lying under accusation for a long time; also he commanded that the revenues of the temples and the contributions of provisions and money made them yearly, likewise the just portions of the gods from the vineyards and gardens and what else belonged to the gods in the time of his father, should remain upon the same basis.

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“He commanded also concerning the priests that they should give nothing more for the consecration fee than was imposed in the first year of his father's reign: he released also those sacred tribes from the yearly voyage down into Alexandria; also he ordered the recruiting of naval supplies to cease; of the contribution of fine linen cloth (byssus) made in the temples for the royal palace he remitted two-thirds; what had been neglected in former times he restored to proper order, taking care that the accustomed duties should be duly paid to the gods.

“Likewise also he apportioned justice for all, as Hermes the twice great; he ordered also that those who returned down the river from Upper Egypt, both soldiers and others who went astray from their allegiance in the days of public disturbance, should be kept in possession of their property on their return; he took care also that there should go out forces of horse and foot and ships against those invading Egypt both by sea and land, undergoing great expense both of money and corn that the temples and all that are in Egypt might be in safety. He was present also at Lycopolis in the nome of Busiris which had been taken and fortified against a siege by a very abundant supply of all kinds of munitions, seeing that for a long time rebellion had existed among those impious ones gathered there, who had done the temples and the inhabitants of Egypt much evil; and laying siege to it, he surrounded it with embankments and trenches and remarkable fortifications; the great rise which the Nile made in the eighth year, when it was accustomed to flood the plains, he restrained at many places, securing the mouths of the canals, and spending on them no small amount of money, stationing horse and foot soldiers to guard them. In a little while he took the city by storm, and all the impious ones in it he destroyed, like as Hermes and Horus the son of Isis and Osiris overpowered those who in the same parts had revolted in former times. The ringleaders also of the revolts in his father's time who had troubled the country and outraged the temples, being at Memphis, the avenger of his father and of his own royalty, all these he punished as they deserved, at the time when he went there for his performance of the rites proper for the reception of the crown; he remitted also the crown debts owed by the temples up to his eighth year, amounting to no small quantity of provisions (corn) and money, likewise the fines for the value of the byssus cloth not delivered, and of that cloth which had been delivered for the same period, the cost of replacing such as differed from the standard pattern.

“He released the temples also of the tax of the artaba for every aroura of the sacred land, and in like manner as to the jar of wine (the ceramium) for each aroura of the vineland. To Apis and Mnevis he made many gifts, as also to the other sacred animals of Egypt, having much more care for them than the kings before him, and considering in all respects what belonged to those gods; he gave bountifully and nobly what was proper for their funerals, with the dues for the support of their respective worships and shrines, with sacrifices and festivals and the other usual rites. The honors of the temples and of Egypt he has carefully kept upon the same basis, agreeably to the laws. He has adorned the temple of Apis with costly works, expending upon it gold and silver and precious stones no small amount, and has founded temples and shrines and altars. What had need of repair he restored, having the disposition of a beneficent god in matters of religion. By making special inquiry he discovered the state and position of the most honorable temples, and in return the gods have given him health, victory, power, and all other good things, the kingdom being assured to him and his children to all time. WITH GOOD FORTUNE:” —

The list of virtuous and wise deeds enumerated is wonderful for a boy of fourteen years, yet it seems fair enough if the good Aristomenes and other real patriots who had the guardianship of the King acted in his name for the welfare of the land, accepting him as the divine focus of their united efforts. Even if that divine kingship had degenerated into a mere formality from the personal point of view, the system of government echoed the ancient reality of the reign of the divine kings and was an ideal form, however imperfect the details. No other known

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system has, so far as history knows, produced a country that lasted intact and glorious for over seventy-five thousand years!

Unfortunately, Ptolemy V advanced no more in wisdom or righteousness after the death of Aristomenes, and many of the excellent measures adopted in regard to taxation and government were canceled or forgotten before he died. But the priests were honoring the King as he was before the change came for the worse, and the honors they decreed stand to the credit of the young king as he was, and not as he became. This was the purport of the final portion of the Rosetta Decree:

“It has seemed good to the priests of all the temples of the land to decree to augment greatly the honors now paid to the everliving king Ptolemy, beloved of Ptah, god Epiphanes Eucharistus, and likewise those of his ancestors, the gods Philopators and of his ancestors the gods Evergetae and of the gods Adelphi, and those of the gods Soters [Note: The latter four were the first four Ptolemies]; to erect of the everliving king Ptolemy, god Epiphanes Eucharistus, an image in each temple in the most conspicuous place, which shall be entitled, ‘Ptolemy, the defender of Egypt,’ near which shall stand the god to whom the temple belongs, presenting to him the emblem of victory, which arrangements will be made in the manner of the Egyptians, also for the priests to perform a service before the images three times a day, and put on the sacred dress and perform the other accustomed rites, as to the other gods in the festivals of Egypt; to establish for King Ptolemy, god Epiphanes Eucharistus, offspring of King Ptolemy and Queen Arsinoë, gods Philopators, a statue and a shrine, both gilded, in each of the temples, and to place this in the inner chamber with the other shrines, and in the great festivals in which processions of the shrines take place, for the shrine of the god Epiphanes Eucharistus, to go out with them. And that it may be distinguished both now and for future time, there shall be set upon the shrine the ten golden ornaments of the King, to which shall be affixed an asp similar to the adorning of the asp-like crowns which are upon the other shrines, but in the midst of them shall be the crown called ‘schent,’ which he wore when he entered the temple at Memphis, for the performance in it of the rites proper to the assumption of the crown; to place upon the platform (or square surface round the crowns) besides the aforesaid crown, ten golden phylacteries upon which shall be written: ‘This is the shrine of the King who makes manifest (Epiphanes) both the Upper country and the Lower’; and since the 30th of the month Mesore on which the birthday festivities of the King are celebrated and in like manner the 17th of the month Paophi in which he received the kingdom from his father, have been named after him in the temples; since these were occasions of great blessings, a feast shall be celebrated in the temples on these days in every month, on which there shall be sacrifices and libations and the other customary festivals . . . there shall be celebrated a feast and a panegyry to the everliving beloved of Ptah, King Ptolemy, god Epiphanes Eucharistus, each year in the temples throughout the land from the first of the month of Thoth for five days, in which also they shall wear garlands, performing sacrifices and libations and the other usual honors. The priests also of the temples of the country shall be called priests of the God Epiphanes Eucharistus in addition to the names of the other gods whom they serve; that priesthood to him shall be inscribed on all their documents and on the seal-rings on their hands. It shall be lawful for private persons to celebrate the feast and set up the aforementioned shrine, having it in their houses and performing the customary rites in the feasts both monthly and yearly in order that it may be published abroad that the people of Egypt magnify and honor the god Epiphanes Eucharistus, the King, according to the law. This decree to be set up on a stele of hard stone, in sacred and enchorial writing and in Greek, and to be erected in each of the temples of the first, the second, and the third order, by the image of the everliving King.”

Much of the defective portions of the lines on the stone has been supplied with almost certain accuracy from a stele discovered in 1898

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at Damanhur in the Delta, and now in the Cairo Museum, and also from the copy of a text of the Decree found on the walls of a temple at Philae. The language is a little difficult to translate into current English owing to the Egyptian method of expression, but this formal 'sermon in stone' has carried its message down through the centuries, and we are as a direct consequence learning the first chapter of the lesson that our civilization is but a repetition of things well known in past ages; much not only being regarded in some of its most vaunted details as too dangerous to make public where the purest morality is not the guiding principle in life, but actually despised as crude in comparison with other and better methods of attaining the same results.

When we have duly studied the secrets of ancient civilizations which flourished long before our age of darkness — so dark that it even wants to deny the very existence of the light — we shall find, are finding, that the horrors of vivisection are not only methods of savagery, but that those ancients possessed immensely superior methods. They knew of explosives, and rigidly kept the thing secret. What are all the so-called benefits of the use of explosives in the balance against the life of a single man sacrificed by their use? The greatest scholar Oxford ever knew, old Roger Bacon, hid his knowledge of gunpowder in a cryptogram, and it would have been better perhaps if he had concealed it altogether. There are many other things we shall find out in time that the Egyptians knew and concealed from irresponsible scholars for the sake of humanity. The Rosetta Stone and the efforts of those who have built up from it the ancient structure of the language are therefore not to be despised, though they may seem to be little more than a scholar's pastime at first sight, though they come as dim gleams of the twilight and the dark of Egypt's glory.

There is another chapter, not yet written: H. P. Blavatsky, whose writings are a storehouse of knowledge, or rather the keys to knowledge, since she could but touch upon many important subjects, suggests that many of the old writings of the temples of Egypt are as much cryptograms or codes as, say, the genealogies of Genesis. Applying the key of a geometrical figure to the hieroglyphics, certain words are revealed as being connected with one another in a secret combination. As likely as not, the modern materialist would hardly understand most such passages, even if he could read them, any more than the birds could have appreciated a sermon from St. Francis on finance or mathematics, had he chosen such a subject for his discourse to the sparrows and finches. But that does not mean that these hidden interpretations are useless — very much

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the reverse. There is no suggestion that any such interior message has been handed down the ages in the Rosetta Stone — it might be or might not. But the message of the stone may in time lead to useful discoveries, when it dawns upon a larger proportion of the leaders of thought and endeavor that not all discovery should be applied to the art of killing one's fellow man, and in the intervals of peace to the science of getting more money than the man next door,— and out of him, if possible.

