

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

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"A happy life, therefore, is one which is in accordance with its own nature, and cannot be brought about unless in the first place the mind be sound and remain so without interruption, and next, be bold and vigorous, enduring all things with most admirable courage, suited to the times in which it lives, careful of the body and its appurtenances, yet not troublesomely careful. It must also set due value upon all the things which adorn our lives, without over-estimating any one of them, and must be able to enjoy the bounty of Fortune without becoming her slave. You understand without my mentioning it that an unbroken calm and freedom ensue, when we have driven away all those things which either excite us or alarm us: for in the place of sensual pleasures and those slight perishable matters which are connected with the basest crimes, we thus gain an immense, unchangeable, equable joy, together with peace, calmness, and greatness of mind, and kindness: for all savageness is a sign of weakness."

— SENECA: *Of a Happy Life*, 3. Translated by Aubrey Stewart

THOUGHT-CONTROL

H. T. EDGE, M. A.



OUR circumstances are the result of our thoughts. This is a broad *general proposition*; and the unwary proponent of such a statement is apt to be met by the unexpected and unwelcome *particular case*. His critical auditor will mention some particular set of circumstances, and will want to know how the rule applies in that case; how can those circumstances be said to have been caused by the person's thoughts? Nevertheless we have enough confidence in the proposition to make it general; adding that it is only the imperfection of our knowledge which hinders us from always seeing how the law works.

For a full understanding, one must take into account Reincarnation. The seeds which we sow in one lifetime cannot all sprout and fructify in that lifetime, and must therefore be held over to another; so that any of our present experiences which are not traceable to thought-causes set in motion in this life, can be referred to causes generated in a past life. Such is the law of Karma. We may not be able to know in full — we are not likely to be able to know in full — how the seeds of destiny are carried from life to life over the gulf of death; but by a study of Theosophy we

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can gain considerable light on the question. For the rest, there must always be some mysteries that transcend our ordinary reason; while nevertheless man may possess dormant faculties which, if awakened, would enable him to solve even those mysteries.

But let us deal with our proposition within smaller limits and in more familiar applications. It is matter of common experience, which everyone can test, that our thoughts do influence our circumstances; but few realize the extent to which this is true. A thought is a creative act, whereby is generated an influence that may be feeble and evanescent or potent and lasting, according to the energy imparted to it. We see here the beginning of a demonstration of the proposition. The fact that thoughts influence events has been the basis of some cults, or new-fangled religions as some call them; but the man who should try to make his destiny by his own crude experiments and to suit his own notions of what might be good for him, would be likely to make a sorry mess of it, one would think.

The ordinary average individual, experimenting in thought-power, would be pretty certain to try and bring about his own private and particular desires, irrespective of whether their fulfilment was good either for him or for his neighbors; and it would be lucky for him that some wiser and superior power had control. The achieving of a state of self-satisfaction, however desirable to some tastes, is not necessarily the path marked out for us by divine wisdom; and for most people, let us hope, it is not the goal they would choose for themselves. Something more strenuous and heroic might be preferred by some.

This line of thought suggests that one reason why this "scheme of things" is so 'sorry,' may be that we have been trying to mold it too closely "to the heart's desire." What we are reaping now is perchance the gruesome result of a miscellaneous and ill-assorted multitude of desires, hopes, fears, and schemes, fomented at various times in the past, and falling out at the wrong times and in conflict with each other. Perhaps Providence is meekly striving to give us what we have asked for, but cannot be at the pains to sort it out! If circumstances follow desires, we may expect the latter to be as chaotic as the former.

In our attempt to unriddle the riddle of life, we may need to do a little mathematics, as it were. On the one hand we have a mass of events and experiences, seemingly chaotic and unreasonable; on the other hand we are constantly sending out into the ether whole streams of thought-force and emotional force, whose results we fail to trace. Why not explain these two things by means of each other? Is not the tumult of our experiences related to the turmoil of our thoughts and desires? It has been said that man weaves his destiny around him as a spider weaves its

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web (H. P. Blavatsky); and, taking into account Reincarnation and Karma, we can see how each human soul enters life attended by a tangle of unsatisfied causes which he has set in motion at various times in the past, and which constitute his destiny. To this tangled skein he continually and heedlessly adds. Yet he possesses the power to extricate himself. How risky then are injudicious and inexperienced attempts to regulate our fate by thought-control! It is like an ignorant person playing with a dangerous and complicated machine. We are full of folly and unregulated desires; and it must surely be essential to eliminate these first.

Our lives are obviously regulated by a power, or powers, superior to our own wishes and plans; and to this cause we assign the names of providence or fate or chance, according to what our profession of faith may be. Looking back over our life, we may recognise that we were guided more wisely than we would have guided ourselves, had the choice been of our own making. A Divine wisdom dwells within us, as was taught by the early disciples of Jesus, who interpreted his teachings much more accurately and intelligently than many who followed them later.

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”
—*1 Cor.*, iii, 16

This it is which wills and plans our destiny, setting aside our foolish fancies and frail purposes. The light of this Spirit, blending with the higher part of our mind, constitutes our *real* Self, by which we may overcome the fictitious self of matter which is such a frail staff to lean on.

In view of this, what becomes of the doctrine of making one's fate by means of one's thoughts? It is seen to be a question of stilling and ruling the thoughts, rather than of intensifying them. But this means first the ruling of our desires, for it is they that run away with our thoughts.

The advertisement-pages of magazines, in America, England, and elsewhere, teem with methods and systems of thought-control and self-improvement; which is a sufficient warrant of the eagerness of the public for useful knowledge of this sort. But we fear the case is the same as that of the quack medicines and cure-alls and patent foods, when contrasted with genuine medical science. In short it is a hap-hazard hit-or-miss business, in which the patient diagnoses his own case and accepts a prescription from one who has not seen him. There is a genuine science of self-study and self-mastery, and it is comprised in the Theosophical teachings. It starts at the word *duty*, and means the subordination of the lower self to the higher Self. By following this path we escape the danger of merely handing ourselves over to a power that seeks to control *us*, and of simply working for the devil; and our efforts are built on a safe foundation --- on one which cannot be overthrown.

THE PATH OF ACTION

E. A. NERESHEIMER

"Now listen to this knowledge regarding the philosophy of action. O son of Prithâ: being united to this knowledge thou shalt be freed from the bonds of Karma."— *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, ch.ii,39

EVERY man is a philosopher, drawing conclusions from his experiences and weaving them into strands by continuous meditation, that pass imperceptibly into the selective chambers of knowledge. By and by a further transmutation takes place and lo! we behold the keynote of a whole incarnation in the form of character. All this is due to the ceaseless operations of Nature, so ordered that every atom of matter, mind, and intelligence must ultimately adjust itself to perfect equilibrium.

Action there must be so long as there is a manifested Universe, and it is given to man to choose what he desires to do by the exercise of his will; and to employ such methods as to his mind are the best for the accomplishment of his ends.

The ancient scriptures have laid down some fundamental rules for the guidance of aspirants, so that they may proceed along the ways of least resistance towards the goal which they seek to attain. The prime object is to help them to conserve their energy and to learn to guard against those impulses of man's own nature which, if yielded to, would retard his progress. Of the **FOUR PATHS** which are said to lead to 'emancipation,' the path of action is perhaps the most easily understood, and the least difficult to follow. Its burthen is laid upon the mind, through whose higher faculties the wisdom of this 'path' may be first apprehended and then practically applied in everyday life.

The mind is the most important instrument at the command of man. Its nature being restless, it is difficult to control. Thoughts continually stream in and out of the mind unsolicited; some attracted by the senses, evoked by external objects that impinge upon it; others result from a habitual desire for sensation; and again others from the strong thought-currents of human beings which create the psychological atmosphere in which we live. Our acts will always be the counterparts of whatsoever kind and quality of thoughts we willingly yield to and actually entertain. The senses which have, as it were, a life of their own, are the feeders of thought, and they often become clamorous for things which are directly adverse to the interests of the personal self. The mind is frequently too weak to resist their appeal and so in time is apt to become powerless against them.

While it is perfectly true that both the senses and external objects

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serve a great purpose in the development of man's self-consciousness, and that all these exist more or less for our delectation, yet they should not only give enjoyment, but also be recognised as giving opportunities for a further acquirement of knowledge and understanding. Beginning with a broad cognition of what the senses really are, *i. e.*, serviceable instruments of the self, and not, by any means, powers whose dominance should be tolerated, we shall certainly gain lasting benefit from exertion put forth in using them *as they should be used*.

The path of action in man actually resolves itself into work done by the mind through concentration, resulting in knowledge. Has not all the success thus far achieved, *all that man actually is*, resulted from knowledge gained by the assimilation of the essence of former experiences, now stored away in the chambers of the mind? Many are the factors which have determined present circumstances, and the different relations which connect us with the outer world. And do we not constantly add others to these as we go forward day by day?

It is not possible for the centralized self to discontinue action even for one second of time. If it did, disintegration would take place immediately. We work and reap the fruits of our labor; and every thought and deed is followed by just effects. In this the Law is inflexible. Even should we desire to remain inactive for a while, the restlessness of the mind would prevent us from doing so. The exercise of the will to refrain from action is in itself an act which must entail consequences, such as accrue from the omission of duty. Any duty neglected, or shirked, will present itself to us at some future date, again and again, until it has been accomplished; for it is *our* duty, and must be effected by us. Nothing can make it possible for us to circumvent the laws of nature. We may chafe and rage against them, we may drowse or tarry by the wayside, trying to persuade ourselves that it does not matter, but since the consequences of omissions of duty repeatedly come back to us, we shall finally be compelled to acknowledge the fact that evasion is futile.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF WORK

Action alone, although the most universal requisite of man's evolution and the principal source of his happiness, does not lead him to freedom from the bonds of matter and illusion. Action in itself only begets further action, *i. e.*, effects, which again become causes; and so on forever. But there is a way, we are taught, by which we may overcome the creation of causes accruing from the performance of action.

The Ancient Wisdom has much to say about this truth, and designates the path by which the effects of work can be neutralized, as far as those particular consequences are concerned that revert to man.

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It is always man's privilege to choose between two alternatives, namely to work for self, or for not-self. In work done with anxiety as to the results that may ensue for self, the consequences or effects, good or ill, fall back on him who performs the work; but work engaged in without attachment to the outcome of its performance, brings about results that revert to,—or rather, flow into—the general reservoir of the Forces of the Universe.

How then shall we do works without attachment? By the renunciation of self-interest. Nature being the equalizer that produces the balance of all the forces of the Universe, only Divine Man, with purposeful spiritual aims, can transcend her operations.

A singular but suggestive fact may be ascertained by the observation of a tendency, common to all men, *i. e.*, that of their becoming so absorbed in their work at times that they completely forget themselves, and entirely lose their sense of self for the time being. Under these circumstances the quality of the work done is uniformly better than when personal interest is held in mind; for no one can do his best, or concentrate completely on what he is doing, when considerations of self-interest intervene. Have not all great men, and especially the Teachers of World-Religions, done their lofty works in utter self-forgetfulness? Are we ever unhappy when completely absorbed in our work?

Surely no one will claim that there is anything in this world equal to the joy that lies in satisfying the natural urge within us to work for the sake of the work itself; and even greater benefits than these accrue from work accomplished without personal attachment to ensuing results. It preserves physical and mental energy, strengthens the moral character, reveals to us the joy of living and of serving our fellow-men, and who can say that it does not also enrich the world around us?

If it were not for such unselfish action life would be intolerable indeed, and, as a matter of fact, conscience, the ever-present monitor, unfailingly urges to such action. Nothing can be done without a motive, without being impelled by feeling, or without application; but these accessories should be directed towards the perfect accomplishment of the act itself, and not directed towards benefit to be gained by the doer. He who wastes energy by infusing into his work all kinds of personal thoughts, such as "*I am doing this*" or "*I love or hate this work,*" "*I shall be praised or blamed for doing this,*" etc., but invites the karmic effect upon himself; it would be better rather to free the mind from such puny attachments, which never improve the quality of the work but only detract from its true value.

An innate urge for Freedom pervades the heart of man, but by reason of the tendencies and attachments he has created for himself in the past,

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Nature seemingly opposes his independence of her. Do what he may, whether on the physical, mental, or creative planes; whether in the sense-world, through the intellect, or by moral culture, our path is beset with difficulties and opposition. The more rapidly we push forward spiritually, the more are we hampered on all sides, and we find ourselves obliged to put forth ever greater energy, to counteract these difficulties. Yet it is possible for us, in spite of all, to proceed uninterruptedly upon our quest; yea, even to the very goal.

In order to form a correct conception of the causes for this condition, and its rationale, we have to view Nature and Man from two different aspects. On account of his innate divine potentialities, man is placed in the category of Divine Beings, and Nature — as the harmonious assemblage of the Three Qualities of Matter,— is the womb through which he has to pass, for the purpose of his further evolution. Be it remembered that the individualized man's destiny as a divine Spark is the attainment of Perfection, whereas Nature's domain is, after all, but the matrix for this consummation,— a means to an end, so to say,— and not, in itself, an individualized consciousness. Hence it has been called 'Illusion.'

During the entire course of man's previous evolution, Nature was, in a sense, both his mother and nurse. This lasted up to the time when he was forced to take his own future progress upon himself by means of self-effort. While building up his form, and developing his faculties through his association with Nature, his whole being became so closely bound up with some of her humbler conscious and semi-conscious forces, that he now finds it most difficult to disentangle himself from their influence.

These forces are especially connected with the lower constituents of man's being, such as the physical senses, organs, and minor faculties of perception; hence they exercise no inconsiderable power over him. Thus it is not at all difficult to locate the seat of the opposition man encounters upon his path when he attempts to abandon some of the old beaten tracks, and attempts to follow an inner, purely ethical, urge.

As said before, the more he pushes ahead along this path of spiritual unfoldment, the greater the opposition that he encounters from both his own weaknesses and the evil influences that consequently tend to influence him from without. Freedom, therefore, for which every man craves, is not to be gained from extraneous sources. He must learn to go into the inner depths of his own being for strength, and help, which are not to be found in the outer realms of Nature. But after having gone a certain distance, behold! a change appears, that perchance he has not looked to find! No sooner has he placed complete confidence in that which is to be found on the other side of the ridge that divides the material from

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the ethical side of Nature, than the kind 'Mother' turns a friendly face to him, and all opposition from her comes to an end.

SOME PRACTICAL HINTS CONCERNING ACTION

It is better to work with gladness than grudgingly and with reluctance. No haste is necessary.

Success of every kind lies in the evenness, the serenity, of mind with which we approach our work. If we allow ourselves to feel that some particular work or duty is distasteful and irksome to us, or try to evade it, we shall not thereby add to our peace of mind or to the excellency of the work we have in hand. Duties come to us from previous causes that we have ourselves set in motion; they therefore belong to us, and must be performed by us. The best way to bring about a desired change of occupation is for us to do the duty that is ours as well as we possibly can. If done without personal attachment, it will, in the first place, free us from the causes that have brought it to us, and our non-attachment brings of itself into action other aspects of our Karma that then open out to us new fields of work, and different conditions of life.

The more personal feeling we bring to bear upon our work, the less chance there is of its being well done. Some moral compensation always accompanies even the meanest duty well performed, inasmuch as the act in itself provides, for the time being, the means for checking the aggressiveness of the senses, desires, and emotions, leaving the soul free to act in the higher centers of its consciousness.

The state of consciousness that ensues when complete absorption in the work at hand prevails, is what has above been referred to as 'Evenness of Mind,' in which all personal motives and interests are entirely in abeyance. Work performed during such a period is termed 'Right Action,' or action free from personal Karma. To work in this way is to be happy. Devotion to work without personal aims in view, means that it is performed in conformity with the laws of Nature. As said before, the effects which ensue from such work do not fall back upon the doer, but are received in the bosom of Nature, *i. e.*, in accordance with the principle of Action and Reaction. Nature knows not Evil nor Good. In her sight these are only opposites. Whatever evil there is in the world has been created by conscious beings; to whatever degree these may have participated in the privilege of self-consciousness.

To work without attachment, abandoning all personal, selfish interest in the results, does not mean that we may work thoughtlessly, and without plan or interest in the work itself. All work has an object of some kind in view. Our attitude towards this object should always be intelligently conceived, considered and planned to the very best of our ability, in

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accordance with our highest ideal of what may be achieved. There should be no mental reservation concerning our share in the results. These take care of themselves. As to the good or evil accruing to him who performs the act, it is but necessary to remember that no cause is without adequate effect, and that a duty well performed without anxiety as to results of a selfish nature, has a twofold effect. Firstly no new personal Karma accrues from such action, and secondly the moral character is strengthened, the power for further resistance of temptation increases, and also our conviction that we indeed have a place and share as intelligent craftsmen in the grand scheme of the universal progression.

A MEDITATION*

KENNETH MORRIS

Translated from the Welsh of Islwyn (1832 — 1878)

THE Soul strays not from her appointed path
When that she, soaring, leaves what lies between
The cradle and the grave, and whispering words
Not to be told in language, drives her course
Beyond the bounds of things, and draweth near,
Star-guised, to the Eternal.

Hath she not
Her history within herself? She hears
A murmur of the ebb of ancient things
On far, forgotten beaches, where the wrecks
Of ancient recollection are upthrown,
And broken jetsam of old worlds that were.

Are those external stars that shine in heaven
So mighty and divine as bards would sing?
Is not the wizardry supreme *within*,
In half-lost memories of diviner scenes
And things irradiant with a Deity
Inspiring them to spiritual mightiness
And super-excellence? *In us* the stars
Shine; and all bardism is but memory
Of greater things that have been, or prevision
Of greater things that shall be.

**Tybiaeth*; from Gwaith Barddonol Islwyn; Owen M. Edwards' edition, page 805.

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Who is there
Who hath not felt sometimes that there are worlds
Passed and forgotten, speeding in far flight
Beyond the turnings of his pre-existence,
Yet to be sighted sometimes afar off
From headlands in the memory of the Soul?

