



O my Divinity! thou dost blend with the earth and fashion for thyself Temples of mighty power.  
 O my Divinity! thou livest in the heart-life of all things and dost radiate a Golden Light that shineth forever and doth illumine even the darkest corners of the earth.  
 O my Divinity! blend thou with me that from the corruptible I may become Incorruptible; that from imperfection I may become Perfection; that from darkness I may go forth in Light — *Katherine Tingley*

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HEAVENS AND HELLS, IN LEGEND AND IN FACT

**F**RRIENDS near, and friends who are 'listening in' at a distance: After our Temple-services on last Sunday, one who had frequently attended the lectures said to me: "You know, Professor, I am going to stay at home and attend to the children next Sunday. I don't care a bit to hear you talk about hell!"

"Well," I said, "How do you know that I am going to talk about hell in the manner that you think I will?"

She said, "I don't know that you are; but I also don't know that there is anything new to say about it, because so much has been said."

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[Stenographic report of the thirty-fifth of a series of lectures on the above subject. These were delivered at the request of Katherine Tingley (the then Theosophical Leader and Teacher) in the Temple of Peace, International Theosophical Headquarters, Point Loma, California, at the regular Sunday afternoon services. Others will be printed in THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH in due course. The following lecture was delivered on October 14, 1928, and broadcast, by remote control, over Station KFSD San Diego — 680-440.9]

This represents a great deal of the spirit in the world as regards pre-judgment concerning philosophical and religious teachings that in some cases have given great hope to men in past times, and in other cases have brought untold suffering and misery to the human heart, because such latter teachings have been in all cases superstitions.

Now, the Theosophist does not use these words, 'heavens' and 'hells,' except perhaps in a purely figurative way, or in the literary sense; he never otherwise employs them; and the reason is this: that the teaching of Theosophy, which, you will remember, is a formulation of the truths of Nature, is that there actually are no 'hells' and no 'heavens' equivalent to, or on the lines of, former popular Occidental religious teachings. Please let this fact sink into your consciousness; because we Westerners have been so psychologized through hundreds of years by ideas coming to us from so many directions and impinging upon our respective consciousnesses, that, unconsciously to ourselves, when we hear these words 'heavens' or 'hells,' we picture to ourselves localities — the heavens as existing 'above,' and the hells as existing 'below'— in some to us unknown and indefinable regions of space, where human souls in the one case pass eternity in unspeakable torment, and in the other case in unspeakable bliss — 'in the bosom of Abraham,' to use the favorite old phraseology of the Occidental world.

No thinking man or woman, even in the churches, today accepts these outworn beliefs. But while this is so, people, in a natural reaction from superstition, have gone too far and now seem to have lost all consciousness of the existence of any law of retributive action based on Nature's own workings, either for evil-doing on the one hand, or for noble and high-minded living on the other hand. This is unfortunate, because it is a violation of our noblest instincts, which, springing from Nature itself, therefore manifest in us as an intuition of retributive action in Nature. This intuition is our recognition of a natural law which we may express in the following ancient aphorism: 'we reap in all cases exactly what we sow.'

Now, back of every main teaching in every one of the great world-religions or world-philosophies, there is a fundamental truth, a noble seed of thought implanted in that philosophical or religious system by its founder, some Great Sage or Seer. But as time passed on these noble fundamental truths became more or less perverted from their original meaning. Men succeeded in authority to the Great Sage or Seer who

brought the new-old, the old-new, message of spiritual liberation to the world from the great University of these Sages and Seers, and these successors were new men, untaught, unguided by the ancient wisdom and by the spirit of knowledge which the Great Seer had. The result was degeneration from the ancient and original truth, until that religion or philosophy became such as every observing eye may see that most religions have become — to wit, a set of formulae, religious, quasi-philosophical perhaps, but which in very large part have lost their appeal to the human heart and mind.

In this manner have the teachings regarding the so-called heavens and hells suffered the same fate in the various religions and in some of the philosophies. But back of these teachings, considered as a summary — beyond them, at the root of them, in the beginning of them, considered as a collection of doctrines — there does exist a truth based on Nature and therefore a fact.

The Theosophist accepts nothing on faith; he believes nothing because some one says so, or because he reads it somewhere, but only because it appeals to his own inner forum of consciousness so strongly that the immediate mental reaction is: 'That is true!'

There are also other religious and philosophical teachings, which originally were great doctrines, great thoughts, which have both inspired and stirred the world in the past and which were true in their original promulgation, because based on Nature — the ultimate test of truth and therefore infallible. All we have to do, therefore, is to search for this original truth, hunt out the original root-meaning, and thus understand it.

I suppose that the farther we go back in time in our search for the real or original meaning of this strange and yet interesting teaching concerning 'heavens' and 'hells,' the nearer we approach to the original formulation of truth as it was given out by the Great Seer or Sage; and the nearer we come down to our own times, the more clearly do we see the degeneration I have spoken of, and therefore the farther does the researcher find himself wandering from that original truth.

With all due respect to the many noble men and women who in the past have sincerely believed in Occidental views of 'heaven' and 'hell,' I suppose that it is only Western religion — because one of the two latest, considered as world-movements — which teaches an eternal hell

in which men who have lived their one life on earth evilly are destined to pass eternity in everlasting torment.

I suppose, on the other hand, that Western religion, and also Mohammedanism, are the only two which teach the existence of but one heaven, and that those who live a more or less noble life on earth and who are more or less given to high thinking, will after death pass an eternity in some kind of indescribable bliss, but nevertheless apparently totally oblivious of those who are suffering the pains of eternal torment in hell — although, if we accept the views of many early Christian fathers, such as Tertullian, the ‘bliss’ of the ‘saints’ is increased by the sight of the unspeakable torments of the ‘damned’!

How can there be a heaven under such conditions for any compassionate souls, if consciousness and knowledge of the dreadful fate of their unfortunate fellows accompany their own supposed bliss? There must then be the full knowledge and perhaps vision of the others who are suffering eternal torment. Do you not see that this cannot be true and that it is sheer superstition? What is a superstition? A superstition is something ‘added on’ to an original truth. Let me illustrate this by a very simple instance that occurs to me:

We may take a book which contains a noble teaching; we may revere the teaching in that book and the noble mind or minds which formulated it. But from the minute that our reverence takes on the form of fear or of credulity in imagining that if even by accident or chance we happen to mishandle or ill-treat that book some force will emanate from it or from somewhere else and strike us dead or inflict disease upon us or subject us to the dangers of eternal torment, this is a superstition, and the original and proper reverence for noble thought vanishes.

You know the Latin word *superstitio* in its original sense meant something added *upon* or *to* another thing. It is not a superstition to believe in any truth, no matter how strange it may seem to us in the first instance; and many truths are very strange indeed.

I remember that when I was a boy, when I first joined the Theosophical Movement, people called me superstitious because I believed in certain things that I inwardly knew to be true. They did not believe in them; they did not understand them. But these very things that I have in mind have now become subjects of popular knowledge and debate. I refer particularly to the teaching of Reincarnation, rebirth on earth, where we sowed the seeds which we are now reaping in a past life

or past lives; for obviously we must reap what we have sown in the field where we sowed these seeds, and nowhere else.

The other thing that occurs to my mind and which I believed, and for believing in which I was formerly called superstitious, was hypnotism, popularly so called but more properly termed 'psychologization,' now common knowledge of all men, and facts concerning which are even now admissible as good evidence in courts of law. Please understand, though, that when I speak of hypnotism and belief in it as a fact, this is by no means a recommendation of it as in any case whatsoever permissible, for experience as well as wide reading will show any thoughtful man that hypnotism, or, more properly speaking, psychologization of any kind, is a practice fraught with the gravest danger, not merely to the subject but ultimately to the practitioner himself.

Now, all religions, particularly those of great age — Brâhmanism, Buddhism, the teachings of the great Chinese Sage, Lao-Tse, the later teachings of the Greek and Roman civilizations, the pre-Christian religion of the Germanic peoples of northern Europe, and even many of the old doctrines of so-called barbarian and savage peoples (who are not young peoples at all, by the way, but actually degenerate descendants of their once mighty sires who lived in times of great civilizations) all have teachings based on the mysteries of Nature; and we must understand these mysteries before we permit ourselves to criticize. This is obvious. It is rank stupidity to criticize without understanding; and we ourselves, we proud and haughty Occidentals, have done that for too long a time, and the currents of knowledge and fact are now running strongly against us.

The Call to Truth is a part of the message of Theosophy, equivalently with the Call to Duty.

Now some of the ideas, in fact, most of the ideas that I have just spoken of, even of those ancient religions which preceded Mohammedanism and Christianity, are likewise degenerate today; and in addition to this, they have been grossly misunderstood as a whole by Occidental scholars. Yet these archaic religions and philosophies are in general faithful, each one to its own original source — the teachings of the Great Seer who founded it. Hence even today, despite their degeneration, they contain more of the truths of Nature, and these in more easily understandable form, than do the two latest of the world-religions of which I have just spoken.

As regards the subject of our study this afternoon, I may remark in passing that I am not going to waste time in mere descriptions of the various 'hells' and 'heavens' of the different world-civilizations. You may find those in the various encyclopaedias, and I should be simply wasting time in going over what you may there find for yourselves if the subject interests you. I am going to show you, however, what Theosophy has to say with regard to the meanings of these religious and philosophical ideas and shall merely refer to the 'hells' and 'heavens' as illustrations of the vagaries of human thought.

'Heaven,' using the word in a very general sense, is supposed to be a place of judicial reward, a recompense, a retribution for a noble or a good life lived on earth. The oldest religions known, and others younger, but still very old, do not however speak of one 'heaven' only. The 'heavens' are many in the teachings of these older religions — usually enumerated as nine, sometimes as seven; and an equivalent number prevails with regard to those forces of retribution of the oldest religions — which forces we Occidentals have translated as the 'hells' of these beliefs, forgetting that we give to these words 'heavens' and 'hells,' because we do not understand the original meanings or full sense of these older religions, the Occidental meanings popular in the West and well-known to ourselves. And this procedure is obviously unfair.

The 'heavens' and the 'hells' of these oldest religions, if you wish then to use these familiar words, were and still are considered to be temporary affairs, places of temporary purgation; and those who were supposed to dwell in them did so for a time whose length is supposed to depend upon the energy in the original causative thoughts and acts. These 'heavens' and 'hells,' in addition to being temporary abiding-places, were in no cases considered to be localities where incarnate souls reaped a judicial reward for good living or suffered a judicial punishment for an evil life last past in incarnation on earth. Furthermore, in those archaic religious systems, the 'heavens' and 'hells' themselves were considered to be temporary, as I have just said, and therefore destined to pass away when the universe in which they were contained had completed its course of evolutionary manifestation.

In all the archaic philosophies, everything was supposed to have its period: that is to say, its beginning, its youth, its maturity, its decay, and its end. Even as a human being has these several stages in his life-cycle, so also was a planet considered to have the same, and also the

solar system of which that planet is a part; and these ancient religious philosophies further taught that the universe, the aggregate of all the solar systems, likewise has its period of manifestation. But none of these was eternal.

As regards the 'heavens' and 'hells' which were supposed to be certain parts of the universe, of spiritual and material character respectively, the 'heavens' were not places of bliss eternal nor were the 'hells' places of everlasting torment. In every case the beings entered them for a while as a necessary stage in the wonderful post-mortem journey of what is popularly called 'the soul.' Our life on earth, these ancient philosophers said, is but one such stage. We come to this earth from the invisible worlds; we live here for a little while, and then pass on to other stages in life's Wonderful Adventure.

Much of this Theosophy also teaches: for instance, the earth is not the only dwelling-place of thinking beings, nor is it the sole standard by which thinking beings should attempt to regulate the universe; it is but one cosmic 'inn,' so to say, in a journey lasting throughout everlasting time — one event in an everlasting adventure — lasting that is to say, as long as the manifestation-period of the universe in which we live endures.

And when that manifestation-period of the universe has reached its end, then it likewise (as a human being does when death overtakes the physical body) enters into its period of rest and repose until the time comes for it to begin a new cycle of manifestation, when everything within it and all of it reappears anew, but on a higher plane, in higher worlds, in higher stages of life, moving to a higher destiny than the one which had preceded it — higher because more evolved, because more fully grown. 'Heavens' and 'hells' were just such temporary and temporal dwelling-places, as conceived by those archaic religions and philosophies.

Now, some of the ideas connected with the 'heavens' and the 'hells' of the different peoples of the earth are rather quaint. The Guaycurus, who are Indians of northern South America, placed their heaven in the moon; and it was to the moon that their great heroes and sages went for a time after physical death until they again returned to earth. The Saliva Indians, also of northern South America, thought that heaven was a place where there would be no mosquitos!

Other more civilized peoples have placed hell in the sun, for instance,

which was a rather favorite locality for 'hell' as outlined in the imagination of some English writers of not so long ago; others placed their 'hell' in the moon. Sometimes 'heaven,' on the other hand, has been placed in the sun; and sometimes it was located in the blue empyrean. 'Hell,' or the 'hells,' equivalently have sometimes been placed at the center of the earth, which was the common teaching in medieval European times; and it was also the teaching of Dante, as outlined in his *Divina Commedia*. Dante took this teaching over from a very much misunderstood old Greek and also Latin teaching, because the Romans borrowed very much from the Greeks in religious and philosophic matters as well as in jurisprudence and law. You know, I suppose, what Dante writes of the geographical character, so to say, of his *Inferno*, which he divides into nine divisions or stages, or rather degrees, of increasingly terrible torment. And these Circles of 'hell' he locates towards the center of the earth or about it. Above his *Inferno* he describes seven stages of his Purgatory, which, with the ascent out of Purgatory and the Terrestrial Paradise which follows the highest of the purgatorial regions so-called, makes nine more stages or intermediate spheres, or superior 'hells,' if you like. Then, still more ethereal and still further removed from his infernal regions, come the nine spheres or worlds of 'Heaven.' These are capped, or topped, if you like, by the Empyrean, where dwell God and his angels, with the company of the Blessed. This hierarchical system of the hells, of the regions of Purgatory, and of the regions of Heaven, is again based upon old but misunderstood Greek teachings coming from the Neo-Platonic Greeks through the writings of Dionysius the Areopagite into Christian theology.

Homer in the beginning of the Eighth Book of the *Iliad* represents Zeus as calling a convocation of all the gods and goddesses of Olympus; and he tells them in very masterful fashion that if any one of the gods or goddesses disobeys his commands he will cast him or her down into Tartarus, which, says the Father of Gods and Men, is as much below Hades as Earth is below Heaven or Olympus, where the gods dwell. Therefore, according to the *Iliad* of Homer, which represented in a mystical sense what we may call the Bible of the Greeks, to which they referred for the true meaning of their mythological teachings much as Christians used to refer to the New Testament and the Old Testament for the real meaning of Christian theological doctrines, we find four basic stages of the kosmic hierarchy: Olympus or Heaven; Earth; Hades



or the Underworld at the Center of the Earth; and gloomy Tartarus, the lowest of all. Tartarus is supposed to have been the region, according to mythology, whither the Titans who rebelled against Zeus, Father of Gods and Men, were cast and there imprisoned, bound in chains, until the time came for their loosening and freedom.

These subjects are very fascinating as mythological problems, and I would that I had time to go into them and to explain their mythological meaning from the Theosophical standpoint; but time lacks today and I cannot do so. I will merely point this out: that Tartarus represents what we Theosophists call the Elemental World, where the titanic forces of Nature are held in the bonds of what we may popularly call 'law.' Loosened, these terrible natural forces wreak devastation on earth; and thus indeed did the Greek mythographers understand the secret meaning of this part of their mythology, and therefore referred to the imprisoned Titans as producing by their movements in Tartarus the earthquakes, tidal waves, and other phenomena that Nature shows, in which cases the terrible forces of Nature seem temporarily to be unloosed and unchained.

I have said on other Sundays here in this our Temple of Peace — and it is very important to understand this — that Nature is a vast organism. It is composite, that is to say, composed of many grades and degrees of energies and of substances, most of the latter invisible to our physical senses. Why invisible? Or why intangible? Because our physical senses of perception and therefore of report, wonderful as they are in their present evolutionary development, are yet very imperfect reporters; and their range of perception is but small. Consequently, the greater part of the fields of Nature is utterly beyond the power of them, and of these fields they can report nothing back to our mind, which otherwise learns so much of physical Nature through these wonderful senses of ours.

The invisible, the intangible, the inner part of the great organism of the Universe is by far the larger part. We human beings live, as it were, in the outermost shell of things — what we call matter; but we call it matter only because to our physical senses it is the grossest and densest thing that we know. Nature's energies of course are much more subtil and ethereal than the matters or substances in and through which these energies work; and because these energies are more subtil and ethereal therefore are they much more easily set in movement. But they

are likewise substantial, as even our modern science is beginning to tell us — an old Theosophical teaching, to wit, that energy and substance or, as we Theosophists say, spirit and matter, are fundamentally one, two aspects in fact of the same underlying Reality, which is neither matter nor spirit, but the cause of both and the root of each.

Our universe, therefore, being such a vast organism composite of these inner and outer worlds, is what we Theosophists call a Hierarchy, meaning something having a beginning in its highest, which we call Spirit, and extending through long intermediate phases down to its lowest, which we call matter; and these intermediate worlds, invisible and intangible to us, are not merely expanses of etheric spaces but also contain innumerable globes, or worlds, totally invisible to our physical eyes. Our own solar system contains a large number of invisible planets, according to our Theosophical teachings, of which we humans know nothing. These invisible planets of course do not all exist on one plane of matter. Some of them are but little more ethereal than our own physical plane, but still invisible to our physical eyes because out of the range and perception of our optic organs. Others of these invisible planets are immensely higher than our physical world and may with all propriety be called Spiritual Globes. Lastly, between these globes of spiritual substances and the invisible but material globes just out of our own plane of matter, there are other globes occupying the intermediate spaces or degrees, and of varying ethereality. Every step that modern science is making ahead shows the existence everywhere of causal relations, things not visible to our physical senses of report, but which are roots of things, the causes of material phenomena; and it is in this direction that the great minds of modern science and philosophy are ever striving.

Now these inner worlds, according to our Theosophical teachings, are the roots of the outer worlds, the causes of them. We men live here on this our physical globe. Here we pass our physical existence. Then our physical body dies. Immediately the best part of man vanishes. It is not annihilated — that is not my meaning — but it vanishes from this plane, because the instrument which held it here and enabled it to function on this plane of matter is broken. It is as if you broke a telegraphic instrument: no longer can the message come through from the other end: the receiver is destroyed.

Man in his inner constitution is a copy or duplicate of these inner

worlds. He is a child of the universe, an inseparable part of it. He cannot leave it, because there is no possibility of leaving it. The universe is infinite, using the word 'universe' now in the sense of the Spatial Boundless, not merely our own Home-Universe which comprises all within the encircling zone of the Milky Way. For the moment I am speaking of the Boundless All, and everything that it contains is in Man. All the energies, all the forces and substances composing the universe likewise form and compose man's inner constitution." He is, therefore, what the ancients called a 'microcosm' or 'little world,' because of being a copy of the 'macrocosm' or 'Great World.' Man is nothing different from the world either in his essence or in the form and manner of his constitution. He occupies no particular final stage or position by divine authority; he is merely one of the parts of the universe, inseparable from it; but for that very reason everything is in him, latent or active, as the case may be.

Therefore, when the physical body dies, all the inner parts of man are released. As for the man who thought, who aspired, who lived nobly and truly, who had all the yearnings of his spirit and his intellect: all the noblest and best part of his nature is immediately, at the instant of physical death, withdrawn into its parent, man's spiritual Monad, the root of his being; and with this it thereafter lives on the higher planes of the inner and invisible Kosmos or universe until the time comes for the reincarnation of this indrawn part in a new life on Earth. Hence do we say in the brief, emphatic words of Katherine Tingley: "Spiritual Man is eternal: there are no dead!"

Consequently we Theosophists say that there are no 'heavens' or 'hells' as these ideas have been commonly understood by untaught and unguided men; although we do most emphatically proclaim the existence of inner and invisible worlds of widely varying degrees of ethereality and materiality, which are the places in which the noblest, as well as the intermediate parts, of man's constitution find their natural home, after the dissolution of his physical body. As regards the lower part of man, it is but a little more ethereal than his physical body, and is what we call the astral body. This simply decays away and vanishes in due time as his physical body does. But man himself, the ethereal essence of him, the spiritual part, is gone to ineffable rest and peace for a while. This part is the Monad, the source of his spiritual life, which is deathless, undying, because a spark of the Central Fire of our uni-

verse. This is eternally active. Withdrawal of one ray of the human Monad from physical incarnation affects the Monad not at all. It is eternally active, as I have said; and it sends forth from itself, as soon as one ray is indrawn, another newer ray. The indrawn ray — which is the best of the man that was — sleeps in peace in the bosom of the Monad until the time comes for a new incarnation of it on earth; and when the time comes around, then this ray, which is the higher or Reincarnating Ego, begins its descent, passing through the intermediate worlds one after the other, as I have explained in other lectures. But this process is strictly governed by natural laws inherent in that ego, and its entrances into these intermediate worlds are all appropriate, for it goes where its own karman attracts it, and nowhere else. In these intermediate worlds it gradually builds for itself encasements or vehicles which fit it for incarnation on earth, taking up again in each one such world the life-atoms that it had cast aside through all its previous ascent after the last physical incarnation.

If a monadic ray during earth-life has built up a human character which is high and spiritual, full of love and aspiration for the things of the spirit, as the saying goes, it then of necessity finally enters into spiritual worlds because its inward attractions draw it there. This is the Devachan of Theosophical teaching, and upon this ancient doctrine was founded the original formulation of the teaching with regard to the 'heavens,' which thus are a part of the post-mortem destiny of the incarnate reincarnating entity.

The greatest adventure in life is the phase that men call 'death,' or rather what follows the dissolution of the physical body. If the attractions inherent in this re embodying ego, this monadic ray, now drawn within the bosom of the Monad, and now sleeping — whether originated either on our planet or on some other — have been preponderatingly material, gross, evil, it is these attractions which determine the direction it takes in any ensuing imbodiment; and this is the cause which draws it to a material existence of corresponding grossness or coarseness of substance.

You see here, briefly outlined, the meaning of the ancient teaching of the 'hells,' for these 'hells,' as the ancients understood them, were simply grossly material spheres into which the re embodying ego felt itself drawn. Equivalently the 'heavens' were the ethereal or spiritual spheres or worlds towards which the re embodying entity felt itself at-

tracted. I may say in passing, for the thought is rather important in connexion with what I shall say in the next and concluding lecture on this topic, that our Earth, technically speaking, was always considered in ancient times as one of the 'hells,' because it is a globe of more or less dense and coarse matter. Yet at the same time our planet is by no means the most material habitat of human conscious beings that the solar system contains; for there are many planets or planetary worlds within our solar system which are far more dense and coarse and gross than our Earth is.

The gross superstitions that have been accepted in Occidental countries for the last fifteen hundred years or more in connexion with the terms 'heaven' and 'hell,' we Theosophists most positively neither hold nor teach. On the contrary, we show the original meaning of these superstitions and how the latter arose. Theosophy, as I have so often said before, is the Mother of Religions, Philosophies, and Sciences, because it is the modern formulation of the fundamental teachings of the Great Sages, of whom I have spoken in other lectures — that fundamental system of truth which is at the bottom of every world-religion and every world-philosophy; Theosophy therefore explains them all, because it is the ultimate source of them all.

Thus, then, we may see how the original teaching, through degeneration and misunderstanding of its original principles, gave birth in human minds to the theological doctrines or dogmas concerning the so-called 'heavens' and 'hells' of the various religions: the 'heavens' being those spiritual globes or worlds into which the re embodying entity or ego passes, drawn thither by its own attractions towards them, but not dwelling in them by the fiat of any overlording deity, nor as a mere judicial recompense for a good life lived on earth.

