

# THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

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"THE philosophy that teaches selflessness contains the balm for the pain and suffering of today. False ideas, false ambitions, inharmonious methods of living, selfishness, and an unbrotherly spirit, are accountable for the unhappiness and dissatisfaction. . . .

"Humanity has long wandered through the dark valley of bitter experiences; but the mountain heights are again seen, suffused with the glow of dawn and the promise of a new Golden Age, and a pathway is once more shown to that realm where the gods still abide."

— KATHERINE TINGLEY

## WANTED A NEW INTERPRETATION OF HISTORY

H. T. EDGE, M. A.



THEOSOPHY is the modern presentation of the ancient Wisdom-Religion, which has existed in all times, and whose existence and teachings we can trace among all peoples. The question will naturally arise in some minds, why do we find so little about it in history; in the history of the Grecian and Roman civilizations, for instance, in which it is stated to have been known?

The answer to this question, if obscure at first sight, becomes however abundantly clear after a little reflexion.

The fact is that history — what we call history — has been *made to order*. This is by no means to impute deliberate fraud on the historians; it is possible to acquit at least the majority of them of that; but there are other equally efficacious causes of misrepresentation. For consider what 'history' is. Some scholar of extraordinary mental ability searches the records and writings of the Greeks and Romans, and from the mass of material he has collected he compiles a history. But in doing so, he inevitably exercises a selective action. His object is to paint a picture of ancient times which shall be consistent with modern notions, habits of thought, and beliefs. He finds a very great deal of material which he can in no wise fit into his scheme. This he sets aside, rejects, passes over. It is all 'ancient superstition,' which humanity has

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since outgrown. He will not sully his pages or insult his readers with such puerilities. It is not consistent with the 'dignity of history.' Stories about Romulus are either dismissed as idle 'folk-lore,' or tortured into some symbolical meaning, or passed through a sieve in search of what the historian is pleased to regard as a 'grain of truth.'

There are large quantities of writings about the ancient Mysteries; there are the works of the Neo-Platonic school, the teachings of Pythagoras. See how Gibbon has treated the teachings of the Alexandrine school — puffed them away with a breath of eighteenth-century sneer. Not worthy of the dignity of history! As for poor Plato, he seems to have been a weird compound of wisdom and childlike folly, according to the interpretation that is put upon him.

So we see that 'history,' in the form in which we have so long known it, is an artificial product that has been built up on certain initial assumptions; assumptions that might be summed up in the well-known line: "What I don't know isn't knowledge." In other words the historian has made up his mind to select his material according to certain standards of what is true and what false, what sense and what nonsense; and the result is naturally what might be expected — a history made to order.

Imagine a geologist, convinced of the absolute literal truth of the story of Adam and Eve and the creation of the world six thousand years ago. He infers from his belief that any fossils or other evidence contradicting his belief must necessarily be freaks of nature, delusions of the devil, or some kind of fraud. Naturally therefore the only evidence he finally selects is that which confirms his belief. Is this analogy strained? Our historians have started out with the sincere conviction that certain things can happen in nature, and certain other things cannot. Hence, when they find testimony as to the latter, they reject it; while, on no stronger evidence, they readily accept statements which do not conflict with their beliefs as to what is possible.

But it is evident that, once we have made up our mind that things which the historian has considered impossible are possible, his method of selection will no longer apply. It will become necessary at once to bring to light all that mass of materials which he has suppressed; and the result will be a very much modified, even a totally different, view of the ancients, and a history of quite another kind than we have been accustomed to.

Particular instances of this process of distortion and unfair selection could be compiled at the cost of some time and labor; and doubtless readers will be able to furnish some for themselves. But what we can

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find in that way is small compared with the amount which leaves no trace. There is nothing to show us how much the historian has passed over in total silence; or what mental process he has gone through in reducing what he has found in the ancient authors to a form which he considers presentable to modern readers. Where the testimony from ancient historians is scanty or conflicting, the modern historian has to apply some canon of judgment based on his notions of consistency and probability. He asks himself what is likely to have happened; and he can settle that point only with reference to his own ideas as to what is possible and what not. He asks himself how a certain man would have acted; and again decides in accordance with his own views of human nature. One does not blame him for doing what was perhaps the only thing he could; one merely points out that preconception colors his conclusions. And when our preconceptions change, our conclusions will change too.

The pith of the matter is that the principal reason why so little evidence of the Wisdom-Religion has been found is partly that we have not been looking for it, and partly that we have been trying not to see it. The corollary is that, so soon as we begin to look for it, we shall find it easily and plentifully enough.

Recent advances in scientific thought have familiarized us with the idea, which we apply to other matters besides science, that our notions of the universe and of life depend on our point of view. We can regard things in accordance with various 'frames of reference.' The Einsteinists inform us that, if we accept a space-time frame of reference, in place of the old Newtonian three-dimensional system, we can literally, and not merely figuratively, kick a person into the middle of next week; or at least we can fancy ourselves doing so. The world may consist entirely of Greeks and barbarians, or British and foreign. If we consider that reality is confined to what is objective to our sense-consciousness, then all else becomes non-existent and goes into the wastebasket. History needs to be rewritten in accordance with a new frame of reference.

Even as matters stand we have histories of various kinds according to the point of view they are written from. There is for instance the well-known case of Mitford and Grote, historians of Greece, the former of whom wrote from an aristocratic point of view, with a grudge against democracy, and depreciates Athens while exalting Sparta, at the expense of much twisting of the facts, as Macaulay and Grote both prove. Grote wrote his history in a much broader spirit and has been fair to Athens and its democracy, though, as some think, going a little too far in that direction.

As to the early history of Rome, if we set out by pooh-poohing

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Jupiter and Quirinus and the augurs and Sibylline books, and casting them into the waste-basket as unworthy of the dignity of history, we shall of course obtain a filtrate of the kind we desire; but we shall have to do considerable violence to some readers' sense of probability and of the value of testimony. If, on the other hand, we happen to believe in the reality of the Wisdom-Religion and the Mysteries, and understand somewhat how to deal with symbols, we shall be able to interpret the records in a way consistent with common sense, without committing the absurd and solemn mistake of either swallowing things wholesale or rejecting them wholesale.

When the historian meets the word *Deus* or *Theos* he has in mind the modern notion of a personal extracosmic God, and supposes that the ancients worshiped a multitude of such deities. But if we understand that the ancient teachings saw the universe actuated by numerous deific powers, of various grades, and man himself (the microcosm) as an expression of such powers, we can see that, in invoking Jupiter, etc., they were seeking to evoke certain perfectly natural powers which exist in nature and have their correspondence in man himself. It is we who have preferred, while forced to recognise such powers, to give them names like 'force' and 'energy' and 'attraction' and 'affinity,' and to speak of 'Nature' and Chance and Fate. But an erstwhile spirit of self-sufficiency is passing, and we are more aware today that the despised past holds much that it can teach us if we will learn. If we could apply to testimony of all kinds the same criterion of judgment, not allowing prejudice to vitiate the result, but simply looking with open eyes, we might be better able to understand what the voices of antiquity are trying to tell.

## CANTRE'R GWAELOD

KENNETH MORRIS

WHITE wings lap and white waves leap  
O'er the Lowland Hundred's sleep;  
And green and dim the flood flows where  
Were hawk and hound and pride and prayer;  
Yet the bells at evening ring  
From 'neath wave and sea-gull wing,  
And Gwyddno's minstrels' grief and glee  
Sing forever through the sea.

## CANTRE'R GWAELOD

Reeds and rushes whisper and sigh  
Where unknown the Mighty lie:  
Hero-hearts that broke of old  
And bloom now broom- or sunset-gold;  
Prophets murdered long ago  
Who gave the hills their purple glow:  
We forget — but not the Sea  
Nor the Mountains' majesty.

Shineth, fired to west, the sky?  
— Day hath learned from them to die.  
Hath iris, rose, or peony shone?  
— Summer puts their dreamings on.  
Ne'er was hue nor splendor yet  
But what human hearts beget;  
Or, if wrought by Gods behind,  
Focused through some human mind.


Ne'er I lifted up my sight  
Toward the Mountains crowned with light,  
But in mine own spirit there  
I saw the Goal of all men's prayer,  
And glassed where bodily eyes might win  
To view them, cliffs and crags within —  
Love and will or rock and sod,  
The Himálayas of the Heart of God.

And evil thoughts in secret born  
Add to every rose a thorn;  
But what heart would help or save  
Turns some threatening wind or wave;  
And Cantre'r Gwaelod lies asleep  
Green unmotioned fathoms deep,  
But Gwyddno's minstrels' grief and glee  
Chime still through the Celtic Sea. . . .

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## RELIGION AND SCIENCE

RONALD MELVILLE

 RELIGION and Science are now such bitter enemies that it is hard to think of them as former allies living in peace together, basking in the sunshine of Truth. How did they come to such antagonism? Each in its own way is the product of an aspiration to true knowledge, or to knowledge of the truth; each starts with an assumption, Religion declaring that truth can only be received by man as revealed to him through the grace of God; while science no less positively asserts that knowledge comes to man as the fruit of his own efforts and the result of his intellectual experience. Each of these two assumptions is stamped with the seal of positive assurance which admits of no compromise or question. The element of certainty in the case is purely personal; it is a mental attitude, a mold of mind, unshakable because unrecognised as such.

These divergent mental certainties naturally color the avowed object of life's quest which in both cases is called knowledge of the truth, whether the truth be thought to rest upon authority or experience; therefore it may be well carefully to consider what we mean by 'knowledge.' The word seems to carry with it a sense of certainty such as may be proved or demonstrated, yet it is undeniable that what is certain to one person may appear as the merest speculation to another. And the most intense conviction may be established in a mind by an act of faith that is altogether independent of reason, evidence, or proof.

Sooner or later every seeker after truth must face the problem and answer for himself the question "What is the ultimate test of truth"? And he must stand or fall upon the merits of his own decision; for even if he believes upon authority, it is he who makes choice of the authority and accepts its dicta. He is responsible to himself for his own faith.

If he puts his trust in reason, it is he who must decide the question as to what evidence shall be accepted or rejected, as well as what is to be considered proof, and in these decisions he cannot escape the exercise of faith. Even the rejection of all evidence that cannot be verified by the senses is itself an act of faith, a declaration of the infallibility of sense-perception.

The knowledge of the scholar is no more than memorized information stamped with the approval of some arbitrarily constituted authority, and the acceptance of such authority is an act of faith.

Original research may disregard authority but is compelled to

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substitute some standard wherewith to test and verify conclusions drawn from individual experience, and these standards must be based upon experience, authority, or faith, and all of them are subject to rejection or acceptance by every other searcher after truth.

Must we then conclude that there is no ultimate test of truth? Or shall we rather say that there may be as many ultimates as there are minds? In any case a standard or a test depends for its authority upon an individual act of faith. But what is faith? It is the submission of reason to *intuition*, not dogmatic authority; it is the spiritual faculty of direct perception of truth in itself: it is the acceptance by the mind of the dictates of the soul. It is the soul's record of spiritual experience.

Faith sets the seal of certainty alike upon the facts established by science and the doctrines of intuitional religion. Without it knowledge is but accumulated information: and religious rites the empty repetition of a soul-less ceremony. In all things faith is the life-giving principle: in man himself it is the awakening of the soul to a realization of its identity with the soul of nature: faith is the beginning of self-consciousness, the path of knowledge of the Self divine. By faith the doubting mind is rendered capable of enthusiasm without which the soul grows torpid. By faith man frees himself from superstition and the tyranny of the dead hand of old tradition; for the fountain of faith flows from the well-spring of eternal truth which grows not old.

For lack of it our modern science gropes blindly amid the accumulated mental refuse of unilluminated experimenters who for faith have substituted mere negation. For the same cause ecclesiastical religion has failed to light man's path; and thus these two are powerless to help the evolution of mankind, even were they to forget their differences; for two darknesses will not produce a light, nor will two dogmatisms liberate the mind from the depressing influence of hopeless pessimism which has fallen as a blight upon our civilization.

When Science and Religion recognise Theosophy their differences will disappear, for they will see that they are both but aspects of the Truth and have no cause of quarrel. But science, having turned its back upon the light of faith, sees naught but superstition in religion, and so repudiates it, while the ecclesiastical authorities taking their stand upon tradition and authority resent the scientific claims to a monopoly of truth. Theosophy supplies the key to the solution of this tangle: that key is Soul-Knowledge, or Faith. Without it man cannot know himself, and without self-knowledge all other learning is unprofitable. —When Science and Religion shall have found the Self, there will be no more question of authority, for "There is no religion higher than Truth."

## VIEWING THINGS AS A WHOLE

H. TRAVERS, M. A.

"A use, hitherto not much insisted upon, that may result from the contemplation of celestial magnificence, is that it will teach us to make an allowance for the apparent irregularities we find below. Whenever we can examine the works of the Deity at a proper point of distance, so as to take in the whole of his design, we see nothing but uniformity, beauty, and precision. The heavens present us with a plan which, though inexpressibly magnificent, is yet regular beyond the power of invention. Whenever therefore we find any apparent defects in the earth, instead of attempting to reason ourselves into an opinion that they are beautiful, it will be wiser to say that we do not behold them at the proper point of distance, and that our eye is laid too close to the objects to take in the regularity of their connexion. In short, we may conclude that God, who is regular in His great productions, acts with equal uniformity in the little."—GOLDSMITH, *History of the Earth and Animated Nature*

"The error here involved — a gross error redolent of mischief — I cannot pretend to expose within the limits assigned me at present; and with the philosophical it needs no exposure. It may be sufficient here to say that it forms one of an infinite series of mistakes which arise in the path of Reason through her propensity for seeking truth *in detail*."

—POE, *Mystery of Marie Roget*



AN artist is a creator, fulfilling a function which he inherits from a deific source. To obtain unity and wholeness in his creations, he has to adapt. A mere section of the scenery before his eye will not suffice; he must weave it into a unit, a whole, a miniature universe. A novelist does not present a mere selection of annals; even a diarist could hardly so obliterate his imagination and mechanicalize himself as to achieve that. He has to weave his events into a drama, with a beginning, a climax, and end. Thus only can he achieve unity and symmetry.

What we need, then, for recognising the truth, is breadth of view. "He cannot see the wood for the trees," is a familiar saying. All through life we shall find errors arising from this too narrow vision. We cavil at *apparent* defects in the conduct of some person's business, without being great enough or broad enough to view his undertaking as a whole; so that his marvelous merits as a great and efficient administrator are blotted out from our puny vision by a greatly magnified and distorted view of some detail not carried out as we think it ought to be. We cannot judge justly of anything unless we know the whole of which it is a part. I may take a poem and dissect each separate stanza and line, showing that a metaphor in one stanza does not agree with a figure in another. But, unless a poem is to be regarded merely as a congeries of parts, I must try to view it as a whole; when I may discover that the apparent contradictions were only contrasts, blending into a harmony like the chords in music.

Much might be written about the narrow-minded and parochial



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way of viewing various matters. It is a fertile theme for the essayist, and we can all find instances of it among our friends, or, if candid enough, in ourselves. What may be done in this place is to examine its bearing on some of those problems of life to which Theosophy affords the clue.

The apparent injustice of life is of course the most familiar and striking of these problems; and, for want of the real reason, how many elaborate theories have been woven to account for it! Trust and resignation to a supreme Will and Wisdom is a sublime attitude of mind which suffices for some; but not for others, in whom the desire for an intellectual understanding is strong. There may be various schools of philosophy which, relinquishing the attempt to understand, concentrate upon conduct; bidding us make the best of life as we find it, according to pietistic, stoical, or epicurean principles, or what not. There are mystics who assign the apparent injustice to the imperfection of human faculty, and inculcate a transcendental philosophy, and methods for attaining to clearer perception by developing higher faculties. But let us apply the idea enunciated above. We take too narrow and limited a view of life. Therefore we do not descry the pattern. There are two principal ways in which we may thus limit our vision:

I. We discern only a small fragment in time. It is but a single period of earth-life, lasting some three-score years and ten, that we see. But this counts only as a fraction in the life of the Soul — that is, of the real Man, the real liver of the life. Could we see the whole, or even only a greater part, the mystery, or much of it, would vanish.

The truth of this can be actually proved on a smaller scale. If we found a person suffering from some disease, this might seem very arbitrary and unjust on the part of fate or providence, until we should learn that this person had brought his sufferings upon himself by the indiscretions of his youth. This may serve as a simple illustration of the principle that what seems unsymmetrical when viewed in part, may appear quite harmonious when viewed on a larger scale, from a greater distance.