And these imaginings of Poetry,
Who proves they are not relics of a life
Higher, a thousand times more excellent,
Hid in deep waters of the sea of the Soul
Until the winds of Bardism wandering by,
All-searching, drive them landward? Hail the hour
When God thus manifests himself, the Sun
High over time and circumstance,— wherethrough
The eternal pathway of the Spirit runs
From God, through separated being, back
At last unto its Goal in God again.

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SHIFTING STANDARDS OF MORALITY

RALF LANESDALE

IT is a common thing to hear morality and ethics discussed as if we were all agreed as to some recognised basis for our system of ethics or code of morality. But a little close attention to the arguments advanced will easily convince us not only of the elastic nature of our moral code but also of the fluctuating character of the standards upon which that code is built. From age to age great efforts have been made to formulate some moral code that shall epitomize the laws by which society is ruled; but all in vain: no legal code can be more than a temporary expedient which has to be immediately expanded and explained to cover unforeseen emergencies.

The effort to establish such a moral code as shall be universally acceptable is constantly defeated by some fluctuation in the public mind caused by the constant growth and evolution of the human race. If this evolution moved in a straight line it might be possible to cope with it more satisfactorily: but the movement is cyclical and spiral and continually baffles all attempts to bind it in a set of rules which become

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out of date as soon as made. Furthermore it is evident that society is composed of many classes and kinds of people whose path of evolution and whose rate of progress varies from the rest in marked degree: and in each class there is some particular principle that sounds the keynote of that particular code of ethics or system of morality.

Hamlet, for instance, struck such a keynote when he indignantly admonished his mother to "assume a virtue though she had it not." This formula might stand for the keynote of that social state or system which we call Respectability, the basic principle of which is worship of appearances, a principle which still is revered in certain circles of society, but which is violently and scornfully rejected by the 'emancipated' who have no respect for what is called 'public opinion,' and to whom decency appears but as hypocrisy. And it requires but a slight effort of imagination thus to transmute a vice into a virtue and to transform all codes of ethics by a simple change of standards such as is actually taking place in modern civilized communities.

To assume a virtue though one has it not is a virtuous act if judged by standards of respectability: whereas a devotee of truthfulness would call it mere hypocrisy. In this case I mean by the term 'devotee of truthfulness' a person who finds pleasure in unveiling to the public gaze all the unseemliness, whether in himself or others, that decency would hide. To such a person all idealism is dishonesty; while to an idealist such truthfulness is nothing but a vulgar disregard for other people's feelings and the indulgence of a brutal selfishness.

Where then shall we find true standards of morality? Can we discover an infallible test of truth? Or must we each decide such matters by the light of our individual perception of the fitness of things? Is not the SELF the ultimate authority? But it must be *the real Self*, not the brain-mind with its theories and speculations, its prejudices and conventions, and its false independence. The real Self is not independent but is universal: that is to say each individual self is as it were a radiation from the universal Self reflected in the mind of man. So that each seeker after truth has in his inmost self a standard wherewith to test the truth or falsity of any moral *formula* merely, but for the one who substitutes respectability for spiritual religion, and worships public opinion as a god, there can be no certainty as to the real value of the prevailing moral formula; for such things change continually.

There is a fashion in morality as mutable and as tyrannical as that in dress and social customs, which vary geographically and change from age to age. And against the tyranny of these recurrent fashions in morality there is a periodical revolt, a forward movement due to the evolutionary urge of life itself guided by the spiritual teachers of humanity, those

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great souls who “incarnate from age to age, for the preservation of the just, the destruction of wickedness, and the establishment of righteousness.”

This evolutionary urge is in all things and in all men as well as in all organized communities: but all creatures and all men are not evolving along the same line nor at the same rate. Hence of necessity, at any given time, the various inhabitants of any given land will be at different stages of their evolutionary progress; and from this differing degree of evolution arise the varying codes of ethics and different standards of morality. These differences will naturally be more marked in the case of those who are awaking to a sense of individual responsibility for the direction of their own evolution.

But man is at present only in part an individual, being a composite entity: part spirit, part animal, and part human. Theosophy regards him as a sevenfold being not yet fully individualized, in course of evolution. The Secret Doctrine teaches that three streams of evolution meet in man, and these three lines are not as yet in man fully co-ordinated, so far as our humanity is concerned, perfected man being still a stranger on our globe. This complex evolution easily accounts for all the incongruities and inconsistencies in our civilization that furnish such a happy hunting-ground for satirists and cynics. The mind, the individualizing principle, is like an officer endeavoring to organize a crew that does not fully recognise his right to rule. He may uphold the loftiest ideals and yet be answerable for any of the villainies his men may perpetrate. He may be placed in many a false position, and yet be a true man. Or he may feel his own incompetence and hide it beneath a show of loud audacity, and by that imposition he may command the necessary obedience from his mutinous crew, and so bring his ship safely to harbor.


Man is the middle principle in Nature; in him are all the possibilities of heaven and hell. His playground is the earth and he can make of it a heaven or a hell. His complex nature makes of him the paradox of paradoxes, doing the deeds of hell with heavenly aspirations in his heart. Being the thing he is, shall we denounce him for a hypocrite if he “assume a virtue when he has it not”? May it not be that his assumption is an aspiration that will exercise an elevating influence upon his lower nature and justify his seeming double-dealing?

And yet duplicity *cannot ever be justified by lofty aspirations*: sincerity in life is more than a virtue; it is a necessity; without it man is but driftwood in a flood swept onward by his passions. The effort of the aspirant must be to keep his ideals pure and make them practical. To such a one no aspiration is too high, no fall from grace is irredeemable.

FAITH IN MAN

H. TRAVERS, M. A.

“THE tragedy of our century is loss of faith, not in God, but in man. Humanity is in desperate need of a new synthesis which will give meaning to life. Until that boon is vouchsafed, our sparkling toys, increase though they may in number and in splendor, will not bring content. But the lack is hard to fill, for we require now not a Thomas Alva Edison, not a Henry Ford, but Buddha, Confucius, Plato, some godlike philosopher able to take these scattered glowing stones and rear them into a vast and luminous tower, rising to heaven, toward which all men’s eyes shall be turned.”— ROBERT L. DUFFUS, in the *Century Magazine*

N the article from which the above is taken, the writer casts a balance-sheet of present-day civilization in America; and finds that, while the account shows a great credit in inventions for external use, there is a sad deficit in intangibles. He quotes several other well-known writers to a similar effect, and our quotation sums up his conclusions.

It is both unwise and unnecessary to attempt prophecies as to that godlike philosopher. The “Lo here and Lo there!” is not enough: people will have no use for claims; but they will be ready enough to recognise actualities whenever those may supervene. Meanwhile a little self-help will not come amiss. The gods may not be willing to do more than meet us halfway. To him that asks shall be given. Perhaps we must ask a little more urgently yet. Perhaps a yet greater stress is needed ere our energies and our faculties can be sharpened to the point needful for a solution. Again, how are we accustomed to treat our helpers? Or do such usually come in a guise that is welcome to the people of their day? Might not the new Buddha prove to be merely the son of citizen Joseph? Would he not perhaps consort with commonplace people? Is there a godlike philosopher who is godlike enough to be a candidate for crucifixion?

It may confidently be claimed that Theosophy affords that very “synthesis which gives meaning to life,” mentioned in our initial quotation. The Teacher, by whose heroic efforts this synthesis was brought to our knowledge, was not recognised, except by the very few, in her day as a Teacher. Though it was not in accordance with contemporary manners to crucify her bodily on a cross, her reputation was crucified, but has risen again. The ‘new synthesis’ was not appreciated in some influential quarters: it was rather disturbing to comfortably fixed ideas and habits. The teachings were variously described as new-fangled and a rehash of old ideas; as having been invented by H. P. Blavatsky, and as having been stolen by her from others. Yet these teachings are fully capable of standing on their own merits, if candidly examined, and of

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thereby vindicating the character of her who brought them. For they deal with the very things which people are so earnestly searching for — namely, the essential facts of life, the spiritual truths that lie at the root of things, and in comparison with which so much of our vaunted learning is mere husk.

Whereas science has so exclusively studied the mechanism of the material universe that some scientific men declare they can see nothing else, and have adopted an attitude of despair or agnosticism; Theosophy shows the universe as the theater of intelligent powers, as the multiform manifestation of a great Soul and of hosts of souls. In place of a blind mechanical law of evolution, we see everywhere the gradual accomplishment of purpose, achieved through the action of mind and will moving to definite and preconceived ends. Man himself is seen to be a copy in miniature of the universe — the microcosm in the macrocosm — and his every part and principle is closely related to the corresponding principles in Nature as a whole.

All the lore preserved in the world's symbolism and religion, throughout the ages, is gathered together in a grand synthesis, and shown to be part of one great whole — the Wisdom-Religion or Secret Doctrine of antiquity. Spiritual Man is an immortal Soul, and the story of a single earth-life is but a single scene in the great drama of that Soul's life. It is only our ignorance which makes life seem such an enigma, such a sorry farce even at times. But knowledge is within our grasp — is the rightful heritage of every man.

“Loss of faith in man,” says our quotation, is the tragedy of the age. Yet we have conceit enough — of a kind. But self-conceit is not self-respect, vanity is not faith. There are the two selves in man. Worship of the personal self is indeed a sorry staff to lean on; but faith in the real Self is another matter. An illustrated magazine falls into our hands; not a cheap catchpenny sensational magazine, but a reputable one with an illustrious past behind it. The front pages are engrossed with imaginary reconstructions of man's imaginary ancestors, constructed around bones that have been dug up — whether of apes or of degenerated humans we will not undertake to say. It matters little, of course, whether these creatures represent or do not represent the biological ancestry of mankind; for man at present has a Soul, and reason, and self-consciousness, which must have got into him somehow and somewhen, and it is the all-important fact about him. Nevertheless these pictures and what is said about them do serve to convey the impression, intentionally or otherwise, that man is inherently bestial, and to hypnotize his mind with the idea of his animality, while ignoring or belittling his spirituality. So here we find a potent influence working in the diametrically opposite

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direction to that longed for by the writer whom we quote. It is tending to make man *lose* faith in himself. Of a similar character and tendency are those teachings which would have us believe that we are born in sin and can only be saved by special grace to be won by a declaration of faith or an attitude of pious resignation.

Theosophy, which is the modern presentment of the ancient Wisdom-Religion, is based on the truth that man is *essentially* a divine being — an immortal Soul temporarily encased in a physical form. The ethics of Theosophy demand that man shall act in accordance with a belief in this truth — that he shall have confidence in his own essential Divinity, in his power to win his own salvation by trust in the Divine powers with which he is endowed. This is rather different from having faith in the ape-like characteristics with which he may perhaps be contaminated. These ape-like creatures which are held before our gaze represent rather what man may degenerate into if he loses entire faith in himself.

There is no doubt that stress of circumstance will compel man to adopt new (or rather these old) ideals, teacher or no teacher. Perhaps too that stress will impel him to recognise any teacher that may come.

BORN IN SIN?

R. MACHELL

NE of the first things that I learned as to my appearance on this planet was that I was 'born in sin.' And this puzzled me considerably, for I knew somehow that in some way my parents were concerned in the event, and they were in my eyes reverend and indeed holy persons, who seemed to be on relatively familiar terms with God. Moreover, in answer to my question, Why was I born? I was invariably told it was the will of God. Who then, I asked myself, was answerable for the sin in which they told me I was born? I was not long in doubt on that point either, for I soon found that most of my desires ran counter to the 'will of God,' as specially revealed in private to my nurses, who communicated to me the decrees of the omnipotent, and made it clear to me that I was steeped in sin by reason of my own iniquity as well as by the sin of my 'first parents.'

I must confess the sin of my first parents weighed lightly on my conscience; they were so far away in time; and as to my living parents it was my duty to reverence them and love them, under threat of the most awful penalties devised by the anger of an implacable deity. Besides

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which my parents were not only profoundly respectable people but also kindly and affectionate; so that it was difficult for me to credit them with sin, and I did not see how the blame of my unconscious iniquities could fall upon me at my birth if that event were really an expression of 'the will of God.' The natural result in my mind was a sense of persecution coupled with a sullen resentment against the authors of my being, whoever they might be.

The sense of injury, of persecution, and consequent resentment are not a good equipment for life's pilgrimage, which demands more urgently than all else the quality of self-confidence. The doctrine of original sin must surely kill self-confidence if it be accepted at all, and in its place plant fear, the deadly enemy of heroic enterprise, the sure precursor of defeat.

It was not till I found Theosophy that any explanation of this truly monstrous doctrine of original sin seemed possible. It came with the Theosophic teaching of the complex nature of man, a complexity that may be resolved into a duality for practical study of the problems of life. The teaching is that man is essentially divine, a spiritual being that voluntarily incarnates in a human animal, which incarnation is symbolically described as a descent or fall into matter, or the world of sin. So the mystics sometimes say that the incarnating ego is a pure spirit till it descends to earth and is born as a human being by means of procreation, which to the pure spirit is sin. But as the incarnation of a spiritual being on the earth is for the spiritual evolution of matter, the birth of a soul is not a sin but a renunciation.

The teaching of Theosophy is that the journey of life is not so much a pilgrimage as an adventure full of joy, a great experience, a step in evolution, by means of which the soul acquires self-knowledge. So the motto of the Râja-Yoga School is, "Life is Joy!" But to the fanatical puritan, life is woe, and joy is sin; for by life he means the imprisonment of the soul in a 'vile body,' and the unwilling drudgery of forced labor: while by joy in life he understands the gratification of the lowest appetites.

To the Theosophist the earth is either a heaven or a hell according to the way in which man uses or abuses the opportunities that it affords for gaining the experience that is necessary for his evolution. In *The Secret Doctrine* it is said: "There is no other hell than on a man-bearing planet." This becomes intelligible when we learn that man appears upon a planet only at that point in evolution at which unite three currents: the spiritual, the psychic (or astral), and the physical (or animal). Man the thinker is more than an animal, being capable of self-knowledge, and more than a god, being capable of choice. The human mind in its attempts to know the infinite creates imaginary heavens and hells and

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seeks to realize these dreams on earth, that stage on which the drama of humanity unfolds itself at man's dictation.

There is no dream of heaven too high for man's imagining; nor is there any hell too vile for man to make it actual on earth. Such is the duality in which the mind of man disports itself. Man is the maker of his destiny; it is his will to live that brings him here. If he is born in sin, that sin is his: neither the gods nor yet the animals are capable of sin; for sin is an act of will, a voluntary perversion of natural law. Only a man can sin, and man's redemption must be wrought by man. To accomplish this redemption he must find his divinity, his true Self, and so become master of his lower self.

The ancient Teachers veiled their teachings in allegories, which in later times were read as history and accepted literally: and so we came to a perversion of the truth in such stories as the fall of our first parents, and the redemption of humanity by the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, in which we Theosophists find an allegory of the descent of spirit into matter, and of the incarnation of the spiritual ego in the man of flesh; the descent into hell; and in the story of the resurrection we may read the promise of humanity's redemption by the awakening of the Christ within.

Theosophy, divine wisdom, is like a spring of life-giving water flowing from some old fountain of eternal Truth; the exoteric fables are like muddy pools trodden by cattle, from which men turn contemptuously, though the pools were made by the same waters as the sparkling stream. So too in the legends and traditions of religions now degraded we may find traces of true Theosophic teachings originally drawn from a pure source and even now perhaps capable of rehabilitation.

It is therefore in no spirit of wanton iconoclasm that the Theosophist rejects the mere dead-letter of religious doctrine, which appears to him so soul-destroying in its application, and seeks the fountain-head and the pure waters of eternal Truth.

The Theosophist, seeing the light of truth behind the veil of a perverted doctrine, may reject the teaching of original sin and claim his birthright of divinity. He may refuse to put his faith in a vicarious atonement, knowing that the Kingdom of Heaven is within. It has been said: "The mind takes on the form of that which it contemplates"; and if the mind is trained to look upon itself as 'born in sin,' its thoughts will be familiarized with sin, and it will naturally regard itself as destined to iniquity. What hope in life can find a home in such a mind?

But, once convinced of his original divinity, a man will find a constant source of inspiration in the beauty of his own soul reflected in the mirror

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of his mind; for indeed “the mind takes on the form of that which it contemplates.”

Let us then beware of setting upon any mind, our own or another’s, the stamp of such pessimistic doctrines as that of original sin; for while the mind, in some respects is ‘like a mirror,’ its images have life and can impress themselves upon the minds of others and so fulfil their evil destiny making an atmosphere of sin into which some new-born soul will plunge to swell the multitude of “foredoomed children of iniquity.”

Man’s thoughts and theories create the doom and destiny of man; and it is man alone that can redeem humanity from man-made doom.

A BEGINNER’S CONCEPT OF THEOSOPHY

TALBOT MUNDY



REMEMBER the occasion when I first began to learn to swim. There was a deep end and a shallow end. The deeper looked more satisfying, so I jumped in while the teacher was not looking. The indignity of having to be fished out was humiliating, but the worst part was the distaste that it gave me for the whole business of swimming, with the result that younger boys, who had approached the problem reasonably, left me far behind and it was several years before I began to acquire much confidence in the water or any genuine liking for it.

Then there was school. We studied Shakespeare in the English class; but not once, during four years of instruction, were we encouraged to enjoy the poet’s plays or to appreciate their beauty. We were set to parsing and analysis, to definition of the obsolete and rare words, and to memorizing drily written footnotes — with the consequence that poetry, particularly Shakespeare’s poetry, became a synonym for drudgery. I believe I was thirty years old before it ever really occurred to me that poetry was something that a man might blend into his life and breathe into his efforts, thus ennobling any task he touched.

The simplest means opponents of Theosophy could use in order to delay and to obscure its message to humanity, would be to encourage all beginners to plunge into it heads foremost at the deeper end and swamp their intellects with Sanskrit definitions. If they could be kept there—after struggling to possess Theosophy in a bewilderment of words, Theosophy would die out from beneath as certainly as poetry has vanished

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from the schools, since there would be no natural responsiveness in which the love of it could flourish.