KARMA AS CONSOLER

H. T. EDGE, M. A.

“With that absolute knowledge that *all* your limitations are due to Karma, past or in this life, and with a firm reliance ever now upon Karma as the only judge, . . . you can stand anything that may happen and feel serene despite the occasional despondencies which all feel, but which the light of Truth always dispels.”—W. Q. JUDGE



THEOSOPHICAL teachings are nothing if not made real and serviceable to us in our path of life; and the doctrine of Karma must be made real and serviceable, else we are no better off than before we heard of it. There is always the tendency for people, when adopting a new belief, to retain their old habit of mind, and to change nothing but the mere wording of their faith. A man brought up in a particularly narrow form of sectarianism may discard all its dogmas, and yet retain unwittingly many of the traits of character which his training engendered; so that he transplants these traits into his new beliefs. Thus he may become a narrow and intolerant skeptic or a self-conscious and canting materialist. So we must beware lest, in adopting new beliefs, we are merely reclothing the household gods over our hearth; we must avoid the habit of fitting our statues with new heads every time a new emperor or a new creed appears upon the scene. Otherwise we might find ourselves using Karma as a god, to be kept out of the way in a convenient shrine on ordinary occasions, and merely brought forth in special emergencies to be prayed to on the off chance that some good might result.

Even in writing an article on the subject, one feels the necessity for steering clear of this tendency to let the thoughts run in old molds. For one gets to speaking of Karma as an article of faith, a clause in a creed. Would it not be better to regard it as an interpretation of one's own intuitive convictions? Looking back over the past, this is indeed how it seems: it seems as though the belief in Karma were innate, and the Theosophical teachers had simply interpreted to us our own thoughts,

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which had been obscured by many notions derived from all those other people who have influenced our mental growth. It is natural to believe that all life is ordered justly and unerringly. We cannot believe in chaos and chance and disorder. The only difficulty is in seeing just how the justice and order are worked out.

We feel that, with the power to ask questions, must go the power to answer them; and that, if man has the one power, he must have the other. We feel conscious of a power within ourselves that is infinite in its range and that refuses to be put off with the notion that anything lies forever beyond the range of its knowledge. Never, surely, was a more discouraging dogma uttered than that which (in various forms) tells us that we can *never* know certain things — that certain things are beyond our knowledge. If we do not now understand the workings of Karma, nor see how justice is worked out in human life, the reason for our blindness can only be that we do not yet know enough about life and about our own nature. When we know more, we shall understand better the working of Karma. Sir Walter Raleigh wrote, on the night before his execution:

“E’en such is Time; who takes in trust
Our youth, our joys, and all we have,
And pays us but with age and dust;
Who, in the dark and silent grave,
When we have wandered all our ways,
Shuts up the story of our days.”

Which is beautiful, but he ends with what will seem to many an anticlimax:

“But from this earth, this grave, this dust,
The Lord will raise me up, I trust.”

If this life of the mere personality, lasting seventy years, were all, should we have the power to repine over it? Should we not rather be unquestioning and content, like the sentinel quail on my fence or the lizard basking on my doorstep? There was something in that noble prisoner in the Tower which could not brook the narrow conception of human life and eternal justice; but it was not given to him at that time to soar beyond the dogmatic beliefs of his age and upbringing. Hence the anticlimax.

To understand Karma we have to recognise that this personal life is *not* all, but that we are all the time part of a far greater consciousness, of which we are but dimly aware, yet which speaks to us through our intuitions. The teachings of Theosophy interpret to our mind the intuitions of our Soul. They tell us that the *real man* is not mortal, not bounded by time and space and personality; and that, if we could realize

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what we are, what life really means, we should see the justice and order throughout the whole. But more: they tell us that we can achieve such realization — not all at once but step by step; and that the more we study and contemplate, the better we shall understand.

If a man thinks that his fate is arbitrary, he has no security for the future. But if he believes that his present fate is the logical result of his past actions, then he realizes that his present actions will determine his future fate. He begins to suspect that he has the matter in his own hands. The quotation says we can feel serene despite occasional inevitable despondence; and it is true; experience proves it. We do despond; but the fit is sooner over, for the serene mind within is waiting till the outer machinery settles down into calmer vibrations so that reason can hold sway once more.

Karma is habit on a large scale. Our actions and thoughts set up habits; and habits are children of the mind, generated out of desire and fancy, for whom we are responsible and who make demands upon us. Our present fate is a mass of habits which we have set up. We have written ourselves a record, which we must unroll.

There are those who would cavil at the doctrine of Karma, saying that it is fatalism, an unescapable fabric of never-ending cause and effect. Such objections are but the first petulant carpings of the neophyte, whose mind rises in instinctive opposition to every unfamiliar idea, be it true or false. We do not blame him, provided he is willing to study the matter further. Man has the power to steady himself amid the swirling eddies of fate. Compare the man of sense and discretion with the neurotic or the madman; and then, seeing how much freer is the former compared with the latter, infer how much freer still is the sage than the ordinary man. We can progress indefinitely in knowledge, and thus in power and freedom. Entanglement in the meshes of destiny results from the enslavement of our will to the attractions of personal desires and narrow ideals. Life has been compared to a wheel, whose circumference rotates with great and ceaseless velocity, but which becomes stiller in proportion as we approach the nave. Let us therefore seek the center of our being, where there is rest.

Science means the discovery of law and order in nature, and the attempt to understand it; but this knowledge should not be restricted to the department of visible nature. It should include the whole sphere of life, thus banishing from our dictionary such words as 'chance.' Our minds create a great deal of confusion, because they are trained to think in certain definite grooves and according to certain narrow rules of formal logic. Very often, when we stop cogitating, and the time comes for action, this doubt and this confusion disappear: our instincts are wiser than

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our heads. The mind is a faculty that lies midway between the two halves of our nature. It has been so long the playground for our fancies and desires that it presents us with a false picture of the universe and of life, a picture adapted to the wishes of the lower man. The mind should be rescued from this subserviency to the lower man and allowed to reflect the wisdom from above. Then we should have a chance of understanding the real laws of life and should learn more about Karma.

We are not neglected and ignored by fate or providence; for we have the power to bring to our aid great agencies for good. These agencies are invoked by our own aspirations; for, when we are loyal to our own best, we thereby actually create a power that will help and guide us. Thus a study of the law of Karma gives us faith in the efficacy of right action and high aspiration. It also warns us against the evil of indulging in wrong thoughts, which, however secret they may seem, are quite open and public to the all-seeing eye of Law. Such will come up sooner or late, like weed-seeds that are sown, unless they are nipped in the germ. But good seeds will also fructify under the same Law. "Let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due time we shall reap, if we faint not."

THE CREST-WAVE OF EVOLUTION

KENNETH MORRIS

*A Course of Lectures in History, Given to the Graduates' Class
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XVI — THE BEGINNINGS OF ROME



WE have seen an eastward flow of cycles: which without too much Procrusteanizing may be given dates thus: — Greece, 478 to 348; Maurya India, 320 to 190; Western Han China, 194 to 63; in this current, West Asia, being then in long pralaya, is overleaped. We have also seen a tide in the other direction: it was first Persia that touched Greece to awakenment; and there is that problematical Indian period (if it existed), thirteen decades after the fall of the Mauryas, and following close upon the waning of the first glory of the Hans. So we should look for the Greek Age to kindle something westward again, sooner or later; — which of course it did. 478 to 348; 348 to 218; 218 to 88 B. C.; 88 B. C. to 42 A. D.: we shall see presently the significance of those latter dates in Roman history. Meanwhile to note this: whereas Persia woke Greece at a touch, thirteen de-

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cedes elapsed before Greece began to awake Italy. It waited to do so fully until the Crest-Wave had sunk a little at the eastern end of the world; for you may note that the year 63 B. C., in which Han Chaoti died, was the year in which Augustus was born.

With him in the same decade came most of the luminaries that made his age splendid: Virgil in 70; Horace in 65; Vipsanius Agrippa in 63; Cilnius Maecenas in what precise year we do not know. The fact is that the influx of vigorous light-bearing egos, as it decreased in China, went augmenting in Italy: which no doubt, if we could trace it, we should find to be the kind of thing that happens always. For about four generations the foremost souls due to incarnate crowd into one race or quarter of the globe; then, having exhausted the workable heredity to be found there,—*used up* that racial stream,—they must go elsewhere. There you have the *raison d'être*, probably, of the thirteen-decade period. It takes as a rule about four generations of such high life to deplete the racial heredity for the time being,—which must then be left to lie fallow. So now, America not being discovered, and there being no further eastward to go, we must jump westward the width of two continents (nearly), and (that last lecture being parenthetical as it were) come from Han Chaoti's death to Augustus' birth, from China to Rome.

But before dealing with Augustus and the Roman prime, we must get some general picture of the background out of which he and it emerged: this week and next we must give to early and to Republican Rome. And here let me say that these two lectures will be, for the most part, a very bare-faced plagiarism: summarizing facts and conclusions taken from a book called *The Grandeur that was Rome*, by Mr. J. C. Stobart, of the English Cambridge. One greatest trouble about historical study is, that it allows you to see no great trends, but hides under the record of innumerable fidgety details the real meanings of things. Mr. Stobart, with a gift of his own for taking large views, sees this clearly, and goes about to remedy it: he does not wander with you through the dark of the undergrowth, labeling bush after bush; but leads you from eminence to eminence, generalizing, and giving you to understand the broad lie of the land: he makes you see the forest in spite of the trees. As this is our purpose, too, we shall beg leave to go with him; only adding now and again such new light as Theosophical ideas throw on it; — and for the most part, to avoid a tautology of acknowledgments, or a plethora of footnotes in the PATH presently, letting this one confession of debt serve. The learning, the pictures, the marshaling of facts, are all Mr. Stobart's.

In the fifth and sixth centuries A. D., when the old manvantara was closing, Europe was flung into the Cauldron of Regeneration. Nations and fragments of nations were thrown in and tossing and seething; the

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broth of them was boiling over, and,— just as in the Story of Taliesin,— flooding the world with poison and destruction: and all that a new order of ages might in due time come into being. One result was that a miscellany of racial heterogeneities was washed up into the peninsular and island extremities of the continent. In the British Isles you had four Celtic and a Pictish remnant,— not to mention Latins galore,— pressed on by three or four sorts of Teutons. In Spain, though it was less an extremity of Europe than a highway into Africa, you had a fine assortment of odds and ends: Suevi, Vandals, Goths and what not: superimposed on a more or less homogenized collection of Iberians, Celts, Phoenicians, and Italians; — and in Italy you had Italians broken up into numberless fragments, and overrun by all manner of Lombards, Teutons, Slavs, and Huns. Welded by cyclic stress, presently first England, then Spain, and lastly Italy, became nations; in all three varying degrees of homogeneity being attained. But the next peninsula, the Balkan, has so far reached no unity at all; it remains to this day a curious museum of racial oddments, to the sorrow of European peace; and each of them represents some people strong in its day, and perhaps even cultured.