Equivalently, the 'hells' are those material globes or worlds into which the reincarnating entity passes, drawn thither by its own attraction towards gross material existence, and dwelling in them for a time as a natural fruitage of materialistic and gross thinking and living, but in no sense as a judicial punishment for an evil life passed on earth. No God outside of the human soul said to it: "Soul, thou hast lived well; go thither to heaven and rest there in peace and everlasting bliss." Nor to another: "Soul, thou hast merited eternal torment, eternal damnation; go thither to hell and dwell there for eternity." No! In the view of our majestic philosophy all such conceptions are naught but degrad-

ing superstitions, and as such cannot be true, first, because they are unnatural, that is to say, not based on Nature itself, and in the second place, because they are revolting to every noble instinct of the human heart.

Everywhere in Nature we find causal and effectual relations bound together in an unbreakable Chain of Causation. Every energy is a cause; being a causal activity, it produces fruits which are its effects; and these fruits or effects are likewise energetic and instantly become causes, in their turn producing other effects or fruits, and so on for ever. This is a brief outline of what we Theosophists call Karman, otherwise named the Doctrine of Consequences.

The 'heavens' and 'hells,' therefore, or the places of happiness and peace on the one hand; and the places of purgation on the other hand, which are places not so happy and not so peaceful (like our Earth), are spheres or worlds to which the re embodying entity, the reincarnating ego, is drawn when its time for re embodiment comes again; and drawn thither, I say, by its own innate hunger or aspiration, as the case may be; in other words, by the attractions which these different worlds have for it. Do you understand this thought clearly? In this thought, simple as it is, you find the original and whole meaning of the doctrines concerning the 'heavens' and the 'hells' of the various great religions and philosophies as originally promulgated by the Great Seers who founded them.

But there are two other teachings of the Ancient Wisdom, very wonderful and mysterious and to the average man perhaps difficult to understand if he has not first examined the elements or the foundations of the teachings. Nevertheless, I will attempt very briefly, in order to round out the thought which I have just endeavored to explain, to outline what I now mean.

The two doctrines to which I here make reference are Nirvâna on the one hand, and that concerning the Avîchi on the other hand. These two represent perfectly contrasting conditions or states which may be reached by the re embodying entity. Nirvâna is neither a place nor a locality, but just what I have called it: a state or a condition. Nirvâna is the state of the spirit-soul in which all sense of personality (but not of individuality) is completely surmounted. You will remember that personality means the human mask (*persona*) in which we enwrap ourselves and which is a web of thought and feeling woven by our de-

sires and our appetites and thoughts. This personality builds up around itself, which is equivalent to saying around *ourself*, a web of destiny. Hence, when personality is completely surmounted, or, in other words, when the fundamental consciousness of the human being rises above this web of illusion, it reaches the state of pure monadic consciousness, and this is the Nirvâna. In it all personality has vanished into pure spiritual individuality, in which consciousness becomes universal and therefore perceives and learns and deals with fundamental causes. This, therefore, is sheer knowledge, undiluted bliss, and hence, unspeakable peace. Virtually the monadic essence of the human being then becomes allied with the kosmic or universal Oversoul of our Kosmos.

Nirvâna is a state which may be attained by human beings of rare and exceptional spiritual power even when in the flesh. The Buddha is an example of this; and Śankarâchârya also, a great sage of India, is another example that occurs to me. Obviously, therefore, such a state of supreme spiritual grandeur is in every respect far superior, both in intensity of consciousness and in quality of spirituality, to the highest and noblest spiritual state that any, even the highest, of the 'heavens' — otherwise the spiritual spheres — know.

Equivalently, but in the opposite direction so to say, there is what we Theosophists — and likewise the Buddhists, who use this same term — call the Avîchi, popularly but improperly called a 'hell.' Avîchi is both a state and a world or sphere — which Nirvâna is not, for Nirvâna is a state or condition only. If a human being has passed through a long series of lives very evilly, and consciously with a continuously increasing absorption of the soul selfishly in utterly material things, it leads to a dampening and coarsening of that human consciousness; and the final result of the tremendous material attractions or impulses thus inbuilt in the fabric of consciousness is that such an entity is drawn into the Avîchi. The state of consciousness of such an entity is called Avîchi as well; and it is quite possible for a human being to experience this state somewhat, even while living in the flesh on earth. Considered as a world or sphere, the Avîchi is on the very frontiers of what we Theosophists call absolute matter; and if the downward impulses of the human being already in an avîchic-state of consciousness are so strong that the last links with his monadic sun are ruptured, he passes over these frontiers and enters into the fatal current which carries him swiftly to the final and irretrievable disintegration of his psychical composi-

tion. The particles of his psychical nature thus disintegrated are then drawn with the rapidity of lightning back to the mother-fount of matter. This is the case which we Theosophists speak of as a 'lost soul.' I should add in passing that such instances of 'lost souls' are as rare as the cases of nirvânic attainment are rare at the other pole of human consciousness. In the one case we have an incarnate god, the Nirvânî; and, at the other pole, the Avîchi-state.

On last Sunday I read a quotation from Emerson in which he spoke of the consciousness of the human being as growing through evil living so intensely personal and mean and small that finally it becomes a mere mote, a mere point, and, as he expresses it in substance, utter badness becomes utter death. This is exactly the same thought of the Avîchi that I have just attempted briefly to outline to you; and how Emerson had it otherwise than as an inspiration from his own inner god, I know not.

Friends, the Avîchi is the nearest to the idea of 'hell' that Nature provides. But for all that, it is not a judicial punishment meted out upon some unfortunate soul by an overlording deity; because the unfortunate entity taking this 'left-hand path,' as we call it, does so of his own volition entirely, is drawn thither by his own will, by his own evil thoughts; by his own desires and unchastened passions and appetites. Yet even such an unfortunate being has still a chance. It is said that one single pure and soul-impressing thought will save him from this dreadful fate; for actually the existence of such a thought would imply that the link with his own inner god has not yet been finally broken.

Further, while we may truly say that the entity descending the path into the Avîchi experiences no pain in the ordinary sense, and no grotesque or terrible torments such as the 'hell' of Occidental religion is supposed to contain, nevertheless the sense of diminishing consciousness and the fiery intensity of concentrated evil impulses bereft of all aspiration and love and hope, are said to surround such an unfortunate being with suffering which can hardly be described in words; for there is a more or less conscious realization of the withdrawal of the spiritual light and life from it. And I suppose that the pain of the supposititious earth-hells can nothing equal the psychical, mental, and emotional torture that the realization of this fact must bring. If such an entity goes to the worst, then, as a being which had originally evolved from its Monad, it returns to the mother-fountain of material Nature, much as a



dew-drop vanishes in the flame, and thus finds its evolutionary end. In such case the Monad, which long before this takes place has already ruptured all links of union, immediately proceeds to evolve a new emanation from itself, which thus becomes a god-spark beginning its long evolutionary journey towards the Monad again. Much more could be said about this mystery, one of the most secret and carefully guarded of the Ancient Wisdom; but any further exposition of it in a public meeting you will understand, of course, to be entirely out of place; nor do I feel justified in embarking upon a larger analysis of the situation even did I feel myself capable of doing so.

I wish I had more time to talk to you about these questions of the post-mortem destiny of the re embodying ego. There are wonderful mysteries in this connexion that might be spoken of; but they are mysteries because men, as a rule, have not been taught where to look for a solution of them — nor indeed do most men even know that these fascinating mysteries exist. Yet you can find all hinted at in the great old philosophies and religions, as I have so often said before, if you know where to look for them. You can find them more or less openly mentioned in the ancient literatures. But if you wish easily to understand them, you must have a key, and Theosophy does indeed give you that key. I know of no other system of thought whatsoever of which I can say the same.

This wonderful fundamental system of teaching, today called Theosophy, was not in other ages called 'Theosophy.' It was called by other names. But what does the name in any case matter? It had a name in every age belonging to the language in which it was promulgated, and it was formulated after certain manners according to the civilizations in the times when it came to the world from the University of these Great Masters or Seers of whom I have spoken.

I have said that Theosophists do not believe in 'heavens' and 'hells.' Well, we do not; and I have shown you briefly the reason why. Furthermore, there are no 'dead men' who would go to 'heaven' or to 'hell,' if such places actually existed as outlined by orthodox teaching — which we deny. But when I say that there are no 'dead men,' I do not mean that there is no unitary principle which survives the dissolution of the physical body. The human being is not by any means a fully evolved god, nor even a self-conscious spirit, but an entity intermediate between the god and the life-atom. And this intermediate part of the human constitution which we call human consciousness is not in itself

immortal. Precisely as man's consciousness in his body of flesh is built up, so to say, of a mixture of spirit and matter, and therefore is mortal and goes to pieces at death, just so does the human or intermediate part of his constitution, which is also a mixture of heaven and earth, so to say, go to pieces at death. But the monadic essence of the man that was — that which is composed of the best and highest and noblest part of him — is immortal. This is what we call the Spiritual Soul or the Monadic Ray or the Reincarnating Ego, and this is indrawn into the bosom of its parent Monad — which Jesus called his 'Father in Heaven' — at the instant of physical death.

Did I not give this last brief explanation, you see how easily my words could not only be misunderstood but deliberately misinterpreted by any one who was wilfully inclined to do so. You have heard me say, very clearly I hope, that there are no dead. I have done so, and I now repeat it. I did not mean that man was naught but a physical body. I made no such statement; I am not an idiot, and it would be idiotic to say something I knew to be false. It would have been sheer folly.

More strongly than any system that I have ever studied, does our majestic, wonderful, philosophy-religion-science, Theosophy, tell us of the Divinity at the heart of every man and woman who is normal; and when I say 'heart,' I do not mean the physical organ. I use the word 'heart' in the archaic sense as being that invisible, secret, inmost of the Inmost of you and of me, the core of each one of us, the spiritual seed of us, the spiritual root of us — we may describe it in various ways — but it is that within us from which all our noblest powers and faculties come, and have being and life in thinking men.

The splendor of our spiritual intuitions, the grandeur of our intellectual conceptions, the widespread sympathetic understanding of the better part of our intermediate or psychic or human nature — all come from this inner part of us, our own inner god. And when death overtakes the physical body, we then return to the fountain-head of us, our inmost Self, whence we originally issued and to which at death we return.



Ut sementem feceris, ita metes. "As thou hast sown, so shalt thou reap."

— Proverb quoted by Cicero, *De Oratore*, II, 65

THE "BODHICHARYÂVATÂRA" OF ŚÂNTIDEVA  
AND THE DOCTRINE OF ŚÛNYATÂ  
OR "EMPTINESS"

H. A. FUSSELL, D. LITT.

IN spite of the many recent excellent expositions and studies of the ancient religions and philosophies of the Far East, some of them by universally accredited Hindû and Japanese scholars, the ignorance that still persists of their genuine teachings is amazing. Even evaluations of them given to the general public by eminent writers and lecturers, who are supposed to have studied them at first hand, are often misleading and grotesque in their inadequateness. I refer to such statements (all of recent date) as that "the Hindû religions have a low estimate of human existence"; "they do not teach brotherhood"; "Buddhism is merely world-weariness"; "Nirvâna is equivalent to annihilation"; "Karman is fatalism, an excuse for supineness and laziness."

As for the present article, it essays to present the actual teachings, in part at least, of one of the profoundest and most spiritual of the world's religio-philosophical systems, namely, the Northern School of Buddhism, known as the Mahâyâna or 'the Greater Vehicle,' in contradistinction to the Pâli or Southern School, claimed by its followers to be orthodox and true to the public teachings of the Buddha. It is called however by the Mahâyânists, the Hînayâna, or 'Lesser Vehicle,' because in their opinion it fails to bring out the inner, more universal meaning implicit in the Buddha's teachings.

Certain books, as, for instance, the *Confessions* of Augustine and *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis, have, over and above their literary value, special significance as expressions of the deepest spiritual life known to Western nations. The noblest minds of Christendom have found in them inspiration "to lead the life," encouragement and power to overcome their passional nature, and are accustomed to use their language to express the highest aspirations. Even non-religious earnest natures — to whom *The Thoughts of Marcus Aurelius* are more congenial — have felt their charm, while rejecting the dogmas which their authors imagine form the basis of our moral life. The power which

these books possess is due to the fact that they are not merely moral disquisitions, but that each is the portrait of a human soul with all its propensities to evil, its failures and successes in the attempt to lead a life free from blame and to attain to communion with the divine source of its being.

Within the last hundred and fifty years, however, other books of devotion, with a deeper insight into the eternal verities, have been made accessible to Western readers. The *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* and *The Voice of the Silence* appeal to an ever-increasing number of truth-seekers. The *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* has been called "the pearl of the Hindû Scriptures," and *The Voice of the Silence* is a selection of Precepts by the Masters of Wisdom for the daily use of Lanoos (Disciples), which H. P. Blavatsky learned by heart when she was living in the Extreme Orient. 'The Few,' to whom this little book is dedicated, are, I suppose, those *practical* mystics who have really entered upon the Path of Self-Mastery in the pursuit of knowledge, not for themselves alone, but in order to be better able to help and save suffering humanity.

A book of the kind we are considering is the *Bodhicharyâvatâra*, an introduction to the path to be followed by the Bodhisattvas, or aspirants for Buddhahood. The well-known Orientalist, A. Barth, compares it to the *Imitation of Christ*, for it breathes the same humble renunciation and ardent charity. What the *Imitation* is to Christians, that the *Bodhicharyâvatâra* is to Buddhists, giving valuable counsels for the development of the spiritual life. It became extremely popular, and was the daily meditation of many thousands of Buddhists in Central Asia and the Far East during the seventh and eighth centuries of our era.

Just as Augustine wrote his *Confessions* in order to awaken devotion in his own heart and in the hearts of "fellow-pilgrims of the Way," so Śântideva says:

I write this book solely for the sanctification of my own heart; [adding however], it may be of use to others, similar to myself, should they happen to read it, . . . for while meditating on what I desire to write, the current of my purified thought sets more strongly towards good. . . . If it were not for the thought of *bodhi* [enlightenment], what virtue could overcome the power of sin?

Our author belongs to the Mâdhyamika school of Nâgârjuna, a most subtil metaphysician, equally remarkable for the saintliness of his life and the hardihood of his philosophical thoughts, generally regarded as the elaborator of the doctrine of *śûnyatâ* (emptiness, or the void). Born

223 B. C. in Berar, Central India, he went after his conversion to Buddhism as a missionary to China, where he gained many adherents. By the end of the third century, Buddhism had spread over the whole country, and in 625 A. D. the Buddhist monk Eikwan introduced the Mādhyamika teachings into Japan and founded the Sanron sect of Japanese Buddhism. These teachings are largely 'negative,' and some modern scholars, though erroneously in the opinion of the Buddhists, regard them as a form of philosophic nihilism. As we shall see later, the Yogâchârya school gives a positive and spiritual interpretation of the doctrine of the void, more in harmony with the Theosophic teachings. The importance of this school can hardly be overestimated, for H. P. Blavatsky, when asked whether the Esoteric philosophy taught the same doctrines as the Yogâchârya school, replied: "Not quite."<sup>1</sup> She calls it "a school of pure Buddhism, neither northern nor southern"; and no wonder, for it was founded by Āryasanga, a direct disciple of the Buddha; much of its teaching was esoteric.

We have already mentioned the likeness of much in Śântideva's poem to the *Imitation of Christ*, but it is important to note that in Śântideva there is nothing of the quietism and self-depreciation so characteristic of Thomas à Kempis. On the contrary, the aspirant for Bodhisattva-ship is self-reliant, confident, a man of action, bent solely on attaining illumination, and indefatigable in unselfish service for humanity. We must not forget, either, that Buddhism was once a great missionary religion.

"Go forth," said the Buddha to his disciples, "your hearts overflowing with compassion, as teachers in a world torn by suffering, and in every place where reigns the darkness of ignorance, light there a torch."—*Fo-sho-hing-tsan-king*

In verse four of his poem, Śântideva exclaims:

How difficult it is to attain that blessed state in which all the conditions of temporal happiness as well as of deliverance are united — that state in which a man may realize his destiny. If he does not work out his deliverance, it will be a long time before he finds so favorable an opportunity again.

In the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* (vi, 40-42) Krishna says:

Never to an evil place goeth one who doeth good. The man whose devotion has been broken off by death goeth to the regions of the righteous, . . . and is then born again on earth in a pure and fortunate family; or even in a family of those

1. *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, London, England.

who are spiritually illuminated. But such a rebirth into this life as this last is more difficult to obtain.

It is a striking parallel. Śântideva continues:

This pearl which is the thought of enlightenment has been tested and recognised as very precious by the wise who lead the caravan of humanity. Take then this pearl. O ye who go from existence to existence in this world. . . . Even if a man has committed the most terrible sins, he will overcome them if he takes refuge in the thought of enlightenment. . . . One thing, however, is the taking of the vow to find enlightenment; the following of the path that leads thereto is another and altogether more difficult. The vow is to be taken for the purpose of bringing deliverance to all creatures in the universe, by a soul incapable of turning back, with the firm resolve to accomplish this divine mission, even as Avalokiteśvara refused to enter Nirvâna before having saved all creatures. . . . As I have nothing to offer to the Buddhas of Compassion but myself, I renounce the self. I give myself to them without reserve. Take possession of me, O sublime Beings! Then I shall have nothing more to fear here below, I shall be diligent in the service of others, and shall commit no more sin. . . . I take refuge in all the Buddhas, past, present and future, in the Law, and in the Community.<sup>2</sup> The sins I have stupidly committed myself, through carelessness, through attachment or aversion,<sup>3</sup> or have caused others to commit, were done in order to get what seemed pleasant or to avoid what seemed hard to endure. My friends, my enemies, bodily existence, everything, will pass away and disappear like a dream; only merit can save me, and that friend I have neglected. In bodily sickness one does not dare disobey the physician; but, O what height of folly! I have despised and disregarded the words of that omniscient physician who is able to cure all ills, whether of soul or body. . . . But now my soul desires deliverance, and not mine own only, but that of all creatures. I will be a protector of those who have none, a guide, a boat for those who desire to reach the other shore,<sup>4</sup> or a bridge, a lamp for those who are in darkness. . . . Thus may I, in every way possible, in all the immensity of the world, contribute to the life of all that is,—as long as any creature has not found deliverance. . . . I do not know by what miracle the thought of enlightenment has been born in me; it is the Good Law that has given it to me, and I invite all creatures to share in it. . . .

Having, then, obtained firm hold of the thought of *bodhi* [enlightenment], I must henceforth, without fail, endeavor not to violate any of the rules [of the Bo-

2. All Buddhists take refuge in the Buddha; — in the Law (*dharma*), conceived of as the expression of the Buddha-mind; — in the Community (*sangha*), its earthly representative. As M. Anesaki says: "One takes refuge in the Buddha, in order to take refuge in himself (*atta-sarana*), as the Master has done."—*Buddhist Ethics and Morality*, p. 2.

3. The three causes of sin are, according to Buddhism: (1) Inattention; evil comes from unguarded thought. (2) Attachment to objects; and (3) Aversion from objects; that is why it is necessary to cultivate equal-mindedness or detachment.

4. That is, Nirvâna, in which there is freedom from the round of births and deaths.

dhisattvas]. I have made a vow [to attain enlightenment for the sake of all creatures]; if I do not fulfil it, if I disappoint them, what a terrible destiny am I not preparing for myself! . . . That is why failure on the part of the Bodhisattva is so grave, for if he fails he jeopardizes their salvation. . . . Why then, buffeted about in the course of earthly existences, now held back by the weight of my sins, now impelled onward by the force of the thought of enlightenment, do I delay the conquest of holiness? This very day I must strive to conquer my lower nature, or I shall sink lower and lower. The deliverance of all men will be delayed, and through my fault. . . . Capable of becoming good and doing good today, why do I delay? My lusts and evil passions are the cause. Why am I a slave to them? Because I have allowed myself to dwell upon them in thought, and that is why they overcome me unawares. In order to be able to deliver others, I must first deliver myself. . . . The sole cause of my slavery is absence of effort, faintheartedness, and lack of attention. In thought I have dreamt of riches, glory, honor, homage of all kinds. I have been envious of other men's good, desirous only of my own. Henceforth, free from doubt and error, compassionate, firm, obedient to the rules and to the Teachers, master of my senses and passions, I will guard my thought, firm as Mount Meru, from all thought of self. I shake off languor and indolence, and in order to have nothing more to dread. I fix my thought on the Good Law, withdrawing it from all evil ways, applying it to what ought to be its sole object, the attainment of enlightenment and the salvation of all creatures. . . .

Thus far I have sketched Śântideva's conception of the spiritual life almost entirely in his own words and at some length, and although a good English translation exists, I have followed mainly the excellent French translation by Louis de la Vallée Poussin (1907) from the Sanskrit, checked by references to the Tibetan version and commentaries. As might be expected from Śântideva's attitude towards life, there is no false piety in his poem. Though spiritual life is impossible without meditation, he insists again and again that 'ecstatic contemplation' must never be indulged in at the expense of duty to one's neighbor, the service of others being the first and last rule to be observed by him who takes the Bodhisattva-vow, which is strictly in accord with Theosophic teaching. As William Q. Judge says:

Unselfish service, altruism in all things, is the demand made by the Masters of Compassion on all who seek to qualify themselves for chelaship. **THERE IS NO OTHER ROAD.**

And in order that there may be no misconception of what duty is, H. P. Blavatsky thus defines it:

Duty is that which *is due* to Humanity — to our fellow-men, neighbors, family — and especially that which we owe to all those who are poorer and more helpless

than we are ourselves. This is a debt which, if left unpaid during life, leaves us spiritually insolvent and moral bankrupts in our next incarnation. Theosophy is the quintessence of *duty*.—*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 225

There are many interesting parallels between Śântideva's thoughts and those of other spiritual teachers, some of which our readers will already have noticed. We will mention only two. He says:

Many are the friends and enemies that I have had; they have passed out of my life leaving only the sins of which they were the occasion.

Augustine, speaking of the power of suggestion, exclaims:

O friendship, worse than the deepest enmity, unfathomable betrayer of souls! Merely because someone says, "Come, let us do this or that," we are ashamed not to be shameless.

All true Christians have been heartened and encouraged by Paul's admonition in *Hebrews*, xii, 1-2:

Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.

Hear now Śântideva:

There are around me, witnesses of every moment of my life, sublime Beings who might enter Nirvâna if they would, but who prefer to remain [invisible] on earth for my salvation and for the salvation of all men.

We do not need to wonder at these parallels nor at the similarity of language, for the Path is one, and all go through essentially the same experiences, in one life or another.

The *anatta* doctrine—that there is no 'self'—is a fundamental principle of Buddhism, and, as we might expect, the term 'Higher Self' does not occur in Buddhist nomenclature, though isolated phrases are found such as: "Self is the lord of self"; and, "A man who controls himself enters into the untrodden land through his own self-controlled self" (*Dhammapada*, 160, 323). The idea is there nevertheless, and is sufficiently well represented by the *bodhichitta*, or the 'Buddha-mind,' which is latent in all beings and is the cause of all advance in spirituality. Impersonal and eternal, it needs to be awakened and realized by mental purification; when fully active, enlightenment takes place. And so Katherine Tingley says to all students of the Higher Wisdom:

Have you meditated on that Higher Self to which you aspire? This thought and



meditation is the first step to an understanding of the real nature of the inner and outer man. It clarifies your whole being, unloading and separating from you much that you have hitherto thought to be yourself, helping you to an understanding of the valuelessness of much that you have hitherto desired and perhaps thought necessary to your welfare or peace of mind; separating the chaff from the wheat in consciousness, conferring added power of insight into human nature, and discrimination in your dealings with men.— *Theosophy: the Path of the Mystic*, p. 31

Śântideva runs through the whole gamut of Buddhist virtues, emphasizing especially the necessity for Patience or Forbearance (*kshânti*); Strength or Exertion (*vîrya*) — which H. P. Blavatsky defines as "dauntless courage that fights its way to the supernal truth"; and Meditation (*dhyâna*); one of the principal subjects recommended by our author for meditation is "the non-differentiation of one's self from one's neighbor." The remainder of the poem is highly metaphysical and polemical in tone; Śântideva defends the Mādhyamika interpretation of the 'void,' attacks that of the Yogâchârya-school in so far as it differs from his own, and states his reasons for rejecting the metaphysical entity, known as the 'ego,' of the Sankhyas and Vedântists.