Love is the life of the Ancient Wisdom, and unless we love it ardently — unless it comforts and convinces by the flow of confidence outwelling from within — we may be sure we are but grasping at, or arguing against, the printed word; its spirit has escaped us. We cannot absorb Theosophy like patent medicine, and the attempt to masticate it all and crowd it into one gray brain is madness. It is infinite, with no beginning and no end. It would be easier to swallow all earth's air and drink up all the rivers than to possess Theosophy, in the sense that we possess degrees from universities or stock certificates.

A hundred years before the birth of Christianity Shu Kuang wrote: "The genius of men who possess is stunted by possession. Wealth only aggravates the imbecility of fools." * No wiser summary of the futility of all possession ever dripped from a satiric pen, and if the epigram were printed on the front page of all text-books and engraved on every dollar-bill in circulation there might be some hope of civilizing earth within a hundred years. It is an axiom for all beginners in Theosophy.

Meanwhile, we struggle to possess, beginners just as keenly as the older hands who have accumulated what are euphemistically termed resources. Public education is designed to cultivate a memory for facts, as if a crowded brain were an essential to living. And a number of us, having been so educated, try to 'cram' Theosophy as if we had to pass examinations in it and be judged according to an arbitrary scale of marks.

It is true indeed that we must pass examinations in it, but their incidence is hourly. We receive marks, and are judged. But the impersonal Judge, Karma, utterly ignores the feats of memory and all unproved claims, examining the progress of the heart's integrity as demonstrated by experience. Examination questions are the incidents of daily life. We act and react, do and leave undone, think and refuse to think, stand firm or are seduced, while Karma — incorruptible and inescapable — inscribes our spiritual progress on the rolls of destiny.

"The moving finger writes and, having writ, moves on."

I write as one who has but recently become a member of the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society: that is, as a beginner, who had never seen a copy of *The Secret Doctrine* until about three years ago, nor ever read a copy of THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH or any of the *Theosophical Manuals* until the magic of Blavatsky's pen stirred in me something deeper and more challenging than I had known was there and capable of being stirred. And I remember the bewilderment of all the knowledge

*From *Gems of Chinese Literature*, translated by H. A. Giles.

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crowded into her immortal book; and what thoughts first occurred to me when I had laughed a while (for there is humor in all logic, and the logic of the Law of Karma is complete).

For days on end I wrestled with the Sanskrit technicalities and tried to memorize them, caught in the enthusiasm of the universal theme but blinded by the habit of attributing all knowledge to the brain-mind. I would master this magnificent philosophy and make it mine! Then, failing to remember more than half-a-dozen Sanskrit words or to recall, for more than half-a-day, to which Root-race and Sub-race I belong, I scrambled out of that deep water and proposed to myself to try the shallow end. It looked, and was, much easier, but there was mystery enough.

I studied the significance of Karma, as applied to me, and found it not so easy or amusing as the thought of its retributive effect on others. There was too much justice in it. I began to be aware that there were incidents which, had I known of Karma at the time, might not have happened; and it irked me to discover that a more or less meticulous observance of convention during forty years or so, a reasonably decent reputation, and a habit of avoiding what is known as lawlessness, were not masks that could affect the final outcome. Theoretically, having had parents who hired somebody to teach me morals, I had never quite forgotten the necessity to play safe with a watchful Providence; but there was something in the Catechism I remembered about the forgiveness of sins, and it came as something of a shock to realize that all that I had done, for good or evil, must produce inevitable consequences, for me or against me, as the case might be.

I daresay all beginners, when they think a while, face that predicament.

It seemed, to state it mildly, not quite just that a man should have to face the consequences of an act he did in ignorance of the Law of Retribution. Nevertheless, exactly like a landlord pocketing his rents, I felt the justice of receiving compensation for investments on the side of virtue, whether made in this life and in ignorance of Karma, or in past lives utterly forgotten. We enjoy our income. It is outgo that obliges us to think.

Reincarnation, logical though it might be, began to lose that roseate, romantic lure that first appealed to my inquiring mind. I started there and then to reconsider it, and much more critically.

But that was where a little understanding entered in. I had been looking forward to possess Theosophy — to make of it a tool with which to tickle self-esteem and cut a nice wide swath along contenting aeons of eternity. The first glimpse makes the brain reel! It was the humor of my own imagination that upset that view of things. Some spark of

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Theosophical illumination made me wonder just how long the universe would last if each of us might manage his own destiny unguided by experience and by Intelligences higher than our own?

That thought began to lead me somewhere. Who, or what, is this that shall be guided by experience? Our bodies? Possibly, to some extent; but the experience of past lives hardly could be said to educate a body that developed from an embryo in this one; neither could a body destined to be burned to ashes be supposed to have much influence on future lives. Though atoms, or the subdivisions of which atoms are composed, are indestructible; and though our bodies are an aggregate of atoms, purposely assembled in accordance with a law beyond our comprehension; though the atoms so assembled undergo a change and are dispersed for other uses — so that you, or I, or anyone may have the dust of Alexander in our veins and Caesar's clay may stop a bung-hole; nevertheless, the education of those atoms comes a long way short of answering the riddle of the universe.

The brain? Another congeries of atoms, grouped within a section of a skull and destined to disperse at death. The brain of Socrates, of Plato, and of Shakespeare was returned into the common storehouse of disintegrated matter when the change took place that we call death. And unimaginable though it may be that the particles of matter they employed to clothe their bones were not affected by the thinking that they did, and not enriched by the association, none the less those scattered particles are not, and never can have been, the man.

Who is the man? What is he? We all identify ourselves with blood and bones, and we undoubtedly provide our blood and bones with mixed experience. The most conservative of scientists admit that evolution seems to be a fact in nature, and that all things are in process of becoming something else. The brain-chambers of skulls discovered in the prehistoric drifts are differently shaped from those we humans use today, which would suggest, at any rate, that men knew other limitations than our own when those skulls had employment. Yet, the owners of the skulls could think — if not exactly as we think, still thoughtfully and to a purpose.

Has all the thinking that they did died with them? Were the atoms of their vanished flesh the only beneficiaries of the lives they lived? Who were they? Is this all of them, or even the important part of them, that lies in a museum-case or in the gravel of a prehistoric river-bed?

Theosophy does not withhold the answer, though the brain-mind may reject it and keep on rejecting it, until it has exhausted all the arguments of habit, all its prejudices, and the stored-up miscellany of remembered speciosity acquired at second-hand.

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The brain-mind clings to what it thinks it knows, and dreads enlightenment. I know mine did, and does, and I believe myself not different, except in relatively unimportant details, from the rank and file of ordinary men. As we identify ourselves with flesh and blood, that flesh and blood in turn identifies itself with us and it grows very difficult, in consequence, at times to differentiate. But surely it is evident, that if we are that flesh and blood and bone and brain that, at our death, is buried and decays, then there is not much hope for us as individuals and such experiences as we suffer or enjoy can be, at best, a school for atoms.

And we know, though we are clothed in atoms, that ourselves are something vastly more. The very atheist, who says he disbelieves in anything but what his senses indicate, himself is proof upstanding of Intelligence so subtil and pervading that the atoms he assures us are himself took shape and grew into the thing he thinks he is.

Theosophy unfolds to us two natures, spiritual and material, the one immortal and the other governed by the alternating law of life and death. That stuff that we discard, and that they burn or bury (brain and all), when we have "shuffled off this mortal coil," has been subjected to the alchemy of use and we have changed its nature — possibly not much, but we have changed it for the better or the worse. Who then are *we*?

It dawns after a while; and all the words in all the bibles and the dictionaries ever written lack ability to tell the wonder of it when it wakes into the consciousness. That knowledge comes to us in silence, though the world may yell with passion, and there rises in us from within a dignity beyond all measure — hope that is whole and deathless — an illimitable patience — and, like gentle rain on dry earth, the assurance of our own essential divinity.

Then, actually for the first time, we begin to understand the teachings of Blavatsky and appreciate why, with the alternative of wealth at her disposal, she preferred a life of hardship and the task of bringing the Masters' message of the Ancient Wisdom to humanity.

To understand that message is impossible, unless we do as she did: that is, let the lures of selfish ambition go. The love of reputation and of easy short cuts to a brain-mind Utopia, just as surely as resentment of injustice, and as subtilly as contempt for others' seemingly less spiritual efforts, lead astray.

There must be thousands who have read *The Secret Doctrine* and have leaped to the conclusion that the simplest, surest way to follow in its author's footsteps is to make the desperately toilsome journey into Tibet and there learn the doctrines from the Great Teachers, just as she did. There are some who have rejected the whole teaching of Theosophy because, to them, that journey is impossible. And there are others who,

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for other reasons, have assailed the mountain-passes and by dint of almost superhuman energy have reached what maps declare to be the heart of the forbidden land and then, returning, have announced in lectures and on printed page that Tíbet is the home of superstition, so engrossed in ritual and devil-worship as to harbor no conceivable philosophy worth study.

Notwithstanding which, there is no doubt even in the minds of her most prejudiced accusers, who, for the sake of organized opinions that are tottering, and for their own emoluments that must cease when the world wakes up and thinks, would leap at another chance to vilify her — there is no doubt, even in the minds of those men, who have done their utmost to destroy her and her work, that H. P. Blavatsky did receive her teaching in the land, so inaccessible, that lies beyond the Himâlayan range.

There lies exposed the inconsistency of human argument. The man who fights his way against the wind and snow across the passes into Tíbet may be — we may say undoubtedly he is — a marvel of endurance. He may be a good geographer, a linguist, an intelligent observer of barometers, and an exact recorder of the things he sees. But he is no more likely to unearth Tíbetan secrets, or to recognise a Master if he met one face to face, than is a memorizer of *The Secret Doctrine* likely to become a true Theosophist without, in every deed of daily life, expressing — living — what he learns.

It will be time enough to meet the Great Teachers when we know enough to make it possible to understand them; and there is no way of attaining to that state except by putting into practice daily, hourly, and with vigilance, such rudiments of wisdom as we now know, taught to us in elementary Theosophy. It is not book-learning only, it is deed-doing, that establishes Theosophy in human hearts. And no deed may be measured by the clamor that it makes, or by the number of the men who see it done, or by the market-price of its immediate result. Dimensions, weight, and price all vanish in the scales of Karma, leaving nothing to be judged but quality.

The consciousness of our essential divinity includes a sense of the indignity of work not nobly done, no matter what the work is. There are no ranks in Theosophy, and no soft sinecures; who works well finds more work to do; our Leader is the busiest of us all.

Now, as I said before, I write as a beginner, with the first impressions of Theosophy still easily remembered. I am sure of this: that we are all beginners, always. If we vigilantly guard ourselves against the idiotic thought that we are separate from others, favored more than others, capable of being or becoming greater than others; if we keep in mind that any virtue, any knowledge that we have, however individual it may seem

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to ourselves, is something we receive in trust for others' use and cannot be of benefit to us until we use it in behalf of others; and if, above all, we refuse to be deluded by the dream of occult powers that shall make us privileged magicians with authority to govern others by expedients unknown to them: then I am confident that each advancing step of spiritual evolution will reveal to us horizons that expand precisely in proportion to our merit, and the more we know from having done, not talked, the more there will appear for us to learn. And there is only one school -- actual experience.

Thus the apparent paradox resolves itself into a plain fact: personality -- the flesh and bones and intellect in which we temporarily appear on life's stage is, of itself, the least important part of us, being hardly more than mask and buskins; yet, that personality is all important in the sense that we must govern it, and that by our use or misuse of it we are judged.

New dignity is thrust on us the moment we begin to let Theosophy emerge into our minds. As we identify ourselves with what is spiritual in us -- with the incarnating ego, rather than with that in which it clothes itself for one appearance on the stage of evolution -- we assume responsibility and are ennobled. No more whining at the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune"! No more crawling on our knees to an imagined God to beg for favors or implore forgiveness! The remission of our sins becomes our own affair! We wipe them out, henceforth, by standing up and facing consequences, proving, by the way we meet those consequences, that a portion of life's lesson has been learned.

So, less and ever less resentment; less unwillingness to bear our own blame for our own shortcomings. More sympathy for others (since we know the sting of criticism); greater, and forever greater tolerance. No more regret than is enough to help us recognise our own remissness; courage then, and faith, and hope, with now and then a little laughter at our own mistakes (since humor is the music of enlightenment).

The means of the pursuit of happiness is changed. Wealth, fame, amusement, appetite, by gradual, unnoticed stages lose their charm, and boredom ceases because minutes become laden with new interest, new views of life. Reviving energy attacks life's problems in a new direction. Poetry and music -- all the arts -- assume new values; and the knowledge that the quality of work done is the measure of its value elevates into an art the very sweeping of a work-room floor.

The grandeur that Theosophy reveals is like the sunrise. Shadows fade, and change, and cease, until a golden light gleams on a world worth working in. And at our feet -- exactly at our feet -- the Path lies, leading straight ahead. There is no need to look too far ahead. Each step is

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rich with opportunity to think thoughts and to do deeds that shall lessen the sum total of earth's agony and add to the increasing harmony of nature.

Silence is the best way to learn courage of conviction. It is easy to bewilder the beginner with confusing argument. Debate is best avoided. But I know this: once Theosophy has dawned into the consciousness, although a man's own weakness may betray him into lapses from the Path, and though he wreck himself beyond recovery in one earth-life; though cowardice should cause him to deny his faith, and death should find him neither brave nor ready, nothing — "neither death nor life nor angels, nor principalities nor powers" can deprive him of the knowledge that he has another chance awaiting him, and that the sins of this life may be faced again, and overcome, and used as stepping-stones to progress in the lives that follow.

There is nothing purposeless, nor any set of circumstances that cannot be turned into enlightening experience. And death, that most religions have regarded as an enemy to be endured with dread, to the Theosophist becomes the friend that draws the curtain after one act of life's royal drama, while we rest a while in preparation for the next.

DOSTOYEVSKY AS A DRAMATIST

BORIS DE ZIRKOFF

"It is the heart that the drama reaches with its message. That is the secret of its power to regenerate. . . ."—KATHERINE TINGLEY

HT has been said that Dostoyevsky is the greatest novelist of the last fifty years. Is it true? The question is a very delicate one indeed. The writings of an author may be judged from different and most contrary standpoints. One of these viewpoints refers to the purity and beauty of his style, which is certainly more or less a question of taste, or even habit; for what is style if not a mold of mental vibrations conveying in a certain way the inner rhythm of the author's thoughts? Consequently if the thought-world of the reader, or even that of a whole nation, vibrates in harmony with the world of the said author, there will be an understanding, a mutual appreciation of each other, and the judgment of 'beautiful' style in all its numerous shades will prevail.

But style is just the means of expressing on this material plane ideas belonging to the world of pure immateriality. Thus we see that if an

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author is judged by his style alone, — and it has been often done with Turgenyeff,— the most strange result may be brought about, for, to my thinking, the inner force of a literary style is due to the *basic idea* that runs through it. Taken from this standpoint of 'idea,' we may approach the figure of Dostoyevsky in a quite different way from what has been done to the present time; and, referring to the above-mentioned question, namely, whether Dostoyevsky was really the greatest novelist of the last fifty years, we can answer it by simply saying that *Dostoyevsky was not a novelist at all*, strange as this might appear at first.

Let us look into the spirit of his work. The evolution that takes place in the soul of Dostoyevsky's types begins usually with the development of the human *personality*, as it really occurs in the world. This personality is accentuated to the utmost; it grows, expands, rises, from the most elementary and primitive roots of the animal nature; and, after a life of struggle and fight, merges itself into the limitless ocean of pure *spirituality*, redeemed by the agony of suffering, cleansed by the fire of pain. . . .

In all the works of Dostoyevsky the heroic Will struggles against some adverse and fiendish element. With Raskolnikoff it is conscience; with Svidrigayloff, Versiloff, and Ragozhin, it is passion, conscious in the former two, primitive and unconscious in the latter. With Peter Verhovensky, Stavrogin, Shatoff, the same Will, as the inner and most sacred lever of human being, fights some wrong social ideas. Finally with Ivan Karamasoff, with Prince Myshkin, and Kiriloff, this Will tries to find the Truth amidst the most perplexing metaphysical and religious problems. The fight goes on, first unconscious and feeble, then conscious and intense; and later on, towards the end of the crisis, terrible and merciless, this fight forms the background of the picture and ends in the triumph of human Will, the magic agent of our ultimate perfection. Amidst this fight, in the darkness of this battle, in the melting-pot of pain and misery, in the purifying flames of the inner struggle, from beginning to end, the nucleus of the human being, the true Self, remains indestructible and, budding from day to day, blossoms forth at last under the ray of eternal Wisdom. This is the picture that Dostoyevsky gives us at his best.

Starting with the positive establishment of a *personal will*, the unequivocal craving of the lower *personality* in man, Dostoyevsky leads us through the slow progress of the inner evolution of his heroes. He shows how this personal, egoistical will, separate from all and everything that might surround it, gradually and inevitably, as the result of a Higher and Conscious Law, weakens and recedes step by step, and in its successive regressions opens the door to the manifestation of a Higher Will, the Will of a Higher Being, the Will of a god in man. And that panorama of human evolution tends to show us how the glory and sublime goal of man consists

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in merging his lower, animal, separate, and seemingly-free will, into that Superior and Infinite Will of the World, which, although bearing in Dostoyevsky's writings the name of God, resides for him in the very depths of human consciousness, and from a feeble and uncertain flickering at the dawn of earthly existence, rises to the power of a beacon-light and sheds its glorious rays upon the world of illusion.

On account of that heroic battle, which goes and goes on, on the field of the human soul, to the final victory of the Higher Being, the major works of Dostoyevsky are neither novels, nor epic poems, but truly *tragedies*.