According to a very ancient teaching, now revived by Theosophy, this principle must be extended so as to embrace the whole life of a human Soul, including not a single earth-life alone, but many successive earth-lives. It will be asked how the causal link, connecting conduct with its consequences, can be extended across the gap of death and re-birth. But in this connexion it is important to bear in mind how little of real explanation we have for any causal sequence. We see that one thing follows another, and we try to connect cause with effect by introducing a greater or less number of intermediate links in the chain; but

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the *prime* difficulty remains the same, if indeed it is not actually multiplied by the number of links. If this is true, we are merely boggling over one difficulty when we cannot explain another of the same kind. In the Theosophical teachings a good deal is said by way of explanation of the way in which causes are transmitted from life to life; but full knowledge can come only step by step as we progress on the path of knowledge. In the meantime it is important to understand that life, if viewed on this larger scale, would no longer seem arbitrary, unequal, unjust; for we should then realize that man makes his own destiny and incurs the just and inevitable consequences of his own desires and actions, whether of the kind he calls pleasurable or painful. Thus is briefly outlined the great Theosophical teachings of Karma and Reincarnation.

II. We refer the events of our life to our own personality, forgetting that we are part of a great whole; and by the principle that has been enunciated this must lead to error in judgment. A family would be considered very disunited and quarrelsome if each member of it insisted on his personal rights instead of giving and taking, helping and sharing. If I seem to suffer for the sins of others, why should I elaborate a theory to prove that I myself was the real cause of the suffering? May I not be willing to suffer for the sins of others? I am ready enough to gain by the good works of others. In short, if I am a member of a brotherhood, it may suit me to take bad and good as it comes, without caring much who started it.

We must avoid a too bookkeeping idea of life. If, before the angel who posts the book of life, I were to insist too much on having my debts paid, he might produce some entries on the other side of the ledger, showing that I had received a good deal more than my due, through the good-nature of other people.


It is sound Theosophical doctrine that the personality is a delusion. How much error then must arise from viewing life as though the personality were not a delusion! It would seem reasonable to suppose that one's entire view of Karma would change if one overcame the delusion of personality. One thing is sure — Love would swallow up in its healing waters all our soreness about personal injustice.



“IF a man views life as the life of the body, his life ends with the death of the body. But if man views his life as the life of the spirit, he cannot even imagine an end to his life.”— *Selected*

## THE PURPOSE OF LIFE

P. A. MALPAS

 HE purpose of Life is the Evolution of the Soul, back to its divinity whence it came. "For the purposes of the soul [Self] alone the Universe exists," says an old scripture. The royal road of this evolution is Discipline and Self-Directed Effort.

There are many people who, possessing no more than a sketchy philosophy, grasp at the half-truth that "all is illusion." But with their limited intellectual scope and utter lack of training in the science of the Soul, they make their lives more illusionary than ever by thinking that this means that we must ignore the circumstances in which we live, since they are "imaginary." As well may a soldier say that since drill is not war, but only imaginary war, he is foolish to drill and train himself. What really is illusionary is about ninety per cent. of our *wants* as distinguished from our *needs*.

But in all such people there is a hidden fount of wisdom far greater than the mere brain-mind. This higher part of themselves forces them to act against their pet theories of which they *think* they are convinced. For your illusionist, in Europe at any rate, rarely sits down by the roadside to die simply because "all being illusion" he sees no reason to let his body live any longer. His brain is often such a fool that it doesn't know whether there is anything afterwards or, if it suspects an afterwards, it supposes it is some fantastic and feeble existence much like earth-life, only rather more material. But his real Self, the soul, knows. Hence his inconsistency. The pity is that so very few are in a position to tune-in their dulled brains to the wireless of the Soul, and even if they do not give up the battle, they do less than their best.

There are many such people who have no idea of the purpose of life and who might just as well stop as go, for all their brain-mind can tell. Yet such a man will work at his profession and is devoted to his family and enjoys himself in his own way as heartily as any one. If he belongs to the numerous class of *affirmers* and *deniers* who always exist in the world, though sometimes bobbing up under a new name and so thinking they have the distinction of being something really new, then he will sometimes assert that evil and sickness and ill-health do not exist.

Sometimes he will find out the funny little psychic trick of forcing back sickness and pain on to other more dangerous planes outside the

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scope of his mere brain, and then think he has got rid of them! You can't fool nature that way. She has at her command all the time there is, and you haven't. Even if for a whole lifetime, and on all planes, you do manage to escape the consequences of what you have yourself set going as a cause, there are other lives in which nature can get her work of readjustment done — but *you* lose the time, and that is a calamity. The purpose of life is *discipline*, and readjustment of failures in discipline. *And sicknesses and pain are just that and no more.*

Even then the *deniers* and *affirmers*, who are simply people evading the purpose of life, often employ the best physicians and nurses, thereby showing that they have more common sense than brain-sense. They pay for the privilege, too. They pay to persuade others to persuade them that an illusion is still an illusion! Yet they would be insulted if you called them illogical. The fact is that, in spite of themselves, their souls are bigger than their brains.

If life is an illusion, it is a very useful illusion. School is an illusion. What one learns there is often of no value whatever in itself. But the effort of learning promotes growth and discipline of the mind. Similarly all systems of religions — of course referring to those which do not do obvious harm — are schools. There must come a time when the Soul will laugh heartily at the exoteric faiths it has passed through in its school-days, days that we call lives, but it will appreciate the real results, the strength gained by the effort of learning.

The purpose of life is to learn. *Discipline* is simply the Latin word for 'taking learning' and it is a good word, because it turns its back on so-called learning that is merely medicine taken without effort out of a spoon, or information taken out of a book. The learning can take care of itself; it is the making the effort that makes the Soul grow into its greatness.

There is another word which means 'training' of a more intense kind. It is the Greek word *askesis* which we have anglicized into the word 'asceticism.' This is not for ordinary folk, though there is a great fascination in it for many, as they understand it. What is needed today is discipline, and when we have attained to such a high degree of that as is almost unknown in the world — then will be the time to talk of asceticism.

Self-discipline is so badly needed that there is no room nor time for criticizing other people. For it is a curious fact that one who criticizes other people *always* has some glaring defect of character yet uncorrected, and usually that defect is, or soon will be, the fault criticized

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in another. Criticize faults by all means, but *not* other people. Criticism of others is condemnation of oneself — always.


The purpose of life is discipline. This attained in any degree whatsoever, the Soul to that degree has its chance to shine through the illusion of material life and in degree make man *Man*, and no longer an animal, a pig, or a tiger, or a peacock, or a donkey, as the case may be.

Certainly it is all illusion, this life. But the Soul, the part of us, the almost unknown part of us for so many, knows that. On the other hand, it is no illusion for the brain-part of us, but a great reality. What happened is that the Soul undertook to go through it, using the body as its instrument, just as a soldier drills with a rifle, but is not the rifle. The reason why the Soul did so is to get away from the dreamless state of divinity in which it was, to become self-consciously divine, and the only road to that is through experience and self-directed evolution. It can't be done by paying for absent treatments or any other treatments, which are purely material remedies for material ills, whatever they may be made to look like to an over-eager imagination.

You cannot escape the purpose of life, which put in one word is 'work.' Self-directed evolution is a longer word, but it means the same thing, or implies it. Simultaneously with a deterioration of national character there was an ugly phrase that crept into the language, "getting fed up with things." It is the phrase of the coward. There are other lives to come and the quitter will always find that he has the task to do all over again if he deserts his duty now. For the purpose of life is self-directed evolution, through personal effort, heroic effort, divine effort.

## CAN THE END JUSTIFY THE MEANS?

R. MACHELL

 HERE is a school in which it is maintained that "the end justifies the means"; a contention that is stoutly denied by moralists who hold that every act must justify itself without regard to the end to be attained.

The first point that strikes one is the obvious fact that the means to an end must necessarily precede the end to be achieved, and further may be rendered ineffectual by some unforeseen interference which would prevent the anticipated justification. So if the end is to justify the means it must be inevitable in sequence. Can it be so? Obviously not.

It is probable that the ordinary man will feel himself fully justified

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in any act by a pious hope that a desirable end will be achieved by the means that he employs, even if he were willing to confess that the means itself was actually immoral. To the sanguine optimist the hope becomes a certainty capable of transforming an immoral means into a moral necessity. To him there is no real distinction between the desired end and the supposedly inevitable means, and consequently a most immoral act will seem to him as fully justified by the ultimate benefit to be derived from it.

The moralist who measures right and wrong by standards of conduct based upon custom and convenience refuses to avail himself of such expedients, and seeks to justify his acts by conforming to some code of ethics for which he claims authority. The moral fanatic will go so far as to repudiate all responsibility for the consequences of his acts provided that his conduct can be shown to conform to the dictates of his particular code.

But, it may well be asked, can man escape responsibility for the consequences of his acts? Such is not the teaching of Theosophy. Nowhere is it taught that any can escape the natural effects of causes set in motion: but it is urged that since Karma is ceaselessly at work adjusting the results of action, which are in no wise separate from causal acts, man has no need to worry over the inevitable. Wisdom consists, we are told, in the performance of duty, or the right performance of necessary action, without anxiety as to the consequences to the actor. This is a very different thing from teaching irresponsibility.

The student has to learn that every cause has its effect; that thoughts, words, or deeds are causes producing inevitable results, even as stones thrown up into the air must fall again to earth; and that the law of gravity which regulates their fall is neither kind nor cruel, but inevitable. Knowing this, people who are considerate for others do not throw stones at random nor do they shirk responsibility for damage done through heedlessness, nor do they throw the blame upon the law of gravity. The architect who miscalculates the action of the law of gravity cannot escape responsibility for the collapse of the building he has so badly designed nor attribute the disaster to 'natural' causes.

The law of Karma, like the law of gravity, is but the natural expression of the forces inherent in this universe, not blind nor unintelligent, but conscious with the intelligence that rules the world we live in and which is its creator.

This cosmic consciousness, which men call natural law, is naturally differentiated according to the plane of nature upon which it operates, being the expression of the forces that make up that plane. And so the

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intelligence of man is not the same as that which makes the rocks and moves the clouds, although all nature is divine at heart, and universal brotherhood is the natural expression of universal consciousness. So too the intelligence of men differs not only in degree but also in kind. And thus we find apparent contradictions in the various religions and philosophies of the world when men attempt to understand the laws by which they live and have their being. One man declares his personal will is free; another thinks himself the victim of necessity: one says there is no God; another holds there are as many gods as there are atoms in the universe. Each speaks according to the stage of his development, and sees no further than the limits of his ignorance.

So the wise men in every age appear to have established esoteric schools in which the pupils were pledged to observe most rigid silence as to the teachings so received, protecting thus themselves as well as others from mental confusion, for a little knowledge is a dangerous thing, and undigested teachings most misleading. It is to misunderstandings such as these we owe some of the wars known as religious.

In our own age the esoteric wisdom has been hidden by deep layers of ignorance and crude materialism, which have confused our modern languages to such a degree that it has become almost impossible to speak or write intelligibly upon the deeper questions of psychology: and so we have difficulty in answering satisfactorily even such simple questions as the one which is the text of this brief paper: "Can the End Justify the Means?"

For it has well been said: "END and BEGINNING are dreams." In the river of Life the water flows continuously and knows no end; and yet when the waters of the river mingle with the ocean the river disappears. Is it then justified for the destruction it may have wrought upon its way? Only a man would think of blaming it. Man loves to play the judge, to justify or to condemn: can he determine what is the end of action, where action ceases, where the consequence begins?

Let man adjust himself to the GOOD LAW; and he will have no need to justify himself, nor to seek justification before that LAW. For he himself is of the same essence as the Law, and needs no justification. Let him —


". . . do the deed and abide it, and sit on his throne on high,  
And look on today and tomorrow as those that never die."



"THE true faith is one — to love all that is living."— *Ibrahim of Cordova*

## THE IMPERIAL PALACES OF PEKING

OSVALD SIRÉN, PH. D.

HE present Imperial Palace of Peking — known as the Purple Forbidden City — is not very old, but it reflects in its general plan-arrangement as well as in the architectural character of the buildings, earlier Imperial palace-cities of China. Its historical importance is, indeed, more remarkable than its age.

Strictly speaking, none of the actual buildings within the precincts of the present palace-city is older than the sixteenth century and most of them have been extensively repaired or completely renewed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (some even in later times), but these renovations have always been executed in accordance with the old principles of Chinese architecture; the general shape and character of most of the halls, gateways, pavilions, and towers are still the same as ten or fifteen hundred years ago.

These constructions may thus serve to give us an idea about the palaces of the T'ang and Sung emperors in Ch'ang-an and in Lo-yang as well as about those which in later times were built on the site of Peking by the 'Golden Tartars' (the Chin emperors) and by the Mongols. All these earlier palaces have long ago been leveled with the ground, but their general arrangement and plans are known from the maps and descriptions in the old local chronicles or by the account of travelers, such as Marco Polo, who offers some very interesting information about the great palace of Kublai Khan in Khambalic (Peking).

This is not the place to enter into a historical study of those earlier palace-cities, whether in Ch'ang-an, Lo-yang or Peking;<sup>1</sup> it may simply be recalled that they were all arranged according to a similar plan to the present Purple Forbidden City, that is to say, in the form of oblong squares stretching from north to south, enclosed by high walls over which the towers and monumental gateways lifted their curving roofs. The measurements varied from one to two miles in length, the width being somewhat less.

The buildings within these wall-enclosed rectangular compounds were always orientated according to the cardinal points of the compass, their main façades being turned towards the south, and the streets were laid in straight lines from the north to the south and from east to west.

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1. Cf. my article in *THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH*, Vol. XXV, No. 6, December, 1923, about the Capitals of the Sui and the Tang dynasty.



## THE IMPERIAL PALACES OF PEKING

The plan was thus absolutely regular and perfectly balanced, though not exactly like a chess-board, because the buildings and their adjoining compounds were of varying size; the ceremonial halls and palaces, situated in the middle and front part of the palace-city, were larger and much more important in every way than the residential buildings which stood in the side-quarters or towards the back of the city. The front part was usually called the 'Outer Court,' and the buildings here were mainly intended for the transaction of official business, while the 'Inner Court' was surrounded by buildings of a more intimate character and contained extensive gardens and parks.

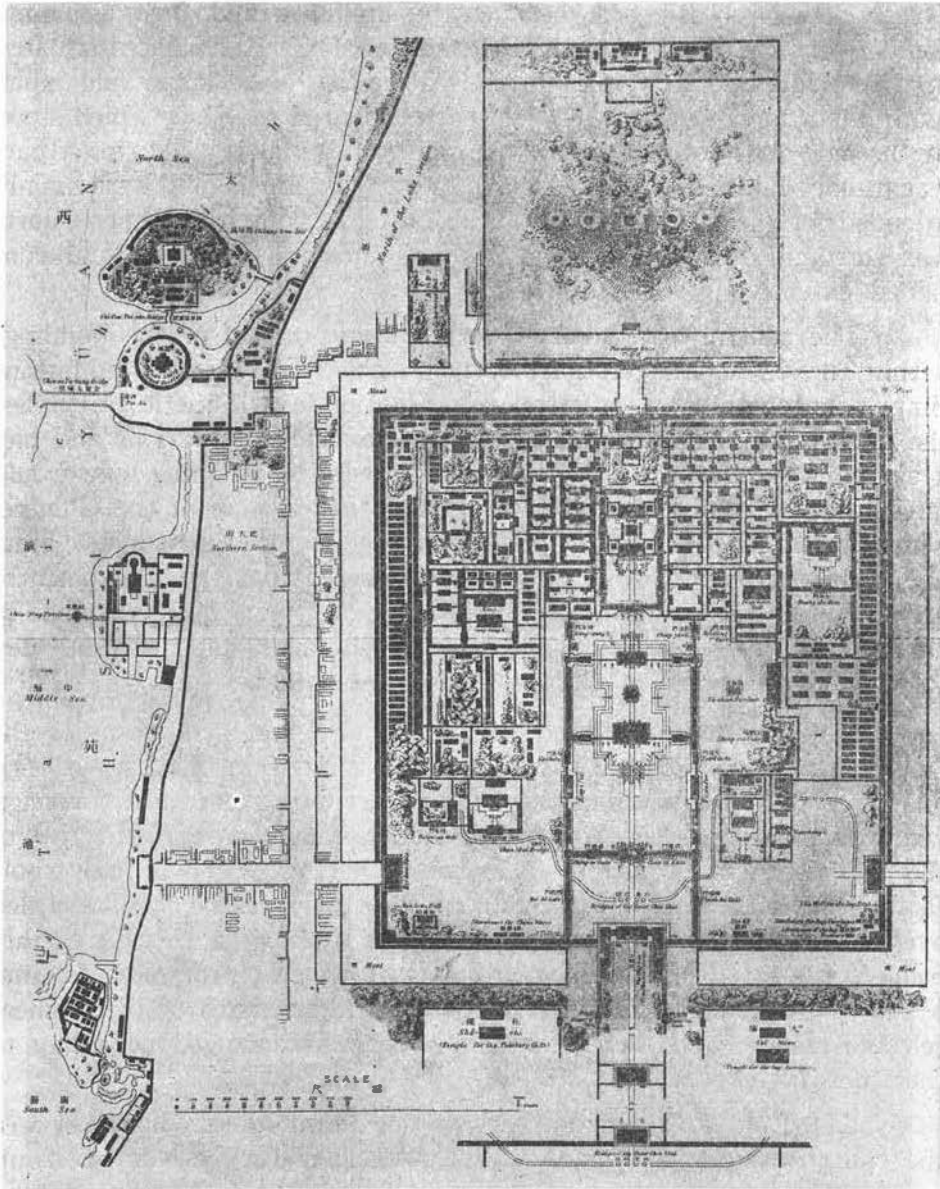
The general arrangement and relative position of the buildings within the ceremonial section of the palace-cities were by no means simply the outcome of practical considerations or aesthetic principles; the underlying ideas were based on astronomical observations and had a symbolic significance. To understand their full meaning, one would have to enter into a study of the cosmological system of the Chinese, which is far beyond our present scope; we can only give a few hints about the matter. May it also be remembered that the symbolism of architectural plans and measurements is something quite common in China, where so many things created by human hands are intended to convey a meaning or a scope beyond the material form.