Briefly stated, the doctrine of the void is as follows. The *skandhas* and elements which make up man and the universe are not only continually breaking up and re-forming according to the law of Karman, but are themselves perpetually disintegrating and reintegrating, so that nothing is left but a ceaseless ever-changing stream of life which wells up as consciousness in an unending series of transient groupments, for ever appearing and disappearing like the rising and falling of the waves of the sea. Nothing is, everything is becoming. The *anatta* doctrine, namely, that the *particular*, the *composite*, can have no abiding existence, but must eternally give way to further transitory 'formations,' has been thought out to its logical conclusion; and therefore is it said that "the salvation of the individual soul lies in its universalizing itself." The phenomenal world is *mâyâ*, illusion, and anything beyond can have only conceptual existence. Behind it, all is empty and void (*sarvam śūnyam*).

What the Buddha really taught was, that all things both *are* and *are not*, that is, they have relative existence (*Samyutta-Nikâya*, ii, 17). On all questions concerning absolute being he kept a profound silence, as his conversation with Mâlunkyâputta proves. The latter had asked:

"Is the world eternal or is it limited? Will the perfect Buddha continue to live

after death? It does not seem to me right that these questions should remain unanswered. Let the Buddha deign to answer them if he can."

The Buddha began: "Did I promise you, when you entered the Community, that I would teach you whether the world is or is not eternal, limited or infinite, whether the saints live or do not after death?"

Mâlunkyâputta was obliged to confess that the Buddha had not.

Then the Buddha continued: "Why do I not teach these things to my disciples? Because the knowledge of them does not conduce to progress in Sainthood, because they do not subserve either Peace or Illumination. The Buddha teaches his disciples the truth about suffering and deliverance from suffering. That is why the things you ask have not been revealed. Let that which has not been revealed remain unrevealed."—*The Śāla-Mâlunkya-vâda*<sup>5</sup>

Nevertheless the Buddha did give his disciples glimpses of ultimate reality, of which nothing can be predicated except that it *is*. For example, in the *Udâna* we read:

"There is, O disciples, a state, where there is neither earth nor water, neither light nor air, neither infinity of space, nor infinity of reason, nor absolute void, nor the co-extinction of perception and non-perception, neither this world nor that world. That, O disciples I term neither going nor standing, neither death nor birth. It is without basis, without procession, without cessation. It is the end of sorrow. . . .

"There is, O disciples, an unborn, unoriginated, uncreated, unformed. Were there not, O disciples, this unborn, unoriginated, uncreated, unformed, there would be no possible exit from this world of the born, originated, created, formed."

"The voidness alone is self-existent and perfect," is a Buddhist saying. Compare this with the statement in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 42):

Non Ego, Voidness, and Darkness are Three in One and alone Self-existent and perfect.

It is evident, from the use of the term 'void,' not only in the above

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5. From this passage and a few others of like import many modern scholars have concluded that the Buddha never taught anything *esoterically*. This is very far from the truth, as the Buddha's own words in the *Saddharma-Pundarika* prove: "Knowledge is difficult to understand. Were fools to be given it suddenly they would become confused, and in their greater folly would rave and go mad. I speak according to the capacity of understanding of each person; with the help of a dual meaning I prepare theories." "What I know and have not taught is much more considerable than what I have taught you"—*Samyutta-Nikâya*. These and other passages which might be quoted prove that the Buddha did *withhold knowledge* from those not prepared to receive it. H. P. Blavatsky, who had access to records unknown to our Orientalists, says that this great Teacher, Gautama-Buddha, "reserved the hidden Truths," concerning the mystery of Being, . . . "for a select circle of his Arhats. The latter received their Initiation at the famous Saptaparna cave . . . near Mount Baihbâr . . . in Râjagriha."—*The Secret Doctrine*, I, p. xxi

citations, but everywhere else in this article, that it does not mean mere emptiness, vacuity, which is the meaning given to it in our dictionaries. The word 'abstract,' in its philosophical sense, comes nearer to the oriental conception of *śūnyatā*, as is plain from a careful consideration of its use, especially since what is abstract requires a concrete imbodiment to become manifest, in much the same way as a righteous man may be said to be an imbodiment of righteousness.

Emptiness (*śūnyatā*) does not always mean relativity or phenomenality, but often absoluteness and transcendentality. When Buddhists declare all things to be empty, they are not advocating a nihilistic view; on the contrary they are assuming an ultimate reality *which cannot be subsumed in the categories of logic*. With them, to proclaim the conditionality of things is to assert the existence of something altogether unconditioned and transcendent of all determination. *Śūnyatā* may thus often be most appropriately rendered by the Absolute.

— *The Eastern Buddhist*, September-December, 1922

In the *Prajñā-pāramitā-hridaya-sūtra* (Tibetan version) we read:

Adoration to the Prajñāpāramitā, which is beyond words, thought, and praise, whose self-nature is, like unto space, neither created nor destroyed, which is a state of wisdom and morality *evident to our inner consciousness*, and which is the mother of all Excellent Ones of the past, present, and future.— *Ibid.*

Let us now see what the Theosophic teaching is.

The Secret Doctrine establishes three fundamental propositions:—

(a) An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, and Immutable PRINCIPLE . . . beyond the range and reach of thought. . . .

(b) The Eternity of the Universe *in toto* as a boundless plane; periodically 'the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing,' . . . .

(c) The fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul, . . . 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. In other words, no purely spiritual Buddhi (divine Soul) can have an independent (conscious) existence before the spark which issued from the pure Essence of the Universal Sixth principle—or the OVER-SOUL—has (a) passed through every elemental form of the phenomenal world of that Manvantara, and (b) acquired individuality, first by natural impulse, and then by self-induced and self-devised efforts (checked by its Karma), thus ascending through all the degrees of intelligence, from the lowest to the highest Manas, from mineral and plant, up to the holiest archangel (Dhyāni-Buddha). . . .

— *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 14-17

All religions are but adumbrations or elaborations of these three fundamental propositions, and their truth or falsity must be judged by refer-

ence to them; for, as Katherine Tingley says: "Theosophy is the inner life in every religion. It is no new religion, but is as old as Truth itself."

*The Secret Doctrine* also teaches that

it is only through a vehicle of matter that consciousness wells up as 'I am I,' a physical basis being necessary to focus a ray of the Universal Mind at a certain stage of complexity. . . .

The 'Manifested Universe,' therefore, is pervaded by duality, which is, as it were, the very essence of its EX-istence as 'manifestation.' But just as the opposite poles of subject and object, spirit and matter, are but aspects of the **One** Unity in which they are synthesized, so, in the manifested Universe, there is 'that' which links spirit to matter, subject to object.— I, pp. 15-16

Bearing these teachings of the Ancient Wisdom in mind, let us now turn to a consideration of the Yogâchârya interpretation of the void. The Mâdhyamika school stressed, as we have seen, the transitoriness and the impermanence of all things; its conclusions were somewhat vague and negative. The Yogâchârya school, on the other hand, being nearer to the Esoteric Philosophy, with its doctrine of the *Alaya-vijñâna*, neither matter nor spirit, but the root of both — essentially the same as the *Bhûta-tathâtâ*, or permanent reality, of Âryasanga — gave a positive content to the idea of the void (*śûnyatâ*) by linking with it the complementary idea of fulness (*aśûnyatâ*),<sup>6</sup> a state in which "the pure soul manifests itself as eternal, permanent, completely comprising all things that are pure." But although identical, Dr. G. de Purucker points out that

the Doctrine of the Void is the more spiritual . . . and treats of the upward and more spiritual nature of the Kosmos; of the inwards and yet more inwards and of the still more inwards, infinitely, of the Spaces of Space. Whereas the Doctrine of the Fulness treats of the Kosmoi, the Kosmoses, as they are *in manifestation*.

— *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, p. 377

The Yogâchâryas taught, moreover, that Alaya is also the self of an advanced Adept.<sup>7</sup> In this aspect it may be likened to the *bodhichitta*, the Buddha-mind, already mentioned, and which, if allowed to become the dominating factor in his life, will lead a man to Buddhahood, for it is latent in all men. All this is in complete accord with Theosophic teaching. In *The Voice of the Silence* we read:

6. Compare with "the voidness of the seeming full, the fulness of the seeming void."— *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 72

7. Cf. *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 48.

Alas, alas, that all men should possess Alaya, be one with the great Soul, and that possessing it, Alaya should so little avail them!

Behold, how like the moon, reflected in the tranquil waves, Alaya is reflected by the small and by the great, is mirrored in the tiniest atoms, yet fails to reach the heart of all. Alas, that so few men should profit by the gift, the priceless boon of learning truth, the right perception of existing things, the Knowledge of the non-existent! . . .

Look inward: thou art Buddha. . . .

All is impermanent in man, except the pure bright essence of Alaya. Man is its crystal ray; a beam of light immaculate within, a form of clay material upon the lower surface. . . .

One reason why the complete Alaya-doctrine was largely esoteric is that it was liable to be misunderstood, for all men are subject to the illusion, at least in the elementary stages of thought about themselves, that they are distinct personalities, and therefore would identify Alaya with their own limited personality, mistaking it for their immortal part. In the *Mahâyâna-Abhidharma*, the Buddha describes Alaya

as existing from eternity to eternity and forming the foundation of all things, without which no paths are possible, nor is there any attainment of Nirvâna. This *Vijñâna* supports and sustains everything, is a storehouse where all the germs of existence are stowed away. *This I preach only to the higher men.*

This idea of Alaya as the Repository or Storehouse in which are contained the seeds of future existences is a very important feature of the Yogâchârya-teaching. So long as man is not free from selfish impulses and desires, these seeds are, in the language of the school, "defiled or contaminated," and there is no escape from *samsâra*, the round of births and deaths, which are conditioned by his karman. When however he has, through lives of service to his fellow-men, got rid of "the great dire heresy of separateness," and become the imbodiment of universal love and righteousness, there is no more "soiled-mind-consciousness" (*klišto-mano-vijñâna*) to produce karman. Though no longer subject to rebirth, the now perfected Bodhisattva, out of compassion for humanity, refuses the Nirvâna which is his by right, in order to remain on earth to help those less advanced than himself. For him Nirvâna is, in the picturesque language of Mahâyâna, "the Abodeless" (*Apratishthita-nirvâna*), for he has

sacrificed the personal to SELF impersonal and destroyed the path between the two — *Antaskarana* (the lower *Manas*).— *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 65

Such is the destiny of every human soul, and it is startling, even

terrifying, when first presented to thought, for, as H. P. Blavatsky says: "To lose all sense of self implies the loss of all that ordinary men most value in themselves." That is why the *anatta*-doctrine of Buddhism, which is really release from every form, even the most subtil, of egoism, is anathema to all those who believe in a personal God and in the survival of the personality after death, and why Nirvâna seems to them no better than annihilation. On the contrary,

Nirvâna is not annihilation, is not death, but life; it is the right way of living, to be obtained by the conquest of all the passions that becloud the mind. Nirvâna is the rest in activity, the tranquillity of a man who has risen above himself and has learned to view life in its eternal aspects.

— PAUL CARUS, *Buddhism and its Christian Critics*

The Secret Doctrine teaches that there is

One homogeneous divine SUBSTANCE-PRINCIPLE. . . . It is the omnipresent Reality: impersonal, because it contains all and everything. . . . It is latent in every atom in the Universe, and is the Universe itself.— *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 273

We are lacking in insight, therefore, if we do not see reality everywhere, or, more strictly speaking, degrees of reality, for the nearer anything is to the One Substance-Principle, the more real it is. The Yogâchâryas liken the *bhûta-tathâtâ* to the ocean, and all phenomenal things to its waves, but the One Reality (*bhûta-tathâtâ*) is inherent in all transient things, just as the water of the ocean is inherent in the waves, which are for ever appearing and disappearing.

This being so, what does it behoove every disciple, every truth-seeker, to do?

To live in the realities of life! That is what all students should aim to do.

— KATHERINE TINGLEY, *Theosophy: the Path of the Mystic*

And to remember that

Of teachers there are many; the MASTER-SOUL is one, Alaya, the Universal Soul. Live in that MASTER as Its ray in thee. Live in thy fellows as they live in It.— *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 64

Some of our readers will doubtless ask our reasons for saying that the truth or falsity of all religions must be determined by reference to what Theosophists call the WISDOM-RELIGION. To guard against any misunderstanding, however, we must first say that Theosophists reverence all great religions, seeking only to disentangle the truth which they all contain from the error with which it is too often overlaid. The an-

swer to our question can be best given in the words of H. P. Blavatsky herself.

The Secret Doctrine is the accumulated Wisdom of the Ages. . . . It is the uninterrupted record covering thousands of generations of Seers whose respective experiences were made to test and to verify the traditions passed orally by one early race to another, of the teachings of higher and exalted beings, who watched over the childhood of Humanity.— *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 272

## A PHILOSOPHIC SCIENCE

OLUF TYBERG

WE shall attempt a consideration of one of the illuminating aspects in modern psychological development — namely, the struggle for supremacy between Aristotelian empiricism and Platonic rationalism. In so doing we expect to show that the modern scientific method has by no means established itself, as the conclusions of recent research in the different scientific departments indicate that the rational method is enlarging gradually that strong undercurrent of influence which no insistence upon merely inductive methods has been able really to impede.

The historic conflict that raged for centuries between theoretic science and dogmatic religion resulted finally in their complete separation. During the nineteenth century, after the introduction of the Kantian philosophy, a similar separation took place between science and philosophy, with the result that philosophy was looked upon largely as moral and mental speculation which, as such, bore no relation to the facts of Nature.

Of late our Western culture has been dominated by a purely physical science declared to rest exclusively upon facts, and the only recognised philosophy of this science is defined as “the organized sum of science.” Some of our modern scientists are now even informing us that by rejecting all *a priori* propositions presented in the form of general principles, and by confining themselves strictly to observed phenomena without claiming to explain Nature, they have succeeded in making more progress during the last eighty years than was made during the previous four thousand.

But the radical error in this scientific assumption is readily shown. Our advance owes quite as much to the creative urge working from within outwards as to the inductive methods by which that urge has fulfilled

itself. For this scientific point of view utterly ignores the conspicuous part which inventions and discoveries have played in this rapid progress. The inventive faculty belongs to the intuitive and creative aspect of the human mind; an aspect which is not subservient to any particular scientific method of investigation, but is dependent solely upon its power directly to recognise truth. It is because the inventive faculty is creative that it has the capacity to brush aside established conventions of the kind with which science, quite as much as religion, is clogged. Hence it is to the inventive faculty in man and not to any particular scientific method that the credit for this progress belongs.

Besides, this 'scientific progress' usually refers only to achievements enabling us to control and utilize the forces of Nature in regard to economic efficiency, so as to lighten physical labor and increase material comforts, regardless of any understanding of the responsibility which these advantages bestow. This dangerous lack of understanding of the moral responsibility which such advantages should entail is now unfortunately tending to make economic development exclusively a governing factor in modern culture. And to this erroneous outlook is directly traceable a one-sided scientific attitude and an isolated scientific method.

It is gratifying therefore to realize that, in spite of this pronounced confidence in empirical methods to the exclusion of every other method, the unexpected evidence recently brought to light by technical inventions and scientific discoveries presents us with some equally unexpected confirmation of the very *a priori* propositions which the scientists are determined to reject.

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In order to understand clearly the question before us, we shall briefly consider the workings of the two methods of investigation known as the rational and the empirical.

Friedrich Schlegel, the German philosopher, is quoted as saying that "every man is born either a Platonic rationalist or an Aristotelian empiricist." Such a statement is entirely too sweeping, though it does certainly direct attention to the two dominant and opposing elements in human mentality. One of these elements we see as the bias to seek understanding through introspection, reflexion, and inspiration, which results in the rational or Platonic point of view. The other gathers knowledge



through observation and experience and is known as the empirical method.

The recognition of these two tendencies should make it clear that there are in reality two sources of knowledge and that there exist two equally necessary functions of the human mind. This pair of opposites cannot therefore be successfully isolated from one another. Nevertheless, we must realize that the human mind is not yet sufficiently balanced in its evolution to prevent one of these functions from dominating the other, and thus bringing about a one-sided intellectual development either in the individual or in an era. Hence it is that the experience of the last few centuries shows how the intense and independent cultivation of either one of these functions has resulted in estranging them and in establishing an artificial barrier between what should be two correlated methods of investigation.

Are our ideas the result of experience or are they an original possession of the mind? Is knowledge a product of sensations received from without or of pure thought conceived from within? The extensive discussion to which these and similar questions have given rise, has been conducted largely by avowed partisans. This has precluded any final judgment. When once the complementary and inseparable relation between these two normal functions of the mind is recognised, we shall realize the necessity of establishing a harmonious relation between the profound convictions which arise from within and the experiences which we gather from without.

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The aim of the rationalist is to follow the processes of Nature as they unfold themselves from within, from cause to effect, from *a priori* generalities to *a posteriori* particulars, from one general principle to facts. As a method it is deductive and synthetic and was referred to by Galileo as the mathematical method.

The empiricist, on the other hand, attempts to formulate general theories from the observation and classification of isolated phenomena. These theories he establishes with the aid of mechanical methods, and records by means of a quantitative mathematics. In this method, which is analytical and inductive, the empiricist follows the rules of formal logic. It should be noted here that it was Galileo and Newton who originally formulated a quantitative mathematical technique. This mathe-

matics, which at present constitutes the only mathematics recognised by physical science, must therefore be distinguished from the synthetic mathematics referred to by Galileo.

It is these two methods which must be combined and co-ordinated before we can learn to recognise the relation which exists between the normal working processes of Nature and her reactions to the purely mechanical methods of man. This must be done before it is possible to lay the foundation for a philosophic science whose *a priori* generalities can be verified by *a posteriori* particulars.

While we may take for granted that no *a priori* reality or general principle would be acceptable to science unless confirmed by facts in general, it may be questioned whether the operations of Nature can be discovered through any process of logical reasoning based upon the observation and measurements of isolated phenomena, or whether it is possible even to interpret any physical fact correctly until we can examine its purely phenomenal aspects in the light of the cause of which it is an effect.

Ever since Copernicus demolished the evidence of a rising and setting sun, which in his time was supposed to be supported not only by observation but by the mathematics of Ptolemy, physical science has been reconstructing its ideas concerning the phenomena of Nature. This process of reconstructing facts has been greatly accelerated during the last thirty years, owing to unexpected and epoch-making discoveries and inventions, which are now demolishing many of the pronouncements of previous centuries.

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Turning to the writings of Galileo, we realize that he was first and foremost a rationalist and a profound student of Pythagorean philosophy, and we furthermore learn from his own statements that his interest in physical experimentation did not spring from any want of understanding on his part, but from an intense yearning to convince his opponents, the Aristotelian metaphysicians, of their erroneous conceptions concerning some of the most common natural phenomena.

In his dissertations on formal logic Galileo warned against logical conclusions in general. He commended logic for purposes of regulating and correcting the course of thought and recognised its critical value,

but he did not regard logic as an aid in the discovery of truth. He tells us that "logic teaches us to know whether the conclusions and demonstrations, already presented, are consistent, but it cannot be said to teach us how to find consistent conclusions and demonstrations." It is discovery, the *a priori* method of intuition, which he recognised as the open door to truth.

Discoveries, he informs us, take place, when from certain experiences we succeed in formulating a hypothesis and in showing deductively how this hypothesis is in accord with other experiences. Hence "the knowledge of a single fact acquired through a discovery of its cause prepares the mind to understand and ascertain other facts without the need of experimentation."

Galileo further insists that, if by the inductive method of empiricism is meant an examination of all possible cases, such a method would prove useless, even should we succeed in accomplishing what in the nature of things is an impossible proposition. The empiricist, naturally, is confined to an investigation only of the most characteristic cases, from which others must be inferred, and even such an inference must be presented in the form of a hypothesis, in order to deduce the proof of its correctness.

In this way Galileo pointed out that induction and deduction are complementary, and he therefore maintained that analytical and synthetic methods must work hand in hand. This view was endorsed by Kant who said: "the understanding (intuition) cannot see, and the senses cannot think"; and who concluded that a certain share in the production of knowledge belongs to each of these, and that only by their union is complete knowledge obtainable.

Concerning the relative merit of the synthetic and the analytical methods, Galileo was more guarded in his writings. As the synthetic method is distinctly philosophical and metaphysical, his silence may be ascribed to the restraint under which he was placed by the Church authorities, who refused him permission to touch upon questions of philosophy in his writings.

Galileo identified the synthetic or rational method as the mathematical method and stated that "we do not learn to demonstrate from the manuals of logic, but from the books which are full of demonstrations, and which are the mathematical and not the logical." This statement was addressed to the metaphysicians of his time, among whom mathematics played an unimportant part; for even though they conceded to

mathematics a position midway between metaphysics and physics, they insisted upon placing logic ahead of mathematics.

But the mathematics to which Galileo referred was not the mathematics employed by the metaphysicians of his time, nor must it be confused with the physical mathematics of today, from which modern scientists draw their logical conclusions. This latter mathematics, which is altogether dimensional in character, was largely formulated by Newton, after Galileo had invented the pendulum and had succeeded in introducing the time-interval as an important factor in mechanics. This made it possible to introduce the *velocity* factor into physics, and establish an accurate measurement for determining mechanical movements.

This purely physical mathematics, invented by himself and later formulated by Newton, is evidently *not* the mathematics referred to by Galileo as essential to a rational interpretation of Nature. As physical mathematics rests upon dimensions and is descriptive of results, it is evident that Galileo was referring to an *a priori* mathematics of Nature. This, we expect to show, was an interpretative mathematics which, according to the Pythagoreans, is capable of revealing the causal principle governing the processes of Nature as they unfold themselves outwardly in a self-moving, self-contained, and self-creative Nature; the only Nature recognised in Pythagorean philosophy.

Mathematics was particularly emphasized by Galileo in the following statement:

*“Philosophy is written in that great book which lies ever before our eyes — I mean the Universe. But we cannot understand it if we do not first learn the language and grasp the symbols in which it is written. This book is written in the mathematical language, and the symbols are triangles, circles, and other geometrical figures, without whose help it is impossible to comprehend a single word of it, without which one wanders in vain through a dark labyrinth.”*

Because this pronouncement was not comprehended, it was ignored and brushed aside as an example of fantastic effusion, and is usually quoted as a striking proof of the superior knowledge achieved by the more self-possessed modern mind.

When we succeed in gaining an understanding of Pythagorean philosophy and its symbolic mathematics, we shall realize that this latter is derived from an intimate knowledge of the working processes of Na-

ture in contradistinction to the quantitative mathematics which is obtained from and is particularly applicable to methods.