It is not only to the dominant idea contained in them that the writings of Dostoyevsky owe their character of tragedy. Their very structure is that of a scenic performance, not that of a novel. Look at the essential part of these works. Their nucleus is formed of a continuous, almost endless dialog between the different heroes. Take on the other hand, for instance, the celebrated novels of Count Lef Tolstoy: *War and Peace*, *Anna Karenina*. Their skeleton is formed of a narrative, where it is not so much the heroes who speak themselves, but the writer who tells us about them. Dostoyevsky is characterized by the contrary; the narrative forms, as it were, a background, appearing accidentally here and there, as if to show that the main part of the subject, the dialog, is not a mere phantasmagoria, a vision unlimited by time and space, but is still connected with some exterior happenings, on the plane of matter. All those who have read something of Dostoyevsky, and especially of his major works, have had this peculiar impression of an endless stream of words, flowing between the respective heroes of the drama, and apparently submerging them. As Merezhkovsky has rightly said:

"In Dostoyevsky the story itself (the narrative part of it) is always written in a great hurry; almost carelessly; it is either too long, unclear, full of details, or too short and briefly stated. It is not a text, but a kind of scenario, that seems to be written in small type and put in parenthesis, in order to fix the place and the time of the action, the previous happenings, the outer appearance and the coming of the respective heroes."

True enough. The real action begins with Dostoyevsky only when the different types appear themselves on the scene, and start their dialog. In these dialogs is concentrated the whole artistic power of the writer. The very crisis in the soul of man, the gradual evolution of his feelings and emotions, the successive change in his thought-world, is enacted in dialog, and shown with astonishing force in the mutual conversations of the heroes. It has been said that Dostoyevsky is in modern literature the master *par excellence* of dialog.

This fact — the predominance of speech in the writings of Dostoyevsky (which sometimes do not possess any narrative part at all),—

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is the second characteristic trait which places these writings on the plan of tragedies, and separates them the more from the real novel.

The picture that Dostoyevsky draws us of his heroes is gradually evolved in our own brain. It is not that we immediately see the physical appearance of every type, by means of some brief description put forth by the writer and merged by him in the narrative. Not at all. This would be the case with Tolstoy; his minute description of the corner of the mouth, the lid of the left eye, or the velvet appearance of the upper lip of such and such a hero. With Dostoyevsky we have to read a certain amount of pages and then finally get the picture, the image of the hero, out of all the endless streams of words and discussions he has just impressed on our ear. Sometimes one single word of the dialog, one certain adjective, gives the last touch to the picture, and before our eyes suddenly appears the full, complete image of the man who speaks. Says Merezhkovsky:

“It is just the final trait that makes the portrait *too living*, as if the author, transgressing the very limits of art, put on the screen and in the colors something magical, superhuman — the very soul of man.”

Thus Dostoyevsky does not *depict* his heroes. It would be useless, indeed; their speech, the very intonation of their voices, which we hear, give us the material out of which our own imagination, perhaps intuition even, built without our knowing it the lasting image of all the numerous types in these writings. Needless to say, the picture varies from one reader to another, and *is sometimes, perhaps more often than we notice it ourselves, in direct connexion with certain latent elements in our own being, awakened to life and consciousness by the similitude or kinship.*

Speaking on this same subject, in his masterly comparison of Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky, Merezhkovsky, — to our thinking the greatest living author of Russia, now in exile in Paris, — said once:

“*With Tolstoy we hear* (the words and cries of the heroes) *because we see* (their picture described). *With Dostoyevsky we see because we hear.*”

There are several other peculiarities in Dostoyevsky's writings which liken them to tragedy. Without entering here into more details on that subject, we should like, nevertheless, to mention in passing that one of the greatest and most important of these peculiarities is the uninterrupted flow of events and happenings, which succeed each other with more and more intensity, tending all to one final goal, to one decisive crisis. The more we advance the more we penetrate into the heart of the story, and the more these happenings and events are rapid in their irresistible succession; they chase one another, they pile up, but in perfect harmony and rhythm. They all tend to the one final action, to the one ultimate ex-

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perience, and seem to try to attain it as soon as possible, and by the shortest way. Is not the intense concentration of all the apparent details and all the secondary actions on one and unique goal to be attained, the characteristic of ancient tragedy? Assuredly.

Owing to that fact, there are no events or descriptions in Dostoyevsky's writings which could draw our attention away from the principal action of his story, and lead it to some other point, as it is always the case with Tolstoy. Once we have plunged into the stream of the action, we feel that nothing can stop us any more; that we are bound to slide with the heroes themselves down the inclined plane of Karmic effect; and it is by the gradually increasing impetuosity of the waves in that stream of events that we presense the proximity of the abyss. It is in the irresistible power and tension of the tragic action that we feel the approaching catastrophe.

Sometimes in the tragedies of ancient Greece, before the ending, a joyous song sprang forth from behind the cliffs; it rose as if by magic and filled the air with happiness and light. It is as if it were the laugh of the gods amidst the tension of the final crisis, amidst the mystery of what will happen next. That touch exists in Dostoyevsky's writings. There, in the depths of gloom, of suffering, and misery, among the phantoms of eternal pain, in darkness and despair, we hear also a chant divine. It is the song of joy, that gushes forth from eternal youth, and resounds from ages to ages. It is a ray from the Sublime Truth which lies beyond the veil of illusion and shines like a rainbow above the somber deeps of ignorance and death. It is this happiness in pain, it is this light in darkness and agony, that gives the touch of grandeur to Dostoyevsky's works. With him we know that the soul is eternal. With him we feel that the night is short. With him we see the coming dawn.

It is interesting to notice that the majority of Russian authors have been fascinated for long centuries by the problem of the fight between the higher and lower parts of human nature, and have minutely described their interplay and continuous struggle with each other. Born on Russian soil, fed by the old and one-sided theories which believe that the pardon of sins can be obtained from God and only from him, these authors, writers, psychologists, and great thinkers, have, nevertheless, tried to show how the redemption and final perfection of the soul is to be obtained or reached by the inherent power of that very soul, moved by the spirit of the Divinity residing in it.

We see how the major part of the intellectual forces of Russia have skimmed and sometimes even penetrated into the sublime domain of the Ancient Wisdom, and drawn out of their own intuitional faculties the answer to many a burning problem of the human mind. Moreover, they

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have written immortal works, and these productions of their literary and philosophical talents are admired and revered till now among the young generations of Russia, and even regarded as the real, great symbolization of the inner consciousness of that country. All this makes us involuntarily feel that the beautiful plant called Theosophy may some day successfully be planted in that country of profound mysticism and undreamed-of possibilities.

Dostoyevsky does not make any exception to that common rule of psychological analysis. He is perhaps the deepest psychologist we have ever had among our writers. He is certainly the most skillful. His psychological studies are merged, so to speak, in the ocean of metaphysics and religious sentiment. He has shown us the bond that exists between the tragedy of our feelings, of our hearts, and the tragedy that resides sometimes in our intellects or minds. He has pointed out the relation between our philosophical and our religious consciousness (meaning by *religion* that aspiration which unites us to the infinite and the transcendental).

It has been often said that *the whole of Russian tragedy consists merely of that battle between an intellectual conception of the universe, and a conception based exclusively on religion and metaphysics*. It might be true. What is certainly evident is that it is in fact this very conflict which holds back our progress and puts innumerable and multitudinous obstacles before our power of intuition and direct spiritual perception. The mind and its subservient tools, our five senses, are the greatest enemies of our Higher Self, though they are inevitably a necessary step in our evolution. Although full of experiences for our soul, the battle just mentioned has to finish some day and result in the harmony of a metaphysical conception of the Universe and the synthesis of Science, Religion, and Art. Dostoyevsky and other great geniuses of Russia have rightly understood the meaning of the Great Riddle, which veils the Primordial Truth.

"I am called a psychologist," says Dostoyevsky; "it is false. I am but a realist, in the highest meaning of that word, *i. e.*, I depict all the profundities of human soul."

Merezhkovsky compares Dostoyevsky with a naturalist, who is perchance a realist too. The naturalist, studying a certain new phenomenon in its natural conditions, puts sometimes into play some artificial, exceptional, rare conditions, brought about by himself in order to see how the actions and reactions will happen in these new conditions of test.

It is in the same way that Dostoyevsky acts. He places his heroes, or *types*, (as they are but incarnated ideas or thoughts) into conditions which are not natural around us. Yet everything is realistic and does not seem impossible and unnatural or imagined. On the contrary, these

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said conditions exist most certainly somewhere, if we but search for them deep enough in the wide world we live in. As Leonardo da Vinci said: "This world is full of infinite possibilities, which have not yet been realized." — The conditions we speak about do not occur, but *they are*.

The psychology of Dostoyevsky is a tremendous, an unbelievable, a huge laboratory. There are in it tools and apparatus, and instruments of the greatest exactitude and delicacy. With them, obedient servants of the master, Dostoyevsky searches, sounds, studies the human soul. He weighs the feelings and emotions; he magnifies the ideas, and looks into the very depth of every being. He knows man as man does not know himself. He has reached the deeps of human spirit and has examined every corner and every spot of it. His method is not the method of science. It is neither the method of art. In his writings the exactitude of science merges into the clairvoyance of a creative genius. *Perhaps this very union is the future method of world-analysis?* Perhaps it is a new kind of art, of science, and of psychology?

And what has he seen in the depths of the human soul? Can he tell us about that light which, as he said so often, shines even in the most degraded of beings? *Dostoyevsky is conscious of the dual nature in man.* He *knows* that two separate beings are fighting together on the outer as well as on the inner plane of existence. Myshkin, the 'holy Prince Myshkin,' is man in his tendency to spirituality and intuition. Kiriloff, the crazy one, is the counterpart of the former, with only occasional illumination. It is as if it were Dostoyevsky himself in both of these types. He likes his own image in Myshkin, and hates it in Kiriloff. In the profound abyss of the soul, beyond the barrier of passion and the veil of intellectuality, Dostoyevsky has seen *the god*.

Thus we see that if Dostoyevsky were really studied and understood from the standpoint of the great idea permeating his whole life-work, most people would surely recognise two facts, dimly uttered sometimes, but never rightly and fully appreciated. These facts are, first, that: Dostoyevsky is much more a dramatist, and especially a tragedian, than a novelist; and his works (at least the major ones) are more tragedies than novels. And secondly that: the hidden, the invisible, and hence the real Dostoyevsky is (and it is true with other great Russian writers) much nearer to Theosophy than some ignorant and prejudiced people would have it believed.

Let them say what they wish. Let them slander the great thinker and accuse him of too great a sincerity. Is it not the destiny of all men of Truth and Justice? Is it not the black shadow that makes them appear the brighter and purer?

As to ourselves, we believe that in him was the soul of Russia, of that

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Great Unknown where lingers the flame of a brighter future. We believe that he was one of those who come to this world to show us the Path of Righteousness and Peace. And we believe too that there are children of the new generation who will seize that Light, and, moved by his spirit of Love and Devotion, begin that new and brighter life which his clairvoyant genius saw in letters of fire on the screen of an Age to come.

SOME SCIENTIFIC CONUNDRUMS

H. TRAVERS, M. A.



SCIENCE is wondrously exact, especially in its measuring departments; but according to a well-known law of pendular vibration we may expect to find it occasionally vibrating to an opposite extreme. We propose to quote what is probably the world-record for all time in the art of wild guessing. It is to be found recorded in *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 484, as a quotation from Robert Ward in the November, 1881, *Journal of Science*. He says:

“The question of the temperature of the sun has been the subject of investigation with many scientists: Newton, one of the first investigators of this problem, tried to determine it, and after him all the scientists who have been occupied with calorimetry have followed his example. *All have believed themselves successful*, and have formulated their results with great confidence. The following, in the chronological order of the publication of the results, are the temperatures (in centigrade degrees) found by each of them:

Newton	1,699,300 degrees
Pouillet	1,461
Zöllner	102,200
Secchi	5,344,840
Ericsson	2,726,700
Fizeau	7,500
Waterson	9,000,000
Spoëren	27,000
Deville	9,500
Soret	5,801,846
Vicaire	1,500
Rosetti	20,000

The difference is as 1,400 deg. against 9,000,000 deg., or no less than 8,998,600 deg.!!’ There probably does not exist in science a more astonishing contradiction than that revealed in these figures.” [Note: This is quoted by H. P. Blavatsky from *The Theosophist*, and the comment is probably her own.]

It is safe to say that such a divergence of opinion leaves the ignorant layman free to theorize and dogmatize to an unlimited extent without the slightest fear of being unorthodox. Soret has his degrees calculated

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down to one in nearly six million; which is ludicrous when other authorities estimate the degrees in paltry thousands.

But why are we writing on this question at this time? Because a clipping has fallen into our hands where Sir Oliver Lodge says, regarding a kindred topic:

“We used to be satisfied with the twenty or fifty million years during which it seemed that the solar system had lasted — the sun pouring out heat and light all that time, and still enduring — but now a fresh source of energy has come to light through the electronic theory of matter, and the result of further reasoning has been to expand the active existence of the sun and planets to something more like a million million years.”— *Daily News*

And tomorrow perhaps some newer theory will bring to light a still fresher source of energy, resulting in further reasoning which will expand the billion into a trillion. Or, who knows? perhaps the existence of the sun will be contracted, owing to the discovery of some theory on the opposition side of the question. What is such reasoning worth? It is trying to reach a conclusion about the vastest possible subject, on the strength of a few data relating to a very minor phase of that subject.

The above reminds us of a chapter in Vol. II of *The Secret Doctrine*, entitled “Modern Speculations about the Ages of the Globe, Animal Evolution, and Man.” Professor A. Winchell is there quoted to the effect that:

“Sir William Thomson, on the basis of the observed principles of cooling, concludes that no more than ten million years (elsewhere he makes it 100,000,000) can have elapsed since the temperature of the Earth was sufficiently reduced to sustain vegetable life. Helmholtz calculates that twenty millions years would suffice for the original nebula to condense to the present dimensions of the sun. Prof. S. Newcomb requires only ten millions to attain a temperature of 212° Fahr. Croll estimates *seventy* million years for the diffusion of the heat, etc. Bischof calculates that 350 *million years* would be required for the earth to cool from a temperature of 2,000° to 200° Centigrade. Read, basing his estimate on observed rates of denudation, demands 500 million years since sedimentation began in Europe. Lyell ventured a rough guess of 240 million years; Darwin thought 300 million years demanded by the organic transformations which his theory contemplates, and Huxley is disposed to demand 1,000 millions.”— p. 694

Here we have various authorities, demanding different periods for their respective viewpoints, and not even those with the same viewpoint agreeing. Since the above was written, radioactivity has been discovered and has consigned all the figures based on cooling to the trash-can. Who knows what may be discovered tomorrow?

Now turn to *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 479:

“We shall have, in Book II, to openly approach dangerous subjects. We must bravely face Science and declare, in the teeth of materialistic learning, of Idealism, Hylo-Idealism, Positivism and all-denying modern Psychology, that the true Occultist believes in ‘Lords of Light’; that he believes in a Sun, which, far from being simply ‘a lamp of day’ moving in accordance with physical law, and far from being merely one of those Suns which, according to Richter — ‘. . . are Sun-flowers of a higher light,’— is, like milliards of other Suns, the dwelling or the vehicle of a god, and a host of gods.”

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Rather a daring statement to make in 1888! Today there are noteworthy signs of a recession from mechanistic views of the universe, and of a willingness to recognise the necessity of postulating intelligence everywhere and at the root of all phenomena. But intelligence is an abstraction; it is an attribute of beings. Hence the use of the word 'gods,' inadequate as that word is. We almost fear to use it, so liable is it to misconception. But our vocabulary furnishes no better.

"The Sun is matter, and the Sun is Spirit," continues H. P. Blavatsky; adding that the ancients saw, concealed by the physical Symbol, the bright God of Spiritual and terrestrial Light.

But indeed we must of necessity postulate intelligent agents behind the movements of the electrons, for how else are they to be explained? If perchance a later and yet more refined physical analysis shall one day extend the chain of causation by another link, still we cannot go on forever referring one physical phenomenon to another. The ultimate physical unit is now reduced to what can only be defined as a center of energy endowed with motion. What is motion? At this point we step beyond the domain of physics, as of course we must necessarily do if we wish to define the origin of physical matter. The only alternative is to make physical matter eternal and uncreate — to put it in the place of the Supreme. So it is no wonder if conjectures, dealing with vast cosmic problems, but based solely upon physical considerations, should lead to the chaotic results above shown.

Life is everywhere, and life is the manifestation of mind and will. We can view the universe under a physical aspect for our convenience in dealing with physical problems; but we must not attempt to make that physical aspect absolute and universal. Monotheism has stripped the universe of its host of intelligent agents, and they have been rudely replaced by an abstraction called 'Nature.' If we could see behind the veil of ancient symbolism, we should find, in the pantheons of the ancient world, a complete science of the intelligent powers in the universe. It was the purpose of H. P. Blavatsky, in *The Secret Doctrine*, to prove the reality of this ancient science; and in Part III of each of her volumes she contrasts its teachings with the speculations of contemporary science.



"THE transition from mere intellectualism to practical, philanthropic activity was not effected without leaving behind a few who showed their theories to be but skin deep."— *Katherine Tingley*

THE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD ORGANIZATION*

E. A. NERESHEIMER

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AMONG the societies and organizations in this latter-day civilization, there are many who in one way or another aim to improve the conditions of human life. However, when we look into their special fields of operation, we find that they concern themselves mostly with the outward aspect of these conditions and with the appearance of things; not one goes deep enough into the essentials nor takes cognisance of the fundamental truth that Humanity is one and indivisible. Without this concept, and without the realization of the fact that the welfare of one is the welfare of all, these endeavors are but palliatives (if nothing worse), therefore they will never succeed in establishing permanent improvement of these conditions.

The Universal Brotherhood Organization declares that Brotherhood is a fact in nature; its purpose is to teach Brotherhood, demonstrate that it is a fact in nature, and make it a living power in the Life of Humanity. This platform does not appeal at first sight to the every-day man and woman, who, as a rule, are so deeply engaged in trying to obtain a bit of the universe for themselves that there is no inclination left for the consideration of such things. But the time will come when everyone without exception, must not only become cognisant of these truths, but must bear his share of co-operative work with nature. It is quite a new science that has been born to the world by the advent of the Universal Brotherhood Organization, a new science in this respect that it affirms faculties of human nature which have hitherto been relegated to obscurity and repressed by the desire of individual assertion which was coincident with material development. This new science is the science of the soul; it teaches that the human being is more than what he appears to be or what he thinks he is.