What the Balkan peninsula has been in our own time, the Apennine peninsula was after the fall of Rome, and also before the rise of Rome: a job-lot of race-fragments driven into that extremity of Europe by the alarms and excursions of empires in dissolution whose history time has hidden. The end of a manvantara, the break-up of a great civilization and the confusion that followed, made the Balkans what they are now, and Italy what she was in the Middle Ages. The end of an earlier manvantara, the break-up of older and forgotten civilizations, made Italy what she was in the sixth century B. C. Both peninsulas, by their mere physical geography, seem specially designed for the purpose.

Italy is divided into four by the Apennines, and is mostly Apennines. Everyone goes there: conquerors, lured by the *donno fatale*, and for the sake of the prizes to be gathered; the conquered, because it is the natural path of escape out of Central Europe. The way in is easy enough; it is only the way out that is difficult. The Alps slope up gently on the northern side; but sharply fall away in grand precipices on the southern. There, too, they overlook a region that would always tempt invaders: the great rich plain the Po waters: a land no refugees could well hope to hold. It has been in turn Cisalpine Gaul, the Plain of the Lombards, and the main part of Austrian Italy: thus thrice a possession of conquerors from the north. It is the first of the four divisions.

There never would be safety in it for refugees; you would not find in it a great diversity of races living apart; conquerors and conquered would quickly homogenize,— unless the conquerors had their main seat in, and

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remained in political union with, transalpine realms. Refugees would still and always have to move on, if they desired to keep their freedom. Three ways would be open to them, and three destinies, according to which way they chose. They might go down into the long strip of Adriatic coastland, where there are no natural harbors,— and remain isolated and unimportant between the mountain barrier and the sea. Those who occupied this *cul de sac* have played no great part in history: the isolated never do. — Or they might cross the Apennines and pour down into the lowlands of Etruria and Latium, where are rich lands, some harbors, and generally, fine opportunities for building up a civilization. Drawbacks also, for a defeated remnant: Etruria is not too far from Lombardy to tempt adventurers from the north, the vanguard of the conquering people; — although again, the Apennine barrier might make their hold on that middle region precarious. They might come there conquering; but would form, probably, no very permanent part of the northern empire: they would mix with the conquered, and at any weakening northward, the mixture would be likely to break away. So Austria had influence and suzerainty and various crown appanages in Tuscany; but not such settled sway as over the Lombard Plain. Then, too, this is a region that, in a time of West Asian manvantara and European pralaya, might easily tempt adventurers from the Near East.

But the main road for true refugees is the high Apennines; and this is the road most of them traveled. Their fate, taking it, would be to be pressed southward along the backbone of Italy by new waves and waves of peoples; and among the wild valleys to lose their culture, and become highlandmen, bandit tribes and raiding clans; until the first comers of them had been driven down right into the hot coastlands of the heel and toe of Italy. Great material civilizations rarely originate among mountains: outwardly because of the difficulty of communications; inwardly, I suspect, because mountain influences pull too much away from material things. Nature made the mountains, you may say, for the special purpose of regenerating effete remnants of civilizations. Sabellians and Oscans, Samnites and Volscians and Aequians and dear knows what all: — open your Roman Histories, and in each one of the host of nation-names you find there, you may probably see the relic of some kingdom once great and flourishing north or south of the Alps; — just as you can in the Serbians, Roumanians, Bulgars, Vlachs, and Albanians in the next peninsula now.

One more element is to be considered there in the far south. Our Lucanian and Bruttian and Iapygian refugees,— themselves, or some of them, naturally the oldest people in Italy, the most original inhabitants,— would find themselves, when they arrived there, very much de-civilized;

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but, because the coast is full of fine harbors, probably sooner or later in touch with settlers from abroad. It is a part that would tempt colonists of any cultured or commercial peoples that might be spreading out from Greece or the West Asian centers or elsewhere; and so it was Magna Graecia of old, and a mixing-place of Greek and old Italian blood; and so, since, has been held by Saracens, Normans, Byzantines, and Spaniards.

The result of all this diversity of racial elements would be that Italy could only difficultly attain national unity at any time; but that once such unity was attained, she would be bound to play an enormous part. No doubt again and again she has been a center of empire; it is always your ex-melting-pot that is.

Who were the earliest Italians? The earliest, at least, that we can guess at? — Once on a time the peninsula was colonized by folk who sailed in through the Straits of Gibraltar from Ruta and Daitya, those island fragments of Atlantis; and (says Madame Blavatsky) you should have found a pocket of these colonists surviving in Latium, strong enough for the most part to keep the waves of invaders to the north of them, and the refugees to the high Apennines. Another relic of them you would have found, probably, driven down into the far south; and such a relic, I understand, the Iapygians were.

One more ethnic influence,—an important one. Round about the year 1000 B. C., all Europe was in dead pralaya, while West Asia was in high manvantara: under which conditions, as I suggested just now, such parts as the Lombard Plain and Tuscany might tempt West Asians of enterprise; — as Spain and Sicily tempted the Moslems long afterwards. Supposing such a people came in: they would be, while the West Asian manvantara was in being, much more cultured and powerful than their Italian neighbors; but the waning centuries of their manvantara would coincide with the first and orient portion of the European one; so, as soon as that should begin to touch Italy, things would begin to equalize themselves; till at last, as Europe drew towards noon and West Asia towards evening, these West Asians of Etruria would go the way of the Spanish Moors. There you have the probable history of the Etruscans.

All Roman writers say they came from Lydia by sea; which statement could only have been a repetition of what the Etruscans said about themselves. The matter is much in dispute; but most likely there is no testimony better than the ancient one. Some authorities are for Lydia; some are for the Rhaetian Alps; some are for calling the Etruscans 'autochthonous,' — which I hold to be, like *Mesopotamia*, a 'blessed word.' Certainly the Gauls drove them out of Lombardy, and some of them, as refugees, up into the Rhaetian Alps,—sometime after the European manvantara began in 870. We cannot read their language,

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and do not know enough about it to connect it even with the Turanian Group; but we know enough to exclude it, perhaps, from every other known group in the Old World,—certainly from the Aryan. There is something absolutely un-Aryan (one would say) about their art, the figures on their tombs. Great finish; no primitivism; but something queer and grotesque about the faces. . . . However, you can get no racial indications from things like that. There is a state of decadence, that may come to any race,—that has perhaps in every race cycles of its own for appearing,—when artists go for their ideals and inspiration, not to the divine world of the Soul, but to vast elemental goblinish limboes in the sub-human: realms the insane are at home in, and vice-victims sometimes, and drug-victims I suppose always. Denizens of these regions, I take it, are the models for some of our cubists and futurists. . . . I seem to see the same kind of influence in these Etruscan faces. I think we should sense something sinister in a people with art-conventions like theirs; —and this accords with the popular view of antiquity, for the Etruscans had not a nice reputation.

The probability appears to be that they became a nation in their Italian home in the tenth or eleventh century B. C.; were at first war-like, and spread their power considerably, holding Tuscany, Umbria, Latium, with Lombardy until the Gauls dispossessed them, and presently Corsica under a treaty with Carthage that gave the Carthaginians Sardinia as a *quid pro quo*. Tuscany, perhaps, would have been the original colony; when Lombardy was lost, it was the central seat of their power; there the native population became either quite merged in them, or remained as plebeians; Umbria and Latium they possessed and ruled as suzerains. The Tuscan lands are rich, and the *Rasenna*, as they called themselves, made money by exporting the produce of their fields and forests; also crude metals brought in from the north-west,—for Etruria was the clearing-house for the trade between Gaul and the lands beyond, and the eastern Mediterranean. From Egypt, Carthage, and Asia, they imported in exchange luxuries and objects of art; until in time the old terror of their name,—as pirates, not unconnected with something of fame for black magic: one finds it as early as in Hesiod, and again in the *Medea* of Euripides,—gave place to an equally ill repute for luxurious living and sensuality. We know that in war it was a poor thing to put your trust in Etruscan alliances.

According to their own account of it, they were destined to endure as a distinct people for about nine centuries; which is probably what they did. Their power was at its height about 600 B. C. As they began to decline, certain small Italian cities that had been part of their empire broke away and freed themselves; particularly in Latium, where lived the descendants

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of those old-time colonists from Ruta and Daitya,— priding themselves still on their ancient descent, and holding themselves Patricians or nobles, with a serf population of conquered Italians to look down upon. Or, of course, it may have been *vice versa*: that the Atlanteans were the older stock, nearer the soil, and Plebeians; and that the Patricians were later conquerors lured or driven down from Central Europe.