Similar views were expressed by Plato, who in *The Republic* calls attention to two kinds of geometry, one of which is dimensional and technical, while the other is ideographic and interpretative. While he confines the usefulness of the former largely to "military tactics," he ascribes to the latter a power inherently belonging to it, and states that: "Geometry will draw the soul towards the truth, and create the mind of philosophy, and raise up that which is now unhappily allowed to fall down." He also insists that "the knowledge at which geometry aims is of the eternal, and not of the perishing and transient." He therefore warns against reducing geometry altogether to the world of sense and advises "imbuing it with the eternal and incorporeal images of thought" which it reflects.

It is this advice which modern scientists have failed to consider. They have been applying geometry principally to "military tactics," that is, to the conquest of a Nature conventionally regarded as inert and inorganic and as existing separate and apart from man and other organic entities.

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Before the close of the last century came the timely but quite unexpected discovery of the X-ray, which opened the door to an altogether new line of indirect research. This made it possible to identify and study organized activities in the invisible realms of Nature. From this followed a succession of startling discoveries all tending to undermine the very foundation upon which Newtonian physics rested and to shake the overwhelming assurance in a purely mechanistic theory of the Universe.

This new method of indirect research is being conducted with the aid of a number of involved mathematical theories, among which the theory of probability plays an important part. This method, which is commonly referred to as the mathematical method, can hardly be regarded as either empirical or rational, but appears to be a subtil and ingenious attempt on the part of ultra-modern scientists to blend these two methods into one.

Among these ultra-moderns appeared Professor Albert Einstein, who emphatically declares himself to be an empiricist. Nevertheless it may

be justly questioned whether his attempt to demonstrate his principle of relativity was confined strictly to empirical methods. As this theory is becoming better understood, it tends to prove that Einstein's bold observations, together with some of his equally bold mathematical assumptions, were largely intuitive. This at least must have been the opinion of such a recognised mathematical authority as the late Prof. Michelson, when he stated: "I am now ready to accept the consequences of the Einstein theory, even though I believe he has made correct results grow from incorrect assumptions."

In whichever way we may regard this latest Einsteinian method of research, its immediate effect has been very gratifying, and even startling. It has succeeded in breaking down a one-sided mold of mind, and has injected into science broader and more cultural conceptions, which to a large extent had been lost sight of in this utilitarian age.

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In a public lecture delivered at London University by its professor in Physics, A. W. Richardson, the audience was told that when the professor was asked by one of his students to explain the Einstein theory of relativity, his reply was that, in anticipation of this very question, he had sought the assistance of his colleague, the professor in mathematics, only to learn that it was impossible for a mathematician to explain this theory to a physicist; and as a result he was compelled to conclude that it was more than impossible for a physicist to explain this theory to a layman.

Behind the subtil humor of this story is traceable a readiness on the part of some physicists to surrender the more profound aspects of their science to a few highly trained mathematicians. This surrender is only a natural consequence of the many empty claims made in the past by physicists who have been insisting that their conclusions cannot be questioned, as they are based not merely upon observation but upon mathematical demonstrations.

The result of such claims had been to place physical mathematics upon a pedestal, and to give to it a pre-eminence that belongs only to pure mathematics, the science of sciences which, to use a Kantian phrase, "carries necessity on its face." The mathematicians themselves are only too well aware of the fact that the data upon which physical or quantitative mathematics rests are purely provisional. It is an old

maxim that mathematical demonstrations, when applied to cases involving conditions not included in the terms, are contingent only. When the physicists introduce these assumed quantitative data into their mathematical equations, not even the cleverest mathematician can solve these equations otherwise than in terms of the original assumptions. It is impossible to take from an equation any more than we put into it; but this is what the physicists try to do when they assign a fictitious reality to conclusions reached by reasoning from data which are merely provisional assumptions.

There is a vast difference between the working processes of mechanical methods and those of Universal Nature. While the former can be subjected to mathematical formulations based upon measurements, the processes of Nature defy measurements of any kind. When physical science assumes the rôle of an interpreter of Nature it is confined to but one proof, "a preponderance of evidence bringing conviction to the mind."

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Newton's laws of motion and of gravitation were based partly upon records obtained experimentally from mechanical methods and partly upon the assumption that certain quantitative relations could be established mathematically between *time*, *space*, and *matter*, which by Newton were regarded as three absolutes. Observing that the acceleration of a falling body represented an unchangeable quantity, he introduced what henceforth became known as the *gravitational constant*, and utilized it for determining an *inertial mass* and a *gravitational force*. The former he determined by the ratio between *a body's weight* and the *gravitational constant*, and the latter by the product of *mass* and the *gravitational constant*. It was largely upon the strength of these formulations that Newtonian physics rested, and because these formulations never failed in their application to mechanically devised methods, Newton's laws received the dignity of axioms, and became fundamental to a scientific interpretation of Nature, which the scientists henceforth regarded as a huge mechanism.

In justice to Newton, attention is called to his *Principia*, in the Preface of which he expressed the hope that the principles which it contained would help to bring to light some truer method of philosophy. He also stated: "If I have seen farther, it is because I have stood upon

the shoulders of giants.” From such expressions we may gather that although Newton felt that he had risen to greater heights of perception than his predecessors, he did not attach any finality to his own formulations. But what about Newton’s successors? For nearly two hundred years they contented themselves with turning the memory of Newton into an idol, and of reverently falling at the feet of this idol.

When finally it was discovered that Newton’s laws failed to satisfy certain astronomical observations, and revealed other inconsistencies when applied to the motions of minute particles, some of the more courageous physicists began to question these laws and finally to realize that they were limited largely to our own doings on this planet and hence failed to account for the doings in the Universe.

To overcome these limitations Einstein presented his theory of relativity, with its space-time continuum which was based upon the *relativity* of *time*, *space*, and *matter*. According to this theory Newton’s *gravitational constant* is applicable only to the Earth, whose *inertial mass* is determined by its own particular motion. In its place Einstein introduces a universal mass which is a function of velocity and which at the same time is the mathematical equivalent of an internal energy. Pointing out that the mass of a body increases with its velocity, Einstein declared that a mass becomes infinite when its velocity reaches the *velocity of light*. This, he maintains, is the greatest velocity attainable. On the strength of these conceptions he introduces the *velocity of light* as a sort of measurable infinity, in relation to which it is possible to determine the mass of all the bodies in the Universe.

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The ready response to the brilliant and intuitive work recently done by Einstein and other eminent physicists, who, while they are not becoming less empirical, are certainly becoming more rational, is bringing about a greatly changed mental attitude, together with a distinct leaning towards the metaphysical conceptions of Life and Nature enunciated by rationalists. The result is a growing inclination to trace physical energy back to mind-stuff or consciousness.

In substantiation of this statement we shall quote from the concluding chapter of a recent work, *The Mysterious Universe*, in which Sir James Jeans reviews the latest scientific theories. Finding that neither conclusions nor the preponderance of evidence upon which they rest



bring any conviction to the mind, he offers the following conjectures as a sort of substitute, while at the same time frankly admitting that science is in no position to make any definite pronouncements.

We have already considered with disfavor the possibility of the universe having been planned by a biologist or an engineer; from the intrinsic evidence of his creation, *the Great Architect of the Universe now begins to appear as a pure mathematician.*

Today there is a wide measure of agreement, which on the physical side of science approaches almost to unanimity, that the stream of knowledge is heading towards a non-mechanical reality; *the universe begins to look more like a great thought than like a great machine.* Mind no longer appears as an accidental intruder into the realms of matter—not of course our individual minds, but the mind in which the atoms out of which our individual minds have grown exist as thoughts.

The new knowledge compels us to revise our hasty first impressions that we had stumbled into a universe which either did not concern itself with life or was actively hostile to life. *The old dualism of mind and matter,* which was mainly responsible for the supposed hostility, *seems likely to disappear,* not through matter becoming in any way more shadowy or insubstantial than heretofore, or through mind becoming resolved into a function of the working of matter, but *through substantial matter resolving itself into a creation and manifestation of mind.* We discover that the universe shows evidence of a designing or controlling power that has something in common with our own individual minds — . . . which, for want of a better word, we describe as mathematical. And while much in it may be hostile to the material appendages of life, much also is akin to the fundamental activities of life; we are not so much strangers or intruders in the universe as we at first thought. (Italics are mine. O. T.)

These conjectures are like a breeze of fresh air trying to sweep away the last remnants of dust which accumulated during the Dark Ages and which ever since have been blinding men's minds and marring their judgment. Besides, as they are rationalistic in their tendency, such utterances gain an added significance when expressed by an avowed empiricist, who frankly admits that physical science has no satisfactory interpretations to offer and "should leave off making pronouncements." We are justified, therefore, in regarding these utterances, coming from an eminent physicist, as a preliminary gesture towards a reconciliation between two opposite methods of research, whose natural growth has been retarded for want of a common meeting-ground, where a general principle can reveal facts, and facts confirm a general principle.

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Newtonian physics regarded phenomenal Nature as a reality gov-

erned by physical laws impressing themselves from without, the knowledge of which could be obtained only through the study of astronomy and of the behavior of inanimate, terrestrial objects. In all Christian lands man was regarded as a sort of special creation and considered a subject unsuited for exact scientific study. However, after the theory of evolution was presented in the nineteenth century and man's mind came to be regarded by many scientists as an outgrowth of matter, some of the psychologists began to follow the example of physical science and introduced mechanical methods for measuring mental reactions to external influences. As with all such methods, they soon tried to demonstrate their practical value by suggesting ways and means for increasing mental efficiency, but without bringing us one step closer to any real understanding of the human mind and its functional relation to the human body.

It should be obvious that the study of effects produced by mechanical methods, from which has been isolated the mind that invented and produced the methods, cannot furnish us with a key to a process which resides, not in the method, but in the mind that invented the method.

The limitations of modern rationalism become equally apparent when we realize that it has not been able to read into the evidence presented by modern science any clearly defined confirmation of its own pronouncements. While part of this failure must be ascribed to its own incompleteness as well as to its involved and obscure presentation, much of this failure can be traced directly to the physical evidence itself. This evidence, as presented, is so honeycombed with theories as to make it impossible to distinguish fact from fiction and leads us even to question whether the physicists have any clearly defined conception as to what constitutes a fact, or as to what distinguishes a fact from the multitude of isolated and classified phenomena on the strength of which they formulated their theories.

Before any reconciliation between the respective pronouncements of rationalism and empiricism is possible we must dismiss from our minds the still lingering conventions which have their origin in a theological scholasticism. We can see only what we are prepared to see; everything else is involuntarily hidden by our preconceptions. The many theories presented by physical science have been more or less conditioned by these preconceptions, while at the same time they have exerted such a constraining influence upon rationalistic thinking as to prevent a frank,

open, and lucid presentation, and even to encourage what at least appears to have been wilful mystification.

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The present upheaval in scientific thought, precipitated by a series of startling discoveries and an accentuated mathematical acumen, has given rise to a bolder attitude towards unconventional and independent thinking, and at the same time has revealed the need of a sounder basis from which to direct a scientific outlook. Only a conviction coming from the realization of truth itself, such as came to Copernicus, has the power to restore the right attitude towards Nature and enable the scientist to distinguish between the normal processes of Nature and Nature's reactions to artificial stimuli. For it is upon the latter that the scientific theories are founded. This distinction is imperative before it will be possible even to think of a philosophy of Nature which shall conform to the vast collection of evidence which the scientists have gathered together with so much labor and ingenuity.

In this attempt to formulate a sound basis from which to consider the possibility of reconciling the evidence of modern physical science with the pronouncements of modern critical philosophy, we shall follow in the footsteps of such men as Copernicus, Bruno, Galileo, and Kepler, the pioneers who did much to stimulate both of these opposite systems of thought, and who drew their inspiration from what they were able secretly to learn of the Esoteric Philosophy taught by Pythagoras in the ancient Mystery Schools.

As much of this esoteric teaching became public property when *The Secret Doctrine* was published by H. P. Blavatsky, elaborately presenting this ancient philosophy, the world in general and the scientists in particular are therefore in a position to determine for themselves the inherent value of a profound and recondite philosophy which, while conceived and formulated by a mentality very foreign to ours, constitutes the source from which sprang both Platonic rationalism and Aristotelian empiricism.

It is with the aid of this philosophy that in coming articles we shall consider a scientific basis for metaphysics. To this end we shall introduce some elementary aspects of a synthetic geometry which we believe to be akin to the mathematics known to ancient philosophy and essential to a more complete understanding of it: a mathematics constituting the

link between geometry and arithmetic on the one hand and between metaphysics and physics on the other. In other words a symbolic geometry that is *a priori* to the arithmetic upon which physical mathematics rests, and as such will enable us to read the universal language which Galileo maintained "is written in that great book that lies ever before our eyes," and which in so doing "will draw the soul towards the truth, and create the mind of philosophy," as was the pronouncement of Plato.

## THE ASTRAL LIGHT

H. T. EDGE, M. A., D. LITT.

**T**HE Astral Light should be a very well-known name to Theosophists, as it has been in constant use from the very first; yet it seems to have been strangely forgotten by some. Those who set store by an adherence to the original Theosophical teachings as given by H. P. Blavatsky may be glad of an opportunity to refresh their memories on this topic. Its practical importance in the life of a Theosophist is very great — so great as to make all the difference between success and failure. For upon a knowledge of the astral light hinges the whole question of psychism, that subject which is so much to the fore. There can be no question that many people who have wasted time and energy, and perhaps incurred unpleasant consequences, by wandering in the deceptive mazes of psychism, would have avoided their trouble if they had had a better understanding of the astral light.

In a word — what is ordinarily understood by psychism means permitting oneself to be deluded and victimized by the currents in the astral light; so that we become the passive recipients of these forces, when, if we but understood their nature and our own powers, we might have been able to utilize the forces of Nature to our own true benefit and the good of others.

It is not proposed here to enter deeply into the question of what the astral light is in its relation to other factors in the cosmic scheme; the subject is too vast, and even if the present writer were competent to deal with it, his readers would be overwhelmed. Such a knowledge must necessarily transcend the capacity of ordinary human minds. Above ourselves in the hierarchy of evolution stand adepts and sages, whose powers of comprehension far exceed our own; and above them again

must stand still greater sages. Yet the mysteries of the universe are infinite, and it is folly to suppose that there can ever be an end to possible knowledge.

It is not surprising, in view of this, that we shall find in *The Secret Doctrine* many statements about the astral light which seem conflicting. Well may they so seem! For what more could the writer have done than give a hint here and there, leaving fuller comprehension to be reached by the student as he advances in his own development. The difficulty of rendering the teachings of the Wisdom-Religion in modern language and in terms of modern occidental ideas is well-nigh insuperable. Then we must bear in mind that every septenary division is subdivided again into septenates, until the complication becomes great. The planes of nature are not separated into layers like oil on water, but interpenetrate each other. When all this is taken into consideration it will be understood that apparent contradictions, so far from being stumbling-blocks, are clues — to the wise student. As the writer of *The Secret Doctrine* says, it was never her intention to enable the student to form any neat cut-and-dried scheme of the universe. Such a scheme would be sure to be wrong; we must keep our minds fluid.

But it is not necessary for our immediate purpose that such a thorough exposition should be undertaken, as all that we are attempting to do is to give a general view of the astral light, especially as to its bearings on our daily life; and this can be done without entering into these deep matters.

First, as to the term itself: the word 'astral' is not modern but goes far back into history. It has been used in contrast to 'terrestrial,' as pertaining to spheres beyond that of earth, the regions of interstellar space. Thus it is to some extent synonymous with 'heavenly,' 'aethereal,' 'sideral.' It has also been used in astrology, as referring to influences from the stars. The word 'light' suggests the power of vision, and one naturally thinks of the expression 'seeing in the astral light.' But, as will be seen, the astral light is concerned with a much wider field than vision; and one might alternatively speak of 'astral matter,' or 'the astral plane.' However, the ideas can be combined if we remember that light is a form of matter; in fact, when we get beyond the region of ordinary physics, such questions as whether the astral light is a region or an ether or an energy can hardly be considered as alternative questions.

In the *Theosophical Glossary* we read that the astral light is —

The invisible region that surrounds our globe, as it does every other, and corresponds as the second Principle of Kosmos (the third being Life, of which it is the vehicle) to the Linga-śarîra or the Astral Double in man. A subtil Essence visible only to the clairvoyant eye, and the lowest but one (*viz.*, the earth) of the Seven Ākâśic or Kosmic Principles.

We need therefore to know something about the Linga-śarîra or Astral Double in man; and, not to complicate our present topic, we must be content to refer to the teachings on that. The astral light has been called the soul of the world; and this is using words loosely, as when we make the rough distinction between soul and body in man. It has also been called the thought atmosphere — the medium or ether wherein thoughts exist and move, as do physical things in the physical world. But when we say thoughts we ought to include emotions, desires, instincts. If we wish to draw a distinction between thoughts and emotions, we might prefer to say that the Ākâśa is the realm of thoughts. Only then we should be using the word 'thoughts' in a restricted sense. The fact is the word is too vague, as is also the word 'mind'; for these words, in our common usage, include or jumble together things which have to be distinguished carefully when we come to a more exact study. Perhaps it will make things clearer if we say that Ākâśa pertains to the higher mind, and the astral light to the lower. But, while this is true in a general way, it is misleading unless we bear in mind that the astral light, though a lower cosmic principle than Ākâśa, is yet the reflector of all things, high or low. A mirror or a sheet of water may reflect the light of the sun. It is always needful to remember that the plan of Nature is complex, and that wherever there are divisions there are also subdivisions. The same units may be grouped in different ways, just as we can divide things by vertical or by parallel lines. If inclined to rebel against such complication, we have only to look at our familiar physical world and see how complex things are there. For example water (which is one symbol for the astral light) rests above the earth and below the air. Yet water vapor pervades the whole atmosphere and mingles with the solid crust. However, details apart, a very serviceable general notion is got by thinking of the astral light as an atmosphere in which thoughts and emotions exist as actual things.

In the astral light we live, as beasts in air and fishes in water, breathing it in and out, acting on it and being acted on by it. Thus we share ideas and feelings in common, our notion of personal separateness being

illusory. Comes a thought into our mind — we call it our own, without knowing whence it has come; we experience tides of emotion, which may or *may not* have started in ourselves. Into this common atmosphere we send forth, like breath from the lungs, our own thoughts and feelings, or the modified forms of those we have received from it. By means of the astral light are explained clairvoyance, thought-transference, those mysterious psychic epidemics which from time to time disturb society, such as religious hysteria, mob violence, and similar collective hallucinations and enthusiasms.

In the human organism are faculties by which we become cognizant of the astral light and its denizens, just as our physical senses serve a like purpose for the physical world.

The astral light is teeming with powerful energies, which have been put into it by the thoughts, emotions, and deeds of men. Many of these energies are evil and destructive; but, since the astral light reflects and stores all things, there are also pure and elevating influences. But that which is grossest lies in the lowest levels; and he who would soar to the pure air has need of wings. There are people who, with marvelous rashness and presumption, attempt to penetrate these dangerous regions without ever having thought of equipping themselves for the adventure. Small by comparison with such rashness would be the folly of one who, ignorant of swimming, should plunge into the ocean with its waves and its sharks; or the folly of a Piccard, exploring the stratosphere without his protective shell. A common diver puts on a suit, and a Polar explorer dons furs; yet the psychic adventurer will try to step naked and defenseless into regions far more dangerous. Usually his motive for doing so is a desire to find relief from his inability to cope successfully with the ordinary world in which he lives. Jumping into the sea is one way of curing seasickness, but not the best.

Fortunately for man, he is largely protected by his physical organization from the assaults of the astral light; so that even his unwise attempts to break down this protection may be frustrated by a Nature wiser than himself. Yet we have many instances of the disastrous results of exposing oneself to influences without having either the knowledge or the strength to cope with them.

At this point, lest it be said that we are adopting a timid or obscurantist policy, and trying to discourage people from getting knowledge; be it said that, for the student of Occultism who approaches the matter

in the right way, there is the fullest satisfaction for every legitimate desire for knowledge. The Teachers of mankind stand ever ready and anxious to teach, whenever they find those ready to learn. But they are also mankind's Protectors, and know well how great are the dangers to which mankind is subjected by ignorance and a presumptuous desire to attain knowledge of Nature's secrets before they are prepared.

The astral light has been typified by a two-headed serpent. The serpent was always a symbol of wisdom, which in its heights is spiritual knowledge, and in its depths is infernal cunning. It is thus that the astral light is both Tempter and Teacher. To be really taught, man requires freedom to exercise his free will; and he may succeed or succumb according as he has mastered his passions or not. For the same reason the astral light is described as bisexual; but here we must beware of misapplying the symbol, for in the pure minds of those who used this symbol there was no idea of sex in its physical or erotic connexions. By male and female they meant positive and negative, spirit and matter. The spirit or active side of Nature was considered masculine; the matter or negative side, feminine; which implies no derogation to either sex. The two interlaced triangles forming Solomon's seal express the same idea.

*The Secret Doctrine* tells us that

The "Dragon" is an old glyph for "Astral Light" (Primordial Principle), "which is the Wisdom of Chaos." Archaic philosophy, recognising neither Good nor Evil as a fundamental or independent power, but starting from the Absolute ALL (Universal Perfection eternally), traced both through the course of natural evolution to pure Light condensing gradually into form, hence becoming Matter or Evil.— I, 73

Ignorant Christian fathers degraded this philosophical tenet into the superstition called the Devil; but the Gnostic Christians, following the Ancient Wisdom, recognised the dual aspect of the Serpent, and distinguished between that wisdom which is celestial and that which is terrestrial or infernal.

This dual aspect of the astral light is of course very important in a practical sense. The astral light, being intermediate, reflects what is above and what is below, as the moon may reflect to earth the light of the sun, or reflect back to earth from its dark side the emanations of earth itself. Moreover man fills the astral light with images both pure and impure. The astral light has many planes. Well has it been called



the Great Deceiver, but the slur is rather upon man who through ignorance and presumption is deceived, than upon a faithful principle of Nature.

If I see a form in the astral light, I have no way of knowing whether it is merely a reflexion of my own thoughts and desires — unless I am proficient. In all probability I have penetrated no further than the astral atmosphere immediately surrounding my own personality, my own astral atmosphere which I carry around with me. It is pregnant with what I have put into it at different times of my life, and may bring back memories that have passed from recollection. If I hear a voice or words, whence do they proceed? Are they not perhaps the mere reflexion of my own thoughts and wishes? Again, if these forms and voices come not from me, from whom come they? The astral light is the great storehouse of the thoughts and feelings of men. Any astral image whatever, from any source whatever, may chance to float into my current and coalesce with vital elements in my frame, thereby attaining to a semi-materialization, as sight or sound, and becoming apparent to my percipient senses. And, in my folly, and my poor vanity, I deem myself favored of beatific powers; my guardian angel speaks to me, or perchance appears garbed in the shape of someone I have seen with my physical eyes. Is it not pitiable! This is folly, and perhaps the Teachers might be willing to leave us to amuse ourselves with it till we were tired; but what of the dangers?

The astral light in its lowest levels is peopled with the shades, spooks, elementaries, *kâma-rûpas*, of suicides, criminals, debauchees; creatures, deprived alike of soul and of body; conscienceless, filled only with the craving to satisfy their lusts and obtain a brief taste of physical enjoyment by obsessing the living. Open the door, and in they rush. And we see people — wise they doubtless think themselves — sitting in circles and trying by every means they know to render themselves susceptible to these influences. Or perhaps they are sitting in their closets, trying to make themselves sensitive and passive, expecting to develop clairvoyance or astral vision. The influences stand only too ready to oblige!