There is an indissoluble link between all humanity, which is expressed in the sympathy of man for man. You need only to consult your own experiences. If anything happens by way of accident to anyone, or if you see a cripple, or an idiot, there is something which at once wells up in your own consciousness that is undeniably akin to fellow-feeling. The tenderness of the heart is active in all human beings, no matter how debased. Physical pains of others, the troubles and despair which they experience,

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give us a moral shock arousing a feeling of condolence, even compassion, and a desire to help. All this is so universal and absolutely incontrovertible, that in it we must recognize the expressions of the soul and that there is something wonderfully deep in human nature to which we have not yet given proper attention.

There is also the dual aspect of human nature. Each one is capable of high aspirations and at the same time he knows that there is something base, low, and mean in his make-up, and it is according to how one exercises his will and develops the one or the other side of his nature that a person comes to be what he is. But the saintliest person is not without the possibility of the opposite characteristics, nor is the vilest without the divine spark. When we go a little farther, we see that the experience of one is also the experience of all, and if we analyze the operations of our mind and note our feelings with unbiased judgment, we shall know what are the feelings of others. They are the same as ours. How, then, if we are all so much alike, all having the same joys, the same aspirations, the same desires, temptations, tendencies, and failings, how can it be otherwise than that we are all a Brotherhood indeed?

Now, when you observe the processes of nature where everything proceeds according to rigid laws and order, everything tending to unfold toward progress, to become more beautiful, more perfect, may it not be that humanity in its present stage is but going through a period or part of its unfolding and progress? Yes. Logic and experience affirm this; it must be so. It is so! We are not the insignificant, silly things that we appear to be; as human beings, we are the apex, the flower of evolution,—each human being has the experience of the ages behind him, even this present life is but a day in the grand period of our existence. There was no time when we did not exist, nor can there be any time when we shall cease to be,—no one unit can be spared from the universal economy,—each one is as necessary as the other, and if it were possible to annihilate one single unit, it would be possible to annihilate the whole universe, God included.

If you further observe the processes of nature, you will find that in no department is nature ever quiescent. Nature is never still, but ever changing, transforming, building, progressing, unfolding,—yet never repeating itself. Knowing this, should you venture to assert that it can be different with the human being? It cannot be. Man is subject to the same laws as everything else, and having arrived at the height of physical and mental evolution to the point where he is becoming self-conscious and invested with the power and privilege of exercising free will, he has become individually responsible for every act, thought, and deed, and must go on evolving through higher and higher stages toward perfection.

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We are the creators of our own destinies; we are now reaping what we have sown in times past. The more potent our will, the greater the responsibility; the more power we possess, the greater our trust, the greater our liability for its right use. Every hair on our heads is accounted for; we have not one too many nor one too few. Our physical bodies, our dispositions, talents, genius or the absence of it, have been made by ourselves under the action of inflexible law, and what we will hereafter be depends upon ourselves; we are making the future in the same way as the present has been made by the past. Immeasurable heights of accomplishments are before us, all of which we must attain to in due sequence, event following event; nature does nothing by leaps or jumps, everything goes gradual, natural, correct, as it must.

When considering the absence of co-operation among men; the almost universal prevalence of unrest and dissatisfaction with present conditions of life, you may be able to appreciate the necessity of an organization like this which declares and emphasizes that Brotherhood is a fact in nature and seeks to demonstrate it. It may interest you to know that this organization has centers and lodges all over the world. It is established on the grandest principles the world has ever known, and without it, this civilization would certainly perish like others have perished before. The present period of time is one in which humanity has been going through an intellectual development, and in this one-sided development, man's larger nature is being lost sight of. We can readily imagine that if the general trend of selfishness and separateness is not arrested, dreadful consequences will ensue. The spirit of competition, unaided by attention to the duties that each man owes the other, will not permit Humanity to progress toward a state of happiness and bliss, but instead misery, waste, and ruin will be the result. There is nothing except a recognition and practice of the principles of Brotherhood that will save our civilization from destruction.

In the wise administration of this organization every field of human progress has been considered and provided for. There is a humanitarian department called the International Brotherhood League, whose first object is "to help men and women to realize the nobility of their calling and their true position in life." This development of the Universal Brotherhood carries into practical operation the humanitarian side of the ideals of the organization. There is another department whose aim it is to emphasize music and drama as true educational factors. Another department has for its object the establishment of a world-library and the preservation of a complete system of philosophy of the origin and destiny of cosmos and man.

The philosophy on which the Universal Brotherhood is founded has

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existed in all ages, and during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, beginning in 1875, it was revived by H. P. Blavatsky, who founded the Theosophical Society in New York in that year. Madame Blavatsky was the author of remarkable works treating on the origin, evolution, and destiny of the universe and man. Among these works are *Isis Unveiled*, *The Secret Doctrine*, and *The Key to Theosophy*, which have laid the foundation of a voluminous literature, all of which has been produced during the last twenty-five years. The fundamental tenets are the unity of all existing things, the essential divinity of man, and rebirth and retribution, or the demonstration of the inflexible law of cause and effect. The consideration of these leads to the invariable conclusion that human existence far antedates the present life, and that the present stage of development has been reached by gradual and successive steps and that the future is without end.

A great boon has been conferred upon this civilization by the Teachers in this Movement by making such truths as: "that universal justice rules the world," "that man is essentially divine," and "that perfectibility is within his power," once more accessible to human knowledge in such a way that they can be easily understood. The sting of the fear of death, which has so long hung over Humanity like Damocles' sword, has been removed for those who can conceive themselves to be integral parts of the great economy of the universe and that they are one with the great body of Humanity.

Humanity has at no time been without its divine helpers who have aided in its spiritual development. H. P. Blavatsky was one of these Helpers. Her works will be known in due course of time, and her mission will be appreciated as being equal in importance with the accepted Teachers and Saviors of the world, like Buddha, Confucius, and Jesus. William Q. Judge, who was her immediate successor, gathered together a number of students from all parts of the world to study the philosophy and to induce them to make an attempt to live it. Under his hand the literature was preserved in its original purity and introduced and expanded to its present importance. The work of these two Leaders represents the incipient phases of the development of the movement.

It was reserved, however, for the present Leader, Katherine Tingley, to develop an entirely new phase of the movement. Inasmuch as the philosophy had heretofore taken hold only theoretically, there remained the necessity for making it "a living power" in the life of those who preached it; under this Leader's wise, bold, and fearless administration, it now changed into a most practical way. She showed that no matter how great and true the philosophy might be, it was useless unless it was *lived and practised in actual life*. It was she who founded the International

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Brotherhood League, the Isis League of Music and Drama, the School for the Revival of the Lost Mysteries of Antiquity, and the Cuban Colony, and many other activities. All of these undertakings have been enormously successful in bringing the sublime philosophy down into practical life, and each of these furnishes a separate and appropriate vehicle for the dissemination of these truths.

At this time there are many workers engaged who have no other aim in life than to work and work in this great Cause which is destined to succeed in spiritualizing the growing intellectuality of the age and to elevate the concepts of the permanency and powers of the soul.

HERBERT SPENCER ON IMMORTALITY

H. T. EDGE, M. A.



HERBERT SPENCER, after stating that his intellect can find no conclusive evidence of immortality, yet is unable to silence another voice which refuses to accept the conclusions of his intellect. He says:

“It seems a strange and repugnant conclusion, that with the cessation of consciousness at death, there ceases to be any knowledge of having existed.”

What faculty in Mr. Spencer’s make-up is it to which the thought of annihilation is strange and repugnant? His intellect has made its decision but another voice dissents.

“With his last breath,” continues our philosopher, “it becomes to each the same thing as though he had never lived.”

“To each,” when there is no each! “As though *he* had never lived,” when there could have been no *he*! To predicate anything about the Soul — even its annihilation — is to affirm the Soul! The ancients get over this metaphysical difficulty by postulating a condition of ‘non-existence.’ Mr. Spencer unavoidably conceives of himself as continuing to exist in a state of annihilation. Can a faculty affirm its own annihilation without at the same time affirming its immortality? Is not immortality an essential and inalienable quality of man’s Soul, whose existence is self-evident and indemonstrable?

“And then the consciousness itself — what is it during the time that it continues? And what becomes of it when it ends? We can only infer that it is a specialized and individualized form of that Infinite and Eternal Energy which transcends both our knowledge and our ima-

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gination; and that at death its elements lapse into the Infinite and Eternal Energy whence they were derived.”

And who is the ‘we’ that ‘can only infer’? Surely Mr. Spencer himself is in and of that Infinite and Eternal Energy, as indeed he admits, and can never cease to be, though illusions and limits may melt away.

And what, let us ask, is the difference between postulating an Infinite and Eternal Energy of which our consciousness is a specialized part, and admitting God or Brahm or Osiris together with the whole philosophies that belong to them? Mr. Spencer is not the first philosopher who has wandered afield only to find himself after a lifetime of searchings falling into line again in the rear of the old philosophies. However vast and intricate and perfect a system the mind may weave, the mind itself stands superior to all; and above the mind stands that power that uses the mind, and which the mind seeks vainly to formulate.

But let us not visit on a philosopher the sins of his parrots. There follows in the wake of every philosopher a train of brainless babblers, who distort his teachings into an excuse for denying their own human responsibilities. They have not read his works, nor could their feeble brains stand the strain; but they repeat a few phrases from the destructive part of his work that happen to suit their own materialistic propensities, without caring about his reconstruction and his admissions.

The lesson we would draw is that whenever a sincere thinker sets about analysing the phenomena of his own mind and his perceptions and conceptions of the world, he comes back to original elementary principles.

SUFFERING, ITS CAUSE AND CURE

E. E. SYNGE

[Read at Lindsey Hall, London]



A SIMPLE, bold statement of fact challenges the thoughtful man to think. As a rule, the people who come to these meetings are beginning to think, for the study of Theosophy compels thought, so let us start tonight with this bold statement of fact: no religion, no philosophy, no system of thought, other than the Ancient Wisdom, today called Theosophy, can give us a clear, logical, and truthful answer to the universal questions — Whence come evil and suffering? and What is their cure?

All the great religions and ancient traditions of all peoples, tell of a time at the dawn of humanity when there was neither evil nor suffering,

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when men walked and talked with Divine Beings who lived on earth and taught men the laws of nature, the sciences, arts and crafts; and all was harmony and beauty; just to live was pure joy. It is good to pause a moment and brush the sorrow and suffering from our hearts and dwell on this picture of perfect happiness, for what has been shall come again, and we shall know that life is joy and harmony the law of laws, and if we have grown wise by then, we shall never lose that perfect joy, but carry it ever in our hearts through all the vast future of attainment and progress that beckons us on to illimitable heights of glorious achievement.

The cause of all evil and all suffering and their cure is to be found in one pregnant sentence: "*Harmony is the Law of Life, Discord its shadow, whence springs suffering, the teacher, the awakener of consciousness.*" It is a wonderful sentence, not an unnecessary word; volumes could be written on it. Remember it, think out its deeper meanings!

When we — that includes you and I, remember, — as spiritual beings, first incarnated as men on this earth, we lived as one unit; we were in perfect harmony with the One Life, none sought to seize something for himself alone; but gradually we became so insnared in these animal bodies forgetting our spiritual unity, that we began to give free rein to the desires and passions arising through our senses, and so grew up a feeling of separateness and selfish disregard of others, thus bringing discord or evil in the place of harmony, and this discord reacted on us as pain and suffering, — 'the teacher, the awakener of consciousness.'

All evil, sin, suffering, and sorrow arise from selfish desire of one kind or another.

The Law of Life is Harmonious Unity, and the moment a selfish desire creeps in there is discord, the perfect harmony is broken, and suffering arises, because we are individually but little cells — if you will — of one unity; no one can escape off by himself and enjoy perfect unalloyed happiness as long as others suffer. *Separateness is a delusion.*

We know that everything is made up of countless tiny lives, or atoms, all in constant ordered activity, and if their rhythmic motion becomes discordant, the object falls to pieces in time, and we say it has decayed or died. It is so with individuals, with nations and with races. That which persists in discord, perishes. Only that which partakes of harmonious unity can endure, and harmonious unity means radiant health and joy.

Someone may say that this about unselfishness and harmony bringing health and happiness sounds very nice, but our lives are often fraught with bitter suffering; how can an all-compassionate Law allow such an evil thing as suffering? — A question worth seeking an answer to.

First of all *is* suffering evil? Is not suffering nature's kindly warning to beware of danger? Supposing one could drink unlimited amounts of

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alcohol, or eat vast quantities of food without nature's warning by suffering, very many persons would quickly kill themselves by overindulgence. Supposing greed, cruelty, and self-gratification of all kinds passed without the corrective effect of suffering; instead of men learning self-restraint and compassion through suffering, we should all grow increasingly selfish and self-indulgent, should we not?

But you may say that this is all right for the cruel, the oppressor, the selfishly evil man; but we who are trying to be kind and unselfish, why should *we* suffer so terribly?

That is a burning question and nowhere but in the Ancient Wisdom — Theosophy — will you find the answer.

All of us have lived thousands of lives on earth; we have been through a vast number of experiences; we have been prince and pauper, chief and slave, merchant and soldier, in many lands and as part of many nations and races, and always we have had free choice as to our conduct — selfish or unselfish — all the time making causes and reaping their effects; we undoubtedly have done much wrong to our neighbors in the past and through suffering are learning honesty and the desire to now live purely and unselfishly, but every thought and act for self that we indulged, in this long path, is a seed sown that must bring suffering until each is met and by being wisely borne, becomes transformed into a seed sown for future happiness and strength.

Absolute Justice rules all nature, and we would not have it otherwise, or chaos would reign.

Through suffering rightly borne we gain experience to choose wisely, strength to overcome all our weaknesses, fortitude, patience, and compassion. Only through suffering do we learn. "He who suffers most has most to give," are true words. Remember this: no painful happening can come to us but what is our own, and it is just the experience that we need to overcome some fault or strengthen some weakness in our character.

Suffering loses its power to hurt if we meet it courageously, admitting the justice and compassion of the Eternal Law, and brace ourselves to learn the needed lessons that it alone can teach.

There is another purpose in suffering that it is well to remember. No one can be happy and satisfied very long with any merely material surroundings however pleasant, for this much-forgotten reason: *we are in essence divine beings*. As the mother-bird stirs up the nest to make its fledglings use their wings and take to the air as nature intended, so the divine inner man will stir us up, bringing unrest and suffering until we begin earnestly to seek and develop our spiritual consciousness, for our destiny is one of illimitable grandeur and joy.

So let us not shrink from meeting the suffering that we ourselves have

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sown in the past, but meet it as an opportunity *to grow*. No youth that is worth while shrinks from the discipline and suffering of the hard training necessary to fit him to win the athletic contest; let us look on each life as a short period of opportunity and training to fit us to play our part in a great and glorious future. We are told by those who know, that the average time between earth-lives is about fifteen hundred years. That means, if we will, some fifteen hundred years of great joy, and then comes the few seventy years or so in these material bodies on earth for testing, training, and growing. Let us then face our time of schooling, joyously, fearlessly, eagerly, knowing that overshadowing each one of us is the Christos, the Higher Self, waiting ever to give us strength to overcome and wisdom to see the way, shedding upon us its love and the joy arising from suffering bravely borne and service nobly rendered, until at last we become one with It, entering upon a path of glory and joy ineffable.

DIGGING UP MAN'S PEDIGREE

MAGISTER ARTIUM

INTEREST in alleged origins of the human race has lately been revived by the discovery of a new bone; and the 'cradle of the human race' has been shifted to Africa. But, in the *Atlantic Monthly*, Chauncey Brewster Tinker protests against the habit of seeking for the mystery of man in his ancestry. This, he says, involves a fallacy, since it rests on the assumption that the history of a phenomenon is its explanation. When, or if, the biologists have traced a complete pedigree for man "from sea-worm to Socrates," the mystery of man and his nature will be as deep as ever.

"Because of this high origin and high destiny, it is well not to fix too great an attention upon our ancestors in this world, for to do so is to obscure the problem which is man. You are yourself the problem; you are the theater of a struggle between two natures for the possession of you; and it is the issue of the struggle, not its origin, that would seem to be of importance."

This is a point which we have often urged in the pages of this magazine. Or rather, there are two points. The first is the fallacy of always looking into the past for the elements of things; and the second is the failure of an ancestral tree to elucidate the mystery of evolution.

As to the first, we do not find that a million years ago there were nothing but seeds; later on, nothing but saplings; and today, nothing but trees. What we do find is that seeds, saplings, and trees exist all

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together today. Was there ever a time when the earth was peopled exclusively with rudimentary men? This habit of thinking in straight lines of time is not conducive to a clear view. One of its consequences is the postponement of immortality to beyond the grave and the fixing of our gaze upon the past or the future instead of the present. We ought to study man himself, as he is, here and now, as well as digging to see what he was like a million years ago.

As to the second point, we have often urged that, be the theories of biological evolution right or wrong, the mystery of evolution is not solved by them. Granted that our whole present humanity, including all the senators, lord mayors, and scientists, has developed by slow and painful processes from a single pollywog in a primeval ocean of mud; what we would like to know is (*a*) how that pollywog came there, (*b*) why it developed into lord mayors instead of into something entirely different. These are the main problems, but there are others.

It is interesting to note in the above quotation, as in so many influential utterances of the day, that fixed hallucinations are dying out as new generations of scientific men arise, and that common-sense views of the nature of man are prevailing. The *vital* fact is seen to be his dual nature, a circumstance which places him in an entirely different category from the animals. Self-consciousness is not an attribute which evolves gradually: it is absent from the animals, and always present in man. It is a primordial attribute, derived from the Universal Mind; and Man is the one being who unites in himself this Divine attribute and the material form which the animals have.

Here, however, is a place where a knowledge of man's ancestry might really be informative, could science discover the truth about that ancestry. Evolution proceeds in two directions: from above downwards, and from below upwards; man representing a junction of these two processes.