In order to understand the importance and symbolism of the Imperial palace-cities, one should keep in mind that they served primarily as the residence and the place of activity of an ideal sovereign who was considered the Son of Heaven, the human representative of the highest divine principle. He ruled theoretically over the whole earth, just as the sun, which was considered his celestial symbol, ruled over the sidereal world.<sup>2</sup> His court and his dwelling-place were earthly counterparts of the heavenly constellations which surrounded the sun. Many of his court-officials had names of the asterisms of the Chinese celestial sphere, and their rank and order was arranged according to the same correspondences.

The Emperor's function was to act as an intermediary between the Ruler Above and humanity; his political power was only the out-

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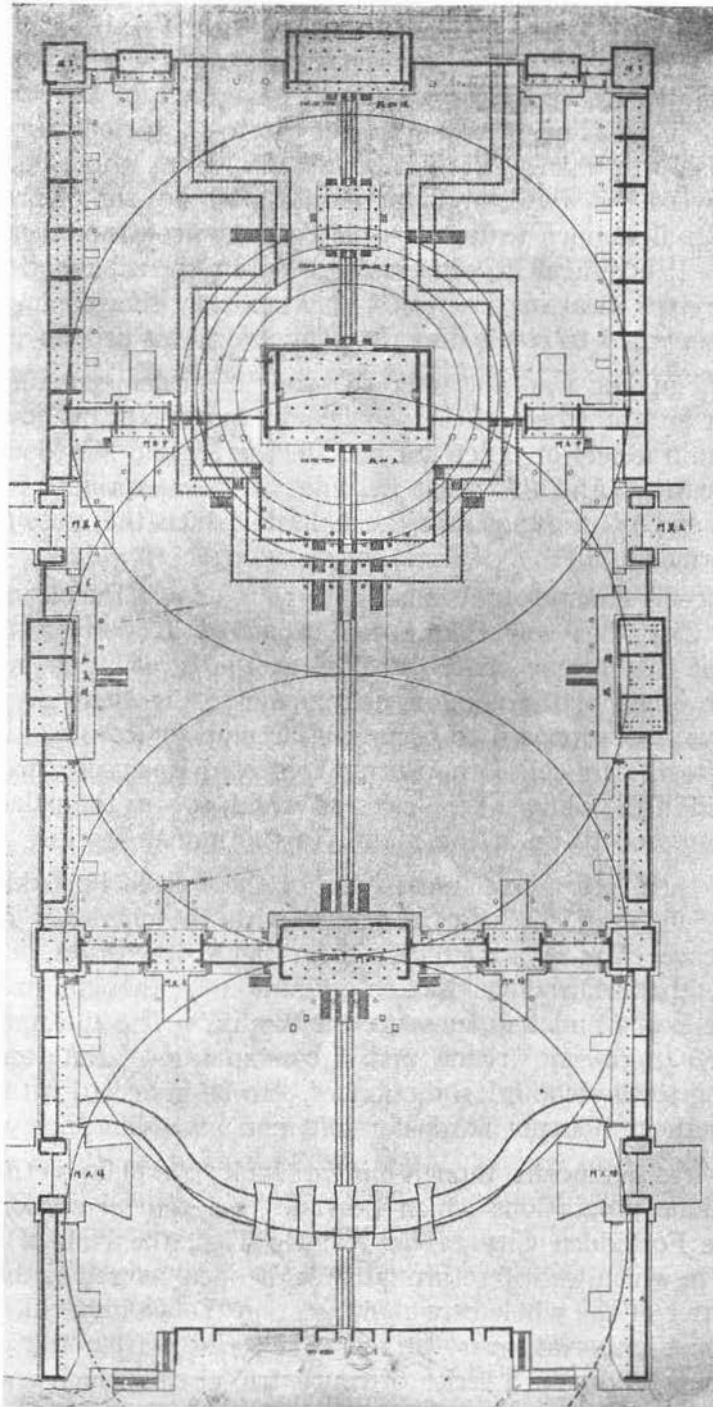
2. The most important discussion of the philosophical ideas underlying the general arrangement of the Imperial Palace is to be found in Mrs. F. Ayscough's article *Symbolism of the Purple Forbidden City*, reprinted in her lately published book *A Chinese Mirror* (London, 1925). I have used this article quite freely in reference to the explanation of the literary and philosophical background of the Forbidden City and take great pleasure in acknowledging my indebtedness to Mrs. Ayscough. Her sympathetic understanding of the Chinese and their ancient traditions adds a great deal to the value of her store of knowledge.



*Lamaland Photo & Engraving Dept.*

PLAN OF THE PURPLE FORBIDDEN CITY, MEI SHAN AND PARTS  
OF THE SEA PALACES

According to a Map published by the College of Engineering of the Tokyo  
Imperial University



*Lomaland Photo & Engraving Dept.*

PLAN OF TAI HO MEN, TAI HO TIEN  
& CHUNG HO TIEN, PAO HO TIEN

With Courtyards and Surrounding Buildings, in the Forbidden  
City in Peking, China

*(By J. A. Stark, Architect, Peking)*

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come of his supreme spiritual position. "The cult of the worship of Heaven was in his hands; it was his duty to make periodical reports of his stewardship to Shang Ti (the Above Ruler) from whom he held the order to govern the world, and this he did after a night of prayer and fasting at an altar open to the sky, placed to the south of the Imperial residence." It is difficult to conceive of a more responsible position than that held by the ideal sovereign of China, and any shortcomings on his part were supposed to result directly in misery to his people.

The emperor was not only the supreme ruler but the highest example for and protector of the people; the purpose of his government was to sustain a perfect peace not only in the Middle Kingdom but on the whole earth. And this great purpose was also expressed in the arrangement and in the names of the halls in which the state-functions were performed.

The general name of the palace, *Tzu Chin Ch'eng*, Purple (or Violet) Forbidden City, has sometimes been explained as derived from the red color of the mortar on the walls, but the explanation is entirely wrong; the origin of the name is astronomical; the Heavenly Lord or Ruler Above was supposed to occupy a circumpolar constellation composed of fifteen stars called the Purple Protected Enclosure, and as this was situated in the center of the celestial world, so was the palace of the emperor supposed to be in the middle of the human world.

The three great ceremonial halls of the Purple Forbidden City, known as San Ta Tien, have all names with the character *Ho*, Harmony or Peace; Mrs. Ayscough calls them "an apotheosis of, or a consecration to, that Harmony, that co-ordination of thought and action that brings peace and happiness to the world." The meaning of the character *Ho* (formerly written with a combination of flute and grain) is, according to the K'ang Hsi dictionary, "to be in accord with, to harmonize together; it is not hard, nor soft, nor unyielding, nor yielding."

Not less significant, though more difficult to explain, is the system of harmonious proportions which pervades the central section of the plan of the Forbidden City. The T'ai Ho Tien, the Hall of Supreme Harmony (to which we will return later) is the ideal as well as the mathematical center of the whole ceremonial section (as we may call this central and most important part of the palace-city); from the center of this hall may be drawn a series of concentric circles which enclose the salient points of the three successive terraces on which it stands, and also the larger circle which touches the side-walls of the enclosure. This is the largest unit of the threefold division, that seems to form a fundamental feature in the arrangement of the plan. It may be recalled that

## THE IMPERIAL PALACES OF PEKING

the division by nine (3 x 3) is particularly evident in the plan of the Altar of Heaven; just how far a similar system of proportions may be ascertained in the arrangement of the three great ceremonial halls, is a question that can be answered only after a more minute study of the plan than we can undertake at this place.

The plan of the whole palace-city is, as already observed, remarkably clear and symmetrical, in spite of the fact that it comprises such a great number of buildings. It is impossible to walk over all this wide ground within an hour or two and to observe all the buildings; we can only stop at some of the largest halls, taking note of their architectural features and their general purpose and significance.

The main entrance to the Forbidden City is of course from the south, through *Wu Men*, the *Gate of Zenith*, the largest of all the four outer gates, but it remains nowadays closed. The distance from here to the northern gate, which forms the opposite end of the great middle section, is more than three quarters of a mile.

Wu Men is built over the moat and consists of a broad middle portion (about 300 ft.) and two side-wings projecting at right angles towards the south (over 200 ft.). The bastion-like wall is pierced by three vaulted openings, and on top of this battered wall are placed open halls or pavilions connected by lower galleries. The doors of Wu Men were opened only to the emperor himself; when he passed through here, a bell was struck, and if he went to offer sacrifices at the ancestral temple, a bell was beaten — an instrument which still may be seen in the central hall of the gate.<sup>3</sup>

From the terrace of Wu Men one has a splendid view over the whole Outer Court, which extends over more than 2,000 feet northward to Ch'ien Ching Men. Through the front (south) part of this court enclosed by T'ai Ho Men and its adjoining galleries at the northern end, runs the *Golden Water River*, *Chin Shui Ho*, forming a wide curve from east to west. It is spanned by five marble bridges with sculptured balustrades, symbolical of the Five Virtues, the Five Relationships, or some similar concepts of Chinese philosophy.

The straight road, paved with marble slabs, leads across the middle bridge up to the terrace of *T'ai Ho Men*, the Gate of Supreme Harmony, in front of which stand two enormous bronze lions. T'ai Ho Men, like

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3. More complete historical information about the principal buildings within the Forbidden City may be found in the author's work *The Imperial Palaces of Peking*, published in English and French by G. van Oest, Paris. The publication contains 274 plates in phototype and a number of maps and drawings. The present article is largely based on the introductory text to *The Imperial Palaces of Peking*.

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all the great middle gates, was opened only for the Son of Heaven, while his officials, who usually joined him in front of this gate, passed through the side-gates, the civil officials using *Chao Te Men*, the Gate of Luminous Virtue, on the east, and the military officials *Chen Tu Men*, the Gate of Correct Conduct, on the opposite side.

T'ai Ho Men stands on a marble terrace surrounded by a sculptured balustrade likewise of white marble. Three flights of stairs lead up to the terrace, the middle one being for the most part covered with a kind of sloping bridge, decorated with dragons and other symbolic animals in high relief. It is the pathway of the Emperor; his chair was carried over the sculptured floor, while his retinue ascended the 28 steps on either side. The 'gate' consists mainly of an open hall with three naves and nine spans on the façade; the rear is closed and provided with large doors. The length of the façade is over 150 feet, while the whole terrace on which it stands comprises 170 feet. The tall columns carry, as usual, a double roof, curving deeply and projecting far at the eaves. The lofty effect of the building depends largely upon its beautiful substructure, the marble terrace, and upon its openness, the big roofs hovering over the open colonnades.

The importance of a building in China is as a rule accentuated by the terrace upon which it stands, and it may be claimed that the terrace with its decorative balustrade often is of a finer architectural effect than the wooden structure it supports.

This terrace-system is, no doubt, a feature that can be followed through various provinces of Oriental architecture, and it may well have been introduced into China from India, but it has hardly ever been more richly and beautifully developed than in the Imperial Palace-City of Peking. Here it is both figuratively and materially a fundamental feature; it affords the proper monumental support for all the great buildings and is of decisive importance for the decorative effect. And this is very much accentuated by the material; the terraces and their balustrades being executed in marble, while the superstructures are made of wood and painted red.

The distance between this gate and T'ai Ho Tien, the Hall of Supreme Harmony, is nearly 500 feet, but it seems still longer, because of the absolute bareness of the open court that lies between, and the monotonously uniform, low buildings on both sides.

T'ai Ho Tien is the first of the three great halls — *San Ta Tien* — constructed on the large three-staged marble terrace known as the '*Dragon Pavement*.' The plan of this terrace is like a double cross without a head;

## THE IMPERIAL PALACES OF PEKING

the contours form a series of right angles on both sides, and as the successive terraces all are enclosed with beautifully sculptured marble balustrades, the general effect becomes very rich. The three different stages correspond to the three Powers, that is *Heaven, Earth, and Man*. When these powers act in perfect union they are supposed to produce those greatest of blessings — *peace* and *plenty*.

The ascent to the terrace is by means of a triple staircase similar to the one we have noticed in front of T'ai Ho Men, but it is broader and is repeated three times over the successive stages of the terrace which gives it a very imposing aspect. The central flight is again treated like a sloping bridge or pathway over which the five-clawed Imperial dragons soar through clouds and waves. The steps of the two staircases at the sides are also decorated with reliefs representing various symbolic animals, and between the three flights are placed eighteen large bronze cauldrons, sometimes considered as descendants of the famous Nine Tripods, which during the T'ang and earlier dynasties existed at the Imperial Palaces. On the terrace itself may be seen two large cranes and two tortoises of bronze, animals often used as symbols of longevity, besides a sundial and a grain-measure.

The idea of the sundial was that it should remind every one of the Emperor's likeness with the sun whose light shines on high and low alike; when the sun is clouded the dial is useless,— so is the Ruler when evil counselors are allowed to intervene between him and the people. The grain-measure is the symbol of the full measure of justice that should be meted out to everybody, irrespective of his station. The measure should be level to the brim with benefits to the people.

T'ai Ho Tien was the place for the great ceremonies on Chinese New Year's day, on the day of the Winter Solstice, and on the Emperor's birthday; built at the end of the Ming dynasty, reconstructed after a fire under K'ang Hsi, restored by Ch'ien Lung and Yuan Shih K'ai, the room is now rarely used, except on very special occasions, such as the celebration of the armistice in 1918. The plan to convert it into a meeting-hall for the Chinese parliament has not as yet been carried out. The interior which measures 160 by 96 feet is divided lengthwise by three rows of eight columns, the end-parts of the buildings being cut off by walls, and the foremost aisle, on the south side, being treated as an open gallery. The plan of the whole building is a hall, nearly 200 feet wide with a broad central nave and two successively narrowing aisles on both sides.

The interior of T'ai Ho Tien is still a very impressive room, not only because of its dimensions but also because of its gorgeous decoration.

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The huge columns are coated with vermilion lacquer, the upper part of the walls, the beams and the brackets, are decorated with dragon- and cloud-patterns of a very spirited design, executed in gold on red ground — the ceiling is supported by multiplied rows of composite brackets, decorated in blue, green, and white and divided into a rich system of coffered compartments.

Only a few pieces of furniture are left in the room, most remarkable among them being the pagoda-like incense-burner in cloisonné work and the large sideboards in sculptured black wood (besides some chairs and screens) and above all the Imperial throne which still stands in the middle of the room, though denuded of most of its original decoration. It is formed by a high dais to which five stairways lead up. The seat is a broad, low sofa behind which is a very large, magnificently sculptured screen, while in front of it is placed an immense incense-burner. It was the custom to burn incense here (as in the temples) at all ceremonial occasions, the fragrant fumes rising around the sacred person. This custom is often referred to by poets, as for instance, "Their bodies soaked in Imperial essences the officials return." Or in the words of Wang Wei, the well-known poet and painter: "Sweet-scented smoke envelops the Emperor's robes of ceremony — in the floating mist the dragons seem to writhe, to live."

*Chung Ho Tien*, the Middle Harmony Hall, stands about half way between T'ai Ho Tien and Pao Ho Tien at the place where the great marble terrace or 'Dragon Pavement' is cut down to a narrower shape. It is a one-storied quadrangular building, surrounded by a colonnade with five spans on each side and covered by a pyramidal roof of somewhat earlier date than T'ai Ho Tien. The building itself measures 50 feet on each side; the terrace on which it stands is 75 feet square. The four large columns in the interior serve to support the roof and to divide the room into three bays; in the middle bay is a low dais with the Imperial seat and a decorated screen. The ceiling is coffered; the central bay on each side opens as a door.

The Emperor used to come to this hall before he went to the great ceremonies in T'ai Ho Tien, and it was in this room too that the messages to be read at the memorial services in the Ancestral Temples were prepared. Once every year the Emperor here inspected the agricultural implements and the new seeds of the year.