At any rate, as their empire diminished, Etruria stood like some alien civilized Granada in the midst of surrounding medieval barbarism; for Italy, in 500 B. C., was simply medieval. Up in the mountains were war-like highlanders: each tribe with its central stronghold,— like Beneventum in Samnium, which you could hardly call a city, I suppose: it was rather a place of refuge for times when refuge was needed, than a group of homes to live in; in general, the mountains gave enough sense of security, and you might live normally in your scattered farms. — But down in the lowlands you needed something more definitely city-like: at once a group of homes and a common fortress. So Latium and Campania were strewn with little towns by river and sea-shore, or hill-top built with more or less peaceful citadel; each holding the lands it could watch, or that its citizen armies could turn out quickly to defend. Each was always at war or in league with most of the others; but material civilization had not receded so far as among the mountaineers. The latter raided them perpetually, so they had to be tough and abstemious and watchful; and then again they raided the mountaineers to get their own back, (with reasonable interest); and lastly, lest like Hotspur they should find such quiet life a plague, and want work, it was always their prerogative, and generally their pleasure, to go to war with each other. — A hard, poor life, in which to be and do right was to keep in fit condition for the raidings and excursions and alarms: ethics amounted to about that much; art or culture, you may say, there was none. Their civilization was what we know as Balkanic, with perpetual Balkanic eruptions, so to speak. Their conception of life did not admit of the absence of at least one good summer campaign. Mr. Stobart neatly puts it to this effect: no man is content to live ambitionless on a bare pittance and the necessaries; he must see some prospect, some margin, as well; and for these folk, now that they had freed themselves from the Etruscans, the necessaries were from their petty agriculture, the margin was to be looked for in war.

Among these cities was one on the Tiber, about sixteen miles up from the mouth. It had had a great past under kings of its own, before the Etruscan conquest; very likely had wielded wide empire in its day. A tradition of high destiny hung about it, and was ingrained in the consciousness of its citizens; and I believe that this is always what remains

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of ancient greatness when time, cataclysms, and disasters have wiped all actual memories thereof away. But now, say in 500 B. C., we are to think of it as a little peasant community in an age and land where there was no such wide distinction between peasant and bandit. It had for its totem, crest, symbol, what you will, very appropriately, a she-wolf. . . .

Art or culture, I said, there was none; — and yet, too, we might pride ourselves on certain great possessions to be called (stretching it a little), *in that line*; which had been left to us by our erstwhile Etruscan lords, or executed for us by Etruscan artists with their tongues in their cheeks and sides quietly shaking. — Ha, you men of Praeneste! you men of Tibur! sing small, will you? *We* have our grand Jupiter on the Capitoline, resplendent in vermilion paint; what say you to that? Paid for him, too, (a surmise, this!) with cattle raided from your fields, my friends!

Everything handsome about us, you see; but not for this must you accuse us of the levity of culture. We might patronize; we did not dabble. — One seems to hear from those early ages, echoes of tones familiar now. Ours is the good old roast beef and common sense of — I mean, the grand old *gravitas* of Rome. What! you must have a Jupiter to worship, mustn't you? No sound As-by-Parliament-Established — Religion of Numa Pompilius, sir, and the world would go to the dogs! And, of course, vermilion paint. It wears well, and is a good bloody color with no levity about it; besides, can be seen a long way off, — whereby it serves to keep you rascals stirred up with jealousy, or should. So: we have our vermilion Jupiter and think of ourselves very highly indeed.

Yes; but there is a basis for our boasting, too; — which boasting, after all, is mainly a mental state: we aim to be taciturn in our speech, and to proclaim our superiority with sound thumps, rather than like wretched Greeks with poetry and philosophy and such. We do possess, and love, — at the very least we aim at, — the thing we call *gravitas*; and — there are points to admire in it. The legends are full of revelation; and what they reveal are the ideals of Rome. Stern discipline; a rigid sense of duty to the state; unlimited sacrifice of the individual to it; stoic endurance in the men; strictest chastity in the women: — there were many and great qualities. Something had come down from of old, or had been acquired in adversity: a saving health for this nation. War was the regular annual business; all the male population of military age took part in it; and military age did not end too early. It was an order that tended to leave no room in the world but for the fittest, physically and morally, if not mentally. There was discipline, and again and always discipline: *paterfamilias* king in his household, with power of life and death over his children. It was a régime that gave little chance

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for loose living. A sterile and ugly régime, nevertheless; and, later, they fell victims to its shortcomings. Vice, that wrecks every civilization in its turn, depend upon it had wrecked one here: that one of which we get faint reminiscences in the stories of the Roman kings. Then these barren and severe conditions ensued, and vice was (comparatively speaking) cleaned out.

What were the inner sources of this people's strength? What light from the Spirit shone among them? Of the Sacred Mysteries, what could subsist in such a community? — Well; the Mysteries had, by this time, as we have seen, very far declined. Pythagoras had made his effort in this very Italy; he died in the first years of the fifth century, soon after the expulsion of the kings, according to the received chronology; — in reality, long before there is dependable history of Rome at all. There had been an Italian Golden Age, when Saturn reigned and the Mysteries ruled human life. There were reminiscences of a long past splendor; and an atmosphere about them, I think, more mellow and peace-lapped than anything in Hesiod or Homer. I suppose that from some calmer, firmer, and more benignant Roman Empire manvantaras back, when the Mysteries were in their flower and Theosophy guided the relations of men and nations, some thin stream of that divine knowledge flowed down into the pralaya: that an echo lingered,— at Cumae, perhaps, where the Sibyl was,— or somewhere among the Oscan or Sabine mountains. Certainly nothing remained, regnant and recognised in the cities, to suggest a repugnance to the summer campaigns, or that other nations had their rights. Yet there was something to make life sweeter than it might have been.

They said that of old there had been a King in Rome who was a Messenger of the Gods and link between earth and Heaven; and that it was he had founded their religion. Was Numa Pompilius a real person? — By no means, says modern criticism. I will quote you Mr. Stobart:—

“The Seven Kings of Rome are for the most part mere names which have been fitted by rationalizing historians, presumably Greek, with inventions appropriate to them. Romulus is simply the patron hero of Rome called by her name. Numa, the second, whose name suggests *numen*, was the blameless Sabine who originated most of the old Roman cults, and received a complete biography largely borrowed from that invented for Solon.”

— He calls attention, too, to the fact that Tarquin the Proud is made a typical Greek Tyrant, and is said to have been driven out of Rome in 510, — the very year in which that other typical Greek Tyrant, Hippias, was driven out of Athens; — so that on the whole it is not a view for easy unthinking rejection. But Madame Blavatsky left a good maxim on these matters: that tradition will tell you more truth than what goes for history will; and she is quite positive that there is much more truth

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in the tales about the kings than in what comes down about the early Republic. Only you must interpret the traditions; you must understand them. Let us go about, and see if we can arrive at something.

Before the influx of the Crest-Wave began, Rome was a very petty provincial affair, without any place at all in the great sweep of world-story. Her annals are about as important as those of Samnium of old, of which we know nothing; or those, say, of Andorra now, about which we care less. Our school histories commonly end at the Battle of Actium; which is the place where Roman history becomes universal and important: a point wisely made and strongly insisted on by Mr. Stobart. It shows how thoroughly we lack any true sense of what history is and is for. We are so wrapped up in politics that our vision of the motions of the Human Spirit is obscured. There were lots of politics in Republican Rome, and you may say none in the Empire; so we make for the pettiness that obsesses us, and ignore the greatness whose effects are felt yet. Rome played at politics: old-time conqueror-race Patricians against old-time conquered-race Plebeians: till the two were merged into one and she grew tired of the game. She played at war until her little raidings and conquests had carried her out of the sphere of provincial politics, and she stood on the brink of the great world. Then the influx of important souls began; she entered into history, presently threw up politics forever, and performed, so far as it was in her to do so, her mission in the world. What does History care for the election results in some village in Montenegro? Or for the passage of the Licinian Rogations, or the high exploits of Terentilius Harsa?

Yet, too, we must get a view of this people in pralaya, that we may understand better the workings of the Human Spirit in its fulness. But we must see the forest, and not lose sight and sense of it while botanizing over individual trees. We must forget the interminable details of wars and politics that amount to nothing; that so we may apprehend the form, features, color, of this aspect of humanity.

Here is a mighty river: the practical uses of mankind are mainly concerned with it as far up as it may be navigable; or at most, as far up as it may be turning mills and watering the fields of agriculture. There may be regions beyond whence poets and mythologists may bring great treasures for the Human Spirit; but do you do well to treat such treasures as plug material for exchange and barter? They call for another kind of treatment. The sober science of history may be said to start where the nations become navigable, and begin to affect the world. You can sail your ships up the River Rome to about the beginning of the third century B. C., when she began to emerge from Italian provincialism and to have relations with foreign peoples: Pyrrhus came over to fight her in 280.

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What is told of the century before may be true or not; as a general picture it is probably true enough, and only as a general picture does it matter; its details are supremely unimportant. The river here is pouring through the gorges, or shallowly meandering the meads. It is watering Farmer Balbus's fields; Grazier Ahenobarbus's cows drink at it; idle Dolabella angles in its quiet reaches; there are bloody tribal affrays yearly at its fords. It is important, certainly, to Balbus and Dolabella, and the men slain in the forays; — but to us others —.

And then at 390 there are falls and dangerous rapids; you will get no ships beyond these. The Gauls poured down and swept away everything; the records were burnt; and Rome, such as it was, had to be re-founded. Here is a main break with the past; something like Ts'in Shi Hwangti's Book-burning; and it serves to make doubly uncertain all that went before. Go further now, and you must take to the wild unmapped hills. There are no fields beyond this; the kine keep to the lush lowland meadows; rod and line must be left behind,— and angler too, unless he is prepared for stiff climbing, and no marketable recompense. Nor yet, perhaps, for some time, much in things unmarketable: I will not say there is any great beauty of scenery in these rather stubborn and arid hills.

As to the fourth century, then (or from 280 to 390) — we need not care much which of Ahenobarbus's cows was brindled, or which had the crumpled horn, or which broke off the coltsfoot bloom with lazy ruthless hoof. As to the fifth,— we need not try to row the quinqueremes of history beyond that Gaulish waterfall. We need not bother with the weight Dolabella claims for the trout he says he caught up there: that trout has been cooked and eaten these twenty-three hundred years. Away beyond, in the high mountains, there may be pools haunted by the nymphs; you cannot sail up to them, that is certain; but there may be ways round. . . .