It would entail too long a digression to go into the details concerning spiritistic phenomena. They fall into several classes, but in every case they involve dangerous tampering with the astral light and with man's constitution. From elements supplied by the vitality of the sitters, by the astral memories of the sitters, by the images in the astral light, and

by the denizens of the lower astral plane, can be constructed simulacra of deceased friends and relatives. Details of the life of the deceased persons, known only to the surviving relative, are accepted as evidence of the presence of the departed; when they are merely picked out of the aura of the said survivor himself, and conveyed back to him in the form of a 'message.' Yes, the astral light is a great deceiver, but we need not let ourselves be deceived.

People whose minds have become accustomed to the mechanical philosophy of the world may harbor the idea that the material world, as described by science, is complete in itself; and that therefore any other world, such as that of the astral light, is something extra or outside. This is very far from being the case. Without postulating a superphysical world, we cannot begin to explain the physical world, and must fill the gaps in our explanation by the use of words like mass, matter, motion, force, attraction, etc., which are merely counters or uncashed checks, as men of science are today more ready to admit. We cannot explain the integrity of the human body, whose atoms are continually changing, without presupposing a permanent model or pattern, upon which those atoms are woven or molded by the life-forces. We cannot explain memory, which persists throughout life, despite the fact that the material substance has changed again and again. And as in man, so in the physical world in general; the same difficulty encounters us at every step. If matter is nothing but a system of atoms separated by spaces, how does one atom act upon another? If I push one end of a stick, why does the other end move, if there are gaps between the particles? To make a long story short, the astral light is not like a layer floating above the physical world like oil on water; nor is it even an ether penetrating physical matter. If there were no astral light the physical world would fall to pieces; for the astral light is one of the essential elements of the constitution of physical matter, necessary to scientists, though they have overlooked it.

We are so accustomed to thinking in terms of matter and force — which may be called the gods of the mechanical philosophy — that we ask ourselves the question whether the astral light is of the nature of a force or energy, or whether it is a kind of material. But let us consider the question of ordinary light: is that a force or a substance? Newton considered it as an imponderable form of matter, with particles emanating from luminous bodies and pervading space; but this theory not suf-

ficing to explain certain phenomena, later investigators proposed the undulatory theory. According to this theory, light was not a substance but merely a wave-motion in a substance; and a hypothetical substance was invented and called the luminiferous ether. But today it is found that this theory is not sufficient to explain phenomena which have since been discovered; and the conclusion has been reached that, not merely in connexion with light, but in connexion with radiant energy in general, we must give up trying to make a sharp distinction between force and matter. Light is neither energy nor matter in the old sense of these words; it is both at once, and a new set of formulæ is being devised to measure its properties, and we must try to develop our conceptual powers in accordance with these new requirements.

So with the astral light: we dare not call it matter, we dare not call it energy, since neither term suffices to define it. It is neither, and yet both. This explains why we find it sometimes spoken of as the vitality of nature. Taking the human analogy, we can speak of man as having a life-principle or Prâna, and an astral double or Linga-sârîra, and yet we can say that the two together constitute his vitality. The two are interdependent. We can speak of a vibration in an ether, but it is wrong to try to imagine a vibration without an ether, or an ether without vibrations.

The astral light is the great *storehouse* of Nature; it receives, holds, and gives back impressions. Man poisons the astral light, as he does the air, by his expiration. Man collectively engenders a malign atmosphere in the astral light, and this reacts on him in the form of epidemics, whether physical or psychical. This will explain the mysterious incidence of influenzas, so difficult to account for by scientific theories. The germs play a minor rôle, and the causes which render them innocuous at one time and virulent at another escape the scientific eye. By means of the astral light we can show the connexion between the moral, mental, or psychic atmosphere of mankind, and those physical phenomena which common belief always connects with them, however much science may deride this as superstition. Great storms and magnetic disturbances are thus connected with disturbances in the minds of men. Even earthquakes cannot be explained mechanically; the animal kingdom is scared before the earthquake happens, and sensitive human beings are similarly affected. On mechanical principles the marvel is, not that the earth trembles, but that it is usually so still. A disturbance in the

astral body of the earth will communicate itself to the physical body, just as happens in human beings.

Once in a while purer influences from a higher plane of cosmic substance — from the Ākāśa — may break through the upper strata of the astral light, thus causing one of those cataclysms, which, dreadful though they seem, are purificative and thus beneficent.

The Theosophical doctrine of Karman is much connected with the astral light. The difficulty we have in understanding Karman is largely due to our great ignorance of the architecture of the universe; we do not see the means by which causes are joined to their effects. The astral light provides us with one such missing link. It is so reasonable, so eminently scientific, to say that man, by his free will, disturbs the equilibrium of the astral light, and that Nature's effort to restore equilibrium causes a reaction to take place upon man. If we consider the immediate astral atmosphere of an individual, we can understand how he may carry about with him the seeds of his own thoughts and acts, ready to beget their kind whenever conditions allow. Man may be said to carry his karman about with him. Going beyond the immediate sphere of the individual, we see that man is involved in the karman of his race, both for good and for ill, and as receiver and bestower.

There are some people who, taking a rather narrow and commercial view of Karman, seem over-anxious about the question of exact personal deserts. But it may be replied that they usually take for granted the pleasant things they enjoy, showing no anxiety to inquire whether or not they have deserved these; while it is only the unpleasant experiences that they cavil about. As Shakespeare in *The Merchant of Venice*, and others, have said, if those who complain of divine justice, overlooking divine mercy, were taken at their word, they would probably have cause to regret it. Also, our own conduct is better than our narrow theories; for no man outside of a desert-island lives for himself alone; he is ready to share his life with his fellows, giving and taking, without concerning himself overmuch about balance-sheets. And so, though it is doubtless true that individual karman is balanced up in the long run, there can be no doubt that we both gain and lose temporarily by being mixed up in the general life, whether physical, astral, or otherwise.

The astral light thus figures as a preserver of records, and we are reminded of the Recording Angel and his Book of Life. The astral light is a great preserver of *equilibrium*; and when we act we disturb the

equilibrium, thus setting in motion a counter-action which tends towards the original source. The principle will appeal to scientific minds, for it is the same as we find operating in the physical world. It has been formulated in the words, "To every action there is an equal and opposite reaction." But it may be convenient to consider both action and reaction as together constituting one thing, just as a line is a single thing but with two ends. So in the case of karman, we may say that what are usually called acts are only the beginnings of acts — volume I, so to say; the act is not complete until the sequel has ensued. These thoughts might be pursued further, but at present it is in connexion with the astral light that we are considering the subject.

Of the physical world we are cognisant through our physical senses, whose organs are in the physical body; of the astral light we know something through its effects. But we are endowed with other senses, which are co-ordinated with the astral plane as our physical senses are with the physical plane. But what has already been said applies here — as to the folly and danger of uninstructed and premature attempts to develop such senses. In so far as we might succeed in our attempt, we should thereby subject ourselves to temptations which we should not be prepared to resist; and delusion, insanity, disease, gross profligacy, are among the consequences of such rashness, against which it must be the desire of all teachers to guard their pupils.

We may take occasion here to give warning against a monstrous doctrine sometimes alleged by people advocating psychic practices. It is based on false analogy and sounds plausible until a little consideration and common sense exposes its falsity. It has been argued that we cannot get to the spiritual planes without passing through the astral planes first. This of course represents the crude idea that the planes of Nature and of man are so many separate strata, like oil on water; a most misleading notion. Actually the various planes of Nature and the various principles of man interpenetrate and are interdependent; and it is obvious that man is able to exercise abstract thought without having to pass through the astral plane on his way to the mânasic plane; and that he is able to exercise self-sacrifice and divine love and the wisdom that comes from love — all pertaining to the spiritual planes — without having to develop the astral and psychic senses. In applying the principles of analogy, too, we must remember that each of the seven principles or planes is subdivided again in a sevenfold way.

Students of physical science know that the scheme of Nature is much more elaborate than their first crude theories might lead them to hope; and it is not otherwise with the other planes of Nature. This fallacy is therefore but an application of false analogy, used to afford excuse for those who wish to waste time wandering in astral regions. Could anything be more absurd than the idea of a universe all in layers, with the material plane at the bottom, the astral regions floating above it, and the spiritual plane accessible only to those who have penetrated the intervening layers! Or could any idea of the human constitution be cruder than a similar storeyed and articulated structure!

It will be appropriate at this time to connect our subject with the newer ideas in physics which are so much to the fore. Some speak of these as new discoveries, but others may perhaps prefer to regard them as rediscoveries of things known before but recently forgotten; rediscoveries by comparatively ignorant people; *partial* rediscoveries, perhaps we should say; and dressed in a new terminology, regarded from a new viewpoint. Physicists have had to admit the validity of certain things long known to philosophy; they realize the need of evaluating certain unknown quantities, certain *x*'s and *n*'s, which they have used in their equations, and to which, forgetting the provisional nature of these terms, they have allowed themselves to assign reality. They have had to give up the Newtonian system of time, space, and matter, as independent constants; and have ceased to speak of mass and energy as independent entities. Thus we are now able to discuss the astral light with greater facility than could be done a half century ago. Reading the old books, one finds prefatory remarks about the need for postulating a world different from that contemplated by science; but now we can point to science itself for indorsement of the probability (or certainty) of such a world — such worlds. Science is engaged in the attempt to formulate mathematically the properties of a world other than that of Newtonian mechanics; and it is seen that, even after we have formulated it mathematically, we shall not be able to conceive it until our faculties have become trained.

The fact that the astral light, like physical light, is neither energy nor matter, but both, has already been mentioned; but it will need some time and effort on our part to wean ourselves from the familiar ideas of matter and energy as distinct things, and to replace this by an adequate conception of the astral light as something which is both at once.

We must avoid trying to transfer to ultraphysical regions the ideas we have derived from physical experience; and we must use analogies with caution. Take our idea of *space* for example. We usually think of it as a large empty room into which things can be packed, and which allows of motion in certain directions. And, transferring this idea, we think of the astral plane as a large empty space, *full of* things. But is this valid? Is it likely that a given plane of Nature should have the same properties as a given other plane? The familiar threefold spatial extension which we assign to physical objects, whether we call it a property of matter or an intuition of the mind, is not likely to pertain to another plane; if so, in what would the one plane be different from the other?

Another unreal distinction to be given up is that between 'living' and 'dead' matter. There is nothing dead in the universe; all is alive. It may suit temporary convenience to think of some things as dead by contrast with other things: the ground may seem dead to the creature that walks on it; a man's body may seem dead when the life has departed. Yet if we analyse the dust of the ground, we can find nothing in it but living electric energy; nor can we find anything more dead in the material left behind by the departed spirit. The very air we breathe is not a great sheet of placid fluid, but a most lively concourse of animated specks; and these specks themselves, when scrutinized by the refined processes of modern physics, are found to be compact of living fire. So we shall be wrong if we try to imagine the astral light as dead. It is neither body nor life, but a living being — a living being as a whole, and living beings as to its component parts.

Think of the manifested universe as the son of a father and mother. We must perforce regard the universe, though in essence *one*, as two-fold; we cannot think but in terms of duality. This duality we express under various pairs of terms: force and matter, spirit and form, masculine and feminine, subject and object, active and passive, and so on. Every manifestation is thus resolvable. Thought is a motion or energy acting in a material or vehicle. It is true that the distinction between active and passive principles is not fundamental; yet such a distinction exists in a relative sense and is recognised for practical purposes. The astral light is the soul of the universe; it is reality regarded under the aspect of a receptive, feminine principle; mother-nature, as distinct from father-nature.

The name given to mother-nature, the passive or receptive side, the vehicular side, is Prakriti; and the astral light is called the lowest of the seven planes of Prakriti, Âkâsa being one of the higher planes. The student may work out this for himself. Yet here we must remember, as said above, that each plane is again divided into seven planes; and also that planes are not to be thought of as separate layers.

In these discursive remarks on the astral light, we have not taken much trouble to arrange the ideas in a very definite order; but this is all the better, because it will tend to prevent the student from forming too narrow and rigid an idea. It also guards against the possibility of hampering the student's mind by imposing upon it our own ideas, which are confessedly imperfect. We have sought to do something towards dissipating the idea of the *supernatural*, by representing the astral light as an indispensable part of Nature. The notion of the supernatural is hard to get out of the mind, even when we think we have done so. What we are pleased to call the real world seems so real that we think of the astral light as being some other world. Yet this world, which seems so real, is only Nature as seen through the veil of our corporeal senses; and would wear an entirely different aspect if seen through other senses. Again, we live in a world of thoughts and emotions which is usually more important to us than the world which we see with our eyes; and we need to understand something about the physics of this inner world in which we all live. A study of the astral light will therefore furnish a clue to the understanding of the world in which we live.

## SCIENCE, ARCHAEOLOGY, AND THEOSOPHY

### New Discoveries, Confirmations, and Speculations

C. J. RYAN, M. A.

**I**N the early days of Theosophy critics asked if the Masters of Wisdom ever offered any practical suggestions that would be worked out in future years, but which science had not taken up either because they seemed impractical and impossible, or for other reasons. There were such, and a recent improvement in photography reminds us of the answer given by the Master K. H. to the question: "Could any other planets besides those known to modern astronomy . . . be discovered by physical means if properly directed?" The answer, in part, is:



They must be. . . . Edison's tasimeter adjusted to the utmost degree of sensitiveness and attached to a large telescope may be of great use when perfected. When so attached, the 'tasimeter' will afford the possibility not only to measure the heat of the remotest visible stars, but to detect by their invisible radiations stars that are unseen and otherwise undetectable, hence planets also. The discoverer, an F. T. S.<sup>1</sup> a good deal protected by M. [the Master Morya], thinks that if, at any point in a blank space of heaven . . . the *tasimeter* indicates an accession of temperature and does so invariably, this will be a regular proof that the instrument is in range with the stellar body either non-luminous or so distant as to be beyond the reach of telescopic vision. . . ."—*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 169

The tasimeter was an electric apparatus for detecting changes in pressure and hence in temperature by the variations in the electric conductivity of carbon; but it is only recently that electric instruments such as the vacuum thermocouple have been made sufficiently sensitive to detect the minute amounts of heat received from the stars and planets, and, so far as we know, no invisible celestial body has yet been discovered by heat rays, though the heating effect of thirteenth magnitude stars has been measured. This extremely minute effect is equal to that of a candle two thousand miles away!

The new development in photography, however, promises to fulfil the suggestion made by the Mahâtman to Mr. Sinnett fifty years ago, for sensitized plates have recently been made in the Eastman laboratories far more sensitive to heat-rays than has hitherto been possible. Already unsuspected lines in the spectra of thirty-six elements have been discovered by their aid, and it is reported that scientists are looking with anticipation to the probable discovery of invisible celestial bodies by heat radiation which is not sufficient to affect ordinary plates. Such discoveries might revolutionize current theories of stellar evolution, it is suggested.

#### DOES THE ABSOLUTE ZERO OF TEMPERATURE MEAN UTTER DISINTEGRATION AND DEATH OF MATTER?

An immense electro-magnet has lately been made for the University of Leyden, Holland, which is to be used for fresh efforts to tear the atom apart. Extremely low temperatures must be maintained while the powerful current is flowing in order to prevent the coils being overheated and rendered useless. Experiments have been made to obtain temperatures approaching as nearly as possible what is called the 'Absolute' tem-

1. Edison was one of the earliest Fellows of the Theosophical Society.

perature, at which all heat is theoretically supposed to disappear. This, on the Centigrade scale, is 273 degrees below the freezing point of water. It is considered unlikely that we shall ever reach the Absolute temperature, but the latest report from Leyden says that Professor W. H. Keesom has succeeded in obtaining 272.3 degrees of 'cold,' as we may say: that is, he has reached to seven-tenths of a degree above the Absolute, a marvelous achievement, for at about minus 268 degrees C. even helium liquefies under great pressure.

Now what happens when these extremely low temperatures are approached? As it is accepted that the movements of the molecules of matter (not the atoms or electrons) slow down by degrees in proportion to the lowering of the temperature, it has been suggested that the molecules would be motionless, 'dead,' or inert, when the Absolute was reached, if that were possible. This suggestion strongly reminds us of the Oriental teaching of *laya* conditions, or *laya* 'centers'—transition states where things disappear from one plane of activity or existence to reappear on another of a different nature. The word *laya* comes from the Sanskrit *lī*, to dissolve. Matter, when it reaches the *laya* or neutral condition, is said to be resolved into a kind of homogeneous state, a gateway through which both ingress and egress for energies or consciousness are possible. This subject is treated at length in *The Secret Doctrine* and in Dr. G. de Purucker's *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*.

When cooled to within about two degrees of the Absolute Zero, a metallic substance cannot be very different from what it would be at the zero, but it has not disappeared from our ken, although its molecules are (presumably) almost at rest. But a great change in its nature has taken place; its power of conducting electricity has enormously increased. When Professor Onnes of Leyden (who first liquefied helium) sent a current of electricity through a ring of lead cooled to the temperature of liquid helium, and then broke the circuit, the current continued to flow, and he said that if the metal could be kept at the same low temperature the current would not stop for two years! It would be interesting to know why metals should lose their electrical resistance at low temperatures, and what relation exists between this and the approach of the molecules to immobility. Is it connected with the *laya center* above-mentioned where, according to esoteric teachings, transformations of energy and consciousness take place? We cannot pursue this speculation further here, but perhaps others will find the suggestion

profitable, and will study the implications arising from the theory of *laya centers* so frequently mentioned by the great Teachers.

The increase of electrical conductivity at low temperatures suggests another possibility. Delicate measurements by means of the electric thermocouple have shown that the planets Jupiter and Saturn are exceedingly cold, far more than 100 degrees below zero Centigrade. Yet observations prove that tremendous forces are at work on those worlds. Horizontal currents sweep round the equatorial regions at several hundred miles an hour, light and dark spots appear and disappear, even the very outline or shape of the disk occasionally undergoes deformation.<sup>2</sup>

An intensely heated atmosphere of dense vapors was the explanation formerly given for these and other activities on Jupiter and Saturn, but there were many objections and the recent discovery of the intense cold on these planets has compelled its final abandonment. No other has been found.

Bearing in mind that electric conductivity increases so greatly at very low temperatures, even in such a comparatively poor conductor as lead, can it be that we are observing on the giant planets the effects of tremendous electric currents released from the restrictions of heat and working under quite different conditions and perhaps with different materials from those we are acquainted with in our pleasantly-warmed planetary home? This suggestion is offered for what it may be worth. Perhaps someone will follow it up.

#### BIOLOGICAL FORCES NOT BLIND OR AUTOMATIC

Certainly "the Earth does move," and step by step Theosophical ideas are spreading even into the most unlikely regions. An article in the *Journal of Heredity* for May, 1932, is a case in point. This is a highly technical, scientific magazine, dealing with the study of heredity and its application to the improvement of plants, animals, and humans,

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2. Data concerning the curious changes in shape of Jupiter and Saturn as seen by Herschel and others will be found in Chambers' *Astronomy* and elsewhere. Even within the last year observations have been reported upon irregularities of Jupiter's satellites, in the times of eclipse, which can seemingly only be explained by deformations of many hundreds of miles in the outer surface of Jupiter's extremely deep atmosphere. These changes sometimes give it a somewhat oblong appearance which has been termed 'square-shouldered.' The present writer can corroborate the reality of this rare phenomenon, having seen it once.

and it is noted for its strict adherence to the most rigid principles of mechanistic evolution — natural selection, survival of the fittest, Mendelism, and the rest. Its object is excellent, but many of its contributors seem to be limited by lack of knowledge of anything beyond the material plane.

Among other matters its contributors study the microscopic structure and behavior of the minutest biological cells that unite to form living beings, and many extraordinary discoveries have been made. In fact it would seem as if the limit of knowledge about *external appearances* had almost been reached, although no doubt many details have to be filled in. The development of these cells is one of the most wonderful and mysterious processes in all Nature, and the physical transformations from the earliest microscopic particle to the fully-formed being can now be followed by the eye of the biologist. How the astronomer would rejoice if he could watch the formation of stars and planets from the first tenuous nebula to the blazing glory of the galaxies, a process which is analogous to the incarnation of the Monad of man or animal into the body it uses while living on earth!

Mr. R. Cook, the writer of the article referred to, has obviously broken away from the comfortable belief that we shall some day discover by ordinary means of physical research exactly why a fertilized egg produces exactly what it does produce.

Speaking of the 'genes,' which are 'the units of inheritance' (extremely minute bodies lying within the germ-cells), which are supposed to control the development of the new being coming into existence, he says:

Some of the forces operating in a cell are not of the kind known to physics. Chromosome behavior at cell-division and in the formation of sex-cells shows 'likes' attracting at one time and repelling at another.

Chromosomes are microscopic bodies carrying the genes within them.

What else can the "forces of a kind not known to physics" be but forces of intelligent consciousness; selecting and directing the arrangement they need in order to carry out the invisible plan — Builders, or if you prefer, Gods, attracting or repelling at will — anything but blind mechanical forces.

We referred in the April, 1932, number of this magazine to the remarkable discoveries in nerve-formation made by Dr. Carl C. Speidel, anatomist of the University of Virginia, wherein he found that tips of

nerves grow in an intelligent way, moving through the tissues by 'amoeboid' movements, with an obvious sense of direction. It would seem as if the units of inheritance, the genes, were equally if not more intelligent, or else ruled by hidden intelligences, not visible to the physical senses. In 'Kosmic Mind,' H. P. Blavatsky shows how the ancient philosophers of the Orient gave names of gods to the organs and cells of the human body, each being considered to be possessed of its own kind of consciousness, and she compares this with the intelligent action of the primitive amoeba in choosing food, etc. She gives the key to the situation on which modern science is just beginning to speculate less materialistically.

Speaking of the size of the smallest cells that contain the chromosomes and the genes, Mr. Cook says:

About 8,000 of them could be laid side by side in one inch. Each of them contains the potentialities for the production of a new individual. Is it inaccurate or irreverent to feel that we have in this process actual miracles that are still entirely beyond our understanding? . . . Miracles of old — even the miracle of resurrection — are hardly to be considered more amazing than this continuing miracle of every day — the resurrection of life from the separated and supplementary halves necessary to initiate this wondrous process of growth and differentiation. Is not this passage through the early stages of growth amazingly like the passage of the Valley of the Shadow of Death? From the complex forms of life today, back to the first primal cell, the invisible bridge extends — over the valley of Oblivion — unbroken.

What extends over the Valley? Life consciously seeking expression in form. The old *blind* forces, purposeless and accidental, seem less popular than they were before the Theosophical Movement began to stir things up and teach Reincarnation to the Western World!

#### ANTIQUITY OF ANCIENT CIVILIZATION IN INDIA

In *The Theosophist* for May, 1882, H. P. Blavatsky wrote a short article in which she spoke of the "whirligig of time bringing its revenges," with special reference to Marco Polo's discredited 'traveler's tales' and their rehabilitation by modern research. She closed by saying:

We are approaching the time when the educated Hindû and Sinhalese will be forced, by the painstaking researches of Europeans, into the ancient records and monuments, to do tardy honor to their ancestors of whose greatness they have not now the faintest conception.

In *The Secret Doctrine* she speaks of the high civilization of India at least four thousand years B. C. being shown by the export of teak-

wood and fine muslin, and also that Chaldaea owed its civilization to prehistoric India (India including far more territory than goes under that name today.)<sup>3</sup> Yet, she pointedly remarks, the Hindûs were supposed to be

ignorant of the art of writing before the Greeks taught them their alphabet — if we have to believe Orientalists! — II, 226

In many other places the Masters and H. P. Blavatsky refer to the glory of ancient India and of the extraordinary darkness that has obscured it. But the revenge of time has arrived and her historical claims have been vindicated to a large degree, with the discovery of the buried cities of the plain of the Indus, in 1921-7 by the Archaeological Survey of India under Sir John Marshall, Director-General. His monumental book, in which everything is described and illustrated, was lately published.