*Pao Ho Tien*, the Protecting Harmony Hall, is the most northern building on the 'Dragon Pavement.' It is of the same period and style as *Chung Ho Tien*, *i. e.*, constructed in the seventh year of Tien Ch'i



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(1627) but it is a much larger building, its outer measurements being 150 by 74 feet. It is built on exactly the same plan as T'ai Ho Tien, *i. e.*, a five-aisled hall with a broad central nave covered by a coffered ceiling. The front aisle on the south side is, as usual, treated as an open gallery. The roof is divided into two stages, not quite as towering as the roof on T'ai Ho Tien, but provided with the 'Owl-tail fishes' (*Chi Wen*) at the ends of the ridge (supposed to guard against fire, etc.). It has beautifully decorated half-gables instead of full slopes over the short sides.

Pao Ho Tien is best known as the room where the Emperor used to meet scholars who had successfully acquired the highest degree in the examinations, and thus were ready to receive important appointments in government offices. Other Imperial audiences — for instance with vassal princes — also took place in this hall. The building is now closed and said to be filled with old books.

The splendid exterior effect of these palaces depends largely upon their gorgeous coloring. We have already mentioned that the supporting terraces with their staircases and balustrades are made of white marble; the structures which rise on them are bright red (or have been so), and the roofs are laid out with glazed yellow tiles. These three colors, white, red, and yellow, set against the clear sky and the green trees, or reflected in the dark water of the moats and canals, form the dominating accord in the vistas of the Palace-City. And as these views are usually beheld from high points such as the terrace of Wu Men, it is natural that the bright golden tone of the roofs becomes the most striking note, the color which one remembers as particularly characteristic of the Imperial Palaces. Such roofs are not allowed on any other buildings in the capital, while the red columns and the white terraces may be seen at many temples and residences outside of the Palace City.

The beams and brackets over the columns are, as a rule, painted with ornaments in green, blue, and white, representing floral designs or geometrical patterns. Their effect is quite good at a distance but they do not stand closer inspection; the execution is generally crude and there is no attempt at finer harmonies of color or design. They are most beautiful when tempered by dust and age. More care is usually bestowed on the sculptured door-panels which are decorated with winding dragons or geometrical designs in relief, often heightened with gold, and on the very delicate trelliswork of the window-openings.

All of these ornamental elements as well as the *Kuei Lung tzu* (dragon and devil-like beings) on the roofs and the sculptured birds and animals on the marble balustrades, are highly characteristic, sometimes quite entertaining or even amusing, and their importance to the general


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effect of the buildings is considerable. Yet the architectural beauty of these buildings depends mainly on their very clear and natural wooden construction, their perfect balance and symmetrical arrangement, their striking contrasts of color, their position on high terraces, their unity of style and artistic purpose.

*(To be concluded)*

## LIFE AND THE LABORATORY

LYDIA ROSS, M. D.

UTHORS of recent medical articles on cancer, comment on the increased number of cases in the lungs, a relatively rare location not so long ago. As usual, cancer-research finds no satisfactory theory for this increase. Also, as usual, the victim's environment is challenged to explain the causative part it plays in human pathology, since the profession commonly regards cancer as "the sequel of chronic irritation."

Recent theories of causation place under suspicion irritations from certain minerals in ores as affecting miners' lungs. Another guess is that the tarred streets and roads may be guilty, since lung-cancer has followed continued painting with tar on the skin of rats' backs, and other "scientific animal experimentation." However, observers admit that lung-cancer statistics from tarred-street districts do not support this theory. Then the use of war-gases is accused of causative irritations; but it turns out that few of these lung-cases have been 'gassed.' However, the accusing finger points to increased inhalation of irritating gases from autos, imperfect fuel-combustion, and industrial processes, but without proving the case.

Another irritation-'suspect' is the increased use of cigarets, with inhalation of the smoke, instead of the former use of pipe and cigar, without smoke-inhalation. Here, again, statistics are not convincing. Many physicians accept the influenza-epidemic as an explanation,—a twin mystery, by the way, as this explanation itself still remains unexplained. Even here, stubborn facts refuse to be juggled into proof. For the lung-cancer increase following the great epidemic of 1918 began several years earlier, and, moreover, the many known malignant cases had no influenza.

Now, since each of the above theories fails, in turn, to prove its case, why not make a composite guess of them all, and relate it to the

## LIFE AND THE LABORATORY

human equation of the patients? Possibly the modern man, in running the earth, the heavens above, and the waters beneath, may be running himself into the ground, albeit unwittingly. Have not the searching analyses of his body and material conditions quite overlooked his essentially conscious quality that must have evolved in proportion to his changing environment, which is the result rather than the cause of unfolding human forces?

Humanity is a composite of individual dynamos, generating electric and magnetic currents of thought and feeling which act and react, mentally and physically, upon themselves and upon each other. Take our present civilization — the center of cancer-increase — which, like any era, has evolved, step by step, in the inner world of imagination before taking on concrete forms. Man, as the creator of typical social environments, must always be evolving his conscious self in advance of his creations.

Note, for instance, that the evolving soul of the Red Indian, whose tepee on the Illinois prairies defined his social status, had the same physical form and the same natural forces to work with as the Chicago citizen who now lives and gets his living in skyscrapers. Nature furnishes the material forces and matter wherewith the conscious man within expresses himself consistently, whether in healthy, simple, nomadic life, or in the complex ways of a modern city and with up-to-date diseases.

The inner man is the mainspring of action, both physiological and pathological, as well as primitive and sophisticated. The potential forces of dynamic human nature must have unity in action, else the mind, body, and morals suffer in this 'house divided against itself.' Should not research, then, go beyond the symptomatic clues of social creations and body-conditions to analyse the dual man who, clever enough to create great hospitals, is also unbalanced enough to increase his incurable diseases? Surely, a perfect diagnosis must reckon with the modern refinements and outreaches of human nature, to find the disordered inner forces which appear later as physical disease.

No microscope is needed to see that modern man differs as much in his conscious quality from his medieval forebears as in his typical diseases. For instance, take the devastating plagues, now outgrown and replaced by problems of degeneracy and malignancy, which keep pace with medical research and all-round sanitation. Medieval humanity created its unclean environment, and mistook the inevitable reaction as the mysterious ways of a merciful Providence. The mistake is evident enough, viewed in retrospect. But has not this classic evasion of responsi-

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bility — the replica of theology's vicarious schemes — reincarnated in our matter-of-fact faith in germs as first causes?

If plagues showed that filth and low-grade customs were abnormal conditions in the Middle Ages, subtil malignancy may hint at wrongs in our inner life, out of keeping with our gains in knowledge.

Mother Nature does her part in providing an earth of healthy resources for all normal needs. Her living exhibits of plants and animals show health as the natural rule and not the exception, as in the human kingdom. Then, as man's body is part of her material, she makes his diseases outward symbols of inner wrongs of the conscious self. Unlike lower animals, he has free will wherewith to mold thought and feeling into the forms — good and ill — which Nature works out on material lines. The subtil, complex modern man, who has evolved the insight of microscope and research-laboratory, must have unfolded even finer and more delicately adjusted human forces in himself, with added potencies of health and of disease. Why not study this inner man in relation to his typical output of disorders and 'modern improvements'?

Perhaps the suspected list of war-gases, and tarred roads, and scientific mutilation of animals, and auto-combustion, and intemperate smoking, and influenza, etc., may have something in common, and even bear some relation to cancer. All these things are typical parts of our ambitious, strenuous life. The tarred roads and autos and huge industrial plants aid our increasing pace in keeping on the move to 'get rich quick,' despite intensive competition, and, generally, to run 'on high,' even when restlessly killing time for relaxation. Meantime, our endless efforts are not balanced by increasing worthiness of purpose, and we 'arrive' only at new levels of desire for sensation and action. We are not rounding out the higher phases of our human nature.

The new war-gases gave added impetus to the military plague which all but wiped out the civilization creating it. This world-epidemic was the reaction of unwholesome mental and moral conditions; it was the natural eruption of selfish ambition, dislike, and suspicion festering in the inner life. A broadcasted spirit of Brotherhood would have cleansed the social blood of all this had moral preparedness kept pace with military equipment.

The vivisection-and-serum chase is an artificial attempt to get ahead of Nature's timely efforts to right human wrongs. There is no natural get-well-quick scheme which tends to dehumanize man with vitality vamped from the lower animals.

The cigaret-habitué claims to get more 'kick' out of his smoke-

## LIFE AND THE LABORATORY

screen which covers the sensitive nerve area of throat and nose. So, as life is consciousness, of some kind, he speeds up his sensations and feels more alive,— until the reaction comes between smokes.

As for the influenza-plague which followed the war and hurried its millions beyond the veil, this reaction must have belonged to the war-spent world. Nature makes no mistakes in handing back what belongs to us. Modern hygiene called a halt in her usual reactions through festering battlefields and camp-diseases, but ignored the détours left open to her on inner lines. Likewise, the materialistic researches as to causes failed to reckon with the invisible destructive forces invoked through four years of inner and outer horrors that outraged every normal human sense. So far, influenza has not been accounted for, in the world of medicine. It has yet to be studied as some contagious evil, deflected on to inner lines, where it so subtly poisoned the nervous forces that the impetus to live failed even before organic tissues were fatally diseased.

The cancer-cells fall in line with all the foregoing phases of restless activities without equal gains in worthy purpose to balance the increasing pace. Cancer begins with good cells gone wrong, in doing no functional work while uselessly multiplying themselves into what becomes a malignant tumor. It seems like Nature's analogy of our civilization's abnormal growth of mental and material activities whose finer forces should be conserved in the conscious upbuilding of the higher human qualities. Surely the overwrought brain and body are so out of normal balance with the ignored soul,— the inner man — that Nature writes the malign signature on man's body of earth-stuff. Cancer is life *plus* on the lower levels; what more does average modern life total?

Spiritually, our civilization has the precocious degeneracy of certain neurotic children. The Red Indian was more true to type and his whole nature more rounded out than is true of his white brother, whose boasted progress leaves him below the Indian level in self-discipline and devotional spirit.

If, then, cancer be a sign of mal-adjustment of man's inner and outer life, the study of it must engage both reason and intuition. Humanistic analysis promises to reveal more causes for cancer than can be learned by painting tar on rats and other fantastic tricks that must "make the angels weep."




"WITH all our experience we are as yet but touching the fringe of real life; we are but entering the outer portals of the real mysteries."—*Katherine Tingley*

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

### THE TRUE ROAD FOR HUMANITY—BROTHERHOOD Viewed in the Light of Theosophy

STUDENT

HE true road for Humanity lies in the principle of BROTHERHOOD properly understood. But that word, 'Brotherhood,' needs careful consideration, if we are to gain an adequate idea of what it really means, and not be misled by the numerous false conceptions which are attached to it. Brotherhood, as the term is usually understood, represents a conception which is much too small and slight to stand as the salvation of Humanity. Too often it means nothing more than a vague sentiment of mutual toleration, or a system of communal life based on such mutual toleration. When people speak of Brotherhood, they often have in their minds something that is difficult and goes against the grain. To practise Brotherhood, they imagine, means to act against one's inclinations and maintain towards other people an attitude of forced benevolence and toleration.

This is because we are trying to practise Brotherhood without having the real thing in our hearts; and so, instead of being an instinct, whose gratification is a pleasure, it becomes an irksome duty. Our motive is wrong. We act from religious fear or philosophic belief, or some other motive that does not deeply stir the nature. Brotherhood cannot rest upon sermons nor upon philosophical treatises. You cannot preach people into brotherhood, nor argue them into it.

But Theosophy sheds quite a new light on the question. According to Theosophy, Brotherhood rests on certain great truths which

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have long been forgotten by the human race, and which must be brought back to recollection. The first of these truths is that of the *essential divinity of man*. This makes all the difference in the meaning of the word Brotherhood, because the belief in the essential divinity of man is not taught either by religion or science, or, if it is, then only in a vague and ineffectual way.

According to Theosophy, the ordinary life of man is but a poor shadow of the real Life that should be his. The greater, better, part of human nature lies still latent and undeveloped *outwardly*. There are possibilities in life which we do not dream of. We go on theorizing about questions as if the present stage of human development were the best possible. But it is evident that, if so many of our powers and faculties are still latent and undeveloped, we have quite a large and new field of conjecture left open to us.

The powers of the Soul can only be evoked by a true Brotherhood. Just as the sublime harmonies of music require the consonance of many tones tuned in accord, so many hearts beating together in perfect mutual understanding and love evoke the sublime harmonies of the Soul-life.

To most believers in religious creeds, the Soul-life is a thing of the hereafter, not to be enjoyed on earth. And even thus, there is never any idea of a blending of hearts, but rather one of selfish bliss — if such a thing were possible. But in the light of Theosophy the Soul is ever present with us, overshadowing us each and all, and waiting for our recognition. This is surely no strange doctrine, but only the one that Christ taught. But we have perverted his kindly teaching into a cold and barren dogma.

It is open to everyone to enter upon the Path which leads to eternal peace and knowledge. The one essential is that he should give up those personal prejudices and delusions which hide from him the light. But to be willing to do this, he must become convinced that there *is* such a Path, and that it is worth striving for. This is where the need for Theosophical teachings comes in. There are many, many sad hearts and puzzled brains in the world who are ready to come to the light, but are kept from it by the almost impassable barriers of false knowledge and mistaken ideals that exist in the world. Many hear of Theosophy and pass it by without further inquiry, when it is the very thing they are in search of; and all because of the number of times they have been deceived. They think Theosophy is one more sham and delusive hope.

Since humanity has no creed or faith on which it can base a doctrine of true Brotherhood, it needs more than all else a proper understanding of the laws of life and of the constitution of human nature.

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*Humanity needs a new HOPE.* Without hope and the faith of knowledge the heart is cold. How are we to restore the lost hope and faith of humanity? By restoring the knowledge of man's essential divinity.

The Theosophical teachings as to the history of humanity are more scientific than those which are current today. Theosophy teaches that Man has had an immense antiquity on the earth, as our archaeologists are now beginning to discover. Science admits that the rocks and plants and animals are millions of years old, but, with strange inconsistency, will not accord a corresponding antiquity to Man; but, instead, makes him the creature of a few paltry centuries, while its ideas as to the status of the ancients are often childish and silly. The Wisdom-Religion, more consistent, gives Man an antiquity commensurate with that of the geological ages.

The life-history of humanity comprises a cycle of fall and descent, and a cycle of reascent and rise. It is what is meant by Paradise lost and regained. There have been times in the far past when humanity was more glorious and happy than it is now — times dimly spoken of in legend as the 'Golden Age.' All nations have traditions of these times, when Gods and Heroes walked the earth. Also we have legends of the Fall of man, when, led away by the misuse of his divine prerogative of free will, he forsook the Light and turned to sensual pleasures and worldly power. The purpose of life is the experience of the Soul, which, being essentially divine, descends into fleshly bodies for the purpose of adding to itself the knowledge and dominion of all the lower kingdoms of nature.

It is the destiny of man, by virtue of his free will, to stray far from the light in his quest of experience and happiness. It is also his destiny to return to the light after his long pilgrimage and to become master of all the forces of his lower nature. But the path of humanity is always forward, though sometimes leading along a descending slope. Viewed in this light, the present age, and indeed all the period covered by history as we know it, is a cycle of materialism and spiritual darkness. Man has been engaged in bloody wars of conquest, in religious quarrels, in the struggle for material wealth, and all things that are earthly. But we have now passed the lowest point of the cycle and a return to more spiritual ways of life is impending. This explains the universal hunger for reality and faith which is heard everywhere today.

It is a sad thing to have to confess, in a so-called scientific and cultured age, that people are in a state of absolute doubt and ignorance, as to how to deal with the most vital problems of human life: — how to bring up children, how to stop vice and crime, how to prevent disease



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and secure health, what is the right form of government, how to prevent industrial strife and financial corruption, what constitutes truth in religion, what is the nature of the human mind and heart, and innumerable other questions. It is not very flattering to have to confess that we cannot prevent international wars, bloody massacres, political dishonesty, and the ravages of selfishness, cruelty, and lust. In short, the outfit of knowledge which we can claim in this age is confessedly altogether inadequate to solve the simplest problems of human life.

Is there not need to bring back to humanity its lost faith and knowledge?

The secret of happiness is SELF-CONTROL. But what is to be the controlling agency? The only self-control we know is where some greater passion controls the lesser ones, as when ambition rules a man's life, or love of ease. Or perhaps religious fear may keep us in order. Fortunately, the greater part of humanity is governed, not by the contradictory voices of religion, nor by the wild guesses of scientific opinion, but by the sane and healthy instincts of human nature which make themselves felt and which impel men to observe the laws of self-sacrifice and mutual helpfulness which alone can render society stable. But these are only instincts and people do not understand their reason.

What we have to learn is that the law of Brotherhood is founded on eternal truth, that it is the very fundamental LAW of all life. The higher life is not a kind of supplement added to the ordinary life. It is the only real life, and what we know as life is only a counterfeit. Theosophy teaches that, while the lower mind of man is personal and separate, the Soul is one for all and knows no self-interest.