Here, still in the foot-hills, is a pool that does look, if not *nymphatic*, at least a little fishy, as they say: the story of Rome's dealings with Lars Porsenna. It even looks as if something historical might be caught in it. The Roman historians have been obviously camouflaging: they do not want you to examine this too closely. Remember that all these things came down by memory, among a people exceedingly proud, and that had been used to rely on records,— which records had been burnt by the Gauls. Turn to your English History, and you shall probably look in vain in it for any reference to the Battle of Patay; you shall certainly find Agincourt noised and trumpeted *ad lib*. Now battles are never decisive; they never make history; the very best of them might just as well not have been fought. But at Patay the forces which made it inevitable France should be a nation struck down into the physical plane

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and made themselves manifest: as far as that plane is concerned, the centuries of French history flow from the battlefield of Patay. But what made trumpery Agincourt was only the fierce will of a cruel, ambitious fighting king; and what flowed from it was a few decades of war and misery. That by way of illustration how history is envisaged and taught; depend upon it, by every people: it is not peculiar to this one or that. — Well then, the fish we are at liberty to catch in this particular Roman pool is, a period during which Rome was part of the Etruscan Empire.

The fact is generally accepted, I believe; and is, of course, the proposition we started from. How long the period was, we cannot say. The Tarquins were from Tarquinii in Etruria: perhaps a line of Etruscan governors. The gentleman from Clusium who swore by the Nine Gods was either a king who brought back a rebellious Rome to temporary submission, or the last Etruscan monarch in whose empire it was included. But here is the point: whether fifty or five hundred years long — and perhaps more likely the former than the latter — this period of foreign rule was long enough to make a big break in the national tradition, and to throw all preceding events out of perspective.

At the risk of *longueurs* — and other things — let me take an illustration from scenes I know. I have heard peasants in Wales talking about events before the conquest; — people who have never learnt Welsh history out of books, and have nothing to go on but local legends; — and placing the old unhappy far-off things and battles long ago at “over a hundred years back, I shouldn’ wonder.” It is the way of tradition to foreshorten things like that. Nothing much has happened in Wales since those ancient battles with the English; so the six or seven centuries of English rule are dismissed as “over a hundred years.” Rome under the Etruscans, like Wales under the English, would have had no history of her own: there would have been nothing to impress itself on the race-memory. Such times fade out easily: they seem to have been very short, or are forgotten altogether. But this same Welsh peasant, who thus forgets and foreshortens recent history, always remembers that there were kings of Wales once. Perhaps, if he were put to it to write a history, with no books to guide him, he would name you as many as seven of them, and supply each with more or less true stories. In reality, of course, there were eight centuries of Welsh kings; and before them, the Roman occupation,— which he also remembers, but very vaguely; and before that, he has the strongest impression that there were ages of wide sovereignty and splendor. The kings he would name, naturally, are the ones that made the most mark. — I think the Romans, in constructing or making Greeks construct for them their ancient history, did very much the same

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kind of thing. They remembered the names of seven kings, with tales about them, and built on those. These were the kings who had stood out and stood for most; and the Romans remembered what they stood for. So here I think we get real history; whereas in the stories of republican days we may see the efforts of great families to provide themselves with a great past. But I doubt we could take anything *au pied de la lettre*; or that it would profit us to do so if we could. Here is a pointer: we have seen how in India a long age of Kshatriya supremacy preceded the supremacy of the Brahmins. Now observe Kshatriya Romulus followed by Brahmin Numa.

I do not see why Madame Blavatsky should have so strongly insisted on the truth of the story of the Roman Kings unless there were more in it than mere pralalyic historicity. Unless it were of bigger value, that is, than Andorran or Montenegrin annals. Rome, after the Etruscan domination, was a meanly built little city; but there were remains from pre-Etruscan times greater than anything built under the Republic. Rome is a fine modern capital now; but there were times, in the age of Papal rule, when it was a miserable depopulated village of great ruins, with wolves prowling nightly through the weed-grown streets. Yet even then the tradition of *Roma Caput Mundi* reigned among the wretched inhabitants, - witness Rienzi: it was the one thing, besides the ruins, to tell of ancient greatness. Some such feeling, borne down out of a forgotten past, impelled Republican Rome on the path of conquest. It was not even a tradition, at that time; but the essence of a tradition that remained as a sense of high destinies.

Who, then, was Romulus? -- Some king's son from Ruta or Daitya, who came in his lordly Atlantean ships, and builded a city on the Tiber? Very likely. That would be, at the very least, as far back as nine or ten thousand B. C.; which is contemptibly modern, when you think of the hundred and sixty thousand years of our present sub-race. The thing that is in the back of my mind is, that Rome is probably as old as that sub-race, or nearly so; but wild horses should not drag from me a statement of it. Rome, London, Paris,— all and any of them, for that matter. — But a hundred and sixty thousand or ten thousand, no man's name could survive so long, I think, as a peg on which to hang actual history. It would pass, long before the ten millenniums were over, into legend; and become that of a God or demigod,— whose cult, also, would need reviving, in time, by some new avatar. Now (as remarked before) humanity has a profound instinct for avatars; and also (as you would expect) for Reincarnation. The sixth-century Britons were reminded by one of their chieftains of some mighty king or God of prehistory; the two got mixed, and the mixture came down as the Arthur of the

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legend. This is what I mean by 'reviving the cult.' Now then, who was Romulus? — Some near or remote descendant of heroic refugees from fallen Troy, who rebuilt Rome or re-established its sovereignty? — Very likely, again; — I mean, very likely both that and the king's son from Ruta or Daitya. And lastly, very likely some tough little peasant-bandit restorer, not so long before the Etruscan conquest, whom the people came to mix up with mightier figures half forgotten. . . .

We see his history, as the Romans did, through the lens of a tough little peasant-bandit city: through the lens of a pralaya, which makes pralayic all objects seen. It is like the Irish peasant-girl who has seen the palace of the king of the fairies; she describes you something akin to the greatest magnificence she knows,— which happens to be the house of the local *squireen*. Now the Etruscan domination, as we have noted, could probably not have begun before 1000 B. C.: at which time, to go by our hypothesis as to the length and recurrence of the cycles, Europe was in dead pralaya, and had been since 1480. So that, possibly, you would have had between 1480 and 1000 a Rome in pralaya, but independent — like Andorra now, or Montenegro. The stories we get about the seven kings would fit such a time admirably. They tell of pralayic provincials; and Rome, during that second half of the second millennium B. C., would have been just that.

But again, if the seven kings had been just that and nothing more, I cannot see why H. P. Blavatsky should have laid such stress on the essential truth of their stories. She is particular, too, about the Arthurian legend: saying that it is at once symbolic and actually historical,— which latter, as concerns the sixth-century Arthur, it is not and she would not have considered it to be: no Briton prince of that time went conquering through Europe. So there must be some further value to the tales of the Roman kings; else why are they so much better than the Republican annals? Why? — unless all history except the invented kind or the distorted-by-pride-or-politics kind *is* symbolic; and unless we could read in these stories the record, not merely of some pre-Etruscan pralayic centuries, but of great ages of the past and of the natural unfoldment of the Human Spirit in history through long millenniums? Evolution is upon a pattern; understand the drift of any given thousand years in such a way that you could reduce it to a symbol, and probably you have the key to all the past.

So I imagine there would be seven interpretations to these kings, as to all other symbols. Romulus may represent a Kshatriya, and Numa a Brahmin domination in the early ages of the sub-race. Actual men, there may yet be mirrored in them the history — shall we say of the whole sub-race? Or Root-race? Or the whole natural order of

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human evolution? It is business for imaginative meditation,— which is creative or truth-finding meditation. But now let us try, diffidently, to search out the last, the historic, pre-Etruscan Numa.

If you examined the Mohammedan East, now in these days of its mid-pralaya and disruption: Turkey especially, or Egypt: you should find constantly the tradition of Men lifted by holiness and wisdom and power above the levels of common humanity: Unseen Guardians of the race,— a Great Lodge or Order of them. In Christendom, in its manvantara, you find no trace of this knowledge; but it may surprise you to know that it is so common among the Moslems, that according to the Turkish popular belief, there is always a White Adept somewhere within the mosque of St. Sophia,— hidden under a disguise none would be likely to penetrate. There are hundreds of stories. The common thought is that representatives of this Lodge, or their disciples, often appear; are not so far away from the world of men; may be teaching, quite obscurely, or dropping casual seeds of the Secret Wisdom, in the next village. Well; I imagine pralayaic conditions may allow benign spiritual influences to be at work, sometimes, nearer the surface of life than in manvantara. The brain-mind is less universally dominant; there is not the same dense atmosphere of materialism. You get on the one hand a franker play of the passions, and no curbs imposed either by a sound police system or a national conscience: in pralaya time there is no national conscience, or, I think, national consciousness,— no feeling of collective entity, of being a nation,— at all; perhaps no public opinion. As it is with a man when he sleeps: the soul is not there: there is nothing in that body that feels then 'I am I'; nothing (normally) that can control the disordered dreams. . . . Hence, in the sleeping nation, the massacres, race-wars, mob-murders, and so on; which, we should remember, affect parts, not the whole, of the race. But on the other hand that very absence of brain-mind rule may imply Buddhic influences at work in quiet places; and one cannot tell what unknown graciousnesses may be happening, that our manvantaric livelinesses and commercialism quite forbid. . . . Believe me, if we understood the laws of history, we should waste a deal less time and sanity in yelling condemnations. . . .