The excavations of this new Pompeii — overwhelmed by flood instead of fire — have added more than two thousand years to the accepted age of India. Till now, our knowledge of Indian antiquities reached only to B. C. 300. It is now certain that civilization of a high order existed long before the Aryans are supposed to have developed it in India (about 1500 B. C.) and Indian pre-history must be reconstructed on the lines H. P. B. indicated.

The ruins that have been dug out of the mud of the Indus river show first-class town-planning and well-designed houses with fine brick-work covered street-drains, connecting with those in the houses; bath-rooms, wells, shops, and temples. No cemeteries were found, but cinerary urns and some bones within the brick-work of the house-walls. The various objects found include personal ornaments in ivory and shell, pottery and stone vessels, games and toys, weights, animal-models, copper vessels and tools, gold and silver jewelry “so well finished and so highly polished that they might have come out of a Bond Street jeweler’s of to-day rather than from a prehistoric house,” seals with exquisitely chased animal-designs and inscriptions that cannot be deciphered, and some remarkable statuettes. By comparing these seals with certain discoveries in Mesopotamia, it was found that they must be older than 2700 B. C.,

3. The student should consult *Isis Unveiled*, I, chapter xv, especially pp. 578-580, for her refutation of the notions about the age of India current when she wrote. Also *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, pp. 152-3.

which means that these highly-civilized cities had existed for unknown ages before even that remote age. The statuettes, carved in stone, are so remarkable that Sir John Marshall says:

When I first saw them I found it difficult to believe that they were prehistoric; they seemed so completely to upset all established ideas about early Art. Modeling such as this was unknown in the ancient world up to the Hellenistic age of Greece, and I thought that some mistake must surely have been made.

But no mistake had been made, and so we have positive assurance that the discoveries in the valley of the Indus carry not only the history of India, but that of 'classical' statuary to an earlier period than anyone had thought possible, as Sir Arthur Keith in his article on this remarkable discovery, has to admit. The Hellenistic age of Greek art (290-150 B. C.), remember, includes such masterpieces as the Laocoön and the Dying Gaul.

Sir John Marshall sums up the results of his researches by saying:

In the nature of things, a civilization as widely diffused as the Chalcolithic (which includes the newly-discovered culture of the Indus) with ramifications extending as far west as Thessaly and southern Italy and as far east, perhaps, as the Chinese provinces of Honan and Chih-li, could not have been homogeneous throughout. The peoples who participated in it were of different races, spoke different languages . . . and in other ways displayed different orders of mentality. Nevertheless, we must be careful not to exaggerate the differences between them or to regard them as entirely self-centered and self-sufficient communities. Each, no doubt, had its own particular type of civilization, which was adapted to suit local conditions. But *between them all was a fundamental unity of ideas* which could hardly have been the result of mere commercial intercourse.

Sir Arthur Keith, discussing the problem of this unity, admits that these discoveries have greatly changed the scientific view of the age of civilization:

How this unity of civilization, which extends in the fourth millennium B. C. across the ancient world from the Nile to the Indus, was brought about, we do not know yet; some day the spade will solve the problem. We have to search for the beginnings of civilization in a more remote period than has hitherto been dreamed of.

According to the teachings of Theosophy, derived from the records preserved by the Masters of Wisdom, civilizations existed even before the Glacial Period in regions unsuspected by modern scientists, civilizations earlier than the early Stone-Age 'savages,' a few of whose relics we have unearthed in scattered localities. These 'savages' represent the decline or descent of great civilizations, not the ascent of man from

the hypothetical ape-ancestor. There are many surprises awaiting scientific research into human antiquity, but whether they will be revealed by spade-work as Dr. Keith believes or in other ways time only will tell. Anyway, it is deeply interesting to watch the way archaeology is pushing its horizon farther and farther back into the mysterious past of human evolution, and how every advance gives new evidence for the Theosophical position. The new discoveries of the lost and utterly forgotten cities of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro on the Indus, and their relationship with an India much vaster than that of today, is a magnificent tribute to the authenticity of H. P. Blavatsky's information.

Since writing the above, interesting news in regard to the inscriptions found at Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa on the Indus has been published, to the effect that Professor Guillaume de Hevesy has informed the French Academy of Science that more than 130 signs and symbols in the Indian hieroglyphics *are identical with characters in script on tablets, weapons, etc., found on Easter Island*. Professor de Hevesy contends that the Easter Island and the Indian scripts undoubtedly originated from the same source. This is a most unexpected discovery, and definitely connects the southeastern Pacific region with very ancient India. How long ago was this communication made? As the Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa civilization disappeared at least three thousand years before our era, and no one can guess how long it had been in existence, it would seem certain that navigation was sufficiently well developed five or six thousand years ago to enable men to travel safely across the vast waste of the Pacific, for there is no suggestion that the conditions of land and water were not similar to those of the present day.

The inscriptions from Easter Island referred to by Professor de Hevesy are not found on the gigantic statues for which that mysterious little island is so famous. They are carved on pieces of wood, *rongo-rongo*, so-called, and cannot therefore be nearly as old as the statues, or the *ahus* or beautifully tooled platforms, but they may be comparatively modern copies of archaic inscriptions, handed down from an enormous antiquity. Many attempts have been made to read them, but without success. Do they contain records of historical import of inestimable value, perhaps the story of the destruction of Atlantis or earlier civilizations? Now that closely related hieroglyphs have been unearthed in India, we may expect an intensification of efforts to decipher both scripts. One of the most fascinating aspects of archaeology is the element of



surprise, and with so many expeditions in the field new discoveries are being made with far greater rapidity than ever before.

Perhaps the most interesting fields of research today from the Theosophical standpoint are the Pacific area and the Maya countries. The former is rich in unsolved problems relating to former cultures and the latter holds the tantalizing secret of the carved and written inscriptions of which so little is known. One Maya monument contains a record of a period of more than five million years, yet we cannot tell what kind of period, historical or astronomical. Students are working hard on this problem, and when we read the Maya glyphs it is not unlikely that we shall find positive data about the lost civilizations of Atlantis.

## CONSTRUCTIVE TENDENCIES OF THOUGHT

WILLIAM A. DUNN

**M**ADAME H. P. BLAVATSKY, in her article on 'Psychic and Noëtic Action,' speaks of the noëtic or higher action of the mind as being "a metaphysical force." In *The Secret Doctrine* she also states that "outside of metaphysics no occult philosophy, no esotericism, is possible."

Metaphysical thought may be defined as a positive activity of the thinking principle striving to understand the actual truth of life, and to realize the relation that exists between the power of thought and the impressions presented by the senses. In this scrutiny of the varying contents of the mind by the inner self, a classifying process is necessarily enforced, wherein ideas seen to be merely phenomenal and untrue are separated from those that are obviously true to life itself. This effort naturally brings forward the more vital energies of the mind, and discards what is seen to be worthless, so that the instrument of thought acquires a new and truer focus, and a functioning power that is healthy and energetic. Hence metaphysical thought is not so much a science as a *process* — a tendency or motive force imposed on the mind to progress towards what is true and spiritual, away from that which is untrue and worthless. All this implies the activity of the soul, for it is only the soul that can stand apart from the mind and classify and direct the forces and impressions that move therein. We see the opposite of this in the growing tendency to accumulate immense stores of learning without at the same time training the deeper faculties to a degree of

strength that can digest the facts acquired and transform them from memory-ripples into an original thought-current.

H. P. Blavatsky defines Will as acting "in those phenomena where the seemingly subjective acts on the seemingly objective and propels it to action." Now the use of the word 'seemingly' indicates that what is called subjective and objective may vary with perception, and hence change the direction in which the will is exerted. For instance, a man displaying tremendous stress of will through muscular organs may not be exerting one hundredth part of the influence of another whose quiet action may carry a spiritual inner force that emanates from a refined character.

So the question arises, Do we all see the same world? The answer to this is that we do not. Herein the teachings of Theosophy are fully supported by Immanuel Kant, whom H. P. Blavatsky refers to as the greatest philosopher of European birth. The quotations given are taken from a work entitled, *The Spirit of Modern Philosophy* by Professor Royce.

According to Kant,

The world that we know is the world, not of dead outer things, but of human thoughts — and when we try to get at truth we are trying to find how the world in space and time would seem to the experience of a perfectly sane and rational and farseeing onlooker; in other words, to find out the mind of the ideal man. . . .

Space and time appear to us to belong outside us, merely because they are conditions *in us* of our seeing and feeling things, forms of our senses. They are not revelations of truth outside of us at all. They are *our* own fashions of receiving the things that we perceive.

The unknown things (in life and Nature) in themselves give us sense-experiences. These we first perceive in the forms of space and time, because that is our mode of perceiving. Then, being coherent creatures, we order this our world of sense according to the laws of causation and the other 'categories' which are forms of our thought. Thus we all alike get a world which, while it is in all its sanity and order an inner world, is still for each of us apparently an outer world — a world of fact, a world of life. The unity of our personality demands the unity of our experience; this demands that our show-world of Nature should conform to the laws of thought; and thus causality, necessity, and all the other forms of the understanding are realized in the world through our constructive imagination.

In the above quotation it is shown that we classify and formulate the experiences of life according to the peculiar form of mind and character possessed by each one of us, and as our minds and characters vary, it follows that the conception we each have of the external world varies

also. Hence we do not look out on the same universe. Strictly speaking, we throw off a replica of our total inner self, with all its impressions and memories, on the reflecting waters of life, and wrongly imagine that the outside picture is separate from us. So it follows that a discontented person who criticizes others and finds fault with conditions, is simply at war within himself, with his own ideas and sensations, throwing off tones like a bell with cracks and flaws in it. On the other hand, a conception of Universal Brotherhood and co-operation means the unification of our own inner world of ideas that connect us with all other beings. Thus the two poles of being (the inner and the outer) are but reflexions of each other. We picture life outside exactly as our minds are arranged and constituted.

We hear only according to the capacity of the organ of hearing; we see only so far as the eye permits, and we perceive mentally only just so far as we have developed and arranged the organ of thought to focus on this or another aspect of life. Of course, as Theosophy teaches, these organs develop with evolution, but at any given stage they condition our perceptions.

It has often been put forward that metaphysical subjects are of little value because they are purely intellectual and do not warm the heart. I cannot accept this as true, for the woof and structure of the great world-teachings are metaphysical through and through. The following quotations from Kant present a side of his life little known. In *The Secret Doctrine* occurs the following, taken from his writings:

I confess I am much disposed to assert the existence of immaterial natures in the world, and to place my own soul in the class of these beings. It will hereafter, I know not where, or when, yet be proved that the human soul stands even in this life in indissoluble connexion with all immaterial natures in the spirit-world, that it reciprocally acts upon these and receives impressions from them.

In Professor Royce's interpretation of Kant the following is given:

Your world is . . . glorious . . . if only you actively make it so. Its spirituality is your own creation, or else it is nothing. Awake, arise, be willing, endure, struggle, defy evil, cleave to good, strive, be strenuous, be devoted, throw into the face of evil and depression your brave cry of resistance and then this dark universe will glow with a divine light. Then you will commune with the eternal. For you have no relations with the eternal save such as you make for yourself.

Kant conceives that

truth, as far as we know it, is neither from innate ideas, nor from our experience.

It comes to us because we *make* it. This determination of ours it is that seizes hold upon God, then, just as the courage of the manly soul makes life good, introduces into life something that is there only for the activity of the hero, finds God because the soul has wrestled for his blessing, and then has found after all that the wrestling *is* the blessing. God is with us only because we choose to serve our ideal of Him as if He were present to our senses. His kingdom exists because we are resolved that it shall come. This is the victory that overcometh the world, not our intuition, not our sentimental faith, but our living, our moral, our creative faith. . . .

Serve the unseen God as if He were present with you.

Build anew the lost spiritual world.

You know that you ought to do right, and doing right for Kant is something very simple, rigid, and absolute. There is no compromise in his case between the moral law and the desires of sense.

Fichte, a philosopher who lived about the same time as Kant, and whose life was a great influence for good, wrote much in the same strain. He fully bears out Kant's thesis that each creates his own world, as the following quotation from Professor Royce's work will show:

Good and bad men, noble and base men, strong and weak men, really do not see precisely the same sense world. The seeming outer world for any man actually varies with his moral perceptions.

Your outer world is just as large as your own spiritual activity makes it.

Each of us builds his own world. He builds it in part unconsciously; and therefore he seems to his ordinary thought not to have built it at all, but merely to find it. Each of us sees, at any moment, not only the world that we have made by this act, but the world that we have made by all our past acts. And hence our whole life is thus consolidated before our eyes; our world is the world of our conscious and unconscious deeds.

So teaches Fichte, who writes:

The true Self is something infinite. . . . Each one of us is a partial imbodiment, an instrument of the moral law, and our very consciousness tells us that this law is the expression of an infinite world-life. . . . All we human selves are thus one true organic self, in so far as we work together. . . . With you I stand in the presence of the divinest of mysteries, the communion of all in the one Self whose free act is the very heart's blood of our spiritual being. . . . We and our world exist together. Our world is the expression of our character. As a man thinketh, so is he — as a man is, so thinks he. . . . No one can exist unless he is ready to act. My life, my existence is in work. I toil for self-consciousness, and without toil, no consciousness. . . . my deeper self produces a new world, and then bids me win my place therein.

The above examples show that the great philosophers of modern as well as ancient times drew their inspiration from the same storehouse of Theosophic truth. In *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 274) we read:

The universe is worked and *guided* from *within outwards*. As above so it is below, as in heaven so on earth; and man — the microcosm and miniature copy of the macrocosm — is the living witness to this Universal Law and to the mode of its action.

And further (*Ibid.*, I, 276):

By paralysing his lower personality, and arriving thereby at the full knowledge of the *non-separateness* of his higher SELF from the One absolute SELF, man can, even during his terrestrial life, become as "One of Us."

The threshold of consciousness may be compared to a central port of customs at which is received the merchandise from all the kingdoms of Nature. From this material, the guardian of the portal, acting according to his acquired power of choice, selects just those goods that exactly accord with his condition, line of vision, and degree, and rejects all others. The selected materials are then passed on to the different centers within, there to be worked up into products demanded by the passional, intellectual, and moral appetites. The internal man, thus built up, conditions the forms, indeed *is* the form, into which the objects and events of life are poured as into a mold, there to synthesize and consolidate into human character. This unity between the diverse elements of thought demands an ideal plan into which the contents of consciousness are builded.

This leads to the thought that mental and moral health depends upon the power of control that is imposed from above on our mental conditions — to that point where the need for effort changes into a natural stream of tendency into which dissociated ideas and memories easily pass.

In the writings of William Quan Judge numerous references are made to the need for concentration and meditation. He speaks of a mental condition brought about by these exercises that is unknown to those who do not practise them. In one place he states that the objective universe no longer exists for the student who attains spiritual knowledge. This statement throws meaning into the teaching of Kant that our ideas of time and space are in reality forms within our minds into which we build our knowledge of life. So that our world is really an inner fact — our idea — as truly within as it appears to be without. This philosophic truth throws profound meaning into such sayings in *The Secret Doctrine* as: "The universe becomes I"; "I and my Father are one"; "Alaya is both the universal soul and the self of a progressed Adept";

“The opposite poles of subject and object, spirit and matter, are but aspects of one unity.” Hence the idea of a Universal Brotherhood centered round the Teacher will result in each faithful member epitomizing the whole, as a drop of water epitomizes the ocean. Just as every sound in Nature is part of the one parent-overtone of the etheric medium, so all separate thoughts and feelings rise to the parent-overtone which is our true Self. So if action and control are propelled from above, the overshadowing unity in its descent must transform all the disorder of disconnected thought-forms into those unified powers that belong to the spiritual life. Thus knowledge will take on a functional and vital aspect as well as an outer synthetic form, and all past memories and experiences will spring forward into the undivided life of the present.

## JESUS THE THEOSOPHIST

KENNETH MORRIS, D. LITT.

**I**N former lectures I have spoken of the Great Teachers who have appeared on earth from age to age to remind men of the truth about human nature and universal nature; I have spoken of the Elder Brothers of the race, who are always working, either in secret or openly, for the spiritual welfare of the world. Of their Order, of their Brotherhood, are those Great Ones who in our own day, in 1875, sent Madame H. P. Blavatsky into the western world to found the Theosophical Society. Commissioned and appointed by Them were the three who followed Madame Blavatsky as Leaders of that Society, which exists to further the purposes they have at heart — the preaching and practising of Universal Brotherhood, and showing it as not a sentimental aspiration, but one of the fundamental facts in Nature, which you can no more disregard with impunity than you can that other fact that if you put your hand in the fire, you get burnt. You see, the matter with the world today is that it has persistently disregarded the stern fact of human brotherhood; and is in consequence getting burnt in the particular way that such disregard entails.

Now in a certain book called the New Testament we read about one of these Masters of Wisdom who was born into the world some nineteen hundred or two thousand years ago. There are four accounts of him; and they vary a good deal among themselves; so that what you get is

rather an impression of him, an appeal to the imagination, than a scientific account. But to the eye of the Theosophist, undoubtedly what emerges is the picture of one of these, you may say, superhuman beings: superhuman in the sense that they have evolved beyond the status of ordinary humanity: who live to help humanity, and for that reason only.

Now, how should such an ideal being help humanity? Obviously, I think, by teaching men the laws underlying life, the science of life, how to live. Men are on the path of evolution; the great thing that concerns them is to learn, to grow, to evolve, to become wiser, more compassionate, larger natured, than they were before. Whatever trouble one may be in, one can learn from it, make oneself really a greater being by it; I mean, whatever trouble of the kind that is generally recognised as such: sickness, poverty, and the like. We have all known men whom such troubles have made splendidly courageous and unselfish. But there is another kind of trouble which prevents growth, and which causes all the other kinds of trouble: Selfishness. If your attention is fixed on yourself you can't grow. Instead, you grow smaller; the boundaries of your being narrow down until at last you are about the size of a pin's head, metaphorically speaking.

Now the only reason why people do such a very dangerous thing as to be selfish is that they don't know how dangerous it is. They don't know that they are defying the whole universe and all the laws of Nature. If they did, they wouldn't dare. They would take the way of least resistance, the (ultimately) easiest way; which is to live and work for humanity.

So the way these ideal beings help the race is in doing what they can to remove ignorance. They tell mankind what the laws of the science of life are. They remind us of these laws, and insist on them. When they come into life on this earth, it is to do just this. It is to save mankind by fighting against human ignorance. 'Shining on' would be a better phrase than 'fighting against,' in many ways; shining, shedding the light of their wisdom and compassion on the ignorance of mankind, to dispel it. Every year that they can live, when they take upon themselves bodies here in the world, means so much more chance to save human beings from their sins, as the old saying is; which means, really, to show human beings how to save themselves from their sins.

Besides, each one of us is such a Christ or Buddha potentially. Deep within us, the very core of the core of our being, is a god: a being all

divine, all compassionate, all wise. Were it not so, we could never evolve to be Buddhas or Christs; nor could any human being have so evolved in all the long ages of human history or prehistory. It is like the oak coming out of the acorn: that is what is meant by evolution: the growing out from something of all the possibilities that lie latent in it. The beech-tree or the pine is not latent in the acorn, and so could never evolve or grow out of it; each type of tree can only grow from its own seed; and so a god can only grow from man; man is the acorn, and the god that he will sometime grow to be is the future oak.

So that, this god being the inmost thing in us, the root of our being, it becomes quickened in those who have contact with one of these Great Teachers. It becomes quickened in his disciples, in those who come to him begging him to teach them the science of life. Their evolution is hastened. From being ordinary men, they advance some steps on the way to godhood; indeed, he puts them through experiences which hasten their evolution. He forces them to discover the hidden realms within themselves: to discover and fight with and conquer the evil in their nature; to discover and bring into action the good. So you see that every year he lives is an extra benefit for mankind, because no one can evolve, no one can grow and advance along the path of evolution, without benefiting to some extent all mankind. The Great Teachers therefore come into the world with a definite business to perform, and they are going to do it; how much they can do depends on how long they live. Every year of their lives sees something more of their grand message given to mankind; every year sees their disciples further advanced along the path of evolution: with more self-knowledge, with deeper generosity and compassion of nature; with greater strength to resist temptation. It is only when their work is finished; has been carried as far as the age permits, that such Great Ones consent to die.

Now we read in the New Testament of this particular Great One that he lived but three years and a half as a Teacher, and then gave himself up to death. Now to the eye of a student of history, this statement looks curious at once. Such students know that Teachers live much longer than three years and a half; because in so short a time practically nothing of their work can be accomplished. It is said that to train one disciple, even the best and quickest to learn, so that his feet shall be safely planted on the path and he can be relied on to stand firm, to be above temptation of all kind, to have the wisdom to transmit his



Teacher's message, takes at least seven years; mostly no doubt it would take much longer. So that when the student of Theosophy reads that this great Syrian Teacher gave himself up to death after teaching for only three and a half years, he knows quite well that he is not reading history here, but symbolism; that a deeper meaning is to be sought in the story than appears on the surface; that there is more to it than meets the eye.

But before we go into that branch of the subject, it is necessary to study the evidence, and see just why he should be counted as a Great Teacher. In the Gospels, two things emerge: one, a miraculous element; as that he was born in a manner not consonant with the laws of Nature, and rose from the dead in a manner not consonant with the laws of Nature; and the other element is, a Teacher, a man who gave out certain views of life and the way it should be lived; and who was, singularly enough, very insistent on the sanctity and absolute sway of the laws of Nature. It is the second element or figure that we shall look into first.

Jesus is very insistent on the absoluteness of natural law; of the Law of Karman, that action and reaction are equal and opposite; that what we suffer is the exact result of what we have done; and so: that we make our fate ourselves, be it good or bad, harsh or gentle. *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete it shall be meted to you again. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?*

He attached the utmost importance to his teachings. He said that to pay no attention to them — to neglect to carry them out — was to build your house upon the sand, that the rains and tides would wash away; but to carry them out in action — to build your life on them, to build your civilization on them — was to build upon a strong rock a house the elements could not shake. And he was right, infinitely right; and we ought to see it now. Christendom has made its religion an absorption of the mind in the mythological element in the Gospels; has taken that for history which was never meant to be history; and in doing so has neglected to notice, much more to follow, the science of life, the laws of Nature, that Jesus taught. And it has in consequence built its house on the sand; and the rains are descending, and the house is being washed away all right. It is just as he said it would be; and why?

Supposing you have to build a great railway bridge. You must get

an engineer to do it, who understands all that is to be understood about gravitation; about strains and weight-bearing capacities; he must understand the laws of Nature that are at work there, and conform with them; he must work with Nature. If he does, and the contractor is honest and also works with Nature in building that bridge and carrying out the plans the engineer has made, you can send a train over that bridge and it will get across. But supposing before you started the work you said: My Savior died for me nineteen hundred years ago; he died to make that bridge safe from earth to heaven; what's Nature anyhow? And you went to work then in ignorance and contempt for natural law, with a beautiful faith that the merits of the One that died were stronger than gravitation. And then you sent your train across that bridge that you had so constructed. There'd be some smash and some splash, I reckon; and the cargo wouldn't get to heaven so you would notice it! No: you must work with Nature; you must understand her laws, the principles that govern life, that underlie the universe; or you are building your house on the sand with a vengeance.