If we should rise above the delusions created by our selfish passions, we should become illuminated by the light of the Soul shining into our minds and making us see things as they really are. We should then be inspired with the universal Love which would impel us to act in the common interest and would dominate and supersede all self-interested motives. Instead of having a lot of ordinary people actuated by ethical and religious principles in which they only half believe, we should have people who were illuminated and to whom the teachings of true Religion were natural instincts instead of difficult tasks.

Modern opinion fluctuates to every point of the compass; all the departments of inquiry are at cross purposes; there is no unity or agreement in modern thought and it is a perfect Babel. How can we find in the midst of this confusion, any authority, any certainty, anything that can serve as a sure guide in life? We have lost the unifying factor of knowledge, the keystone of the arch. Instead of knowledge, we have

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multitudinous opinion, and if it were not for the natural healthy instincts, society could not exist at all.

The unifying factor which we have lost is the ancient Wisdom-Religion — Theosophy — that knowledge which in antiquity was widely diffused and generally recognised, but which was obscured by false doctrine and gradually lost from public knowledge during the dark cycles. In this Knowledge there is no contrariety between science and religion and the whole fabric of knowledge coheres and is perfectly consistent and harmonious. It replaces the everlasting doubt and fear about the future life and the Soul by a certain conviction of the immortality and essential divinity of man's nature, and thus gives a new hope and strength and dignity to life.

No longer need we live without a purpose, drifting along we know not whither. The assurance that there is a larger knowledge and a fuller, richer life open to each and all who are willing to enter the path of wisdom, gives man a sure goal to aim at.

The True Road to truth must be sought within oneself. In the Soul is the ultimate criterion of truth. The religious bodies of the Occident are to some extent beginning to realize this; that is to say, they are getting back to the original teachings of their Master, who taught that we must look within ourselves for our divine nature. But it needs Theosophy to put this teaching into a form that will make it real and practical; for without the knowledge regarding the nature of man there is no rational basis for the doctrine to rest on and it will not satisfy the reason. Theosophy indicates how we may so direct and fashion the course of our lives as to approach that fount of divine strength and wisdom which is in each one of us. That way is by the practice of Brotherhood.

We must realize that the selfish propensities are fetters on the Soul, chaining it down to a narrow and sordid life, when it might be free and soaring like a bird. By recognising the unworthiness of our personal desires and ambitions, and forcing them to give way to the unselfish aspirations which we are cultivating, we can gradually rise to a calmer, happier life.

This is no idle dreaming. The Theosophical or Brotherhood-life is being actually lived before the eyes of the world in Lomaland, and is rapidly becoming the source of wonderment and admiration. For the world hungers for, and can appreciate, practical working example.

Theosophy does not divide life into compartments, but regards it as a whole. Hence the whole nature is developed harmoniously, as the ancient Greeks sought to develop it. Body, Mind, and Soul, are all

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cultivated. Theosophy contains the laws of right living on every plane; so that it includes the laws of bodily health.

The most striking instance of the effects of practical Theosophy now before the world is the Râja-Yoga school-system. The quality of the children which that system of education brings forth is astonishing the eyes of the people. In the Râja-Yoga Schools true self-command is taught, for the children are taught from their earliest years to rely on the indomitable strength and purity of their own Soul, and by it to control all their faculties, of mind and of body, and to drive out all the intrusive passions and ailments which afflict and mar the life of less fortunate people. The Râja-Yoga system, as applied to children and to grown people, may truly be described as the hope of humanity.

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**N** considering the higher possibilities of the drama, it is necessary to give the element of humor its due. There is nothing disrespectful to the highest ideals of the drama in doing this. Humor is the wholesome, genial element, the presence of which makes it possible for the dramatist to use pointed weapons in dealing with subjects that could not be successfully attacked in an atmosphere devoid of the kindliness and sense of unity that coexist with humor. The keen edge of the weapon is felt less, for the moment, on account of the enjoyment of a ludicrous situation; but the picture remains, of what perhaps was never so clearly flashed upon the mind before, and this inevitably reproduces itself whenever the associated acts and qualities are again suggested. By means of humorous scenes, we learn from what, in everyday life, often calls forth only careless condemnation.

In the classic comedy of Greece, Aristophanes made the keen wit and humor of his dramas the vehicle of a tactful censorship of the citizens of Athens. In the parabasis of the comedy, the chorus approached the audience and expressed, in the songs that accompanied their dancing, the poet's frank criticism of not only literature, education, and public morals, but of the personalities of the day. Every means the dramatist could muster, was used to illustrate and reinforce the argument — satire, parody, and burlesque,— in which imitations of animal life supplied a fantastic and most effective element. And here and there were interspersed the most-exquisite lyrics, so that the appeal made by the dramatist for higher things was extremely varied — now a keen thrust; again,

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a burst of rollicking song, an interval of burlesque, a note of high poetry.

In the *Birds* of Aristophanes, the action concerns the founding of a colony in mid-air, Cloud-Cuckoo Borough. Peisthetaerus (Plausible) and Euelpides (Hopeful) propose this scheme to the birds, and fit themselves out with feathers from the Hoopoe's nest. Their object is to cut the gods off from men; but in the most delightfully humorous scenes, the fortunes of the colonists are used to set forth the weaknesses and follies of the Athenians.

Molière was more limited in the means to be used to produce effects; but he did skilfully devise means in his comedies to score sham and humbug, and uncompromisingly assail them in many of their guises. Hearty laughing and hard thinking may go on at one and the same moment, as the scenes of his plays progress. He battled bravely with hypocrisy. One has only to recall *Tartuffe* to realize this.

In Shakespeare's comedies we see the poet, the playwright, and the teacher utilizing the charm of the lyric, the spell of faery-realms, suggestions of the animal world, and profound knowledge of human nature, in order to lure the spectators to self-knowledge. Falstaff, chosen as an embodiment of much that menaced purity and progress, is shown in all the ridiculous situations — not one without its point and lesson — into which folly and excess have led him. Braggart and wanton, he is tripped up, and his type clearly impressed upon all beholders for what it really is. Shakespeare's compassion is shown by his treatment of Falstaff in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, where honest women and pure children effect an awakening of his better nature.

As a study in self-deception, Malvolio stands supreme. His vanity makes him easy prey. He is fooled to the top of his bent. Wantonness and vanity are often invulnerable to all save ridicule; but where any grace remains, ridicule may always reach and cure. Ancient Pistol, too, with his "killing tongue and quiet sword," whose honor could be cudged out of him, served Shakespeare well as a means of bringing before the public certain excesses of all times.

The better the art used by the writer of comedy, in depicting situations in which folly and vice are linked to consequences, the purer the humor which envelops the whole, the deeper will be the effect on the public. Whenever, as in the higher comedy, sin is shown earning an inevitable wage, an educative influence is registered on the sensitive plate of the human mind. We laugh first; then we recollect that "he laughs best who laughs last"; and then we learn to know ourselves. The educative power of comedy is drained, however, from even the


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greatest dramas, by the impure lives of those who act the parts. The higher comedy demands high morality in the players.

Just as the real significance of many comic scenes in the great dramas have lost force because of the conditions of the modern stage, so have love-scenes lost much of the higher meaning they may be made to convey. Love is not only a sentiment of an outwardly demonstrative type; it is a deep stirring of the springs of the nature; it may become comradeship of the most lasting and uplifting type. Into the acting of love-scenes may be put much that speaks of these higher aspects, much that lifts us into the true heart-world, where romance is evermore. Those know who have seen plays given under Katherine Tingley's direction.

## THEOSOPHY AND EVOLUTION

G. LIDELL

HE subject of Evolution is so vast that it would be futile attempting to deal with it adequately in a short paper like this. One can give only a brief outline of the great fundamental truths, as brought forth in Helena Petrovna Blavatsky's gigantic work, *The Secret Doctrine*, which is largely founded on the old temple-literature of the Hindûs, Chinese, and Tibetans.

Dealing with the evolution of the Universe at large, H. P. Blavatsky submits three fundamental propositions, based on Esoteric Philosophy. They are:

“(a) An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, and Immutable PRINCIPLE on which all speculation is impossible, since it transcends the power of human conception and could only be dwarfed by any human expression or similitude. . . .

“(b) The Eternity of the Universe *in toto* as a boundless plane; periodically ‘the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing,’ called ‘the manifesting stars,’ and the ‘sparks of Eternity.’ . . . ‘The appearance and disappearance of Worlds is like a regular tidal ebb of flux and reflux.’ . . .

“(c) The fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and the obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul — a spark of the former — through the Cycle of Incarnation (or ‘Necessity’) in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic law, during the whole term.”— *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, pp. 14-17

Referring to that part of the Universe which is most familiar to us, namely, our earth, the sun, and the moon, Theosophy throws new light on their relationship. In their constitution they are like human beings, sevenfold; all three are in different stages of development at present. The moon is a body in decay, having accomplished its life-cycle. Part of its cosmic substance formed our earth, which, so to speak, is

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the child of the moon. The earth has also inherited its life and energy from the same parent. The great sustainer of life on our earth is the sun. Everything in the Universe, from the innumerable celestial bodies down to the atoms, is subjected to the same law of change, striving towards the same goal, perfection.

All these statements may seem very strange and speculative. What has become of the old history of 'creation'? It is gradually losing ground. Astronomy, archaeology, and geology, have given it its death-blow. There are also older sacred books than the Bible, where one can find proofs of the truth of what has been said, such as the Purânas, the Vedas, the Upanishads, and others. Extracts from these books appear in our Theosophical literature. In chapter II of *The Ocean of Theosophy*, our second Leader, William Q. Judge, gives us a view of the general laws governing the Cosmos. As a contrast to the 'history of creation' the following might be quoted here:

"The one eternal thing we can most easily imagine is Space, the ever-present cause of all, the incomprehensible Deity or that which is self-existing, and the mystic root of all matter. (Matter in this meaning is invisible.) Its first differentiation is Spirit, with which appear Matter and Mind. Mind is that in which the plan of the Cosmos is contained. The Universe evolves from this unknown source on seven planes, which causes all the worlds of the Universe and the beings thereon to have a septenary constitution."

The origin and the manifestation of the Universe are set forth in these beautiful lines from the same source:

"The great Breath never ceases; forever the going forth and the withdrawing into the Unknown will go on. As it proceeds outwards, objects, worlds, and men appear; as it recedes, all disappear into the original source. Wherever a world or system of worlds is evolving, there the plan has been laid down in universal mind. . . . No limit can be set to its evolutionary possibilities in perfectness, because there never was any beginning or there never will be any end to the periodical manifestations of the Absolute."

"As regards the evolution of mankind, the Secret Doctrine postulates three new propositions, which stand in direct antagonism to modern science as well as to current religious dogmas: it teaches: (a) the simultaneous evolution of seven human groups on seven different portions of our globe; (b) the birth of the *astral*, before the *physical* body: the former being a model for the latter; and (c) that man, in this Round, preceded every mammalian — the anthropoids included — in the animal kingdom."— *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 1

What is man? The *real* man is an evolving soul — in our Theosophical literature called the Ray of the One Divine Existence or the 'Monad' — traveling a well-defined path and wearing down many physical bodies in its journey towards divinity (*Theosophical Manual*, No. XVIII, p. 23).

What does 'Round' mean?

"There are seven great circuits called 'Rounds' in the journey of the *Monad* or Ray of Divinity. . . . During the First, Second, and Third Rounds, the Monad descended into matter, and in the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh it will be traveling upward."

— *Theosophical Manual* No. XVIII, p. 16

## THEOSOPHY AND EVOLUTION

We are in the middle of the Fourth Round and have just passed the turning point.

Theosophy has no need of a 'missing link,' because it knows that all the links in man's evolutionary chain are complete. An explanation of this fact will be given later on.

Speaking of the origin of man's complex and mixed nature, H. P. Blavatsky says:

"Man was not created the complete being he is now, however imperfect he still remains. There was a spiritual, a psychic, an intellectual, and an animal evolution, from the highest to the lowest, as well as a physical development — from the simple and homogeneous, up to the more complex and heterogeneous."

"This double evolution in two contrary directions required various ages of diverse natures and degrees of Spirituality and intellectuality to fabricate the being now known as — man."

The real age of our earth is vastly great, and that of physical man as he is now formed is more than eighteen millions of years. The present humanity has passed through many changes, adapted to the different stages of development of the earth. A few hints will be given to show its progressing process.

The First Race appearing was highly ethereal and not self-conscious. There was no death, for this incipient humanity had no physical bodies to wear out. This primitive Race merged into the Second and became one with it. The man of the Second Race was a little more materialized than the First and produced offspring by budding, in the manner of cell-division. (In passing, it might be interesting to note that the now living, primitive animals, the protozoans, follow the same manner in producing their kind.) At this time the Race was still devoid of the element of desire and passion, and hermaphroditism was the natural order.

The First and Second Races being boneless have left no trace of their existence in the rocks of the world. Not until the Third Race had been established for several millions of years, was there anything tangible enough to last until today as a fossil witness.

The development of the Third Race is recorded in the Indian Purânas, before mentioned, and we learn that it was divided into three groups of higher and lower development. It is always so in the evolution of the human races, that some groups and individuals advance, according to their higher nature, and others follow the downward path, and retard and disturb the whole plan of development. Such was one of the groups of the above-mentioned Third Race, and to them is attributed the origin of the anthropoid apes.

The home of the Third Race was a continent now under the

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Pacific, which has been called Lemuria, of which a part extended across the Indian Ocean. To the northwest it stretched as far as Sweden and Norway, to the east to New Zealand. This continent had its rise and its fall, and the greater part of it was destroyed 700,000 years before the commencement of the Tertiary Age of geology. A relic is Easter Island with its gigantic statues which give us an idea of the culture of a very late Lemuro-Atlantean remnant of that past race. Of course, the breaking up of a continent and the disappearance of a Race are gradual and stretch over an immense duration of time.

As there is no standing still in evolution, the Third Race was merged into and followed by the Fourth, called Atlantean. Its home, Atlantis, did slowly rise when the previous continent was destroyed. The Atlanteans also were a race of giants. Materialism reached its greatest development during that period, and the Atlantean civilization marked a turning-point in the history of the Earth. The Atlanteans stand as an apotheosis of materiality, and they created causes for difficulties with which we are struggling today. Remember, we are the same Monads throughout all the Races, going through varying experiences during the whole duration of our globe, and what we sow, we must reap.

In *The Secret Doctrine* we read:

“Esoteric Philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in man save those won by his own Ego (Monad) through personal effort and merit throughout a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations (rebirths).”

Returning to Atlantis, it finally met with its destruction by submergence, of which the story of ‘Noah’s deluge’ is a distorted account. The last great Atlantean catastrophe took place towards the close of the Miocene Age, when the Alps were upraised. When the final destruction of one of the few remaining islands took place about 11,000 years ago, the Atlanteans had already then for ages past diminished in size to the present proportions of men. An interesting fact to mention is, that in Atlantis, language took its inflexional form, after having passed from the stage of musical nature-sounds in the Second Race, to monosyllabic speech in the later Third. Writing was fully known to the Fourth Race. Their civilization reached great heights; they were masters of mechanics, and such things as airships were common. This only shows the development of great mentality — spiritual development is directed towards other aims.

Already long before the destruction of Atlantis, the Aryan or Fifth Race had started. They are the descendants of the more spiritualized and better class of Atlanteans, of whom a few had preserved the



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high knowledge of their ancestors, and were ready to revive it when the race demanded it. By degrees, in our survey, we have now arrived at historic and present time. As we long since have passed the densest materiality of the Fourth Race, every step onwards is leading to higher conditions, and the general tendency of human evolution is upwards.

## “MIGHT IS RIGHT”

R. LANESDALE



NEVER was uttered a more obvious truism; nor was ever a more misleading formula adopted for the guidance of man in his relations with his fellows.

“Might is Right.” That seems so clear; and yet it is but the use of one unknown to explain the nature of another: for who shall say what is might? Superior force, you may answer: but how can you say which, for instance, is the stronger, a bull, or a small boy? Muscularly the bull: but any day on a ranch you may see a small boy or even a child drive a bull wherever he wishes the animal to go. A lion is stronger than a man; but a man can dominate a whole cage-full of lions, and make them behave like monkeys while raging at their own submission and ready to tear their master in pieces if his nerve fails for a moment. On which side is the might?

A little thought will show us that there is a trap concealed beneath the plausible simplicity of this well-worn formula. “Might is Right.” Certainly it is the only right the world seems to know; but as no considerable number of people mean just the same thing by the word *might*, and as a very large number do not really try to know what they mean when they quote this saying, the result is a confusion of ideas, that serves as an excellent screen for deliberate hypocrisy and sophistry, and that is used as a justification of all selfishness and of all oppression. That this formula is tacitly accepted as an axiom of human philosophy is evident in many ways, and notably just now in the talk of some peace-advocates, who believe that warring nations may be frightened into peace by the threat of violence from a larger group of so-called neutral powers.