Italy then was something like Turkey is now. Dear knows whom you might chance on, if you watched with anointed eyes . . . in St. Sophia . . . or among the Sabine hills. Somewhere or other, as I said just now, reminiscences of the Mysteries would have survived. I picture an old wise man, one of the guardians of those traditions, coming down from the mountains, somewhere between 1500 and 1000 B. C., to the little city on the Tiber; touching something in the hearts of the people there, and becoming,— why not? — their king. For I guess that this one

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was not so different from a hundred little cities you should have found strewn over Italy not so long ago. The ground they covered,— and this is still true,— would not be much larger than the Academy Garden; their streets but six or seven feet across. Their people were a tough, stern, robberish set; but with a side, too, to which saintliness (in a high sense) could make quick appeal. Intellectual culture they had none; the brain-mind was the last thing you should look for (in ancient Rome at least); — and just because it was dormant, one who knew how to go about it could take hold upon the Buddhic side. That was perhaps what this Numa Pompilius achieved doing. There would be nothing extraordinary in it. The same thing may be going on in lots of little cities today, in pralactic regions: news of the kind does not emerge. We have a way of dividing time into *ancient* and *modern*; and think the one forever past, the other forever to endure. It is quite silly. There are plenty of places now where it is 753 B. C.; as no doubt there were plenty then where it was pompous 1919. — Can anyone tell me, by the bye, what year it happens to be in Europe now?

How much Numa may have given his Romans, who can say? Most of it may have worn away, before historic times, under the stress of centuries of summer campaigns. But something he did ingrain into their being; and it lasted, because not incompatible with the life they knew. It was the element that kept that life from complete vulgarity and decay.

You have to strip away all Greekism from your conceptions, before you can tell what it was. The Greek conquest was the one Rome did not survive. Conquered Greece overflowed her, and washed her out: changed her traditions, her religion, the whole color of her life. If Greece had not stepped in, myth-making and euhemerizing, who would have saved the day at Lake Regillus? *Not* the Great Twin Brothers from lordly Lacedaemon, be sure. Who then? Some queer uncouth Italian nature-spirit gods? One shakes one's head in doubt: the Romans did not personalize their deities like the Greeks. Cato gives the ritual to be used at cutting down a grove; says he:—"This is the proper Roman way to cut down a grove. Sacrifice with a pig for a peace-offering. This is the verbal formula: 'Whether thou art a god or a goddess to whom that grove is sacred,'"— and so on. Their gods were mostly like that: potentialities in the unseen, with whom good relations must be kept by strict observance of an elaborate ritual. There were no stories about them; they did not marry and have families like the good folk at Olympus.

Which is perhaps a sign of this: that Numa's was a religion, the teaching of a (minor) Teacher who came long after the Mysteries had disappeared. Because in the Mysteries, cosmogenesis was taught through dramas which were symbolic representations of its events and processes;

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and out of these dramas grew the stories about the gods. But when the real spiritual teaching has ceased to flow through the Mysteries, and the stories are accepted literally, and there is nothing else to maintain the inner life of the people,— a Teacher of some kind must come to state things in plainer terms. This, I take it, is what happened here; and the very worn-outness of conditions that this implies, implies also tremendous cultural and imperial activities in forgotten times. I imagine Italy, then, at two or three thousand B. C., was playing a part as much greater outwardly than Greece was, as her part now is greater than Greece's, and has been during recent centuries.

This, then, is what Numa's religion did for Rome: — it peopled the woods and fields and hills with these impersonal divinities; it peopled the moments of the day with them: so that nothing in space or time, no near familiar thing or duty, was material wholly, or pertained to this world alone; — there was another side to it, connected with the unseen and the gods. There were Great Gods in the Pantheon; but your early Roman had no wide-traveling imagination; and they seemed to him remote and uncongenial rather,— and quickly took on Greekishness when the Greek influence began. Minerva, vaguely imagined, assumed soon the attributes of the very concretely imagined Pallas; and so on. But he had nearer and Numaish divinities much more a part of his life,— which indeed largely consisted of rituals in their honor. There were Lares and Penates and Manes, who made his home a kind of temple, and the earth a kind of altar; there were deities presiding over all homely things and occasions: formless impersonal deities: presences to be felt and remembered, not clothed imaginatively with features and myths: — Cuba, who gave the new-born child its first breath; Anna Perenna of the recurring year; hosts of agricultural gods without much definition, and the unseen genii of wood, field, and mountain. Everything, even each individual man, had a god-side: there was something in it or him greater, more subtle, more enduring, than the personality or outward show. — To the folk-lorist, of course, it is all 'primitive Mediterranean' religion or superstition; but the inner worlds are wonderful and vast, if you begin to have the smallest inkling of an understanding of them. I think we may recognise in all this the hand of a wise old Pompilius from the Sabine hills, at work to keep the life of his Romans, peasant-bandits as they were, clean in the main and sound. Yes, there were gross elements: among the many recurring festivals, some were gross and saturnalian enough. The Romans kept near Nature, in which are both animal and cleansing forces; but the high old *gravitas* was the virtue they loved. And supposing Numa established their religion, it does not follow that he established what there came to be of grossness in it.

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They kept near Nature: very near the land, and the Earth Breath, and the Earth Divinities, and the Italian soil,— and that southern laya center and gateway into the inner world which, I am persuaded, is in Italy. There are many didactic poems in world-literature,— poems dealing with the operations of agriculture; — and they are mostly as dull as you would expect, with that for their subject; but one of them, and one only, is undying poetry. That one is the Roman one. Its author was a Celt, and his models were Greek; and he was rather a patient imitative artist than greatly original and creative; — but he wrote for Rome, and with the Italian soil and weather for his inspiration; and their forces pouring through him made his didactics poetry, and poetry they remain after nineteen centuries. Nothing of the kind comes from Greece. As if whenever you broke the Italian soil, a voice sang up to you from it: *Once Saturn reigned in Italy!*

It is this that brings Cincinnatus back to his cabbage-field from the wars and politics, as to something sacred, a fountain at which life may be renewed. Plug souls; no poetry in them; — but the Earth Breath cleanses and heals and satisfies them. In place of a literature, they have wild unpoetical chants to their Mavors to raise as they go into battle; for art and culture, they have that bright vermilion Jove: nothing from the Spirit to comfort them in these! But put the ex-dictator to hoe his turnips, and he is in a dumb sort of way in communication at once with the Spirit and all deepest sources of comfort. — What is Samnite gold to me, when I have my own radishes to toast,— sacred things out of my own sacred soil? The Italian sun shines down on me, and warms more than my physicality and limbs. See, I strike my hoe into Italy, and the sacred essences of Earth our Mother flow up to me, and quiet my mind from anxious and wasting thought, and fill me with calmness and vigor and Italy, and her old quaint immemorial gods!

Not that the Roman had any conception, patriotically speaking, about Italy; it was simply the soil he was after,— which happened to be Italian. Not for him, in the very slightest, Filicaia's or Mazzini's dream! Good practical soul, what would he have done with dreaming? — But he had his feet on the ground, and was soaked through, willy nilly, with its forces; he lived in touch with realities, with the seasons and the days and nights,— how we do forget those great, simple, life-giving, cleansing things! — and his mind was molded to what he owed to the soil, to the realities, to *Dea Roma*; — and Duty became a great thing in his life. Out of all this comes something that makes this narrow little cultureless bandit city almost sympathetic to us,— and very largely indeed admirable.

They knew how to keep their heads. There were those two races among them,— races or orders; — and a mort of politics between the

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two. Greek cities, in like manner but generally less radically divided, knew no method but for one side to be perpetually banishing the other, turn and turn about, and wholesale; but these spare, tough Romans effect compromise after compromise, till Patricians and Plebs are molten down into one common type. They are not very brilliant, even at their native game of war: given a good general, their enemies are pretty sure to trounce them. Pyrrhus, a fine tactician but no great strategist, does so several times; — and then they reply to his offers of peace, that they make no peace with enemies still camped on Italian soil. — Comes next a real master-strategist, Hannibal; and senate and people, time after time, are forced (like Balbus in the poem)

“With a frankness that I’m sure will charm ye
To own it is all over with the army.”

He wipes them out in a most satisfactory and workmanlike manner. Their leading citizens, *ipso facto* their generals (amateur soldiers always cabbage-hoers at heart) afford him a good deal of amusement; as if you should send out the mayor of Jonesville, Arkansaw, against a Foch or a Hindenburg. One of them, a fool of a fellow, blunders into a booby-trap and loses the army which is almost the sole hope of Rome; and comes home, utterly defeated,— to be gravely thanked by the Senate for not committing suicide after his defeat: “for not despairing of the Republic.” Ah, there is real Great Stuff in that; they are admirable peasant-bandits after all! Most people would have straight court-martialed and beheaded the man; as England hanged poor Admiral Byng *pour encourager les autres*. And all the while they have been having the sublime impudence to keep an army in Spain conquering there. How to account for this unsubduability? Well; there is Numa’s teaching; and what you might call a latent habit of *Caput-Mundi-ship*: imperial seeds in the soil.

There is that indestructible god-side to everything: especially, behind and above this city on the seven hills, there is divine eternal ROME. So, after the Gaulish conquest, they rejected proffered and more desirable Etruscan sites, and came back and provided *Dea Roma* with a new outward being: the imperial seeds, molds of empire, were on the Seven Hills, not at Veii. So, when this still greater peril of Hannibal so nearly submerged them, they took final victory for granted,— could conceive of no other possibility,— and placidly went forward while being whipped in Italy with the adventure in Spain. There was one thing they could not imagine: ultimate defeat. It was a kind of stupidity with them. They *were* a stupid people. You might thrash them; you might give them their full deserts (which were bad), and fairly batter them to bits; all the world might think them dead; dozens of doctors might write

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death-certificates; you might have Rome confined and nailed down, and be riding gaily to the funeral; — but you could not convince *her* she was dead; and at the very graveside, sure enough, the ‘pesky critter’ (as they say) would be bursting open the coffin lid; would finish the ceremony with you for the corpse, and then ride home smiling to enjoy her triumph, thank God for his mercies,— and get back to her hoe and her cabbages as quickly as might be.