So you see why Jesus insisted on the absoluteness and sanctity of law; what divine common sense was his. His vision was for the harmony of the universe; for restoring that harmony among men; for removing causes of offense. As we have seen on former evenings, Brotherhood, harmony, is the fundamental fact about this universe of ours; it is only we fools of men and women who disturb that harmony; who wander away from that fact of brotherhood; and we bring on ourselves all our troubles by doing so. But the Nazarene Theosophist labored to make men understand how to restore it, how to remove offenses. Make nothing of them, he says; forgive them; wipe them out of your consciousness! If a man take your coat, give him your overcoat too; if he smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. It is just his way of saying that the more one receives offences unoffended, the more one has wiped out old scores. The man that hurts you, hurts you because you needed just that hurt; it was the only possible cure for a certain spiritual unhealth lodged somewhere in your nature; take it as that, and be thankful, and its object is effected; the reason why the law of the universe inflicted it on you is fulfilled and accomplished; the thing is finished with, and you are the cleaner man, the nearer to spiritual health, which means being in harmony with the universe. Love your enemies and do good to them that hate you, says he; because in the great

card-game of the universe, love is the ace of trumps; it is the final winner; the one weapon which is invincible. It is the bond which keeps the suns in being and in harmony; the central fact in Nature; the law of Laws; the ultimate immortality.

“Hatred never is conquered by hatred,” said the Buddha; “hatred is conquered by love”; and to conquer hatred means to restore the balance of Nature. Hatred is an ache in the universe; a pain in the scheme of things; a thing necessary to cure, to remove, to do away with. And we have the medicine for it; we have the certain cure; we can draw it out of the Heart of the Universe; it is the opposite of hatred, impersonal love. So “love your enemies” is no matter of sentimentalism; it is not to be thought of with a sanctimonious smirk on the face; it is not to be done to win approval from God or Jesus or any one like that, or that we may go to heaven when we die; but to right things here; to have health in the world; to stop human life being a festering sore and a stench in the nostrils of the universe.

*Ye are Gods*, said the Great Theosophist of Nazareth; and don't you see the meaning of that? Gods; wielders of magical power; lords of life and time and things! Gods! That is, beings who can by the exercise of their powers cure the ills of time and make the world a worthy member of the Brotherhood of Stars. Gods, who can use the supreme power, might, and magic of the universe: LOVE, to make the kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven.

Now what did he mean by ‘heaven’? A place where you can go when you die and strum harps and sing alleluias through eternity by believing Jesus died to save you from the consequences of your actions? I guess he did NOT mean anything of the kind. No; he says, *the kingdom of heaven is within you*; he says it is to be established on earth; he tells his disciples that it is given to them to know the mysteries of it. Let us examine these sayings, sifting the evidence, as it were.

It is within us. Now, who are you, and who am I? David Jones, John Brown, Kenneth Morris — the fellow that the world sees? But even when you were a little child you had no idea that you were that thing; and before you were born you were not he; and he will go into the grave, or the crematorium — a much better way — some day, and the world will forget him, and he will be no more. Your body? No; for you can do what you will with your body; saying to it, Go there, and it goes; come here, and it comes. Your desires? That in you which

says, I am hungry, thirsty, sleepy; I want this, I long for that? No: because there is a superior You in you that can say to the one who says 'I want this,' 'But you shall not have it; it is not good for you.' Your mind then? No; for you can change your mind; so You are something that is behind and beyond and above the mind.

What then are you? Why, the great Nazarene Theosophist told you: he said, *Ye are Gods*. So if we could dig for it, if we could find it, the real *We*, the things or beings behind and beyond and above our minds, are Gods; the reality, the source and essence of each one of us a God, a divine being. So to find the Real Self, we have but to follow to its source every noble thought or feeling that arises in us and drifts down to our minds. To every one of us the feeling comes once in a while, I don't gain by this; there is nothing in it for me; but it is my duty; it is the right thing to be done; other people will gain by it. Catch that thought when it comes; dwell upon it; put the seal of action on it; and you have put the God in you into action; you have made a channel between the kingdom of heaven and this world; you have acted as the Immortal Being that you are at the source. Dig inwards; mine into the mountain of yourself, and find the diamonds there; the greater the riches you come upon and bring out in action into this world, the nearer you have come to your god-self.

The 'kingdom of heaven' is within us: don't you see that within us is everything; is all the wealth of the universe? Explore within in this way, following the trail of every noble aspiration to its source, and you do not come to a stop; you don't find a petty world there, a little self that ends corrupt; you find infinity — wisdom, love, compassion, power without end. Now don't you see what the 'mysteries of the kingdom of heaven' are?

The universe is infinite. If heaven were, as the churches used to teach, above the bright blue sky; a dead man might travel with the speed of light, or at a much greater speed, forever and forever and forever afterwards before he would come to the place where space ends and heaven begins: he would never get there; because there is no *there* to get to. But infinity does not only imply that outward direction, or those outward directions. It is infinite inwardly too. Start inwards from your body and outward man and personality; pass your desires, your mind and so on, and you can still travel on to greater and greater heights, for ever and for ever. There, in those depths of Being, is the

place from which the laws of being flow outward; the things that we see are the last outward effects of causes which are within and within. And we can come by knowledge of those inner worlds and regions. Knowledge of the laws that govern them, of the geography of them, so to say, is attainable; and that is what is meant by the 'mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.' Jesus taught his disciples; he could tell them things; he could work upon their natures, hastening their evolution, until they could know for themselves something, at any rate, of what those mysteries were. So he says to them that unto them it was given to know 'the mysteries of the kingdom'; but unto the multitude he must speak 'in parables.'

Now I told you the other week, when we were discussing the origin of fiction, something about the nature and purpose of parables. A parable was a story that contained a hint, a suggestion, an insinuation, of the hidden wisdom the one who told it desired his audience to know. There was the great fact, the most important of all facts we can know: that it is possible to rise above our common manhood and travel the path to wisdom; that it is possible to come to know the mysteries of the kingdom, and from men become gods. It was to keep in the minds of men the knowledge of that possibility that story-telling was invented.

In the old religion of the Greeks, for instance — and remember that Christianity is derived as much if not more from Greek paganism as from the religion of the Jews — in the old religion of the Greeks there were, as in every other religion of those days, two sides. The one was for those who wished to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, and who could prove themselves worthy to receive that knowledge; the other was for the man in the street — for people who were content to go through life enjoying it more or less, and never worrying what it was all about. In the latter category, no doubt then as now, the great mass of the people was to be included; but out of that great mass there were always arising those to whom it occurred to think, to inquire, to aspire. When they did, they knew where to go for teaching.

I speak now of centuries before the time of Jesus. Where such aspirants went to be taught, in those early days, was to an institution called the Mysteries — Greek *Mysteria* — the very word Jesus used, you see. The chief sites of these Mysteries were at Eleusis near Athens and at Samothrace. The candidate underwent a long training with a view of freeing himself of all taint of selfishness; and when he was prepared,

he was what they called 'initiated.' Because there was great secrecy about these initiations, the word *Mystery* has come to mean something secret and concealed. In those old days, unless I am mistaken, it meant rather 'revelation.'

But the same priests and hierophants who had charge of these sacred Mysteries, had also charge of the outer religion of the masses; and it was their business to see that through the outer religion people should be reminded constantly of the possibility of their rising to the knowledge of the inner religion of the Mysteries. So the outer religion consisted largely of festivals in honor of the Gods held at different times of the year, and of stories about the Gods. Everyone grew up with knowledge of these stories, just as we grew up with knowledge of the stories of the Old Testament. Only in those days one did not have to go very far to hear the news that the stories were not to be taken too literally; that they had an inner meaning; that you could only learn what that inner meaning was by applying for initiation into the Mysteries. They were, you see, parables in some sort. They were symbolic: they told the history of the human soul on its journey from common human status to godhood, in the guise of an interesting or beautiful story. About some great figure of ancient times legends would be built up; and the master-truths underlying life were worked subtilly into these legends; and all that the great master-truths should be was kept not very far from the public consciousness.

For example, legends were built up round the figure of Hercules, who was perhaps a very ancient Greek hero of some kind, and who, as the ages passed, came to be regarded as a Savior: a symbol of the Inner God at the root of our being, which we may unite ourselves with, bringing its glory into our lives, when it becomes our Savior in a very real sense. Now this Inner God comes into the world, so to say, only through a heart that has been made quite pure: free from all selfish desire, all selfishness. So they told that Hercules was born of a virgin mother; that his father was not a man, but a god, bright, bodiless, and free. This idea so worked into the consciousness of the people when they had forgotten its meaning in after ages, that it was quite a common thing to credit any great man with being born of a virgin; of having a god for his father. We find Alexander the Great making such a claim; and in the very time of Christ, the Roman emperors were just naturally credited with it. So it was a very common notion and, strangely enough, while these great

men were supposed to be sons of gods, miraculously conceived — people knew quite well that they had earthly fathers as well, the husbands of their mothers. But it was entirely in the air, as we say, that anyone who came to do great things for humanity, or whom it was politic or conventional to pretend came to do great things for humanity — like the Roman emperors — was sure to be said to have been born in miraculous fashion, with some spiritual being for his father.

Now that accounts, doesn't it, for both Matthew and Mark tracing the descent of Jesus from David and Abraham through his father Joseph, while saying at the same time that he was conceived of the Holy Ghost? They are very particular to trace Joseph's descent, and therefore Jesus', from the ancient Hebrew king and patriarch; it was something in their eyes (as Jews) quite important; and they never feel any discrepancy about saying that though he was the son of Joseph, and the grandson of so and so, and the great grandson of such another, and the descendant of David, and the great-grand-descendant of Abraham, he was all the same the son of the Holy Ghost. So right there in the first chapter of *Matthew* we might see quite clearly that Matthew, the author of that gospel — whatever his name was, it is quite convenient to call him Matthew — was setting out to write a religious story in the sense that the whole world at the time understood a religious story, that is, a parable; a symbolic narrative; something that was not to be taken too literally; that was to be understood to have an inner meaning, which it at once concealed and revealed: concealed from the multitude, who would be content with just a yarn, a story; revealed to those who had ears to hear and eyes to see.

Now, that is the only reasonable way to take the Gospels. Take them the other way: as actual historical truth, every word of which has to be believed as telling things that actually happened, and at the best you have a flat, hard surface without depth or particular significance; and at the worst you have the fact that you can't make the four evangelists agree altogether. There are glaring discrepancies; and you have incidents that are positively derogatory, discreditable. We are calmly told, for example, that Jesus went to a fig-tree to gather fruit, and finding no fruit on it, proceeded to lose his temper and curse the tree; and in the cursing committed a miracle and made the tree wither! Now I ask you what you would think of a man who would do such a thing? Someone else's tree, too, mind! Quite obviously that story was either

invented by a very primitive person who saw nothing wrong in losing your temper and cursing an unfortunate fruit-tree, but was just anxious to get in all the miracles he could think of; or else it has some hidden meaning and is symbolic of something; is capable of suggesting to an open mind some spiritual truth. My own mind is not at present open enough to get any suggestion from it; and so I shall pass the incident by merely remarking that probably no one in this room is childish enough to curse a tree because there is no fruit on it; while quite enough is told about Jesus that has the ring of historicity, of actual truth, about it to show that he was almost, you might say, infinitely greater and better and less likely to be so foolish, than anyone in this room.

But if you read the Gospels in the way I am suggesting; in the way all sacred scriptures of the world are intended to be read — as conveying by hint, by symbol, by suggestion, not merely historical truth as to something that happened long ago and once and for all, but spiritual truth as to what is happening now and always, in your own heart and nature: ah, then it is quite a different story! Then you have depths beyond depths to discover in them; then you have actual light thrown on life, and help on your journey through life; you have the secret places of the universe illuminated; the whole thing becomes living and important. The Christ is born of a virgin mother; as we read that the Buddha, the great Indian Savior who lived some six centuries before him, was; as we read that Krishna, a great Indian Savior who lived some three thousand years before him, also was: and simply because it is only in the pure heart that the Christ-self, the God-self in each one of us, is born. This again is what he taught himself, when he said, *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.* You see, there he is teaching pure Theosophy: that it is possible to purify oneself, to become perfect, to become, from a man, a God; to evolve into something higher and nobler than we are. Purify the heart; cast out self; love and forgive, and you shall be actually, and know yourself for, the God that you are potentially and at the root of your being.

Well now, we have found the way to read the Gospels; to accept as historically true that which has the ring of historical truth; which is mainly that there was such a Teacher, one of the great Order of Teachers who have appeared from time to time in the world to remind men of the truths they are so prone to forget; that has the ring of historical truth because we find him announcing the same old truths, flaming with



the same grand message of Theosophy that all his predecessors brought to the world, and all his successors have brought; a truth tremendously scientific; tremendously affirmative of the sanctity and absoluteness of Law. And we have seen that, such being the case, he would have lived in the world just as long as was possible; because every year, every extra month, in the life of such a Teacher, counts for the salvation of mankind. So it need not surprise us to find in the early church the tradition or belief, mentioned by the church father Irenaeus, that Jesus was alive and teaching many years after the supposed date of the crucifixion. As it is obviously true and reasonable to suppose he would be. Let us then look into the story of the crucifixion.

Now, as I said, in those days all religion centered round the Mysteries of Eleusis and Samothrace. Greek civilization was *the* civilization of the age; and the core of religion in Greek civilization was the Mysteries. Just as now all religion of the Christian world centers round the sacraments: so then it centered round the ceremonies of the Greek Mysteries. Whatever church is founded in these days, is sure to have ceremonies in it of baptism and the communion; because those things are regarded as so much the foundation-stones of religion, that you couldn't be religious without.

Well now, in the Mysteries, the central fact was that Initiation by which a man became his Higher Self, a God. Long centuries before the time of Christ, it was the real thing; quite real. After years of preparation and training, the candidate was initiated. His body was tied to a kind of wooden cross and placed in a secret chamber; his soul, his mind, his consciousness, he himself, went out into the deep spaces of the inner universe, and discovered for himself, saw for himself, the workings of the laws of Nature: saw for himself the truth underlying life. For three days the soul was thus free, and the body lay in the cryptlike initiation-chamber. Then the soul returned to it; and the man arose, in his body again, initiated, glorified. The technical term for the man so initiated was 'the Christos,' 'the Christ.'

Glorified, I said. Do you remember that cry of Jesus on the cross, *Eloi, eloi, lama, sabachthani?* Do you remember that it is translated, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Take it to a Hebrew scholar, and ask him what it means! He will tell you, if he is honest, that the Hebrew is given quite correctly in the text, but that the Greek translation of it, from which our English and Welsh translations are

made, is quite incorrect; that *lama sabachthani* means, *how hast thou glorified me!* You see, in the outer Gospel-story we are shown Jesus losing his courage on the cross, wailing in his despair; but many mere men have gone through deaths of as hideous agony as Jesus did and borne all cheerfully. No: this is an instance of the way the sacred tale is told; a hint for those who can understand; the meaning concealed from the multitude. "Cast not your pearls before swine," said Jesus; meaning that these huge truths, these secrets of the universe, must not be allowed to be desecrated by those not fit to hear them; and yet the world must be continually reminded of them. The cry, *My God, my God, how thou dost glorify me!* is the cry of the Initiate, who rises glorified indeed, the wisdom of the universe made known to him; and the tale that was told is again the story of Initiation: the story how man can become a God.

It is a myth, a legend, fastened on to the story of the life of a great Initiate. Understand it, and it becomes living truth here and now. The Christ, the God-self in us, is crucified on these crosses of flesh and matter, our bodies, even now; now and always; until through our own effort, through a determined struggle upward, through the pains and endeavor of initiation, it, that 'Christ,' rises from the dead, the God-self of us taking possession of our lives. *The kingdom of heaven is taken by violence*, Jesus is made to say; in modern English that would be by strong effort, by a man's own will and effort; there is no backstairs into it; there is no sneaking in by the merits of another. O Lord, how unlike his own teaching is to the teaching men have been patiently swallowing all these centuries, in the vain notion that it came from him!

To sum up: Jesus was one of the Great Initiates, the Great Teachers of Theosophy that come into the world from time to time. He taught that Brotherhood is a fact in Nature — whereas Christendom has made it a race for heaven, each man for himself. He taught that man can attain godhood only through his own strong will and effort: whereas Christendom has believed that you can't attain godhood at all; that Jesus lied when he said *Ye are Gods*; that the thing to do is to get to heaven when you die; and that can't be done by your own efforts, but only through the merits of Jesus because he died to save us from the consequences of our actions. He taught the sanctity and absoluteness of natural spiritual law; whereas Christendom has taught and fervently believed that you can dodge the laws of Nature, and that Jesus was al-

ways dodging them himself. He taught that the bond uniting us should be love; the reign of love; whereas from Pandy Square to the British navy, all Christendom bristles with signs of its belief in the reign of force. He seemed to doubt whether money was a thing that could get you to heaven — said it was easier for a camel to get through a needle's eye than for a rich man to get to heaven — which doesn't mean a place you go to through *his* merits when you die, remember, but something that is within you now; — whereas Christendom believes in getting rich — honestly if possible, but getting rich. He taught that your religious exercises should be done in secret: behind the locked door of your room upstairs; whereas Christendom has believed in publicly going to church and chapel, and what's more, making other people go!

In a few words, he was a great Theosophist.

## GOETHE, WEIMAR, AND FAUST

GRACE KNOCHE, M. A.

### II

“Forward over graves!”— GOETHE, *in a letter to Zelter*

**A** PSYCHOLOGICAL chasm divides the Second from the First Part of *Faust*. The earlier scenes and characters have disappeared; the setting has changed from the fevered environment of the outer world, with its illusory ‘pleasures’ and stark tragedy, to the quiet of mystic Nature. Faust himself is reborn. The man we knew before, hag-ridden by desire, supporting even though courageously a continual battle between the higher and lower impulses of his nature, has vanished, died, and another Faust meets us now. This alone would be sufficient to place the mystic seal upon this drama, for such is essentially a mystic experience. Had not Faust passed through it there would have been no Second Part, no possible completion of the cycle begun in the First. “Behold, I die daily!” was never original with Paul. It has been said by mystics of every land, every age, and every type. Its common acceptance, even by people who do not seem to think, is attested by the remark so often made about one who has passed through deep waters and has emerged head up and with a smile, “He is another person altogether.” So is Faust now another person. He has passed through that profound psychological change that is comprehended only by mystics, the rebirth of the

spirit, and this becomes increasingly apparent as the drama proceeds.

It is twilight in an elfin forest. Here Faust has come for healing — the man we last saw so terrified, sickened, defeated, so distraught — both place and scene recalling also Goethe's superb pantheism, his conviction that between man and Nature there is eternal alliance.

Faust is soothed and calmed by Ariel and his chorus of Nature-spirits. Night passes, day approaches, the gates of morning open in pealing, tumultuous splendor, and the glorious sun appears. Here, in the closing lines of the soliloquy which follows, is the key to Goethe's philosophy, the key that unlocks all the riddle of this kaleidoscopic Second Part. Behind Faust rises the sun; before him the cataract plunges downward between deep-riven crags, and his words seem to blend with its echoes:

Allein wie herrlich diesem Sturm erspriessend,  
 Wölbt sich des bunten Bogens Wechsel-Dauer,  
 Bald rein gezeichnet. bald in Luft zerfliessend,  
 Umher verbreitend duftig kühle Schaur!  
*Der spiegelt ab das menschliche Bestreben.*  
 Ihm sinne nach, and du begreifst genauer:  
*Am farbigen Abglanz haben wir das Leben.*

For reasons already stated (v. THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH for October, 1932), we give a simple literal translation, with no attempt at a metrical rendering.

But how gloriously profiting this storm,  
 Arches the enduring changefulness of the rainbow,  
 Now clearly shown, now melting into air,  
 All around spreading vaporous, cool showers!  
*This shows, as in a mirror, human striving.*  
 Think upon it. and you grasp it exactly:  
*In the reflexion made up of colors we have Life.*

We have here, in a passage too easy to trouble even a beginner in German-study, the key-doctrine of Goethe's philosophy, and a clue that, alone if necessary, will unravel the mystery of this misunderstood yet labyrinthine Second Part. It is the archaic doctrine of *Mâyâ*, the teaching that life is a reflexion only, illusory, ever-changing, the result of the breaking-up of the white light of Unity into its composing colors. It is the teaching that only in its ultimate essence, for ever intangible and invisible, has life any qualities that endure longer than — to borrow

Beethoven's favorite simile, taken also from the Eastern teachings — "moonlight trembling on the waters." The very simplicity of this passage has led translators astray. One of the best known naïvely footnotes his rendering of this passage with the observation that he does not translate what Goethe *says* but what he thinks Goethe *meant to say*, or in the light of better scientific knowledge, *would have said*, because, forsooth, "Goethe's conclusions have been drawn from partial observation and have been proven incorrect." In sober fact, Goethe gives us in this passage the Ancient Teaching.<sup>1</sup>

1. May we be forgiven for suggesting that translations be well scanned, even for hoping that some day a translator will rise up out of the ranks of genuine students of the esoteric philosophy? The popular metrical rendering may have to give place, but it will leave us *Goethe*, and that is what matters. We have only to compare the poetic and inspirational Butcher and Lang translation of the *Odyssey* — literal, utterly simple prose that it is — with any existing metrical rendering to know that it is possible to keep alive and pass on the letter and spirit of a great work, with all its richness and beauty. There are in existing Goethe-translations too many examples of similar conscientious but fatal mistakenness. For instance, Goethe's earlier reference in this drama to the symbol of the macrocosm and its psychological effect on Faust is made the occasion of an apologia, the translator explaining that macrocosm is a "term" used by certain medieval philosophers to denote the universe, "between which and man himself *they imagined* a certain mysterious connexion." Shades of H. P. Blavatsky! This is not said in criticism but merely to point out that in writings whose background is so patently the esoteric philosophy much, in the case of translators ignorant of these teachings, will be overlooked, criticized, misunderstood, amended to its undoing. And we find Theosophy everywhere! Take the lines prefacing Goethe's *Osteologie* — a subject which Goethe knew thoroughly, having lectured at one time on anatomy to classes of art-students:

. . . Und es ist das ewig Eine  
 Das sich vielfach offenbart.  
 Klein das Grosse, gross das Kleine,  
 Alles nach der Eignen Art. . . .

which, translated as written, reads: "And it is the Eternal Unity that manifests in diversity. Small is the great and great the small; all things after their own inherent characteristic." Were so many of the key-teachings of the world's ancestral Theosophy ever before crowded into the small space of four short lines — in modern writing, at least? Here is the doctrine of the Many from the One; that "there is no great, no small, in the divine economy"; and the archaic doctrine of *Swabhâva*, or the inherent characteristic of things, that seed-individuality which makes a rose a rose, and nothing else; that new-old, long-forgotten teaching which Dr. de Pu-rucker, in his *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, shows to be "the foundation-law of morals."

It is significant that in this opening-scene Mephistopheles is nowhere encountered. He appears in the next, however, which is set in the throne-room of the Emperor's castle, and here the kaleidoscope makes its first turn in a long series of phantasmagoric cross-sections of life in both the visible and the invisible worlds. It is into this corrupted court that Mephistopheles enters, "curst, yet welcomely expected," quite in character though with one important difference: he is no longer master of the situation. From now to the end of the action he is no longer an adviser, but a servant, even a slave,<sup>2</sup> for Faust, deceived, wounded, tortured as the result of taking directions from a minister of evil, has made a complete *volte face*. Definitely now are his feet on the upward way. There are new worlds to be uncovered and explored; there are new dangers to face; there are stumbles to be endured and obstacles to overcome; there is almost everything to learn. But Faust the Man, the Thinker with the radiance of intuition upon his thought, *Buddhi-Manas* now, is at the helm to stay.

Which explains why the action of Part One moves so swiftly and terribly downwards, from heaven to deepest hell, while the action of the Second Part moves so steadily, fatefully upwards, out of hell, through chambers of learning and purification, to heaven again.

Faust, torn and shattered by the impact of remorse, gathers up his innate strength and forthwith will take heaven by violence, his strong will bent to spiritual ends. He will undo the tragedy, restore the unbalance, that the desire-principle, left free and even encouraged to work its wrecking fury on him in the earlier scenes, brought about. Desire "regulated by moral fitness"—that is another story. From now on the charioteer is Krishna, the very Self.