But the most important thing is for us to accept the indisputable fact of our dual nature and to put that knowledge to practical use. Triune nature, one should perhaps say; since we find *one* between *two*. Scientific research, of course, has its great claims and its true interests, and will naturally go on. If conducted in the right spirit, it can but lead to the discovery of truth; but many errors will intervene. In pursuit of its method, scientists frame many provisional hypotheses, which resemble the temporary frameworks that carpenters tack together to hold matters steady while they are completing the edifice. These have to be pulled down; but there is always the tendency to forget the provisional character of such hypotheses and to erect them into authoritative dogmas.

DISCIPLINE

KURT REINEMAN

(An Address read at the meeting of the William Quan Judge Theosophical Club, Râja-Yoga College, International Theosophical Headquarters, Point Loma, California, February 5, 1925)

“Any real attainment must come through Discipline.”—KATHERINE TINGLEY

“O ye who look to enter in through Discipline to Bliss,
Ye shall not stray from out the way, if ye remember this:
Ye shall not waste a weary hour, nor hope for Hope in vain,
If ye persist with will until self-righteousness is slain.
If through the mist of mortal eyes, deluded, ye discern
That ye are holier than these, ye have the whole to learn!
If ye are tied with tangled pride because ye learn the Law,
Know then, your purest thoughts deny the Truth ye never saw!
If ye resent in discontent the searchlight of reproof,
Preferring praise, ye waste your days at sin's not Soul's behoof!
Each gain for self denies the Self that knows the self is vain.
Who crowns accomplishment with pride must build the whole again!
But if, at each ascending step, more clearly ye perceive
That he must kill the lower will, who would the world relieve,
And they are last who would be first, their effort thrown away;
Be patient then and persevere. Ye tread the Middle Way!”

— ‘The Lâma's Law,’ from *Om: The Secret of Ahbor Valley*

HT shows them all the horror of their lower selves.” This pregnant line from Talbot Mundy's *OM* evokes a picture, a gleam, of an unveiled truth that, some time or other, has to be faced by every human being who seeks real attainment. And when that moment of revelation comes, fortunate the man if he knows his own divinity, for “unless he can see his higher nature shining through the lower, he had better not have seen anything.” The truth is simply this: that every evil of which man has ever been capable — all selfishness, all greed, all cruelty, vice, bestiality — this, and much more, lies sleeping in the lower nature of each of us, and will ever remain there, latent or active, as the case may be, until that great and final victory which makes of man something more than man. Monstrous potentialities are ours; for we have built up, during millions of years, each for himself and all for all, an evil entity so sinister that, were it shown us suddenly in all its horror, we might well go mad!

This being, which is our *lower self*, hates discipline. Though it may often make us think it likes ‘a reasonable amount’ of it in order to trick us at the first sign of weakness on our part, it fears discipline more than anything — except, perhaps, neglect. At any instant it is ready to throw off all restraint; that is its nature. Linked with it are all corresponding beings and forces in our fellows and in the world in general,

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forming, as it were, a vast reservoir of evil. Once given its freedom, our lower self draws therefrom a power whose rush is like that of a tidal-wave,—overwhelming the unhappy man who has released it. Our overflowing jails, penitentiaries, and reformatories, our rapidly increasing insane-asylums, hospitals, and sanatoriums, are filled with such victims of their own lower selves. We elbow them, too, at every corner. The daily suicide record tells a pitiful tale of their last gesture of despair.

What is the cause of these things? Lack of discipline, somewhere, at some time.

And yet, this age prides itself, if on anything, on its attainments! Why do not our attainments — and they are often wonderful indeed — prevent this wreckage of human lives? Where is their potency to help men to strong, manly, and clean living? Can they be called ‘real’? What is wrong, that we begin to have a sense of insecurity regarding the edifice of our civilization? These are questions that demand an answer. The edifice is rising higher and higher, and indeed is not lacking in a certain beauty and grandeur, in spite of the striking contrasts it affords; but there is a widespread feeling that perhaps ere long the whole vast structure may totter to its fall. The foundations are so evidently weak and insufficient! In the crash and turmoil of the coming catastrophe, where will our boasted attainments be? The only values that forever remain untouched — let us remember well — are the spiritual values; the rest disappear. And such values are the result of discipline, are not to be gained otherwise than through discipline.

It follows that attainment on outer planes, if it is to have real value, must correspond to achievement on inner lines. And right here is a danger-point; for one of the subtlest defenses our lower nature puts up against discipline is to make us believe that we are attaining to great heights, *when in reality we may be retrogressing inwardly*. Or it will often spur us on to feverish activity, to incessant work for others even, so that our inner perception may become clouded by the dust we are raising and we mistake the false glamor of the lower life for the sunlight that shines on the peaks of high achievement!

We need to remember that the strength of character, the firmness of will, the power of continuous right action, which enable one victorious hero to attain where a thousand weaklings fail, are not his through mere chance or favor. By a million little acts of self-discipline he has won them, made them a part of himself, *until at last he cannot fail*.

Discipline is a law of Nature. Everywhere, in the mineral, plant, and animal worlds, we find at work a power that molds matter into forms in accordance with an ideal plan. Where conditions are right and where matter responds, as it so readily does, to the touch of the Soul, there we

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find a perfect expression of the divine idea. At the other extreme we have instead an abortion, a horrible monstrosity, a failure — due, not to any defect in the disciplining power, but to outer circumstances. Nature works through discipline, then; for what is discipline but the effort of the Higher to mold the lower into a true expression of the ideal which is its goal? The Higher loves order, beauty, truth, and right action. It makes its decisions NOW; it never argues. It moves on joyfully, silently in a sense, yet full of the richest and sweetest harmonies. If through discipline we can bring the lower into tune with these harmonies, then real life, real attainment, will begin for us; not before.

Among men we find, here and there, those we call ‘perfect gentlemen.’ Character is written all over such men. Limited though they often are because of the times and the environment, they still bear the stamp of the Higher in every thought and act. The flower of a type, the outgrowth of generations of discipline, they are an inspiring promise of what will come to fruition in humanity, once conditions permit. If, after the old order has gone down finally, true Architects, wise Builders, are allowed to take charge of the work of laying the new foundations, then there will come in no long time a period of flowering, in which all that is real in our present attainment will blossom forth, free from the blight of materialism and the dry-rot of ‘indiscipline.’

Each of us possesses, in very truth, immense resources of experience, of spiritual energy, of moral courage and daring, of endurance and patience, locked up in the inner chambers of our being, stored there during past ages of struggle. On those glorious fields — in the eternal warfare that is man’s birthright, whereby he is made strong and from which he will emerge at last as Victor over self — we have all of us played the hero. No matter now if at times we faltered and went down in bitter defeat! More often it was the enemy that fell! What magic key will unlock all the doors of that great store-house? Simply DISCIPLINE, SELF-DISCIPLINE.

The following, from Plotinus, seems a fitting close to this discussion:

“Withdraw into yourself and look. And if you do not find yourself beautiful yet, act as does the creator of a statue that is to be made beautiful; he cuts away here, he smooths there, he makes this line lighter, this other purer, until a lovely face has grown upon his work. So do you also: cut away all that is excessive, straighten all that is crooked, bring light to all that is overcast, labor to make all one glow of beauty, and never cease chiseling your statue until there shall shine out on you from it the God-like splendor.”



“THE path of the mystic is a path of self-mastery and service.”

— *Katherine Tingley*

HAPPINESS MUST BE EARNED

BORIS DE ZIRKOFF

(An Address read at the meeting of the William Quan Judge Theosophical Club,
Râja-Yoga College, International Theosophical Headquarters, Point Loma, Cali-
fornia, January 29, 1925)

MAN as a thinking being has always longed for happiness. It is true that if you ask someone to tell you what that very word 'happiness' means, each man will reply in a different manner. Contradictory as their multifarious definitions may seem at first, one fact remains, however, unshaken; and that is the feeling inherent in every human being that somewhere there must exist a state of perfect peace and contentment, a state of mind and consciousness which can be reached by the power of man. In spite of all the suffering, in spite of the apparent gloom of life, man will still cling to that ideal he dimly sees outside of space and time, as it were.

Yes, he is right in his feeling. There is a state of peace and inner contentment. His intuition tells him the truth of that ideal. And yet when man begins to work for the attainment of that very happiness which locks his mind, and blurs sometimes his perceptions, when he takes the first step on the road he thinks leads towards the goal, he is always and everywhere, except some few and rare individuals, the prey of his own ignorance and selfishness.

For he forgets that there is a Law of Justice which governs the world. He seems to ignore that power which rules the interplay of cause and effect. Man in his strife for happiness tries to reach the goal for himself alone, leaving all behind, forgetful of his sacred duties to his fellow-men.

Behind the veil which hides from us the realities of eternal life, there is a force which puts its seal on every act of our existence, and brings about with inflexibility and inexorable justice the results of our own deeds, as if the effect were just an inherent characteristic of the respective cause. Thus we see around us the just results of our past actions. The present is the child of the past; it is also the parent of the future.

Man is blind to the Great Law; he seeks happiness in the wild strife after the riches of the world; he tries to attain it in the mad race of selfishness; he seems to expect it in the contentment of his own petty desires; he waits for it in the dark fortress of his lower self. He thinks that happiness may be reached by oppressing his brothers and forgetting everyone around him for the sake of himself and his own ambitions. Illusion! Self-deceit!

If the Great Law of retribution works day in and day out on the inner

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planes of consciousness; if the result of every human deed is in constant and perfect accord with the cause that gave birth to it; then it is by bringing happiness to others that we may earn happiness for ourselves. And what are we ourselves that it seems to us so important to be happy and full of bliss? What are we but a drop in the ocean of eternal life, but an atom in the infinity of living beings! What foolishness and what ignorance to think that we may attain to happiness by isolating ourselves from the surrounding in which we are born; by trying to forget all and everything just for the gratification of our own desire!

You cannot change the Law. The world is based on Eternal Justice and it is only our blind eyes that cannot see the Glory of Existence.

As everything in this world, happiness too must be earned. And to earn it means to do actions and deeds which contain in them the seeds of future happiness. Moreover, it is not for ourselves that this happiness ought to be wished. It is for our fellow-men, for all the living creatures that move and have their being in the infinite Nature around us.

That state of peace and inner contentment which is the goal of man can be reached only by a life of devotion and sacrifice. Devotion to our fellow-brothers. Devotion to our inner Being. Devotion to the ideal of Truth. The lower instincts and ignorant ambitions *must* and *will* be sacrificed to the great Principles of Perfection and Spiritual Love for all.

Amidst the whirlwind of contemporary life, in the turmoil and the clash of civilization, man forgets too soon the one Reality of life — the search for Truth, which is in itself happiness, as it is light and peace. He takes the fleeting shadows of a nightmare for something true and real. His blind eyes do not see the difference, the abyss that separates the personal and selfish world from the sublime ocean of Eternal Truth. — Ambition, selfishness, desire, the love of wealth, what are they all but illusive forms and evanescent phantoms of our mind? Born today, they pass before our eyes in a seeming procession; they fly away like dust and withered leaves with the wind of autumn and disappear for ever in oblivion and forgetfulness. . . .

Truth alone remains unshaken.

Earned by a clean life, won by your devotion to principle, gained by your sacrifice for suffering humanity, happiness, that real happiness which resides in the inner chamber of your being, can be yours at every moment of your life, if you but work for it and work for others. Theosophy applied to daily life is the key.


The light lit in the soul of man is bliss and life, and that light can never be darkness, as there exists this everlasting light within his soul.

TRUE DRAMA, THE SOUL'S INTERPRETER

C. M. SAVAGE

(An Address read at the meeting of the William Quan Judge Theosophical Club, Râja-Yoga College, International Theosophical Headquarters, March 13, 1925)

"The drama, like music, is regarded by the world as one of the relaxations of life because it is supposed to deal with unrealities. True drama points away from unrealities to the real life of the soul. As such the drama should lead and guide the public taste, providing it with ideals towards which it can aspire."—KATHERINE TINGLEY

HAT all kinds of dramatic representation have a universal appeal cannot be denied. Whence does the drama derive this power over the human mind? Is it not from the fact that all life is one vast drama? We are familiar with Shakespeare's words "All the world's a stage"; and it is quite possible he would have gone deeper into the subject than the "seven ages of man" if the time had been ripe.

Theosophy gives us further enlightenment in stating that, in the long pilgrimage of the soul, each life is as an actor's part in the grandest drama of all. We learn that even the very word 'personality' comes from an old word meaning a mask; and that the soul, the individuality, assumes many masks or personalities in order to gain all the necessary experience and to do its share of work for the general good.

In witnessing a true interpreter of the dramatic art, we rejoice with him, we feel his sorrows, we are stirred by his aspirations, and even feel as though we were living through that part. May it not be that the appeal comes from the fact that we have lived through similar experiences before, and that those aspirations are our own? And that we respond to the feelings portrayed just as a musical string vibrates in sympathy with another whose pitch is closely related to its own?

But only that is worthy of the name of true drama which points out the path that it is the soul's destiny (and desire) to follow. Unfortunately many writers are wasting valuable talent in portraying aspects of the lower nature without bringing in the redeeming feature of the divinity of the real man. Another very noticeable feature of many modern plays and dramatic writings is that the problems of the age are portrayed, in many cases with the stamp of genius, but no solution is offered. In such cases one feels the desperate need of Theosophy at the present time, and one realizes how powerful will be the influence wielded by our best writers when their work is illumined and completed by a knowledge of the Ancient Wisdom.

Another aspect of the subject is the *drama of life*, about which there

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is so much ignorance. In all ages the Teachers, Poets, and Philosophers have given glimpses of its grandeur, but the average human being has been so completely identified with his personality that he has not heeded the advice to 'look within.' He has seen only the surface of things. He has considered only the personalities. And from that point of view he has mistaken the false for the real and has been chasing a will-o'-the-wisp that has led him into all sorts of treacherous marshes and wildernesses that starve the soul.

Just as an actor on the stage can interpret a rôle and endow it with deeper meaning, so can the soul, if we would allow it, show us the deeper meaning of our lives on earth. In order to bring this about the first step to take is to enter the path of self-discipline. Then follows the awakening of the imagination, which our Leader calls the bridge between the brain-mind and the soul. With the lower man disciplined and the imagination awakened, the soul will begin to speak as intuition. Then the true meaning of the life-drama will begin to become clear. That this is so has been shown in all ages by many enlightened souls who have passed through the necessary experience and discipline.

Under the heading of true drama we can justly include many of the beautiful and mystical legends of all mythologies, for these have often been used as the basis for dramatic representation. Take just a few examples at random. How noble they are in their superficial aspect, and how symbolic and instructive in their deeper meaning!

For instance, the legends connected with Hercules and the other Greek heroes, those of the Arthurian cycle, the deeds of prowess of the heroes of ancient Ireland, the contest between the forces of light and darkness as represented in the tales of the Scandinavian mythology: all these have lent grandeur and truth to the work of many a poet, and some of the most powerful operatic works have been inspired from the same source. Their universal appeal is undoubtedly due to the fact that they are allegories of actual happenings in the realm of the soul. Some of them possibly grew up about the lives of certain grand characters of ancient times, but many were certainly given to the various races by those who had deeper knowledge than the average individual. And it is quite possible that many of them came directly from the ancient mystery-schools. In fact we are told that much of the instruction in those schools was carried on by means of dramatic representations.

It would be easy to multiply a list of noble dramas which have portrayed the struggles, the sufferings, and the triumphs of the human soul. In view of these it is an insult to human nature to place before it some of the paltry things which usurp the place of the true drama today. Such action shows that we recognise and cater to the lower nature.

DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE

But the characteristic of true human nature is that the higher shall dominate the lower and keep it useful in its sphere.

The dramatist, the producer, and the actor need not degrade their art. They need not portray situations which have no business occurring. They can be the instructors and leaders of the people along the true path. This has happened often in the world's history and has been one of the most powerful factors in the upbuilding and preserving of the nobility of a nation or race.

Mr. Judge says in one of his writings that there are periods in the history of mind when darkness seems to set in and the mind is unable to perceive the light. That phrase 'history of mind' is striking because it suggests that each of our faculties has its own history and goes through its own cycles. Thus mankind may be enlightened in regard to one faculty while another is passing through a dark period.

It would seem that we have been passing through one of those periods. During that time we have had to depend for our illumination upon the flashes of enlightenment received by a few advanced souls. But the time is again coming, when, with the knowledge derived from their own inner wisdom, and fostered by the teaching they will receive in their childhood, the exponents of the drama will again raise the standard of their art. In their hands the true drama will again interpret the life of the soul so that every human being will be inspired to take up with renewed courage and knowledge his part in the grand drama of life.

DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE

EMMETT SMALL, JR.



HAVE heard it said that Stevenson received the inspiration for writing this book in a dream. Be that as it may, it is certain that what this story is built on, the basic fact on which it centers, is an essential truth in life — the duality of human nature, or, as Stevenson himself puts it, that "man is not truly one, but truly two." And in an admirable way he portrays this, so that it is quite plain to a careful reader that the author must either have been a deep searcher within his own inner kingdom, an analyser of motives, a weigher of truth and falsity, a great student of human nature in all its forms; either this, or in some striking dream — as abovesaid — the picture must have flashed upon his mind — haply at that moment in a receptive condition and sensitized to receive impressions — and made an indelible picture there, much as the prepared plate of a photographer will register

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what is before it where the sunlight is flashing. And if this latter were the case — as we are rather inclined to believe — if the idea did come through a dream, only a mind that was unusually shocked into something horribly and fearfully but clearly seen, and with a writer's ability behind it, could have written this book, — so minute in detail, so perfect in each little thought and incident.

What is this story then, that took such hold of Stevenson's brain that he was forced to transmit it to paper? Is it a great fiction? Is it a mere dream, a fantasy? No!