It is this that to my mind makes it philosophically certain that she had had a vast antiquity as the seat of empire; I mean, before the Etruscan domination. *Dea Roma*,— the Idea of Rome,— was an astral mold almost cast in higher than astral stuff: it was so firmly fixed, so unalterably there, that I cannot imagine a few centuries of peasant-bandits building it,— unimaginative tough creatures at the best. No; it was a heritage; it was built in thousands of years, and founded upon forgotten facts. There was something in the ideal world, the deposit of long ages of thinking and imagining. How, pray, are nations brought into being? By men thinking and willing and imagining them into being. Such men create an astral matrix; with walls faint and vague at first, but ever growing stronger as more and more men reinforce them with new thought and will and imagination. But in Rome we see from the first the astral mold so strong that the strongest party feelings, the differences of a conqueror and a conquered race, are shaped by it into compromise after compromise. And then, too, an instinct among those peasant-bandits for empire: an instinct that few European peoples have possessed: that it took the English, for example, a much longer time to learn than it took the Romans. For let us note that even in those early days it was not such a bad thing to come under Roman sway; if you took it quietly, and were misled by no patriotic notions. That is, as a rule. Unmagnanimous always to men, Rome was not without justice, and even at times something quite like magnanimity, to cities and nations. She was no Athens, to exploit her subject peoples ruthlessly with never a troubling thought as to their rights. She had learned compromise and horse sense in her politics at home: if her citizens owed her a duty, she assumed a responsibility towards them. It took her time to learn that; but she learned it. She went conquering on the same principle. Her plebeians had won their rights; in other towns, mostly, the plebeians had not. Roman dominion meant usually a betterment of the conditions of the plebs in the towns annexed, and their entering in varying degrees upon the rights the plebs had won at Rome. She went forward taking things as they came, and making what arrangements seemed most feasible in each case. She made no plans in advance; but muddled through like an Englishman. She had no Greek or French turn for thinking things

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out beforehand; her empire grew, in the main, like the British, upon a subconscious impulse to expand. She conquered Italy because she was strong: much stronger inwardly in spirit than outwardly in arms; and because (I do but repeat what Mr. Stobart says: the whole picture really is his) what should she do with her summer holidays, unless go on a campaign? — and because while she had still citizens without land to hoe cabbages in, she must look about and provide them with that prime necessity. All of which amounts to saying that she began with a habit of empire-winning,— which must have been created in the past. On her toughness the spirited Gaul broke as a wave, and fell away. On her narrow unmagnanimity the chivalrous mountain Samnite bore down, and like foam vanished. She had none of the spiritual possibilities of the Gaul; but the Crest-Wave was coming, and the future was with Italy. She had none of the high-souled chivalry of the Samnite; but she was the heart of Italy, and the point from which Italy must expand. She was hard, tough, and based on the soil; and that soil, as it happened, the *laya* center,— a sort of fire-fountain from within and the unseen. You stood on the Seven Hills, and let heaven and hell conspire together, you *could not* be defeated. Gauls, Samnites, Latins,— all that ever attacked her,— were but taking a house-cloth to dry up a running spring. The Crest-Wave was coming to Italy; whose vital forces, all centrifugal before, must now be made to turn and flow towards the center. That was Rome; and as they would not flow to her of their own good will, out she must go and gather them in. Long afterwards, when the Caesars and Augusti of the West left her for Milan and Ravenna, it was because the Crest-Wave was departing, the forces turning centrifugal, and Italy breaking to pieces; long afterwards again, in the eighteen-seventies, when the Crest-Wave was returning, Italy must flow in centripetally to Rome; no Turin, no Florence would do.

So, by 264 B. C., she had conquered Italy. Then, still land-hungry, she stepped over into Sicily, invited by certain rascals in Messina, and light-heartedly challenged the Mistress of the Western Seas. At this point the stream is leaving Balbus's fields and Ahenobarbus's cattle, and coming to the broad waters, where the ships of the world ride in.



“Do what you believe to be right, whatever people think of you. Regard equally their censure and their praise.”— PYTHAGORAS

AUTUMN LEAVES

R. MACHELL

CHAPTER V

WHEN luncheon was over and the two men were installed in the library smoking comfortably, the unpleasant subject of Mr. Charlton's marriage forced itself on their attention. To get rid of it, Appleby said:

"I suppose you know what that man Charlton came about?" The vicar nodded assent, and Appleby continued:

"I like the man, and really it seems a very natural thing for Mrs. Mathers to want to establish herself in such a way as to be able to give her daughter a fair chance of making a respectable marriage. She herself is not exactly a young woman now, and at his age it is not unreasonable to be looking for companionship in his declining years; he has been her trustee so long, that really the scheme is a most rational arrangement, which it seems a pity to disturb by raising questions of conscience, with which after all, I think, we are not seriously concerned."

He paused, but the vicar said nothing, so he went on: "They want me to be present at the ceremony and stand sponsor for the respectability of the contractants. You may laugh as I do at the idea of my guaranteeing anyone's respectability. But it seems they have few friends in the country who are in a position to make even as good a pretense to social standing as I. I have the advantage, you see, of being an unknown quantity. Well, anyway I agreed. Think of it — agreed to attend a wedding."

Suddenly he jumped up as if a new idea had struck him. "Why, I may have to give the bride away . . . I! . . . I had not thought of that."

His expression was one of horror, which the good parson supposed to be assumed humorously, and at which he smiled good-naturedly. But Appleby was far from joking. He had so conscientiously endeavored to forget the incidents of his early life that he had not realized how this marriage could in any direct way affect him in his present position of detachment from the past. He had told himself so often that all links were broken, and that he was free from responsibility in regard to the woman who had wronged him, that at last he had come to believe it in part if not altogether. Now he was face to face with a situation that tested the reality of this detachment, and he was forced to realize that the chain of destiny is not to be broken so, for its links are forged from

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thoughts and feelings, acts and words, each one a cause and an effect, and the whole chain is that which we call life.

He was shocked to find that his liberation was not complete, and that he was not wholly separated from the passionate youth who broke his heart for an adventuress, although he had grown up into a cynic, who could look coldly and indifferently now on all other women.

Seeing that his friend was not in fun, the little parson looked serious and said:

“There is a good deal in what you say. I must confess that I was very much embarrassed to justify my position to Mr. Charlton. I really do not know what he can have thought of me. I could not explain things to him, for of course he knows nothing of the divorce.”

“Well, why explain it to anyone? Why make a mountain of a mole-hill? I have promised to go to the wedding at Easterby, and I cannot break my word. You must see us through. It will be quite a quiet affair. You will not be compromised in any way. In fact, if you think of it, you may put yourself in a very uncomfortable position by declining to officiate. After all, if the woman wants to make a fresh start, why make it hard for her? Why not let her forget the past, if she can? And even if she must remember, there is no reason why other people should dig up old scandals and set the gossip-mongers talking; that is not work for a man with a heart in him. I think you ought to give her another chance. She has not injured you and no one else accuses her of anything so far as I have heard. What are we men to cast the first stone at her?”

Appleby spoke with more feeling than he had yet displayed, and the little clergyman was deeply moved. His heart was bigger than his mind, and his inherent love of humanity was stronger than his theological prejudices, or even than his reverence for conventional propriety. He was carried away by his feelings and yielded weakly at first, then with more confidence as he found his footing on new ground.

“God forbid,” he exclaimed earnestly, “that I should be the first to cast a stone at this poor woman. I really had not looked at it in that light before. I had no wish to judge or condemn a fellow-pilgrim who has been perhaps more sinned against than sinning. I am ashamed to think that you should see farther into the hearts of men and women than I, who am a minister of God. I sometimes think I could have been a better man if I had not been a clergyman. ‘Nearer the church, farther from God,’ is an old saying. Sometimes I fear that there is truth in it. You think then that I should allow them to be married at Easterby and should officiate myself?”

“I think so,” said Appleby with quiet conviction.

“Well, well, I suppose it must be so. After all nobody need know

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about the divorce, since she was married again afterwards and passes as a widow, whether that last marriage was sanctioned by the church or not. No one need know."

Charles Appleby smiled to himself at this unconscious tribute to the dread deity Respectability whose hierarch is called Public Opinion; but he indorsed the decision, saying:

"Exactly! She is a widow legally, and if she confided to you any details of her private history, it must have been somewhat in the nature of a confession that as a clergyman you would naturally hold sacred."

"Of course, of course!" agreed the little parson, delighted to have his friend's approval. "Well, well. I suppose then that I ought to call at Framley to explain my change of opinion. That will be embarrassing."

"Oh no. Mrs. Mathers is a woman of the world. She will not make you feel uncomfortable, quite the reverse. I think that you will be very well received."

"Do you think so? Well, well. I will try to find time to call there tomorrow, or in the course of the week, perhaps." And the little man beamed with satisfaction at his own benevolence as well as at the prospect of a friendly visit to a charming woman whose hospitality was so well supported by her cook.

Mr. Mason's reception at Framley Chase more than justified his friend's prediction; and, as Mr. Charlton had returned to London, the reverend gentleman in the largeness of his heart thought it would be considerate to repeat his visit in a few days in order to cheer his charming hostess in her solitude.

Appleby tried vainly to dismiss the matter from his mind. It worried and oppressed him with a strange sense of unreality that haunted him and made these fated associates of his dark days appear like specters from some other world, that had obtained a sort of artificial life by fastening upon him and feeding on his vitality. He could not shake them off: indeed he almost doubted if he wished to do so; they were so closely interwoven with his life, that it was like self-mutilation to cut them out of his heart. He began to understand that hate can bind as well as love, better perhaps, because unwillingly. He thought he was growing superstitious and decided to go away for a change after the wedding.

But the date chosen for the marriage had to be postponed on account of the delicate condition of Marie, who had developed an alarming weakness of the lungs, which caused her mother great anxiety. The girl was at a high-class boarding-school and was well cared for, but her mother insisted on bringing her home to be nursed at Framley. Mr. Charlton remained in London; and Mr. Mason resumed his regular calls at the Grange with a clear conscience, and with an added interest in the woman

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who showed herself a most devoted mother as well as a charming hostess. Marie too interested him. She liked the little parson and made fun of his weaknesses so good-naturedly that he enjoyed it, although he feared that he was compromising the dignity of 'the cloth' by tolerating such familiarities. She joked about her mother's "young man," as she christened Mr. Charlton, but bore him no ill-will for coming between her mother and herself. She took life as it came, prepared to enjoy it to the full. The doctor's warnings seemed ridiculous to her and she disregarded them, nor did she pay more heed to her mother's entreaties, but just went her own way laughing and making the old house seem wonderfully home-like to the woman who had known so little of that kind of happiness in her stormy life.