This desire to extinguish fire by pouring oil on the flames is based on the belief that the rights of man are nothing more than a greater quantity of that force they denounce as wrong. This confusion of mind keeps the world busy chasing round the same old circle, like a kitten in pursuit of its own tail.

To return to the illustration used just now. There is no question

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that the feeblest kind of man can dominate powerful animals; while among men themselves the ruling personality in a community, who may be recognised as the strongest man in the country, may be physically weak or even crippled. Obviously there are different kinds of strength, and clearly there are men who are strong in different ways. No less clear it is that there is a certain quality of strength, power, or might, that is developed at each particular step in evolution. Thus a human being is master of an animal by virtue of the place in evolution that each occupies. The same is true among men: and man as well as the animal knows his master when he meets him, if both are in a normal, natural, condition: but if abnormal conditions prevail, then the lower creature, whether human or animal, may detect the weakness of the one who should be his master, and may turn upon him and break loose, asserting his own superior force, which has become to him the law, simply because of the failure of the other to live up to his duty: his duty being to perform that which is due to his true position in the scale of evolution.

To a certain degree this is recognised by all, even by the most selfish and lawless; for even a man, who starts out to get all he can and to keep all he gets, has to recognise that he must have the power, not only to beat other men in his dealings with them, but also to avoid or to beat the laws of the land drawn up to protect the weak from the greed of the stronger. But he stops there, and fails to recognise the laws of nature, and the higher law, of which the human code is often but a parody, or at best little more than a poor imitation imperfectly administered.

Did man but know that the laws of Nature are inherent in every particle of the universe, and therefore in man himself, that their disregard or violation will bring inevitably a painful readjustment, he would take them into account, and would say "the higher law is mightier than man." Then he would attempt to keep within the pale of that law, which at present the ordinary man thinks to be of no account, a fancy, a superstition, a bogey held up to overawe the ignorant perhaps.

Did men but know their place in nature, and their relation to the higher law, which is the actual law of their own higher nature, they would not think they could with impunity override the rights of weaker men; for they might see that though the weak ones, whom they hope to conquer or to despoil, cannot protect themselves, these weaklings are a part of a great whole, whose might is the might of all nature, and whose rights are guaranteed by nature herself, that is by the great law of life, by which the strong man himself exists. They would know that the higher law would compel a readjustment and they would understand that no real gain can be accomplished unless it is in accordance with the higher

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aw. Nor is this higher law so vague as some may think or as some may pretend to believe: for it is a part of man's own nature and its presence is indicated in what we call conscience. It is shown in man's aspiration to a higher life, in his desire to do things heroic, or generous; it is the only explanation of man's admiration for a life of self-sacrifice; and it is that which makes renunciation the rule of life to the highest men. The might of the higher law is the only might that is right.

When men open their hearts to this law, or when suffering shall break down the closed doors of their minds and let in the light, then they will bow their heads to the law that, in its impartial and impersonal readjustment of man's disorders, has brought them to ruin and to shame. And when they know that this higher law is the law of their own inner nature, impossible to escape and supreme in its action upon its own plane, they will no more think of ignoring it than they would now dream of ignoring the law of gravity.

The knowledge of this higher law is called Wisdom, but it is a kind of wisdom that may be mastered by each, and must be mastered by all in the slow course of human evolution. And, as men are not all equally developed in any respect, all must be able to recognise this higher law in some varying degree, and the degree of their evolution will be marked by the superiority of their moral or ethical code: for the moral code is but an attempt to formulate some perception of the higher law into a practical system or rule of life for general use.

But men must know that the full majesty of truth is the full measure of the higher law, and that it is man's destiny to reach his perfect development by the action of this law; and therefore he must learn to recognise its presence in his own heart, and he must fashion his code of ethics upon this inner light, or he will be false to his own nature, and, like the lion-tamer who gets drunk or who loses his nerve, he will be in danger of being torn in pieces by the lower forces in his own nature that it is his duty to master and control.

Man must learn that the weak are not unprotected, being in fact as much a part of nature as he is; he must learn that in all things and at all times he is dealing with the great laws of nature, and that the meanest of creatures has the whole of the universe behind; then the saying "Might is Right" will come to have a new meaning, and humanity will know that the rights of Man are backed by the might of Nature's law. Then it will be seen that it is wisdom to recognise that Brotherhood is a fact in Nature, and to act accordingly. No more than this is needed to make peace universal, and no less will serve the cause of human evolution.

## A FLEXIBLE PAST

T. HENRY, M. A.

**P**RESENT control of past events seen as a possibility," announces the *Boston Transcript*, in a heading to a scientific item. Rather an ambitious program, one would say, for mere humanity, which has still so many shortcomings and imperfections in regard to more ordinary matters. Fancy being able to control past events, when we cannot bring up our children properly or stave off the assaults of arterio-sclerosis! What shall it profit a man, if he shall change the whole past and lose his own soul?

Still, there is something fascinating about the notion of a flexible past. It would rid us, at a stroke, of the burnings of remorse for past deeds or undeeds, once thought to be so irremediable. History could be carved and molded to suit the taste: a matter, however, about which there might be some conflict of opinion between various carvers and molders! It makes a sorry hash of the doctrine of Karma. If I am suffering from the consequences of my past acts, I can change that past, and thus escape the suffering, thereby cheating the laws of retribution. No longer content to weave myself a golden future by my present conduct, I can give myself a fortunate present by altering my past conduct.

All this boggle results from trying to eliminate time from our reasoning, so as to be able to regard time as an external object; while we are at the same time retaining it as a necessary part of our thinking process. To be able to stand outside of time, so as to become independent of past, present, and future, we must cease thinking altogether; hence we cannot talk about it.

However, on reading the article, we find that the scientist does not suggest the alteration of past events, but of *what we call* past events. This is not so sweeping. The article being copyright, we must be content with summary and allusion. The theory is that a particle will not emit light promiscuously into space, but only to another particle. Hence a luminous particle on Sirius (let us say) will not send us a ray unless we provide another particle to catch that ray. But, by ordinary calculation, it takes thousands of years for the ray to travel. This compels us to alter our grammar, bringing in the future-perfect tense, and saying that the particle on Sirius *will not have sent* out a ray (thousands of years ago) unless I here and now provide a particle to receive that ray. In other words, by keeping my particle out of the way, I can prevent the

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Sirian particle from ever having telegraphed (to me) its ray at all; thus altering events which we call past.

Perhaps the idea might be made clearer for the bewildered reader by supposing that there is a man on Sirius with a very long stick reaching to me on earth. By holding my end of the stick, I can prevent him from moving his end. Now comes the crucial question: Do the two ends of the stick move at the same instant, or did his end move a thousand years before mine? If a ray of light issues from a distant star and strikes the earth, should we regard the starting and arrival of the ray as simultaneous events or as events separated by a thousand years? So you see it is all a question of Einstein and Michelson and Morley.

There is of course much confusion of thought as to the question of regarding time as a fourth dimension; a confusion in which, to be frank, the present writer shares. A writer in the *Times Literary Supplement* of some past date, has this to say on the subject:

“Mathematicians have rather misled the public by speaking of time as though it could be of the same ‘dimensions’ as length — a confusion of which they would be ashamed in their symbols. The fourth notion, which they treat symbolically as convertible into length or breadth or height, is not simple time at all, but time multiplied by velocity, *i. e.*, distance traveled, which is a length like the other three. The velocity in question happens to be always the same (that of light), and can be implied or understood, but not ignored.”

## NOW


### STUDENT

I ASKED a Sage the time, and he replied:  
“It is the subtil, ever-present Now,  
The undivided All, to Whom I bow:  
Wherein are former Milky Ways that died,—  
Wherein all future constellations hide.”  
Quoth he: “The Present Moment is the prow  
That cleaves the Sea of Life; but, knowest thou  
That at the prow two great Illusions ride?”  
“Who waives the present moment is beguiled;  
For none may dwell within the past and grow,  
And future time lies yet in embryo.  
The Now is both the parent and the child;  
It IS — to be held sacred or defiled.  
Within the NOW is all there is to know.”

*International Theosophical Headquarters,  
Point Loma, California*

## THE PROBLEM OF THE PYRAMIDS AND THE NEW DISCOVERY OF A ROYAL TOMB

C. J. RYAN

HE mills of the gods grind slowly, but they grind exceeding small." Confirmations of Theosophical teachings in the shape of archaeological discoveries not easily explained in other ways, are more frequently appearing in proportion to the increase in the number of exploring expeditions.

The latest discovery of significance comes from Egypt. This is Dr. G. A. Reisner's important find, in the immediate neighborhood of the Great Pyramid, of the tomb of some royal personage of the famous Fourth Dynasty that has not been pillaged by robbers. This tomb, with its magnificent contents, may prove of special interest from its possible bearing upon statements in H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine* regarding the real purposes for which the Great Pyramid was built and its actual age.

For centuries we have been officially taught that this mighty structure was erected for no other purpose than to hold the mummy of Khufu (Cheops) a king of the Fourth Dynasty of United Egypt, supposed successor and perhaps son of Pharaoh Senefuru and predecessor of Khefren of the Second Pyramid.

There have, however, always been difficulties in fully accepting the tomb-theory, though it is superficially plausible because it fits in with modern ways of thought, prejudiced against the traditions of the ancients when they transcend the notions familiar to our materialistic, so-called 'practical' age.

Many of the beliefs about the Great Pyramid held by people in general are quite erroneous, and are results of inadequate observations by early explorers and downright guesswork, and of these the tomb-theory is one of the most persistent. Then there is the belief that the entrance-passages were completely blocked. Professor Sir Flinders Petrie makes short work of the latter in his *Ten Years' Digging in Egypt*:

"The passages are commonly supposed to have been plugged up by blocks of stone, solid masonry, whereas at Dahshur and in Strabo's account of the Great Pyramid, it is evident that a flap-door of stone filled the passage mouth and allowed of its being passed. . . . In both the great and second pyramids it is evident that a flap-door filled the mouth. . . ."

In connexion with the tomb-theory it is difficult to understand how the Great Pyramid could have been designed to be carried to completion

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in the lifetime of one man. The suggestion of Lepsius was that each king began his pyramid-tomb on a small scale and added layer after layer on the outside till his death. Dr. Petrie scouts this idea for the reason that the pyramids on the whole show a unity of design which betokens an original plan carried out as intended. There is no evidence that the largest pyramids were built by the longest-lived rulers. It is obvious that Dr. Petrie feels the difficulty of the tomb-theory, for he says:

“How did Khufu know he would live long enough to build a pyramid covering 13 acres of ground, of 2,300,000 separate blocks of stone, each containing 40 cubic feet? And how is it that others did not do so too and try to surpass him?”

Another erroneous idea is current that we could easily reproduce the Great Pyramid ‘if we had the mind to,’ but according to Dr. Petrie the Egyptians could turn out better mechanical work than ours, and we should probably find it impossible to equal the most exquisitely wrought masonry of the Great Pyramid even if we succeeded in orienting it so accurately, which is doubtful. Speaking of their ability to drill the hardest stones, he says:

“An American engineer, who knows such work with diamond drills as well as anyone, said to me, ‘I should be proud to turn out such a finely cut core now’; and, truth to tell, modern drill-cores cannot hold a candle to the Egyptian: by the side of the ancient work they look wretchedly scraped out and irregular.”

In another place Dr. Petrie proves that the pyramid-builders must have had astonishing machinery for drilling. In a discarded stone he found a hole two inches in diameter that had been bored to some depth for the removal of the core, which however remained. A helical line running round indicated the depth cut at each revolution of the drill, and this he says was so great that diamonds set in our hardest steel would have been torn out of their sockets in cutting through such hard material to such a great depth at each revolution. From the fact that he found oxide of copper adhering to the walls of the hole, he concluded that the Egyptians had developed a hardened copper, to hold the diamonds, much harder than our finest steel!

In connexion with the difficulty in understanding how the builders of the Great Pyramid could have *suddenly developed the ability to do such extraordinarily accurate work* — comparable, as Dr. Petrie says, only to the finest *optical* work of today — in the handling of enormous blocks of the hardest stone, when, up till the time of the alleged builder, Khufu, nothing but ordinary workmanship in stone is found, and very little of that, we need not apologize for a short citation from a valuable article by the late William Scott, a man experienced in practical mechanics. In THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH for August, 1921, he wrote:

“One who has not himself striven to do perfect work, or who has not had to deal with

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men in work where a high degree of accuracy was necessary, can have little idea of the meaning of the marvelous workmanship of the Great Pyramid. . . . Even the accuracy required in many of the crafts can only be attained by a small percentage of the craftsmen. It may surprise many to know that . . . not one in a thousand can make a six-inch cube true to the hundredth of an inch. But to a mason of the Great Pyramid an error of this extent, even in the great blocks of the courses, would be crude. They worked to the third decimal of an inch! . . .

"We cannot even conceive of a method by which they could have done such accurate work. Even if they had immense planing machines similar to those used for planing iron, what could they have used for cutters? The abrasion even of diamonds would be so rapid that accuracy to 0.002 inch could not be maintained. Again it is not an easy matter to make one side so perfectly true, and the difficulty increases in geometrical progression according to the number of sides that have to be 'trued,' not only in themselves, but in relation to one another, and block in relation to block. . . .

"It would be well within the truth, therefore, to assert that we have no means whereby we could manufacture blocks with the accuracy of those in the Great Pyramid, nor have we stonemasons possessed of the needed sense of accuracy; and very many generations of development would be required to produce them in adequate numbers for such a task."

It does not appear as if the conventional view — that the Pyramid was built by driven slaves a very short time, a few hundred years at the outside, after the Egyptian "primitive wood-builders who did not use stone" had taken to the use of stone — is a probable or even possible one.

William Scott further remarks that the workmanship of the other pyramids bears about the same ratio to that of the Great Pyramid as the detail of a wheelbarrow to that of the Lick telescope!

The explanation of the mystery of the Great Pyramid given by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine* fits rationally into the environment provided by the complexities of its internal system, and does not go beyond the possibilities of human nature in a high state of spiritual and intellectual development. Among other references to the subject in *The Secret Doctrine* she writes:

". . . 'externally it symbolized the *creative principle of Nature*, and illustrated also the *principles of geometry, mathematics, astrology, and astronomy*. Internally, it was a majestic fane, in whose somber recesses were performed the mysteries, and whose walls had often witnessed the initiation-scenes of members of the royal family. The porphyry sarcophagus, which Professor Piazzi Smyth . . . degrades into a corn-bin, was the *baptismal font*, upon emerging from which the neophyte was 'born again' and became an adept.'

"Our statement was laughed at in those days. . . . And now . . . this is what Mr. Staniland Wake writes . . .

"The so-called King's Chamber, of which an enthusiastic pyramidist says, "The polished walls, fine materials, grand proportions and exalted place, eloquently tell of glories yet to come"—if not, "the chamber of perfections" of Cheops' tomb, was probably the *place to which the initiate was admitted after he had passed through the narrow upward passage and the grand gallery, with its lowly termination, which gradually prepared him for the final stage of the SACRED MYSTERIES.*' Had Mr. Staniland Wake been a Theosophist, he might have added that the narrow upward passage leading to the King's chamber had a 'narrow gate' indeed; the same 'strait gate' which 'leadeth unto life,' or the new spiritual re-birth alluded



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to by Jesus in *Matthew*, vii, 13 *et seq.*; and that it is this gate in the Initiation temple, that the writer who recorded the words alleged to have been spoken by an Initiate, was thinking of."— *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, pp 317-318

Staniland Wake was one of the few scholars who had the daring to suspect more than a tomb, and another was Marsham Adams. According to the latter, in his *Book of the Master*, the mysterious recesses of the Great Pyramid correspond so closely with the Ritual of the Egyptian *Book of the Dead* that the traveler who penetrates them "may follow almost step by step the mystical progress of the holy departed through the grave and gate of death to the final resurrection of the Open Tomb." Furthermore, he says, speaking of the correspondence between the written record and the stone representative:

"The testimony borne by the highly distinguished Egyptologist, Professor Maspero, carries especial weight. 'The Pyramids and the *Book of the Dead*,' he wrote to me (adding at the same time that no Egyptologist had dealt with the subject before myself) 'reproduce the same original, the one in words, the other in stone.' And the prevalence of a tradition among the priests of Memphis (a fact which I learned later from that same authority) supporting my contention that that Secret House was the scene where the neophyte was initiated into the mysteries of Egypt, lends it a force which only direct evidence could rebut."

And such rebuttal-evidence has not come forward, but, for all that, the 'tomb and nothing but the tomb' theory, weak as it is, has been allowed to go out as an established fact.

Another Theosophical teaching which the unique discovery of an un-pillaged royal tomb of the Fourth Dynasty may support by indirect or inferential evidence, is that the age of the two Great Pyramids at Ghizeh has been greatly underestimated; they were not erected in the 'pyramid age' of the 'Ancient Empire,' but had been in existence thousands of years before the First Dynasty of United Egypt, and their real builders are not known to Egyptologists.