It is the tragedy that results in human nature when man loses the great fight, when man falls in that great battling that goes on within him, between his lower and his Higher Self. It is the tragedy of man succumbing to the wiles of evil. It is the tragedy of the Soul lost in the meshes of matter; lost, estranged — temporarily — from its Divine Seat. And fearfulest and truest of all, it is the tragedy, the *every-day* tragedy, in the lives of millions of men and women who are on this earth today.

These millions do not know what we are taught here, what our Teacher, Katherine Tingley, has taught and preached for twenty-five years in this country and in Europe — the dual nature of man: that in man is the angel and the demon, that within him are latent all the potentialities that can make of him a God, and that also there lurks in him unsleeping evil, ready to spring and strangle the good at every opportunity; and that between these two there is constant warfare.

And that is what Stevenson's story depicts. His Hyde is the lower nature; his Jekyll, the Higher; and in reading his book one is reading the drama of the struggle between these two powers — and here the Evil gains, and virtue and goodness fall a victim to uncontrolled desire. Another book might be written on the results of the fight if the Higher Nature — the Jekyll — had come out victor and the lower had been banished forever; and that book would be of such glory, so full of the laughter of life, that one would scarce believe it could be connected with or indeed be a sequel to this book, which might be termed Hyde's Ascendency. But it is with the former that we are concerned and must take lesson from; for Life, after all, is but a series of experiences for the Soul's development, and Hyde, though the Devil himself, can yet teach us many a thing that we can profit by, if we look at it with an eye to evolution.

We are each of us so much a part of Edward Hyde and Henry Jekyll, that it is almost like undergoing the trial itself to read the book.

There was the first changing into Hyde. And what was it but a matter of concocting a drug, some strong potion, and drinking it? The elements of the drug were but Thoughts — powerful chemicals wrought in the laboratory of the Mind. And Jekyll drank of the Evil, and became

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Hyde. There was the first transformation. There was the deformed, ugly creature, that for the time had utterly usurped the field of the Mind and ousted poor Jekyll clear out of existence. Jekyll was no more; he was dead; he could not occupy the same place at the same time as Hyde — so he, being at this time the weaker, died and Hyde was master. That was the complete transformation. — And who has not had that experience; when first a wrong thought has crept into the mind, and, nestling there, has grown to something huge, so that it becomes All-important, and the good thoughts fly — and then though “ugly and deformed” we “see our image in the glass,” and feel no repugnance. That is the first step. And what school-boy, what child, has not experienced it!

And from then on the fight wages warmly. Stevenson has it all in his book; the details you yourselves can verify, for they are Truth, and every unlying heart knows they are. Edward Hyde is pure evil. There is not a vestige of good in him, and he is unspeakably clever, and Jekyll is tempted, tempted so subtilly, almost one might say, so casually! Conscience slumbers in him, ambition awakes and evinces itself in cold meaningless cruelty at which Hyde laughs in glee. He loses his self-control, he has less and less the power to restrain himself. Hyde is gaining mastery; and when Jekyll does get back — and he cannot possibly do that until Hyde is gone — he stands “aghast before the acts of his other self.” Step by step he sinks into the clutches of the lower nature. We trace it all in ourselves — it is clear, oh so clear!

And then one morning — one horrible morning — Jekyll wakes, and finds himself not Jekyll but Hyde! He went to bed Jekyll but woke up Hyde! I can imagine nothing to make the blood run more cold, nothing to make one feel more on the brink of Hell than that! Oh, the horror of it! See that hand “lean, corded, knuckly, of a dusty pallor and thickly shaded with a swart growth of hair” — that was not Jekyll’s hand. I think when Hyde saw that, such terror seized him that he might have died if the physical were not so strong in him. — One is willing to encourage the lower nature, or anything wrong, or what you call ‘not quite straight’ — that is, man as a rule is willing to do so, for man is not naturally evil — if he thinks he has control over it and can stop or regulate it as he pleases, or when necessity calls; but when one feels he is losing grip and cannot possibly hold it in check, then comes terror, terror of the Soul, terror because he knows not what is beyond: terror worse than a thousand deaths.

But the higher nature survives the shock; and the very fact that it was such a near catastrophe serves to spur it to renewed efforts to throw off this veil that Hyde is so surely insnaring him in. He tries and tries hard, and takes oath with himself to have nothing more to do with his lower self; but Hyde has grown powerful and there comes a day when the

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dose that should bring Jekyll back fails — the thoughts of good were not strong enough to chase away those evil visitants — and the dose had to be doubled. That set Jekyll face to face with the supreme question: was he to win out or was he to be annihilated? No more could he go along floating with the tide — one day a powerful entity for good, another a still more powerful one for evil: he must choose, right *now*. And he chose.

He chose as I think man naturally would. He chose to live as Jekyll; and for a time succeeded. By a great effort of will some months passed while he continued in a quiet, useful, purposeful life. But he missed old Hyde. He disliked him — as we all dislike him — but yet he enjoyed the sensation of his company. He had selected to follow the path of virtue; but deep within his heart there was some ‘unconscious reservation,’ some little whispering that he yet might tread the double path and get by with it. Soon, however, time obliterated the freshness of alarm caused by the last episode with Hyde, and one day he again becomes — wills himself to become — that lower creature. The reaction is terrific. Hyde had been starved so long that now, when he is back again, he is terrible in his lust for evil. “No man morally sane could have been guilty of the crime which followed.” There was murder, wild, fearful murder — and a gloating over the crime, and a planning of others; yet all the while “fearing the avenger.” And then Jekyll returns “and with tears of remorse sees what he has done” — not he really, but that Hyde in him, that brute, that beast which had got the better of him.

There we see the pity, the terribleness of it! Man should take this lesson to heart and regulate his laws by it. It is a crying need, this insight into human nature, and it begets that understanding, that compassion, and that justice in the highest sense which can never come unless one has the knowledge that in man there is the Higher and the lower. What are our criminals, our murderers, but those that have fallen in this eternal battle? And in some ways, as Katherine Tingley says, they are not half as bad as other thousands who walk the streets. They have suffered; how they have suffered only they can say; but it is surely with their heart’s blood and the anguish of the soul — and yet we punish them. We see now what our Leader means when she says that they should be put in hospitals and nursed and cared for and given every chance to regain their better selves again, instead of being hounded to death!

— And so Jekyll in the body of Hyde, stands committed to an atrocious crime. By a tremendous effort his Higher Nature comes on deck once more. He reviews his past life; he traces each step from the beginning to the “terrible deed of a few moments ago, the damnable horror of which comes to him now with a sense of unreality.” Could it be I, Henry Jekyll, that have done it? . . . “He resolves to redeem the past and that re-

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solve was fruitful of some good." But (to quote Stevenson's own words) "as the penitence wore off, the lower nature growled for license, the animal within me, licking the chops of memory; the spiritual side a little drowsed, promising subsequent penitence, but not yet moved to begin." Then vanity stepped in — gross egoism. I was after all better than my neighbors! Do not I live a most respectable life? Have I not conquered much? — "And in that instant I was myself no more," (quoting again) "I was *Edward Hyde* — a moment before safe of all men's respect, wealthy, beloved — now the common quarry of mankind, hunted, houseless, a known murderer, thrall to the gallows."

And the rest we need not dwell on. You remember how he runs out of the vicious drugs, and that only by a great effort from day to day he was able to wear the countenance of Jekyll. You remember Lanyon's horror at seeing Hyde transformed into Jekyll — the knowledge that his dear friend and colleague had been that vile evil-doer; how it had been too much for him, seeing it face to face, and he had died! And that Hyde's power grew and grew, and the result — Jekyll's body became weaker and weaker! He hated Hyde now with all his soul, and the great horror of it was that he was so close to him, this Hyde, the Lower Thing in him — "it lay caged in his flesh and at every hour of weakness, and in the confidence of slumber, prevailed against him and deposed him out of life."

Poor Jekyll! Surely we can find it in our hearts to pity him as we remember his words: "No one has ever suffered such torments — habit brought but a callousness of soul, a certain acquiescence of despair"; but nothing save Death could give him release and rest and courage for another trial in lives to come.

And that was the end; and the moral of it (and whether you wish to or not, you cannot fail to see it) is that all the terrors of the world, all the excruciating pains of the Inquisition, all the wild impulses and acts of cruelty ever perpetrated, all Evil is in Man; nothing can be more low, base, and cowardly, murderous and devilish — than man's lower nature.


And also, unspeakable in beauty and grandeur: all the joy, all the happiness of imagined Paradises, all the angels that ever illumined the Heaven; Beauty, Forgiveness, Compassion, All-Love, All-Peace, is in Man. Nothing without him can be more joyous, more high, more grand and inspiring, more sublime and glorious. *All is within Man!*

Could all the world read in the pages of 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde' the undying Truth that man is not one but two, Stevenson had indeed done a glorious work.

If Stevenson had had the courage to read our Theosophical books he would have given even a grander exposition of the two forces in Man, — the Lower, the destroying, and the Higher the controlling and uplifting.

THIS MUDDY VESTURE OF DECAY

T. HENRY, M. A.

CIENCE has familiarized us with an immense range of etheric and other vibrations, only a very small part of which affect our senses; so that we seem to live in a world from most of which we are shut out, like persons born blind and deaf. Our senses are called means of knowledge, and we proudly base entire philosophies on their findings; scorning and abusing those who venture to do otherwise. We call these findings 'facts,' and everything else is supposed to be a 'figment of the imagination.' But actually it is beginning to look as though our senses were screens or filters, placed over our minds to shelter us from the too bright glare of truth.

We speak of 'this world' and 'this life,' and have not the ghost of a notion what either of them is. Consequently our ideas of other worlds and other lives are naturally somewhat vague. The evolution of man is still proceeding; and with it, by equal steps, the evolution of cosmic elements. See the new element, ether, now coming more and more into manifestation. See men of light and learning accepting telepathy and trying in vain to explain it by some mechanistic theory of the usual vibration-type. Why do we worry to seek explanations for out-of-the-way things, when we cannot begin to explain familiar things, such as how the eye sees, or how force is transmitted along a rope?

The moral of this is that those who are bored by the life they lead should seek for a better life *where they are and in the present*, and not go hankering for harps and golden streets beyond the grave. We do not know what is in the world; all we do know is what we can manage to perceive with our outfit of senses and appreciations. Some do not see beyond creature-comforts and superficial amusements; and find a street and a lane all the same, except that the latter has not restaurants or shows in it. Others can find a new and larger life in the beauties of nature; others again can live in the romance of the past by means of books. There are various tastes, intellectual and artistic, which can be cultivated and make a vast difference between the sphere of life of a cultivated and an uncultivated individual. But what limits can be set to this principle?

To what extent may it be possible so to refine our faculties that we may be able to discern many now hidden secrets of the universe and of life? And not only is it knowledge that is spoken of, for this by itself might seem dry and cold; but experiences and appreciations — joy, beauty, harmony — such as make life worth living. Think how much may be hidden from us by the veils that shut us in and screen us from the radiance

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that may be flooding the universe — that perhaps even lowly animals may enjoy, for aught we know!

And since all this attainment would be the consequence of a refining of our nature, is it not evident that it is grossness that shuts us out? This is why great Teachers, who themselves have attained, and who are so eager to enable others to attain, have always taught unselfishness, purity, simplicity, freedom from pride and ambition, as the means of attaining to enlightenment.

Many people feel themselves shut in, and wish to change their circumstances. But our circumstances are of our own making: we made them with our thoughts and desires. What we should try to change is that private interior mental world in which we live. It is this world that makes up the greater and more important part of our circumstances; and moreover our exterior circumstances will change also in adaptation to the change in our interior condition. This artificial world of our own imaginings is what shuts us in, binds us down, and deprives us of all those experiences that lie within the reach of clarified and refined perceptions.

Close and candid self-examination will reveal the fact that the chief architect of the prison in which we dwell is self-absorption, in its numerous forms; and consequently the road to freedom consists in placing our interests on impersonal objects. It is a regrettable fact that stern and narrow forms of religious sentiment have accustomed us to regard the path of righteousness as one of thorns, deprivation, and gloom. But yet we find, on examination, that people seek this path as a relief from the burden of a self-centered life. They seek distraction, escape from themselves. Perhaps they can find no better way than narcotization with strong liquors or drugs; perhaps they seek it in a restless round of diversion; perhaps they cherish a hobby. But in any case it is escape from self that they seek. It is undoubtedly this that constitutes the chief charm of sleep. We have dreams in which we are perfectly happy, because self-consciousness is entirely absent, and there is no vanity or self-contemplation or fear or mistrust. Then perhaps self-consciousness steps in, the dream is dissipated, and we awake to the burden of our thoughts and self-analysis.

From this it might seem that the broadening of our sphere of knowledge and appreciation is rather a question of stripping ourselves than of adding new faculties. We have not so much to develop new eyes as to cut the cataracts off those which we have. The universe is full of life, the greater part of which escapes our senses.

“Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.”

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But need we wait until death strips the soul of that vesture? 'Nay,' says Theosophy, with its message of hope. There is a muddy vesture of decay in our minds, and it can be stripped off without killing the body. To do so is the way to freedom and to the enjoyment of the universal harmony, which is in immortal souls. For our souls are immortal during earth-life as well as before and after. What a mysterious thing is that Human Soul or *Manas*, which has the power of choosing its mansion — whether to abide in the muddy vesture of decay or to dwell where the harmonies can be heard!

The circumstances of one man are different from those of another; but, whatever may be the seeming, it is not true to say that any set of circumstances precludes us from seeking and finding the road to peace and light. According to the teachings of Theosophy, each human being finds himself in the place where he has put himself; and it is at that very point that both duty and opportunity lie. It rests with ourselves what attitude we will take up towards our circumstances. If we really believe that we possess the power to transmute our nature, we will from that moment give up the attitude of drifting or inertia or despondency, from that moment find a new confidence and self-reliance born in us.

MORNING


F. M. PIERCE

COMES Morning's inspiration with the sun —
A day in the eternal just begun:
The hush of waiting in the dawning glow
Of thrilled creation in the dusk below.
Now bursting melodies in all the woods,
Thanks giving for the day; the hardihoods
Which action brings. The flowing winds a-rife,
And robust gladness in the works of life.

*International Theosophical Headquarters,
Point Loma, California*

“I TOLD YOU SO”

KATE HANSON

HE best people never say it, it isn't nice. Sometimes, however, students of H. P. Blavatsky's writings cannot help feeling it at least on the inside, when they read of the many remarkable discoveries being made the world over, all confirming her statements as to the antiquity of man, and the high state of civilization in past ages. Even the merest amateur in archaeology, who will keep some kind of a record of the finds of each month, not only provides much worth-while entertainment for himself, but can pat himself on the back a little, and reflect that he is broadening his mental horizon, and storing up information very pleasantly, while reading about other people's labors. Some of the outstanding discoveries of the past months have been:

THE TEMPLE OF DAGON AT ASHDOD: This was discovered a year or so ago, and the preliminary excavations have yielded inscriptions, carving, pottery painted with historical scenes, offerings of gold, silver, and bronze in the shape of goblets, sacramental vessels, and curious statuettes. Ashdod was the city, says the Jewish Bible, to which the Philistines carried the Ark after capturing it from the Jews. According to the Bible, it was an unlucky trophy, which the conquerors afterwards gladly got rid of. The Philistines were a powerful maritime as well as inland people. They are credited with inventing the war-chariot, which prevented any but the Egyptians from warring successfully with them. Their contact with Crete, their familiarity with Minos and the Labyrinth, is attested by coins found at Gaza. The arms of the Philistines, similar to those of the Babylonians, are accurately and faithfully depicted in Egyptian inscriptions, representing their victory, under Rameses III, over these haughty foes. The most interesting fact, however, is the association of the Fish-God Dagon with the familiar Oannes Dagon, the Fish-Man God of Babylonia. Few scholars dare see in the symbol anything more than the sea-deity, who gave the Philistines the riches of his domain. However, as he is also the god of agriculture, and, it may be found, of writing and the arts generally, that time-worn explanation will some day have to be discarded. The meaning of the Fish-God cannot be gone into now, but it should be readily apparent to anyone who remembers a few of the meanings of Dragon, Serpent, Crocodile, and Fish in ancient symbolism.

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THE RUINS OF CARTHAGE are being traced out into the sea, by means of aeroplanes. They are reported to extend under water for seven miles, and enough treasure has been recovered, according to newspaper reports from Prince Waldeck, to fill a museum. The French have discovered in the Sahara the buried city of Samarra, and are financing an expedition to recover the famous City of Brass, described in the Arabian Nights as being filled with treasures. The Senussi are supposed to have full knowledge of this mysterious city, and knowing how native peoples guard the secrets of lost treasure-places, it is easy to believe this is true. Painted baby-bottles, cosmetics, perfume-bottles of iridescent glass, lipsticks, eye-brow pencils, etc., have been recovered.

DISCOVERIES IN BABYLONIA are running a close parallel in interest with those of King Tut's tomb. While the latter is more spectacular, and the treasures are more easily appreciated because of their splendor and beauty, the more modest-looking piles of clay tablets being wrested from the ruins of Kish are of more value historically. The great temple there is said to be seven thousand years old, and the inscriptions already deciphered tell of other buildings, of events in history, and the rebuilding of temples that push the horizon still further back into the night of time. *Ur of the Chaldees* is a name laden with atmosphere. From the cemetery there have been recovered implements both of hammered and cast bronze; of flint and painted pottery, astonishingly well wrought, and very old. The inscriptions are said to prove that Israel was a very small nation indeed in those days, and 'Father Abraham' has become much more modern by comparison with the events preceding his time. Four miles from Ur, gold scaraboid beads have been found, dating back to 4500 B. C., inscribed with the name of the king, Ni-Pad-Da. A broad flight of steps led up the temple, which was adorned with bulls made of clay covered with a thin sheet of bronze, and wearing golden horns. Two columns of mosaic, ten feet high, in black paste, red stone, and mother of pearl, are also recorded from Tell-el-Obeid.