The vicar of Easterby became a frequent visitor and Mrs. Mathers seemed anxious that he should understand her past life (to some extent). She told him how she had met Mr. Charlton and had mistaken him at first sight for his dead brother John whom she had known under another name in California. It was where her husband died, in Brussels, where they lived.

She had occasion to visit her late husband's London lawyers, one of whom, a retired partner, had been appointed executor to her husband's will. When she entered the lawyer's office she was staggered to see her father's old friend Withington sitting there smiling serenely and bowing as he was introduced to her as Mr. James Charlton, her late husband's executor. Explanations followed, and then she learned that her father's friend was a twin-brother who had died in New Orleans, when he, James Charlton, was on a visit to him there. So he was able to satisfy his client that he was no ghost but a duly qualified executor. She hinted that the brothers, though so much alike in some ways, were men of very different characters, and that this Mr. James Charlton was a man of absolute honor and reliability, as well as a splendid man of business, who had done her the greatest services in the management of her affairs. She spoke a good deal of what she had suffered from her late husband's dissolute habits, and made no further reference to the divorce. She realized that it had been a mistake to mention it at all, though at the time it had appeared to her as a wise precaution forestalling any possible indiscretion on the part of Appleby. She had not realized that in England a divorce is a disgrace, nor had she dreamed that anyone would look upon it as an impediment to remarriage. It was not so in California, where divorce was general and frequent, and, amongst her acquaintances at least, was thought of merely as a legal and appropriate preliminary to a new matrimonial experiment. It was now too late to remedy the mistake, but she hoped that by making a

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confidant of the clergyman she would effectually close his lips so far as the world at large was concerned: as to his friend Charles Appleby, he was at liberty to tell him what he pleased. She had to fortify her rather dubious position, and she made use of Mr. Mason to the best of her ability. She had developed a perfect passion for respectability for Marie's sake. The girl was everything to her. That was the reason for this marriage. Her late husband's name and reputation did not constitute a passport to respectable society, though it was better than her own had been. But now all that was soon to be buried beneath a matrimonial tombstone of unquestionable respectability.

Such was the plan, but Fate takes little heed of human plans. She had settled everything without consulting those invisible authorities, the Fates. And they, bound by the law of their own being, which is the law of life, ordained things otherwise.

The news of it came when the lawyer who had succeeded James Charlton as head of the firm arrived at Framley and announced the sudden and altogether unexpected death of their late partner, who was so shortly to have become the husband of Mrs. Mathers. The cause of death was failure of the heart, precipitated doubtless by anxiety on account of his financial difficulties. The lawyer tried to soften the news as much as possible, but he was forced to explain that the estate of Mrs. Mathers was practically bankrupt, and Mr. Charlton's own income, which was merely a life-annuity, ceased with his death. He excused himself from making a more complete statement at the moment, as he was bound to communicate immediately with Mr. Charles Appleby, for whom he was charged by the deceased with a letter that he had promised to deliver personally.

The news of Mr. Charlton's death was naturally a surprise to Appleby, as there had been no visible warning of such an event, but the mode of its announcement puzzled him entirely. The lawyer who brought the letter said that he had promised Mr. Charlton to deliver it along with sundry deeds and documents personally to Mr. Charles Appleby, or failing that, to destroy it unopened. Having discharged this duty he now proposed to return to London by the next train; but was persuaded by his host to stay the night, in order to discuss matters after a perusal of the rather lengthy letter and examination of the numerous inclosures that accompanied it.

A glance at the contents of the bulky envelope showed Charles Appleby that he was expected to take charge of the residue of the late Mr. Mathers' estate and to administer it on behalf of the widow. But it was the letter itself that excited his curiosity, for it was signed "Withington."

Written in anticipation of his death, it was a confession as frank and

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free as one would naturally expect from such a man as the late James Charlton, but it bore the signature of an unprincipled rascal, or of one who had played that part as if it were natural to him.

It was not an apology; there was no disguise about it; it contained no plea for a lenient judgment. It was a plain statement of facts, an honest record of a dishonest life: and in that it differed from much so-called history. It was a remarkable document, that could only have been written by a remarkable man, or by a lunatic. The name of Beatrice recurred continually, in fact the whole story related to her.

Her father had been the writer's dearest friend, and the girl had been the pride of both of them. They had persuaded themselves that it was for her they schemed and plotted, and gambled, and swindled, not for the fun of 'the game.'

It was Withington who had persuaded the girl to marry the ingenuous youth, who was so passionately in love with her as to overlook her antecedents and surroundings, and to endow her with imaginary virtues, that, if there, were certainly dormant at that time.

It was Withington who had persuaded his brother James Charlton the lawyer to take the voyage to New Orleans for his health, hoping to engage him in a mining scheme, that was to make all their fortunes. But when his brother died in the hotel, at which Withington had engaged a suite of rooms for both of them, he saw his chance to step into his brother's shoes; and did so, taking his place so easily that no one thought of questioning his identity. He did it whole-heartedly, as one might say; for he admired his brother James, and had always felt that he could have been like him if he had started right. So he decided to become actually James Charlton in fact as well as in appearance.

This change of personality was more than a reformation of his own character, it was a transformation, or perhaps rather a reversion to original type. He was in many ways so like his brother, that it seemed to him he had nothing to do but to forget all that had happened since he first left home and fancy himself James instead of John. In doing this he almost succeeded in deceiving himself as well as others.

The man Withington was dead and buried, and James Charlton returned to London with his health restored so thoroughly that he refused to let his former doctor examine or even visit him. He retired from business, sold his partnership to the firm for a life-annuity, upon which he lived a secluded life in comfort and tranquillity, absorbed in literature, which had always been his hobby, and persuaded himself that he was indeed the man he seemed to be.

But fate found him out. He could not quite forget the past; and when he found himself appointed executor to the will of a former friend

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of the real James Charlton, and learned that the widow was his old friend's daughter and his own protégée of former days, he accepted the call of destiny, and took up the task of straightening out the tangle of affairs left by the late Mr. Mathers. This executorship appeared to him as a trust imposed on him not by the dead husband, of whom he knew nothing, but by his old friend the father of the girl they both had loved, and spoiled, and launched upon the world without moral ballast, and with no chart of the rocks and channels other than what she herself had drawn from her own experiences.

Having been educated in the law, he understood his work; but when he began to deal with investments, and loans and mortgages, the gambling mania again got hold of him, and, as of old, it was his love of his old friend's daughter that was his excuse for speculating wildly and disastrously with funds intrusted to him for investment. His speculations were ruinous; but though the capital rapidly diminished the income paid into her account remained the same. For it was a principle with him that Beatrice must not suffer. His own annuity was ample for the purpose, and he reduced his own expenditure to the minimum to pay her regular allowance, which she took to be an income derived from safely invested capital.

It was he who had persuaded her to go to Framley, hoping that Appleby would again fall under the charm he had yielded to before. For he thought that if Beatrice were thus provided for and a good home secured for Marie, he could die easy, trusting that Beatrice would forgive his manifold transgressions as an executor and trustee in recognition of his good intentions and his life-long devotion to her worst interests.

But that scheme failed: and then he thought that if he married her himself they could perhaps together manage to secure a rich husband for Marie, who was an attractive girl. It was his plan to induce Charles Appleby to indorse the marriage by his presence, in order to silence him more effectually and to make him in some sort their ally; for, as the writer of the letter rather naïvely expressed it, he felt that they were entitled from old association to regard him as 'one of the family,' who could be counted on to do 'the right thing' when called upon.

But Fate holds cards that no man's ingenuity can beat: and this fact was ultimately forced upon his recognition by the doctor, who warned him that he had but a very short time to live.

Then he decided to play his last card. It was this letter, in which he appealed to Appleby to take up the task he had himself so badly bungled, to undertake the administration of what remained of Mrs. Mathers' estate, a rough account of which accompanied the letter.

Last of all came a defense of the woman he had loved as if she were

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his own child. It was not an apology for her, nor an appeal for mercy: but rather a demand for justice. He told the story of her life and represented her as always superior to her education, even at her worst, as rising above the conditions that surrounded her. He claimed from Appleby, whom she had wronged, reparation of wrongs done to her unwittingly by the two men who loved her best, her father and himself. What more, he asked, could be expected from a woman reared in such circumstances by two such men? "Her heart is generous and strong," he pleaded, "give her another chance, and let her see her daughter safe from the dangers of the road that she has been forced to travel."

Such was the gist of this unusual appeal from a man who, if judged by ordinary standards, would have been hardly entitled to a hearing, but who knew the man he wrote to, and whose confidence was justified by the event: for Appleby took up the task without a moment's hesitation. It never occurred to him that he could do otherwise. But the lawyer, who knew something of the circumstances, marveled; for he had no eyes to see the web of destiny in which his clients were immeshed.

SONNET

H. T. PATTERSON

"Quoth the Teacher:

*"The Paths are two; the great Perfections three; six are the Virtues
that transform the body into the Tree of Knowledge."*

THERE is a maze, a garden, in which grows —
Say antique tales of medieval lore —
The paradigm of flowers, a perfect rose.
Knights chivalresque and pure, in days of yore,
Sought for that garden, wandered in the maze,
To win therein that paradigm and gain
The wondrous prize, the theme of those old lays.
Some knights, ignoring danger, did not deign
To seek anterior knowledge, so were lost
Upon a path which led them to the goal
Of selfishness supreme. A few, though, crossed
Abyss, morass, quicksand, and treach'rous shoal,
For they had changed the body to a tree
From which the Soul the two-fold path could see.

*International Theosophical Headquarters,
Point Loma, California*