The seventy-five Egyptian pyramids may be roughly divided into two classes — the two Great Pyramids, whose superficially obvious outstanding character is their enormous size; and the remaining small and medium-sized pyramids which are probably of the 'pyramid-age.' The second class were undoubtedly tombs, and, as Fergusson and the authorities generally say, were reserved for the early Pharaohs and perhaps their immediate royal relatives. The Third Pyramid is one of the finest examples, with its magnificent coating of red granite and elaborately decorated and polished blue-black basalt sarcophagus.\* The subterranean tomb-chamber was lined with slabs of stone fastened to the native rock by *iron* clamps. The Third Pyramid is very insignificant in comparison with its mighty companions, being only 218 ft. high.

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\*Lost at sea in 1838 when being transported to England.

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The severe censorship laid by the Egyptian government (in consequence of the commercial newspaper-exploiting of the Tutankhamen sensation) on further details of Dr. Reisner's great discovery of the only important tomb yet found intact previous to Dynasty VI, has now been partially lifted, and press-despatches dated March 10th say that the Harvard-Boston expedition has ascertained that the tomb is of the period of Seneferu, supposed immediate predecessor of Khufu the alleged builder of the Great Pyramid, and is probably that of Seneferu or of his Queen. The burial chamber was excavated in the rock at the bottom of a vertical shaft, 90 ft. deep, in the customary manner of the low *mastaba* tombs so numerous on the pyramid-plateau. It contained a large alabaster sarcophagus of great splendor with gold ornaments, a quantity of vessels of bronze and alabaster, and gilded wooden furniture. On the coffin lay an elaborate gold mat with a line of incised hieroglyphics with the name Nebti-Seneferu. The posts of the sarcophagus were sheathed in gold. Fortunately, though the woodwork has nearly perished, the gold which covered the furniture is intact and will be placed together so as to give a reproduction of the original forms: this will be a work of great skill and labor.

This tomb is nearly two thousand years older than that of Tutankhamen at Thebes, and its unexpected discovery is another proof that no man can say what records of supreme interest may not remain to be found in places already explored. No wonder those who can appreciate the value of the find are rejoicing, and that there is great eagerness to learn further details.

Seneferu was a great and honored ruler; inscriptions in commemoration of his valor and justice are to be seen as far off as the peninsula of Sinai, which he conquered and where he established Egyptian settlements and temples at the copper- and turquoise-mines. If the newly discovered tomb is his or that of his consort, and if he was of the dynasty of pyramid-builders, it is difficult to understand why he did not build a pyramid, if not as large as that of his supposed son and successor, Khufu, at least of some splendor. Large tombs of more or less pyramidal shape, were not unknown before the Great Pyramid, according to the Egyptologists. At least one, the curious 'Stepped Pyramid' of Zoser at Sakkarah is believed to date from the previous dynasty.

Can it be that the Fourth Dynasty Pharaohs preferred subterranean chamber-tombs under inconspicuous *mastabas*, and that Khufu and Khefren followed the example of their predecessor Seneferu, and did not build the First and Second Pyramids after all in spite of the vague traditions which connect them with those monuments? In discussing

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the new tomb some authorities in Cairo suggested at first that it might be the tomb of Khufu himself! This shows that the idea that Khufu built the Great Pyramid for his tomb is more or less under suspicion. In connexion with this the correspondent who sent the limited information on March 10th makes a very significant remark; what are we to think of this? —

“Survey of the tomb and its contents will fill many gaps in Egyptian history, and may revolutionize the whole theory of the purpose of the pyramids.”

In view of the Theosophical claim that the Great Pyramid was erected for more important purposes than merely to hold the mummy of Pharaoh Khufu, the incomplete account so far received of the contents of the unrifled ‘Seneferu’ tomb suggests reasons supporting the statement that the Great Pyramid, and perhaps one or two others, belong to a different class from the smaller tomb-pyramids.

According to the popular idea, based on the slenderest evidence, the builders of the Great Pyramids were proud and haughty tyrants who erected these enormous monuments not only to preserve their remains in safety — a very doubtful way owing to the conspicuous nature of the structures — but to display and accentuate their grandeur for the admiration of the most distant ages. Yet there is not a single picture, relief, or carved inscription, to be found within the entire complex of passages and chambers of either pyramid: all is blank with the exception of unexplained projecting knobs and incised lines. No authentic record speaks of any commemorative writing on the outer casing; Petrie explains the reference to ‘inscriptions’ on the outside in various languages as meaning *graffiti* or scrawls made by Greek, Roman, and other travelers describing their impressions, such as are to be seen today on the Colossi of the Plain at Thebes.

The pyramid of Zoser of the Third Dynasty has that king’s name elaborately inscribed in several places. Why should Khufu and Khefren have been so modest as not to have signed their supremely magnificent works? And in the new ‘Seneferu’ tomb there are incised inscriptions with names, including one with the seal of Seneferu himself on a separate slab.

In Zoser’s pyramid-tomb a ‘Ka’ statue has been found, one of those indispensable reproductions of the deceased which were supposed to help preserve the vitality of the astral body if the mummy were destroyed, but nothing of the kind has been found in the Great or Second pyramid.

In the ‘Seneferu’ tomb, the sarcophagus is large and splendid, and carved from rare and beautiful alabaster. In the Great Pyramid

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the so-called 'coffer' in the King's Chamber is a small and insignificant object, made of some dull porphyritic stone and without a lid or traces of one. As Marsham Adams says, it is an '*Open Tomb*,' which means not a tomb at all in the ordinary meaning of the word. Yet, according to the tomb-theory, this second or third-rate sarcophagus, unmarked and without a word of carving to identify it or the building in which it stands, is the final resting-place of the mighty Pharaoh whose pride reached the heavens, while his predecessor Seneferu or some inferior royal personage of that date was dignified by a magnificent sarcophagus with sumptuous trappings.

The coffers in the Great and Second Pyramids would be large enough for a tall man to rest in a horizontal position while he was being prepared to be raised to the vertical in the symbolism of the resurrection to life as mentioned by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine*. And, in that connexion, extreme simplicity would be quite in place.

A singular fact, seldom mentioned, about the coffers of the two great pyramids is that they are both too large to pass through the narrow passages leading to the chambers in which they stand. This cannot have been unintentional, and it arouses many curious speculations.

The 'Seneferu' tomb, proving by its construction that royal personages of the Fourth Dynasty were not necessarily interred in pyramids, releases us from the obligation of assuming that Khufu *must* have had a pyramid for a tomb, and leaves the way open to several possibilities. One is that the Khufu of the Fourth Dynasty may be buried in some undiscovered *mastaba* tomb on the plateau, like that of the 'Seneferu' discovery, and that some other king --- perhaps of the same name, Khufu --- built the Great Pyramid for special purposes long before the Fourth Dynasty.

The vagueness of the traditions about most of the kings of the Fourth Dynasty, and the general lack of reliable information about that period, make it reasonable to think there may be some confusion in the records which cannot be cleared up until more definite information is forthcoming --- perhaps from the 'Seneferu' *mastaba*-tomb.

Much that has been said above about the Great Pyramid applies also to the Second Pyramid, which, though a little smaller, overtops the First owing to its more elevated site on the plateau. Its simple sarcophagus is quite unadorned, with no writing on it, and destitute of a cover. There is no writing or carving of any kind throughout the whole building; nothing to indicate its age or its purpose.

It looks as if the later pyramid-builders felt it an honor and perhaps a protection to rest in the neighborhood of the two great temples

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of the Sacred Mysteries, and possibly the First and Second Pyramids were originally placed in the Field of the Dead, among the small tombs with their hallowed associations because the awe-inspiring sacredness of the spot would be a powerful factor in preserving their isolation and freedom from intrusion.


We cannot say that the Great Pyramid was not utilized at some period for the preservation of a royal mummy, but the Theosophical teaching is definitely clear that it was originally designed for a much more serious purpose, and that it was not built by a king of the Fourth Dynasty, unless we place that royal house many thousand years earlier than the earliest date allowed by Dr. Petrie, the most liberal of Egyptologists in chronology.

H. P. Blavatsky refers to the two Great Pyramids in these words:

“ ‘The MIGHTY ONES perform their great works, and leave behind them everlasting monuments to commemorate their visit, every time they penetrate within our mâyâvi veil (atmosphere),’ says a Commentary. Thus we are taught that the great Pyramids were built under their direct supervision, ‘when *Dhruva* [the then Pole-star] was at his lowest culmination, and the *Krittikâs* [Pleiades] looked over his head [were on the same meridian but above] to watch the work of the giants.’ Thus, as the first Pyramids were built at the beginning of a Sidereal Year, under *Dhruva* (Alpha Polaris) it must have been over 31,000 years (31,105) ago. . . .” — *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, pp. 434-5

## WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY BEAUTY?

R. MACHELL

 ONE day while waiting in an art-gallery for a friend who was diligently searching the long-suffering walls on which were hung the latest horrors (born of a fierce desire to express the unutterable in paint) in the vain hope of finding there some clue to the interpretation of the mystery of modern art, I heard a bewildered visitor inquire of one more accustomed to the ordeal of such exhibitions, “Why is it that the modern paintings are so ugly?” To which a weary voice replied: “Oh, I suppose the Old Masters were as bad in their own day: but these have got it in a new way. Some of them are interesting.”

The first voice answered querulously: “But none of them are beautiful.”

With gentle tolerance the cynic asked: “And will you tell me what you mean by beauty? Do you think you can?”

The impetuous retort came back: “Of course I can. Beauty is

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. . . well . . . Everybody knows what beauty is. Let us have tea. . . .”

I heard no more, and still am guessing at the answer to that question: “What do you mean by Beauty?”

Certainly it is true that we all know the meaning of the word beauty until we try to put our meaning into words. And we can say with some assurance, “this thing is beautiful, and that is not.” But how many can agree upon a simple definition of the term or as to the true standards by which it may be judged? What are the standards? Where do they get their authority? Who discovered them? Is there indeed any such thing as an authoritative standard by which beauty may be judged? For that matter may it not be asked: Is beauty measurable? Can it be tested? What is it? Is it a quality that inheres in things, or is it not rather a state of mind, or an emotion induced in the beholder by certain qualities apparent in the object of his contemplation? If so, what are those qualities, whence do they come, what is their nature?

Probably to the majority, Beauty is a something to be found in certain objects and not in others. But I should say that the assumption that we all know what is meant by Beauty is hardly warranted by general experience. There are in all probability as many kinds of beauty as there are minds to be affected by it: and it is difficult to see how it could be otherwise; for surely the most essential quality of beauty is its power to please; but that quality is inherent in the spectator rather than in the object of his admiration whose power to please depends upon the power of the beholder to appreciate what he sees.

This power to appreciate beauty is not always of the same quality nor is it equally developed in all people; only the resulting emotion is in all cases one of pleasure however various in degree.

Now it is obvious that a similar emotion may be roused by contemplation of all sorts and conditions of objects, as well as by the association of ideas: and it is also evident that different people respond in different ways to the same appeals made to their senses or to their imagination; the result is variation in the kind as well as in the degree of power to appreciate that pleasure in the contemplation of objects generally considered beautiful: and naturally enough this variation is attributed by man to the object rather than to the beholder.

It is probable that in the great majority of people the sense of beauty is almost entirely the result of education, and amounts to little more than a mere echo of the appreciation formulated and expressed by some supposed authority. What little there may be of personal opinion in the criticism of such a commentator is often modestly expressed in a

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familiar formula: "I don't pretend to be a judge of art, but I know what I like." The enunciation of this magic formula is generally held as providing a safe cover from behind which the bitterest criticisms may be fired with impunity: for the 'I know what I like' is both impressive and convincing; and is the more unanswerable because of its irrelevance if beauty is a positive attribute of objects and not a personal emotion.

I like to think of beauty as a spiritual force, or, as a great Chinese artist said: "The life-movement of the spirit in the rhythm of things." This mighty force is busy all the time in the creation of the world, which goes on eternally, in organizing life, and fashioning beauty everywhere. Yet it is unperceived of men whose souls are void of sympathy.

The beauty that a man perceives in nature is truly the measure of his evolution and of his spiritual stature; for beauty is the breath of the Divine, and man is its expression, who sees his likeness in nature.

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OBSERVER

**T**HOUGH the lands of the Southern Hemisphere are far less in area than those of the Northern, especially the temperate regions, and are less explored by scientists, every now and then a report of some discovery of special interest to students of Theosophy comes from the South. A few years ago it was reported from Argentina that the leading archaeologists of Buenos Aires had unearthed a number of polished and channeled stone balls — weapons used in hunting swift animals and running birds — similar to those used by modern Indians of that country, but dating from the Tertiary Period of Geology, hundreds of thousands of years ago and perhaps millions.

Curiously little notice was taken of this extremely significant discovery by our American and European scientists, presumably by reason of the ultra-conservative position taken by so many, as indicated in recent statements made before the American Association of Science quoted in *THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH* for April, 1926, page 368. To accept intelligent men no less advanced than present-day Indians, in the Tertiary Period in America — before most of the modern species of animals existed — is very difficult for those who would doubt that man has occupied American territory for more than a very short time, six or eight or perhaps even twenty-five thousand years at the outside; but the South American scientists have at all events made out a very strong case.

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

Some years ago Mr. Clement Wragge, well known for his researches in New Zealand, described certain groups of basalt pillars in that country which he claimed to be the remains of extremely ancient buildings, so weatherworn as to be almost indistinguishable from natural rocks. If New Zealand was formerly a part of Lemuria, a submerged continent inhabited by civilized men long before the earliest so-called 'primitive' Stone-Age European, there would probably be little left to prove it except shapeless, time-worn blocks. The problem is still open, though it has been lately fully established that New Zealand was inhabited by an unknown intelligent race before the Maoris took possession of the country. The discovery of irrigation-works and a carved lintel of non-Maori type in the Awanui Swamp, North Island, and other evidences, have conclusively proved that the idea that New Zealand had never seen the face of man till the coming of the Maoris "seven hundred years" ago is incorrect.

A new proof of very ancient habitation of New Zealand has just been discovered which suggests many possibilities. In a remote valley in the Kaingaroa plains in North Island, forest-service surveyors came across a kind of rock-shelter or cave on whose smooth wall were a series of well-executed carvings in relief, the most important representing thirty canoes; they varied in size from three to eight feet in length. The canoes are different from the Maori type, having bows resembling ancient Greek galleys with beaks, rams, and platforms for boarding. The decoration includes a double spiral, while the Maori spirals are single. Stone ovens and a pestle were found in the shelter, but no Maori traditions exist about the place or its former inhabitants. The best authorities disagree about the origin of the carvings, and they remain another mystery added to the ever-increasing number.

An interesting piece of evidence in favor of a lost continent somewhere in the southern hemisphere has been lately discussed in the Australian press. At the southeast corner of Tasmania there runs a line of mighty cliffs, two thousand feet high in places. At one spot there is a break where the cliff is lower, and a small stream, barely a quarter of a mile long yet perennially flowing, falls over the edge into the ocean. Within this tiny bit of water, isolated among the hills and shut away from the ocean by a precipice 250 feet high, are found abundantly the speckled Tasmanian mountain-'trout' (*galaxias truttaceus*) which belongs to a genus represented only in the southern hemisphere, never extending north of the tropics. It is not a true trout.

The *galaxias truttaceus* is a purely freshwater fish (and a high range of hills separates the stream — the only one in which it is found — from



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the nearest river, in which another species of mountain-trout occurs), but it has a very close relative in southern South America. The *galaxias truttaceus*, a freshwater fish, is of course incapable of crossing the vast stretches of salt water between Tasmania and South America, and so it is impossible to doubt that there was once a land-connexion between those regions.

Another related fish, *galaxias attenuatus*, is common to Tasmania and Tierra del Fuego. It descends into the brackish water of estuaries, but the open sea would be as complete a barrier to it as to the freshwater 'trout' in its little rivulet high up in the hills.



Mr. S. Hubbard, Curator of Archaeology, Oakland, California, Public Museum, whose interesting report of the finding of remarkable pictographs in the Hava Supai Canyon, Arizona (one of which resembles a dinosaur) was discussed in THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH for October, 1925, has not abandoned his belief in the probability that "a race of people existed in America antedating the American Indians by several millions of years." In a recent communication to the press he approvingly describes the new theory of Captain Alan Le Baron on the great antiquity of man in North America.

Scientists are not agreed upon the position of the scientific 'Garden of Eden' where man originated. Some declare for Asia, preferably Mongolia; others are in agreement with Darwin that Africa is a likely spot; a small but increasing school leans towards the lost continent of Atlantis as by far the most probable seat whence most of the prehistoric and modern races came; America has not been regarded as having been inhabited by man for more than a few thousand years.

But he would be a rash man who would assert that there are no surprises in store for science on the lines of human origins, and Captain Le Baron, a trained Egyptologist, and his co-workers may have revealed something important enough to quite revolutionize the accepted notion that intelligent man is no more than seven hundred thousand or a million years old, and to provide fresh confirmatory evidence to the teachings of the far greater antiquity of the human race on this planet.