THE LABYRINTH OF THE CRETAN MINOTAUR revealing wall-paintings showing the (symbolical) sacrifice of youths and maidens to the Bull of Minos, is one of the most dramatic findings of recent months. The frescos, in the opinion of Sir Arthur Evans, seem to indicate a Cretan origin for the bull-fight. And it was more perilous than anything known to the *toreadores* of Spain, if the belief be true. The girls and boys were trained to catch hold of the horns of the bull, toss themselves over his back, and down his tail. Any slip meant death. The fresco shows one boy who was gored to death. Among the relics was the huge head of

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a bull, with sharp, long horns, on which the youthful contestants probably had to practice before the games actually took place. Sir Arthur Evans is said to have found a storehouse filled with frescos from the palace walls, representing forest-scenes. The colors are perfect, and they represent pet monkeys from the Sudan, rocks, flowers, trees, etc. The civilization of Crete was highly developed. Plumbing which remains is said to be still in perfect repair, and the bathtubs, libraries, experiments with plants, the hairpins, corsets, and flounces of the women's attire (they were famous for their beauty) and the use of black troops, make one feel as if he were reading about modern Paris instead of a civilization dating from 1600 B. C.

HELEN OF TROY NOT A MYTH?

The latest explorations at Troy, conducted under Hugo Winkler, have brought to light not only new and deeper walls, sections, and foundations of buildings, gold cups, but important tablets from ruined Hittite cities not far from Troy, which give lists of the names of the Greek Heroes, the name of the city 'Troisa,' and the word 'Achaiva,' and finally clear reference to the famous beauty who set the ancient world at grips. The Hittite inscriptions, until recently undecipherable, are similar to the Assyrian, and, like them, written on clay tablets. The inscriptions seem to have been written when the memory of the events was still fresh in the scribe's mind. These are the first records, outside of the ruins of Troy itself, which prove the existence of the city, and once more Homer's veracity is established.

THE SILVER GRAIL OF ANTIOCH, dating from 60 to 70 A. D. is one of the most striking discoveries in Palestine where the tombs of David and, Solomon, and their uncalculated treasure, the city of David himself, are expected to be found at any time. This chalice is of solid silver, and has a covering or outer cup of the same material. The cup is so old, so badly covered with chemicals, and so bent, that the most exquisite care has been necessary to clean it sufficiently to study the figures carved on it by a process not now in use in the silversmith's art. The figures are supposed to represent Jesus, the dove, the lamb, Peter, Paul, Matthew, John, and James. The vines and grape, the star, the fishes and loaves of bread, are all supposed to be clearly indicated. There are many places chipped from the rim of the inner cup, probably due to relic-hunters.



“IN studying the mysteries I am sitting at the feet of the Higher Law; I am opening the pages of the great Book of Human Life.”—*Katherine Tingley*

THE STORY OF KALANDA

P. A. MALPAS

V

EVEN though he had been a boy when he left and now came back a man, Kalanda could not help seeing what a wonderful influence had overspread all India, radiating from Pâtali-putra as from a central sun. The Emperor, Chandragupta, had given up the kingdom of earth for the kingdom of heaven; he had actually brought the kingdom of heaven to earth; and the change was astonishing. It is easy to say that 'the other world' is merely a change of state; that the 'kingdom of heaven' is also a change of state. But to bring this change of state into an actual human government over a continent — for India is that — and to have its beneficent rays shining through the darkness of the west, through Persia and Syria and Asia and Egypt and Greece and Gaul and Britain, that indeed is a marvel you don't see every day.

But Chandragupta had done it. Sinking his own personality, he had propagated 'the Law' throughout the known world. And the Kingdom of the Law was what so many other reformers had hoped to establish on earth and had utterly failed.

There was peace everywhere, so far as might be; read the extraordinary declaration of the great Conqueror after he had subdued the Kalingas. He had the world before him — and he declared in imperishable stone throughout the land that he would suffer any wrong to the extent that it could be borne rather than cause the unhappiness of war to descend upon the simplest jungle-folk. There was education and enlightenment. That there were pillars and inscribed rocks sown with lavish hand throughout the land from east to west, from north to south at every prominent roadside-junction, shows that the people could read. The roads themselves were a civilization; the moral precepts enjoined were more than a civilization — they were the voice of the divine in man made articulate.

The rock- and pillar-edicts and inscriptions seemed to fill the land with their messages. Written in every dialect, they applied to all, and taught in silent command and appeal the message of the Good Law, the Law of the Buddha. Here is another which Kalanda and his party saw not long after leaving the seaport where they had landed:

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“This Scripture of the Good Law, the Law of Duty, has been written by command of His Sacred and Gracious Majesty the King:

“Here no animal may be slaughtered for sacrifice, nor shall any coarse entertainments be held. Because in such indulgences His Sacred and Gracious Majesty sees much offense, although certain merry-makings are excellent in the sight of His Sacred and Gracious Majesty the King. Formerly, in the kitchen of His Sacred and Gracious Majesty the King, each day many hundred thousands of living creatures were slaughtered to make curries. But now, when this Scripture of the Law is being written, only three living creatures are slaughtered for curry daily, namely, two peacocks and one antelope — the antelope, however, not invariably. Even those three living creatures shall not be slaughtered in future.”

Kalanda compared in his mind the effect of the cruel religions of the West where the Gods all boasted of their ‘mercy’ and at the same time with ghastly hypocrisy reveled and bathed in blood. Some of them, as for instance at Jerusalem, were occasionally regaled with human victims — only it was usually done very quietly at that ancient place because the surrounding tribes had long ago given up the foul practice. So far as possible all reference to this human sacrifice was omitted from such sacred rituals as were likely to get into the hands of others than the hierarchy of Jerusalem, but there were certain irrepressible and outspoken prophets who loathed the formalities of Zion and they let the secret out more than once. (*Jer.*, vii, 31)

Then as to medicines and hospitals for men and animals, here is another decree of Chandragupta which Kalanda read by the roadside as they passed on their long journey to Pâtaliputra.

“Everywhere in the domain of His Sacred and Gracious Majesty the King, as well as among his frontagers, the Cholas, Pândyas, the Satyaputra, the Keralaputra, as far as the Tâmbaparnî (in the far south of India), Antiochos the Greek King, or even the Kings the neighbors of that Antiochos — everywhere have been made the hospitals of His Sacred and Gracious Majesty the King in two kinds, namely, hospitals for men and hospitals for beasts. Medicinal herbs also, both medicinal herbs for men and medicinal herbs for beasts, wherever lacking, have been everywhere both imported and planted. On the roads, too, wells have been dug and trees planted for the enjoyment of man and beast.”

Kalanda had seen nothing like that in his long travels through the West. Hospitals and medicines for men and animals; healing plants made cheap by cultivation on a large scale; fruits and crops planted

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everywhere for the general good, forests and shade-trees supplied and wells dug — India enjoyed a Golden Age of its own under the sunny reign of Maurya-Chandragupta-Aśoka. It was a foretaste of what might be under a reign of Universal Brotherhood guided by a wise and divine leadership.

What was the secret? There are nostrums galore for a Paradise on earth, and many of them have been tried. All have failed in the end. Why? What is there in the Good Law of the Buddha that makes success possible where others can only theorize? Kalanda found at least one part of the explanation in another rock-inscription — truly India under Chandragupta was a country of Sermons in Stones:

“According to the words of the Prince and High officers of Suvanagiri, the High officers are to be addressed with salutations and addressed in the manner following: —

“His Sacred Majesty gives these instructions: —

“For more than two-and-a-half years I was a lay disciple, without, however, exerting myself strenuously. But a year — in fact, more than a year ago,— I entered the Order of Buddhists, and since then have exerted myself strenuously. During that time the men who had been unassociated with the gods became associated with them. For this is the fruit of exertion. Nor is this to be attained by greatness only, because even by the small man who chooses to exert himself, immense heavenly bliss may be won.

“For that purpose has this proclamation been made:

“*Let small and great exert themselves to this end.*

“My neighbors, too, should learn this lesson, and may this lesson long endure!

“And this purpose will increase; it will increase vastly; even half as much again will it increase.

“And this proclamation was made by the body of missionaries, 256.”

It is a simple secret, but unfortunately rarely tried and maintained by those who talk loudest of their Utopias — just plain, off-coat, shirt-sleeves-rolled-up, knotty-muscled, sweaty-browed *hard work!* Where it has been genuinely tried, it always succeeds.

Then there was another old Buddhist precept which Chandragupta had engraved on another rock:

“Father and mother must be hearkened to; similarly, respect for living creatures must be firmly established; truth must be spoken.

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“These are the virtues of the Law which must be practised. Similarly the teacher must be revered by the pupil, and fitting courtesy must be shown to relations.

“This is the ancient nature of things — this leads to length of days, and according to this men must act.”

A little more than a century previously a certain Esdras or Ezra wrote the same Buddhist precept in a new ritual that he was editing out of old Chaldaean and Oriental Scriptures. In his ritual-story it was no Chandra-gupta, the divine king of India, but the president-god of his lodge for whom the ritual was being prepared, who wrote with his finger on the rock:

“Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long in the land. . . .”

Truly; this is the ancient nature of things. If the Hindûs had honored their ‘father and mother’ — their *spiritual* father and mother, the divine Chandragupta-Aśoka, beloved of the Gods — their days would have been long in the land. Had not Gautama himself taught the same to the proud King of Magadha? If the Vajjians had honored their spiritual ‘father and mother’ and had kept the precepts of harmony inculcated by Buddha himself, then the King of Magadha could not touch them. Therefore the King’s ministers had built a fort at Pâtaliputra to drive out the Vajjians if they should attack him in their turn. And the village of Pâtaliputra had grown from the time the fort had been constructed. The Buddha, our Lord, had seen the fairy Builders in droves and shoals and throngs indicating to men where the city should be, and He had said that Pâtaliputra should be the greatest of cities.

“And, Ânanda,” he had said to his faithful disciple whom he loved, “among famous cities and the busy places where men live, this will be the greatest, the city of Pâtaliputra. It will be a great market where men shall come from every country in India to trade. But three dangers will threaten Pâtaliputra, one from fire, one from water, and another from quarreling and lack of harmony.”

It was a glorious day when the man Kalanda with Râma-Sinha and Lala and the rest of their happy company saw the white walls of Pâtaliputra glistening in the sun. When they had departed, Pâtaliputra was a royal town with wooden walls. Now, as the Buddha had prophesied, it had become a mighty city whose very bazaar chattered with the tongues of every country in the continent of India. The wooden walls were no

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more. While they yet stood the King had built fairy palace-walls of stone within them; carvers and stonecutters and architects and sculptors with busy chisel had decorated the stone walls of Pâtaliputra and where once had been a town was now a dream-city of pinnacles and cupolas, of markets and mansions and temples and squares. It was '320 B. C.'—2250 years ago. Suppose we transport Pâtaliputra to London or New York of today.

When Kalanda returned the city was as big as Manhattan Island — all New York from the Battery to Harlem; or it would have filled an oblong contained between The White City at Shepherd's Bush and the East India Dock Road, reaching as far north as King's Cross and south to Charing Cross. The teeming millions passed and repassed with kaleidoscopic and bewildering variety; well would it have been if there had been none but Indians there!

But — 'Alexander had conquered India!' Indeed he had. The Macedonians were brave men; but India was not conquered with men. The battalions and phalanxes and cohorts and legions of Greece that conquered India were young women and young men of a far subtler army.

The law in nature is so plain that it is amazing to find it escape anybody's observation. When the divine kings come out openly among men in this age of the world it goes without saying that there is dire need for it.

Krishna says: "Whenever there is an insurrection of vice and injustice in the world, I reincarnate from age to age for the preservation of the just, the destruction of the wicked, and the establishment of righteousness."

'Krishna' had reincarnated in the person of Chandragupta, as it were in a minor manifestation and cycle. Therefore the just needed preservation from vice and injustice, and righteousness was in danger.

So we have the two eternal principles at war. In this case Chandragupta and the degenerated '*Greek civilization*'!

It is possible that the *story* of the destruction of Sodom is older than the time of which we are writing — 320 B. C. or so. Whether older or not, it is the same tale. The Greeks came and the virgins of the temples were virgins no longer. The 'holy' boys of the degenerated temple of Solomon found their counterpart in the city on the Ganges; while the grand strong note of Buddhism rang out clear and pure to the clean air of heaven, the foul smoke of degraded Greek rites and Syrian and Persian corruptions sought to overwhelm it in poisonous fumes until the very gods wept. The fire rained down from heaven and destroyed a great part of that glorious city of the Ganges.

And for a time the indignant gods were appeased. Later, what the Buddha had said would doubtless come to pass — it did come to pass —

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water and dissension would have their way with Pâtaliputra and its glory would be laid low.

Meanwhile the glorious reign of Chandragupta, whom they called Kâlâsoka, flowered like a lotus on a mountain-lake. Kalanda 'took refuge in the Law' and joined the Order. He had had his *wanderjahre* and was entitled to years of peaceful pursuit of the ascetic life.

And then about 300 B. C. as we call it, or 243 A. B. as they called it (for Our Lord the Buddha had died 243 years before), Chandragupta went to his rest.

His son Bimbisâra followed him, and he too was a devotee of the Good Law, besides being one of the divine Kings, as Chandragupta had been before him. His work was to consolidate the kingdom of Righteousness, and he did so to the best of his ability. Why then say more? His work lived; his name, what mattered it?

Following Bimbisâra came the grandson of Chandragupta-Aśoka, and him they called Aśoka, too.

This Aśoka had been born in Buddhism but had been an atheist and a profligate. Tales are told of his cruelty, but they are veils for real events in his soul-life hidden by the symbolism of history. With the Hindûs, history is one of the temple secret-sciences, and what emerges in public is very vague --- but the real facts are rigidly recorded. This is better than, like the Greeks, recording all the facts in public and leaving it to posterity to find out that it is all or mostly imagination on the part of willing but uninformed historians.

We are not concerned with the early history of this Aśoka. But the time came when he saw the Light and he became in his turn a real Buddhist. So great and glorious was his reign that he is called Dharmâśoka, 'Aśoka of the Good Law.' Even more glorious than that of Chandragupta was the reign of Dharmâśoka; for Chandragupta had to build the Kingdom of Righteousness, but Dharmâśoka inherited the results of his good work and built the superstructure.

Peace was in the land in those days. If Chandragupta had been able to spread the beams of the Good Law over Syria and Greece and Egypt, Dharmâśoka was able to flash the shining rays of Truth to the farthest confines of the West, to Gaul and Britain and Spain, and perhaps even to Scandinavia.

It is customary on the part of Western students of Oxford and Cambridge to smile in a superior fashion at the wondrous tales of Dharmâśoka, but how should beef-eating and beer-drinking professors of the so-called twentieth century in Europe hope to unravel the subtleties of the historic code of such giants of wisdom as the Aśokas?

The *most absurd* thing that Dharmâśoka did, was to have 84,000

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dagobas and stûpas constructed throughout India by all the friendly Râjâs. These monuments were all finished in one day and Buddhism was much glorified thereby. Well, there were an enormous number of Rock- and Pillar-inscriptions made, as we have seen from the examples we have copied. There were thousands of stûpas made, and if they did not amount to exactly 84,000, it makes no difference whatever. For the number is precisely like the numbers and measurements of Solomon's Temple, more or less crudely copied from these Oriental codes of secret records. Probably there were 84,000 of them, but if not, the figures tell the same tale. They tell of their purpose and of various *scientific* truths not intended for the unintellectual multitude of that day nor for the ignorant intellectual multitude of our day. But we will say that a later philosopher demanded not one but three days to build one Temple after destroying it. So we will take the tale at its literal value, just as if we were professors reading Greek history, not knowing that it might possibly be wrong somewhere. Not claiming to be historians, we are more fortunate, for we can say at once that we are writing fiction, and if by any chance a reader sees between the lines, so much the better for him.

Dharmâśoka reigned for twenty-six years and he, like his grandfather, set up many rock- and pillar-inscriptions throughout the country. Here is one of them:

“Thus saith His Sacred and Gracious Majesty the King:

“When I had been consecrated twenty-six years the following creatures were declared exempt from slaughter, namely: parrots, starlings, adjutants, Brahmany ducks, geese, nandimukhas, gelatas, bats, queen-ants, female tortoises, boneless fish, vedaveyakas, gangapuputakas, skate, river tortoises, porcupines, tree-squirrels, barasinha stags, Brahmany bulls, monkeys, rhinoceroses, gray doves, common pigeons, and all four-footed animals which are neither utilized nor eaten.

“She-goats, ewes, and sows, that is to say, those that are with young or in milk, are exempt from slaughter, as well as their offspring up to six months of age.

“The caponing of cocks must not be done.

“Chaff must not be set on fire along with the living things in it.

“Forests must not be set on fire either wantonly or for the destruction of life.

“The living must not be fed with the living.

“At certain named periods of the year, as well as on fast-days throughout the year, fish is exempt from slaughter, and must not be sold.

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“On the same days in elephant-forests and fish-ponds any other classes of animals whatsoever are not to be destroyed.

“On certain named days throughout the year neither bulls nor he-goats, nor rams nor boars or other animals may be mutilated in the customary way.

“On certain days the branding of oxen and horses must not be done.

“During the period that elapsed until I had been consecrated twenty-six years, twenty-five jail-deliveries have been effected.”

The perfect toleration of the Emperor is shown in edicts where he declares that all denominations are revered by him; but that in his opinion each man ought to have a creed and adhere to it.

Dharmâśoka maintained sixty to seventy thousand monks and priests and was so devoted to the propagation of the Law that he is said in mythical legends to have given all India to the Buddhist philosophy and its organization, sometimes called a ‘church.’

Dharmâśoka shows that he was a Râja-Yoga in the attention he pays to that kind of asceticism which purifies the character and has permanent results for future lives. He says in a pillar inscription:

“A man sees only his good deed and says, ‘This good deed has been done by me.’ In no wise does he see his ill deed and say, ‘This sin have I done, this act called impiety.’

“Difficult, however, is self-examination of this kind.

“Nevertheless, a man should see to this that brutality, cruelty, anger, pride, jealousy, are things leading to impiety, and should say, ‘By reason of these things I must not fall.’

“This is chiefly to be seen to — ‘The one course avails me for the present world, the other course avails me also for the world to come.’”

(To be continued)