The claim is based upon the geological history of an extensive plateau in the state of Nevada, estimated to have been dry land for perhaps forty million years — a most unusual, if not quite unique, state of things — and to have been an island when the Gulf of Mexico was connected by great bodies of water with the Arctic Ocean. Captain

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Le Baron was attracted to the idea that this plateau might be a likely place to search for very early traces of man by the fact that it has escaped for so long the submergences and cataclysms which most of the world has suffered, and he believes he has discovered inscriptions which are convincing evidences of the enormous antiquity of man in America.

The prevailing impression among scientists is that as there is no satisfactory proof that the great anthropoid apes ever lived in America, man could not have originated here, but came from Mongolia in quite recent times. This opinion is, of course, based upon the dogma that man is simply the highest of the ape-family, although, as we know, his line of descent has not been traced: only the collateral branches are known, and those very incompletely. The very daring Captain Le Baron challenges the orthodox view by claiming that "my expedition uncovered a civilization of such archaic antiquity as to stagger the imagination."

Mr. S. Hubbard writes:

"And now comes a Western scientist, making an independent investigation, who boldly proclaims, apes or no apes, that the White race originated in Western North America. And he is beginning to believe that the Chinese people originated here also. He believes this white race established the Maya Civilization and constructed the pyramids, temples, and altars which dot Mexico and Yucatan, and that they invaded Asia and Europe by way of the sunken continent of Lemuria, the mountain-tops of which are the numerous islands scattered through the Pacific Ocean. . . .

"Confirming this, he finds Egyptian, Babylonian, and Maya characters inscribed on the walls and in the caves of Nevada. And, strangest of all, Chinese characters of a pre-Manchu dynasty. As an indication of the great age of these, at the base of one carved cliff, an excavation twenty-two feet deep into cemented gravel did not reach the bottom of the carvings. Dr. John Endicott Gardner, author of Chinese dictionaries and authority on the languages of the Orient, identified these marks as the oldest Chinese writing yet found in the world . . . and Dr. Gardner says that the Nevada characters are closer in resemblance to the most ancient forms of symbols preserved in China than the characters now in use by the Chinese people."

All this is, of course, of deep interest to students of *The Secret Doctrine*, in which the human habitation of America in archaic periods is shown to be a fact. Without accepting the first enthusiastic interpretation of every new discovery until it has been thoroughly discussed, however probable it may be from its fitting in with the Ancient Wisdom, Theosophy, as preserved through the ages by its Recorders and Guardians, it is interesting to keep our attention upon the general trend of many independent workers in science toward the Theosophical position. This, of course, applies also to sciences other than archaeology, for in astronomy and chemistry-physics every new discovery offers problems which can only be intelligently approached by the application of the fundamental principles of occult philosophy of which the keynotes are given in that much vindicated work, H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*.

## SCIENTIFIC ITEMS

BY THE BUSY BEE

### DEATH AND REBIRTH OF WORLDS



SCIENCE has observed the general tendency of energy to transmute itself into less active forms, as when kinetic energy is transformed into heat, and the heat passes into lower temperatures. Activity seems to depend on things being at different levels or temperatures, and to end in a reduction of things to a uniform or dead level. This is known as the 'running down of energy.' From this principle it has been inferred that the world, the universe even, will eventually run down; it is like a clock that has been wound and that begins to die as soon as it is born. Theology might surmise that Almighty Power wound it up; venturing farther, it might speculate that he will wind it up again — if he doesn't forget, as we do sometimes with our watches.

But the question arises whether energy has the power of winding itself up again. We know that heat radiates from a cold body to a hot, as well as the other way; there is a general law in nature that things which have gone to sleep will rise again. There seems no good *a priori* reason for not extending this general law of rebirth and self-renewal to the utmost limits. And such is actually the teaching of the Wisdom-Religion — that the One Life passes through alternate periods of active manifestation and passive withdrawal. We quote in this connexion the following from *Popular Astronomy*, March 1926:

"Dr. E. G. Davis, Kansas City astronomer and scientist, said: 'All matter is in constant evolution or motion.' He cited stars that have disappeared, and new stars that are suddenly reappearing, as evidence of the law of physical dissolution and resurrection of worlds. . . . 'Many astronomers,' he said, 'believed our whole solar system, and all the life that is and ever has been upon it, is a resurrection from a dissolution that occurred to certain astronomical bodies millions of years ago. Many of the elements of matter bear evidence of having been used before. Evidence of millions of years of progress and use is stamped upon them. The Novae,' the speaker continued, 'new stars that appear, are examples of the resurrection of worlds, that now after millions of years of oblivion are visible from the earth.' He drew from these facts that the intelligent cosmic energy that resurrected these worlds is continuous and that the energy has not been rendered ineffective by previous physical dissolutions, but underlies the present visible universe, which will therefore evolve for ever into a 'new heavens and a new earth.'"

Possibly some of the many imperfections which we find in this world are due to the circumstance that so many of the elements of matter 'bear evidence of having been used before.' Second-hand stuff! Who was it that palmed off on us elements with the marks of millions of years of use upon them? But note that the cosmic energy is spoken of as

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'intelligent.' Speaking of resurrection, the above might well make some men of science turn in their graves. But even Tyndall said that "Every attempt in our day to generate life independent of antecedent life has utterly broken down." And Kelvin said that "Inanimate matter cannot become living except under the influence of matter already living." Huxley said that "The present state of knowledge furnishes us with no link between the living and the non-living."

Thus these eminent men of science recognised something extraneous to that which they called non-living matter. The present speaker mentions an intelligent cosmic energy. We shall not attempt to fit these various concepts into their relative places in any scheme. It is sufficient that intelligence has to be posited, somewhere by every serious thinker.

### ETHER-DRIFT

Dr. Dayton C. Miller, as we learn from a report in *Popular Astronomy*, made 100,000 observations to find whether or not there was an ether-drift, and satisfied himself that there was. This contradicts the oft-quoted Michelson-Morley experiment of 1887; for the latter was held to prove that there is no relative motion between the earth and the ether, while the former shows that the earth does plow its way through the ether. Since Einstein devised his theory (or one of them) to explain the 1887 experiment, it would seem that the theory is no longer necessary; which is tiresome, considering that it has been verified by experiments on the heavenly bodies. If the new experiments knock the bottom out of Einstein's theory and leave it no leg to stand upon, those facts which it explained will have to be explained in some other way.

### VALUE OF TRADITION

EVIDENCES show that historians are nowadays more inclined to recognise, what H. P. Blavatsky in her writings has insisted on, the value of tradition. Tradition used to be slighted as unreliable; but so many notable instances have occurred of the verification of tradition that we must change our attitude towards the question of its reliability. Perhaps the most notable instance was the discovery of the site of Troy and of the ruins of Tiryns and Mycenae, and there was also the tomb of Romulus.

Written history is a sifted product, where the historian has riddled out all which in his opinion is not to be taken seriously or which does not harmonize with the picture he wishes to paint. Such a sifting process may have occurred oftener than once, since modern historians use the writings of older ones. Moreover such history, once written, or especially printed, becomes stereotyped with its errors. Tradition is apt to pre-

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serve matters not acceptable to the scientific historian, and thus to be rejected wholesale. It has been supposed that a story handed down orally for a long time becomes greatly changed; but this is a point on which there is room for a different opinion.

The following clipping will be of interest in this connexion:

"Those who believe in the validity of tradition may be fortified by the discoveries of the antiquarians in Kirkwall Cathedral, dedicated to St. Magnus. A thousand years ago and more the Orkney Islands and Shetland were conquered by the King of Norway, colonized by Norsemen, and used as the advance-base of the Norwegian Power in its adventures southward. The islands were ruled by a Norwegian family of noble blood, and at the beginning of the twelfth century there was a dispute about the succession between two cousins, Magnus and Hakon.

"Magnus, says the tradition, was caught on the little island of Egilsay, where a little church, very much older than he, with one of the three round towers on Scottish soil, is reputed to cover the ground where he was murdered, and is dedicated to him. He was killed by the blow of an axe. In art an axe is his emblem, but that was, till the other day, the only corroborative evidence for the story of his death. His nephew and heir, Rognvald, vowed that if he ever recovered his inheritance he would build a church to the honor of Magnus. . . .

"A little while ago, in the course of a restoration, there were found high up within two pillars pine-wood chests or coffins containing the bones of two men. In age, in stature, the skeletons are exactly such as those of Rognvald and Magnus should be. The skull of the hypothetical Magnus bears just such a wound as that by which the axe of the story slew him. Thus the antiquarians and the anatomists vindicate the traditions." *Daily Telegraph* (London)

## DIVINE INSTRUCTORS

THE tendency to represent all phenomena, whether material, mental, or otherwise, as mechanical, has been very rife, but is now beginning to yield ground. This tendency has found definition under a certain use of the word 'evolution' — the evolution of organic beings, the evolution of morals, of religion, and so forth. It has been supposed that such things as folk-songs are the product of a gradual synthesis or evolution; but on the other hand critics have been found to doubt whether an immortal melody can be composed by a committee.

Is it not much more likely that it was composed by some one person of exceptional genius, appearing but rarely though often enough to keep the world resounding with the undying creations of such geniuses? Were 'Old Kentucky Home,' and 'S'wanee River' products of gradual accretion or composed by committees, or were they the inspirations of a rare melodic genius, able to achieve things which not even a Beethoven could achieve? This contemporary fact might well warrant the conclusion that all the folk-songs, Scottish, Irish, German, etc., were composed by single geniuses endowed with creative melodic power, of sublime but inimitable simplicity.

Passing on from this point, let us ask ourselves whether we prefer to believe, with conventional authorities, that gradual evolution has

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been the chief factor in the progress of human knowledge; or to believe, with Theosophy, that the world has owed its progress mainly to the inspiration of geniuses or teachers, rare and specially endowed.

Evolution would seem to be the name of a process or a result, leaving open the question as to the causes of this result. In the evolution of culture, we say that the moving cause has been man himself, especially a few dynamic geniuses who leaven the mass with their special quickening vitality. We can easily trace the workings of such people in history, whether a great moral or philosophical pioneer, or a mighty organizer of government, or a genius in scientific discovery. At longer intervals appear men of an even greater elevation, the founders of religions, men who shatter existing forms and create the forms for a long future.

The ancients believed in Divine Instructors, who brought to mankind the knowledge of various arts, such as the use of fire and metallurgy, or sculpture and architecture; or who gave mankind important truths and principles for the governance of conduct and polity. Theosophy assures us that the ancients were right. See *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, pp. 365 *et seq.*, on 'Our Divine Instructors':

"Not only Herodotus — the 'father of History' — tells us of the marvellous dynasties of gods that preceded the reign of mortals, followed by the dynasties of demi-gods, Heroes, and finally men, but the whole series of classics support him; Diodorus, Eratosthenes, Plato, Manetho, etc., etc., repeat the same, and never vary the order given."— II, 367

If, as is sometimes represented, these geniuses and teachers and reformers owed their powers to mere heredity, humanity would be like an engine generating its own steam, or like a dynamo and a motor hitched together and each feeding the other in a perpetual motion. Such a mechanical system would sooner or later run down, losing energy by heat and friction, and gaining none from without. It is evident that the thing can only be kept going by a power continually renewed from outside.

## NINEPENCE A DAY

RALF LANESDALE



LD Arabi was telling of his morning's experiences. He had been trying to collect money for the building of a mosque in the neighborhood of London and had found the usual unexpected generosity from some and an equally unlooked for refusal on the part of others who might have been expected to sympathize in a practical way with the aspirations of the many Mohammedans scattered through the great city.

I made some commonplace remark about the constant calls for con-

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tributions upon those who were supposed to be fairly well provided with this world's goods, and added something disrespectful about the providence that gave money to one man, and generosity to another who was himself in constant need.

“Don't you think God has a funny way of doing things?” I asked, hoping to draw out some wise answer from the old man, who was a frequent visitor to the studio even when not engaged as a model. He was an Arab from Damascus and in his youth had aspired to lead a religious life, but the attractions of travel and the pleasures of life had led him into strange lands and into paths undreamed of in his youth: but in his old age his heart turned again towards the path of spiritual life and he loved to talk to one whom he knew to be also sympathetic with such ideals even though treading a different path towards the same goal. So he rolled another cigarette and accepted a cup of coffee with the charming courtesy natural to his people, as thoughtfully he replied:

“In the old time, when Moses used to go up to the mountain to talk to God and to get his instructions for ruling his people, there was a poor man who was industrious and pious and so was his wife; but though they worked so hard, and did their duty, and made their prayers very regularly they were still very poor. Do what they would it seemed impossible for them to earn more than ninepence a day. In all their lives they had never had a good dinner or any of the pleasures that other people far less virtuous and pious had all the time. It seemed as if God had forgotten them; he could not be angry with them for they never had done a wrong thing in all their lives. So one day, when Moses was going by on his way to the mountain, the old couple stopped him and told their story with a humble request that he should lay their case before God.

“Moses knew the man and was interested in his story, but could find no explanation for this apparent injustice in the distribution of the necessaries and the luxuries of life; so he decided to do as they wished and to ask for some light on the problem for himself.

“When he had finished all his other business, he told God what the old couple said and begged for some word to throw light upon this difficulty. Then God said:

“‘Moses, you know that I love my children and that I do all in my power to make them happy, but I cannot give to any one what does not belong to him. Every one has his lot and I cannot alter it. Each one has his share and it is enough for his life, but he may waste it all in a short time; that is his business. I can only warn him, and teach him if he will learn, but, when it is gone I cannot rob another to give him what is not his. Now this man and his wife are to live a long time and so long as

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they live they will have just what they get now, just ninepence a day; that is what belongs to them for this life-time; they have earned it in other lives. I tell you this for your own instruction, some day they too will understand.

“‘Now if they are not content they can have all their share in one lump and may spend it as they please, but when it is gone no one will be allowed, no one will be able to give them any more. They can choose.’

“So Moses gave that message to the poor couple and they made their choice. They decided to take it all in one lump and to make a feast such as the rich enjoyed and to taste the pleasures of life, if only for a short time; then they thought they could die content.

“When God heard their decision he made no comment but told Moses to say that if the man would go to a certain place on the mountain and dig there he would find a jar with his share of gold in it.

“Moses gave the message, and the poor man found the jar and emptied it into his leather pouch, carefully burying the jar again where he had found it, as that was not part of his share.

“When his wife saw the gold she wondered that there was so much money in the world, though it was not much really. They went to the city and ordered a splendid dinner, but there were so many poor people around who seemed poorer even than they had been, that their hearts were touched with pity, and they ordered more tables to be set and more food to be prepared while they themselves went about inviting the poor to come and feast with them.

“There were so many guests to attend to that they had no time to sit down to the table themselves. They were so happy to see all these poor people enjoying the good food that they forgot to eat any of it till there was nothing left but scraps and broken remains, no better than they were accustomed to eat at home. But they were so happy that they thought of nothing else but how to get all the other poor people there and to give them a feast too. And so they did till all the money was gone; and all the time they themselves had eaten no more than they had done for years and years when they only had their ninepence a day.

“When all the money was spent the poor couple began to regret that they had not been more economical because there were so many poor and hungry people who might have been helped if they had not spent their treasure so recklessly. The man said: ‘We must thank God for the happiness we have had and now we must die, for our time is come.’

“But the woman said: ‘Look at all these poor people starving; how can we be content to die? Go now to the place where you found the gold and see if perhaps there is not a little left in the jar still.’



“Hope is stronger than reason, and the man did as his wife told him, praying to God to forgive him for his wish to live a little longer. When he had again uncovered the jar he found it full of gold as before and with thanks and prayers to God he took the money and again put the jar where he had first found it.

“This time the entertainment for the poor was managed better, but in the meantime the news of this hospitality had spread and many came from a distance, for there was a great scarcity of food among the people that year. But all who came were fed and cared for by the poor couple, who as before only ate what they could gather from the tables after the rest were gone. But they were very happy.

“Now when Moses heard of this he was much astonished, for there seemed to be no end to the money; and when he went the following month as usual up to the mountain to talk to God about the affairs of his people he could not help saying something about the man and his wife, and about the supply of money that seemed to be continually renewed, though God had said that when the first lot was spent the poor couple would have to starve. But God said:

“‘Moses, I told you that I give to all my children what belongs to them, now tell me, when all those people were feasting what were the husband and wife doing?’

“‘They were waiting on their guests and attending to their wants.’

“‘And afterwards did they order a fresh feast for themselves?’

“‘Not so; it is said they only ate the scraps that remained.’

“‘Well, Moses, do you not understand? It seems to me quite clear; that money was a part of the shares of all those other people who went there to be entertained by the man and his wife. They, the poor couple, only had the same ninepence a day which was their share.’”

So the old Arab gave me a lesson in the meaning of Karma and rebuked my irreverent cynicism with an old story full of ancient wisdom.