The Emperor of this court has, to quote Goethe's own description, "every possible quality for losing his realm, in which he finally succeeds." Given over to selfish pleasures, he has let things go until there is neither law nor justice in his realm, his courts are the accomplices of criminals,

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2. It is interesting to recall that the transformation of Mephistopheles from plain devil to useful servant and even ally in good works, was the hurdle which the critics of Goethe's own day piously refused to take as against all theology. The free young student of today may wonder why, but Goethe himself hit the nail on the head by his remark that if sometime later (the drama was not then finished) the critics should happen upon a passage where the devil himself receives Divine grace and mercy: "That, I should say, they will not soon forgive!"

his army is undisciplined and unpaid, his treasury is empty, even the bread eaten at his table is mortgaged in advance. In the court over which he presides, "Nature is sin and Mind is devil," so that sincerity and thought are both interdict.

But Faust is filled with pity for the people of this crumbling, degenerating state. He goes to the court, advises the Emperor, and tries to get the bankrupt state onto a better basis by issuing paper money, building a credit, founding industries, and so on. He fails — as political measures always fail in the end; but he had that to learn. The strong fact is that pity it was which urged him to the lesson, he willingly suffered in learning it, and his motive was above reproach. This and subsequent scenes must be denied the space here which they deserve.

In the Carnival-Masquerade Goethe gives another turn to the kaleidoscope. The scene is plainly allegorical: a motley procession made up of all phases, on all levels of life the Great Illusion. There are flower-girls, gardeners, woodcutters; a convention-bound mother and daughter; parasites; punchinellos. There are all kinds of poets, and a few lines from Goethe's stage-directions may be included here as having an application not confined to Goethe's day:

The Night and Churchyard Poets excuse themselves, because they have just become engaged in a most interesting conversation with a newly-risen vampire, and therefrom a new School of Poetry may possibly be developed (!)

Into this medley, including the Graces and the Fates, with Zoilo-Thersites typifying the cynic and iconoclast, comes the Spirit of Poesy in the form of the Boy Charioteer, commanding the Herald in words which would seem to be Goethe's own comment on the meaning of the scene:

Name us and describe and show us!  
For we're naught but allegories. . . .

Life's baser side is likewise shown allegorically in Avarice, and Plutus with his gold. Here, too, flock denizens of Nature's invisible world — Nature-spirits, fauns, satyrs, gnomes, nymphs and whatever, the carnival ending at last in a frightful conflagration, itself described as an illusion. The scene is impossible of description without a word borrowed from the vocabulary of music — *polyphonic* — so true is it to life, that intense, fevered motley and medley of good and bad, coarse and fine, lofty and base, ugly and beautiful, with their infinite grades, tints, tones.

At this point Goethe returns to the old Faust-legend, where Faust

calls up the spirits of Helen and Paris. This he does at the Emperor's command, and here is another evidence that Goethe knew the esoteric teachings for he speaks of these shades as type- or model-forms (*Musterbild* is the word employed) and it is to the astral or model-world that he must go to summon them. Of course Mephistopheles demurs, but Faust has now the upper hand and consistently keeps it, and the "father of all impediments" demurs in vain.

The path to these shades of beauty, however, lies through the domain of 'the Mothers,' and here we strike a nexus that will submit to no untying by the non-theosophical hand. How much Goethe knew, and how much he merely divined, it is of course impossible to say. Commentators agree that a satisfying explanation of this passage is not to be expected, but in this we do not concur. Yet Goethe himself would never explain this passage. When questioned by Eckermann about it he merely looked at him, repeated the words put into the lips of Faust, and that was all:

Die Mütter! Mütter! 's klingt so wunderlich!

The Mothers! Mothers! It sounds so strange (mysterious)!

To a student of Theosophy, the meaning of this debated passage is clear as day, though it should be stated emphatically that no Theosophist worthy the name would recommend the little excursus into ceremonial magic that Faust unwisely makes at this point. However, as stated, he has much still to learn and there is no holding him back. Armed with a blazing key he undertakes the journey to the timeless abode of 'the Mothers' —

Göttinnen thronen hehr in Einsamkeit.  
Um sie kein Ort, noch weniger eine Zeit. . . .

Goddesses, throned majestic in solitude,  
Placeless and timeless. . . .

Fearful, shuddering, yet determined, Faust passes on his journey to the Mothers, abiding as they do *im tiefsten allertiefsten Grund* — the deepest depth of things. The scene closes abruptly, as he sinks out of sight, with the following significant words from Mephistopheles:

Neugierig bin ich, ob er wieder kommt!

Curious am I *to see if he returns!*

We cannot call these casual words on Goethe's part. They come too



trippingly upon the inner meaning of this passage, for it is an initiation-journey, this, or rather an attempt at one, a journey of supreme hazard to one understaking it in rash unpreparedness, as did Faust. Goethe leaves its stages undescribed, but we may ask, nevertheless, Who are 'the Mothers' and what is their timeless abode? H. P. Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine* and that invaluable elucidation of it by her Successor, Dr. de Purucker, *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, can fill out the skeleton of the teaching, which is all there is space for here. Faust's goal was not a place, but a state or plane or condition, the "quasi-infinite reservoir of being, of consciousness, of light, of life," the source of what science calls today the 'forces' of Universal Nature. It is *Ākāśa*, the Great Deep, the Celestial Virgin of every cosmogony, Pater Aether, the Swabhavat or Father-Mother of Hindû sacred texts. It is *Anima Mundi*, the Soul of the World. It is that state where spirit and matter are as yet undifferentiated, actually as fundamentally One, where there is neither manifested spirit, nor manifested matter, but only primordial Unity. Never descending from its own state or plane, it is forever the Unreachable, the primordial matrix wherein all that is to be manifest is fashioned, molded, into prototypal form: where there is only

. . . Gestaltung, Umgestaltung,  
Des ewiges Sinnes ewige Unterhaltung. . . .

. . . Formation, Transformation,  
The eternal re-creation of Eternal Thought. . . .

What Faust encountered on this journey, what he experienced, whether he reached his objective at all ( he did not! such reward is not for the unprepared) Goethe leaves to our imagination. He does make it clear, however, that the attempt is both futile and dangerous, for Faust had rashly entered, without preparation, without instruction, a world wherein angels may well fear to tread, a world of powerful and inimical forces in which the adventurer, whether initiant well prepared through long training, or just plain fool, will find quarter neither asked nor given. To succeed is to inherit wonder and bliss and glory beyond the power of imagination to describe; to fail is at best "an ignoble martyrdom." It is a world wherein ceremonial magic, of which Faust the Doctor had much knowledge, is of no use whatever. Nothing but the unsullied forces of the spirit, shedding their radiance upon the *disciplined* mind and soul, can prevail against the terror, the shock, the subtil temptations

that will be met in the Chambers of Illusion through which the initiate must pass. At least thus have I heard. Woe to the unlucky wight who ventures unprepared into these deceptive realms! The history of mediumship, so largely a record of insanity, suicide, physical degeneration and moral decay, is the partial commentary furnished by life.

And after all, *what for?* One may well ask, What price magic? A shade or two materialized for the amusement of a decaying court, and at what risk and heavy cost to the rash experimenter! By this so-called successful attempt, an effect is produced on Faust that is similar to that of a powerful explosive on this plane. He is thrown senseless to the ground; the shades dissolve into mist; Mephistopheles carries the limp form out upon his shoulder, tossing back to us the sage remark that to hamper oneself with fools is hard even upon a devil! Quite so.<sup>3</sup>

When we next encounter our hero he is in no heroic situation, but is stretched unconscious upon an antiquated bed in the high-arched Gothic chamber that he occupied in the opening scene of Part One. The comments of Mephistopheles, who seems to be looking after him, indicate that his mind is unhinged, his reason gone. Far from being any farther along the Path of Attainment by virtue of his dangerous experiment, Faust is thrown back again to near the start, which is apparently the significance of Goethe's returning him to this cobwebby ancient room, "formerly Faust's, unchanged" save for innumerable tenants by the

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3. That Goethe must have trodden the path of esoteric knowledge in some past life, with its gateways of initiation, is indicated not only by this drama, finished late in life, but by writings dating from his youth. Everything he investigated or did was attacked from the vantage-ground of a deep-rooted conviction of the Essential Unity of things, and the urge to demonstrate that Unity. He was always searching for the primordial, the elemental, the noumenal behind the phenomenal, the ultimate fact or truth or *potentia* or whatever from which the visible might legitimately spring. Even in very early researches into the mineral-, plant- and beast-kingdoms we find him trying to seek out the *primordial* mineral, plant, or beast, the *Urgestein*, *Urpflanze*, *Urtier*. When we reflect, in addition, that Goethe was an artist by nature, whose concept of the Good and the True is worse than incomplete without the Beautiful, a clearer notion comes to us of what he was trying to work out in *Faust*. Eckermann records that in a conversation between Goethe and himself in 1827, the former, referring to those who try to describe in words their ideal of the Beautiful, said, "The Beautiful is a primeval phenomenon, which indeed never becomes visible itself. . . ." Here is the esotericism of *Mâyâ* again. How can we hope to understand this drama or the genius who designed it without a fairly presentable knowledge of the esoteric philosophy? We cannot.

manner in the shape of beetles and moths. Through the long dialog which defines this scene, Faust lies there, silent and inert.

Faust eventually recovers, but he seems not to have had enough of the shadow-world, and in due course begins preparations for another excursion — this time with a guide of a sort: Homunculus, an artificial and capricious sprite, but classed by Goethe himself as one of the *daimones*. This journey brings Faust into contact with the Pygmies, the Dactyls, the Griffins, the Ants, the Cranes of Ibycus, old Cheiron and the Sphinxes, the Nereids, Tritons, and Sirens, and the hideous Phorkyads — which latter so delight Mephistopheles that he puts on the Phorkyad-guise for a time. They stand for Ideal Ugliness, and Mephistopheles gravitates naturally to their level. Faust on the other hand, who is lofty and refined by nature, naturally gravitates to much higher levels, higher planes — though not the highest yet. He is searching for Helen (German, *Helena*) but he fails to find her among the “classical spooks” as Mephistopheles sneeringly calls them, and it dawns upon Faust at last that the Helena of his aspiring search must exist on levels of culture, intellect, and beauty. He would make live again, and experience, the Ideal Beauty of the old Greek world. More, he would unite its culture with his own.

This union Goethe portrays, again in allegory. After a Nature-interlude of exquisite beauty, set in the rocky coves of the Aegean Sea, we return to Faust, the medieval philosopher, who steps into the court of Menelaus to which Helena is just returning as her home. Faust woos her, wins her, and to them is born Euphorion, a borderland fairy-sort of creature, reminiscent of the Boy Charioteer of Part One. And Mephistopheles? Transformed now into a Phorkyad, pattern of ugliness, he all but dominates this scene, a torment as well as a foil to Helena, who symbolizes Ideal Beauty.

Here, as in other scenes in this remarkable mystery-drama, Faust begins at once to work out his own ideals and his hopes, one of which was to unite the Classic and the Romantic into something more beautiful and more cultural than either one alone. Even the stage-setting lends itself to this idea, for an obscuring mist arises, to disperse and leave the characters standing not in a court of ancient Sparta, but in the inner courtyard of a medieval castle. Great dignity and beauty mark the meeting of Faust and Helena there, but disappointment is in store again. Euphorion goes back to worlds still more invisible and draws

his mother Helena back with him. She vanishes really however, of her own volition, with the words,

Zerissen is des Lebens wie der Liebe Band . . .

Life's bond as well as Love's is torn asunder, . . .

and Faust stands in bewilderment looking at the empty garment which she leaves in his arms.

It is kinder so, however. Faust is growing, climbing, expanding. Had Helena not departed of herself he must have put her away later.<sup>4</sup> Never could she embody the Eternal, the Radiant, the Buddhi-principle that Faust is seeking — and in the nature of things is bound to find, for the power of 'strong search' joined with inherent pity is irresistible.

The last act of this stupendous drama pictures a final dauntless pitying effort to surmount illusion, an effort that because it is self-forgetting, brings full success. Faust — but not the same Faust as even in the preceding scene, for the Path has many mystic gates of birth — is seen as the Fifth Act opens in the midst of high mountains, "rugged, lofty, serrated peaks." Mephistopheles, now relieved of his Phorkyad-mask and again in character, strides in wearing seven-league boots, which after depositing him, stride magnificently out again of themselves. The last is a delightful touch. It surrounds the whole scene with that eerie, other-world air, which Goethe is so adept in suggesting. He never leaves us long away from faery.

All of Faust's old will and forward-going power are active again and in full force, but now with the radiance of a great impersonal love shed on them. The thought of suffering humanity is heavy upon his heart. He would help. The vision of some great deed to be done for suffering mankind looms before his inner eye. "I feel within me," he says, "the power to do it!" "Ah, so!" whispers Mephistopheles, "and thus win fame!" But Faust knows his wily companion by this time, and merely counters with

Die That ist alles, nichts der Ruhm.

The deed is all, the fame of it is nothing —

sincere words, these, and impersonal, as subsequent events make clear.

A second time Faust seeks the wretched Emperor, whose decaying

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4. It is interesting to recall at this point H. P. Blavatsky's mention of Helen, the Greek ideal of beauty, as the personified *fourth principle*. *Vide The Secret Doctrine*, II, 785.

realm is in the throes of revolution. He proffers help, which is accepted; but no more tinkering with political measures now — he has learned the futility of that. However, revolution is not the way, and first of all Faust works to put that down. In this Mephistopheles is of the greatest help. He enlists the aid of the “three mighty men” and even searches out a quantity of medieval armor and puts into it “spirit-natures passed away,” to take their place upon the battlefield — the invisible world obtrudes again. But at last the State is saved, and the Emperor firmly believes that Faust saved it by the aid of magic, so that from this point on Faust, not the Emperor, is the real ruler of the people. He longs to serve and help them; his heart bleeds over their plight. Great rewards may be his for the asking, but he will have none of them, fame, title, money, place and power. All he asks is a piece of useless land, useless because lying under the sea.

But by this time Faust knows fairly well what he is about. To him this bit of submerged land was not useless by any means, for it gave him a spot to stand upon, a spot for his fulcrum to rest. Besides, the kindly waters had kept it free from encroachment by state, civilization, or church. He lays his plans, large plans. He will reclaim this land and upon it found the ideal community, the perfect State. He appoints Mephistopheles inspector and overseer, an office almost divine in its possibilities — and we have to admit that “regulated by moral fitness” the devil makes a useful incumbent. Faust has the occultist’s penetration. Not only is Mephistopheles made to work for a high end, but even the Lemures, grave-diggers, creatures of darkness, are set to work building a moat. To Faust all things are wheels unto the Law. . . .

For fifty years the building-work goes on — for fifty years, and at last it is almost done. We see Faust in his palace, old and blind — but what of that? The inner sight has only cleared.

Die Nacht scheint tiefer tief hereinzudringen,  
Allein im Innern leuchtet helles Licht. . . .

Deeper and deeper night is round me pressing,  
Nathless within me shineth radiant light! . . .

He goes out upon the terrace to hear the music that his soul loves to hear — the clang of spades and shovels. With his soul-eyes he visions a free people, dwelling upon a transformed and fruitful spot of earth, their own, and a feeling of utter satisfaction, of completest happiness,

overpowers him. The blissful moment has arrived; he would have that moment linger, and he utters the words for which Mephistopheles, with a patience almost less devilish than divine, has waited for so many years:

Verweile doch, du bist so schön!

Linger! So beautiful thou art!

The compact signed in blood has been fulfilled, and Mephistopheles, leaping as he believes to his onetime masterhood, appears to demand his own. Faust's soul is to be claimed for the abyss. But not so easily! *Buddhi-Manas* never witnessed any compact signed in blood. New forces of whose casting-power Mephistopheles never dreamed, had entered in; new forces born of Goethe's life at Weimar, that "funeral lasting sixty years!"

Here the drama sweeps rapidly back to the very top of the Luminous Arc. Futile are the efforts of Mephistopheles, or the powers of the hell now yawning at the left. The celestial hosts receive the now liberated soul, and justly, and the Ideal for which Faust had sought all his life is now the Real, symbolized in Margaret, who is waiting for him. What Faust won only after long striving, a heartbreaking search and climb, she had attained in a single breathless flight — but only to wait on the heights until he should attain too. The symbolism of their mystic union is transparent; we see it close the *Odyssey*, the *Divina Commedia*, and how many epics more! It is the union of Mind and Spirit, the now chastened and transmuted lower self with the Higher.

The scene is long, and the theological setting, even though perhaps no other would have keyed so well with the medieval theme, seems alien to its ripeness in Eastern Teaching and its purely mystic beauty. We will leave it with the closing words, chanted by the Chorus Mysticus as Faust, now glorified because self-redeemed, rises into mystic union with his Higher Self, *Buddhi* with the radiance of *Ātman* upon it.

Alles Vergängliche  
Ist nur ein Gleichniss;  
Das Unzulängliche  
Hier wird 's Ereigniss;  
Das Unbeschreibliche,  
Hier ist 's gethan;  
Das Ewig-Weibliche  
Zieht uns hinan.

Here the impermanent  
As symbol showeth;  
Here the inadequate  
To fulness groweth;  
The Indescriptible,  
Here is it done:  
The Eternal Womanly  
Leadeth us on.

So Goethe, throwing the curtain as wide-open as he may before the âkâsic Screen of Time on which, in picture after picture, life's motley procession is made to pass. And in that passage, stage by stage, we see the whole vast concept of a cosmic hierarchy, ranging from the elemental to the Divine, with Man the Thinker at the half-way point, Man, the conquering Mind. For Faust is Man Himself — in the exquisite imagery of *Fundamentals*, hanging "like a pendant jewel from the spiritual Selfhood of him"— now at last caught up to that from which it hangs, but only to free itself later, again to 'fall,' and again to rise, ever higher, ever upward and on. This is the conviction that sweeps over you like celestial waters as you lay down this so strange drama: man is a god incarnate; no power in hell or heaven or the playground of Infinite Space is puissant to stop or check the forward-speeding energies of this god; "there are no frontiers to infinitude."

## OUR CIVILIZATION IN TRANSITION

CAPTAIN JOHN R. BEAVER

**N**O more appropriate place than this — our Temple of Peace — wherein to exchange untrammelled views on this intriguing problem. Civilization is ever in transition and so in this, our short review, we shall dwell particularly on what we know of it in this our present earth-life and more particularly still on its startling condition of today.

While analysing it however dispassionately in detail, there cannot fail to arise allusions to grave responsibilities, social, individual, religious, educational; yet in this friendly and familiar atmosphere, and on this plane of philosophic thought, the most susceptible of minds not altogether cramped as yet, will find nothing but the kindest consideration. Theosophy can offer this spontaneously, because, being the Divine Wisdom of the Ages, it is the source and spring of highest ideals; it brings symbology into living values and makes the mysteries more understandable to all. It is the common meeting-ground of earnest hearts and liberated minds.

And yet it asks no one to believe. It draws aside the veil from unimparted knowledge and leaves the rest to those who so desire — to put their latent sight to see, their latent hearing to hear, their latent power of thought to think — and then, with these quite new, unbiased

senses, learn the truth of Life that has so long been hidden from them.

To you, to them, to us, in this far corner of the world, so distant from the turmoil of the heavier world-wide struggles, the critical condition of human affairs today comes only by report; and although by reflexion one may glimpse the squalor of privation and the misery of unemployment, and through that mystical sympathy-vibration sense the throbbing of millions of unhappy hearts, we are in no wise prepared as yet to recognise the seriousness, the sternness of the realities, much less our own share of responsibility for the factors that have produced them.

Some may find the picture I shall paint too darkly colored. Let them be not so blind. Some may find relief of conscience in the fatuous excuse, the thoughtless slogan: "There is bound to be strife and struggling in this sad world of ours, and differences of classes and conditions." Be that as it may, only those who know the reason why may calmly face that fact; they who know the law of universal kinship, the brotherhood of man. This human life is but a phase in the ever-upward pilgrimage, and there will always be those differences upon the ladder of evolution, ranging from those on the lower rungs to those who are passing on to other planes, to other spheres.

The time is long past due for honest, straight expression and for individual thinking. The dogmatisms of our religions and our philosophies and the style of education that they so permeate, have dwarfed our vision for centuries past and estranged us from thinking for ourselves on any line outside those of material advancement; and so our thoughts, our actions, and our very lives are ruled, restricted, and controlled by this inbred myopia.

This is the picture that is staring us in the face: The world is bewildered. Humanity is in despair. Our Civilization — *where?* The pace of material progress has been so forced that at last we have stumbled and are piling up in a human scrap-heap of disconcerted ambitions, blind materialism, and intellectual confusion.

Of course we have progressed and are progressing but only on certain strata; the rest remain submerged, neglected, forgotten, and are crying out for readjustment. Instead of advancing steadily, gradually, naturally, as in all manifest evolution, in orderly gradation, that we might evolve all our divinely-given faculties and attributes that link us with the universe inseparably and eternally, we have bolted headlong on a stream of brain-mind alone that has left us 'high and dry' on that



man-made pile we could not, would not, foresee in that mad rush after material and physical things — yes, material and physical aims, satisfactions, indulgences and excesses which we have glorified into personal, so-called: Happiness, Position, Wealth, and Power.

Happiness forsooth — so often shaped into a dream from which we awaken, perchance too late, to find that real happiness lies on the path of service, the path we missed, as in that dream we somnambulated past on the road we thought was Life.

Position forsooth — which once attained we find to be merely a smaller or a larger sucker on one of the arms of a humanized octopus, or a tiny cog in the crazy gear that hastens the speed of a mechanical progress.

Wealth forsooth — that we find none too soon to be a promissory note, sometimes guaranteed by gold, a sop to man's distrust of man, a guarantee more often than not undermined by other promissory notes we dream not of, that leave the security in the air, and the gold in other pockets.

Power forsooth — for which to gain we sacrifice so much, and once attained we are too dense to recognise as our responsibility the hatred we have engendered, a hatred the more intense because it has been fed so long on the husks of injustice and indifference, a hatred so bitter that all the sweet the kindlier few can give will never eradicate it in one short span of life.

Oh yes, we are progressing, but even in the most enlightened nations civilization has frozen in its methods. There are many grades of civilization as there are many kinds of people, but all is chaos due to hide-bound systems of application and exploitation, and man is getting no chance to work out his destiny in any rational way. Some have even to struggle for the right to live and those who are making efforts to bring reform are thwarted as much by those who demand too much as by those who command too much.

Of course there are people, many, many people of outstanding worth, geniuses born or by attainment so become — many, many people of sound intelligence and generous impulse who stand head and shoulders above this chaos of selfishness and conceit, ready to spare of their gifts and their powers for the general good. But alas! a far too large majority flaunt an overbearing arrogance they try to justify by different and misleading names, such as: privilege of caste, character, dynamic ener-

gy, super-personality, while in very truth they are nothing but the gilded surface of solidified egoism, and as often as not, the enthronement of brute force that enslaves the meek and tramples the more assertive under foot; and all the while a sycophantic element of humanity stands by and applauds, while another element helplessly tolerates it with mingled tears and lingering hope, and yet another element stands by and tolerates it while breeding hate. Talk about hypnotic powers — why, ninety per cent of the world is hypnotized already, working, thinking, yes, living on mass-produced ideas!

But now no longer can man endure as sane or even admit as less than iniquitous, a misguided intelligence, a so-called civilization, that can convert into syndicated commercialism the very secrets of Nature that science unlocks for all mankind, to whom they belong. This is not intelligence, it is icy cold, bloodless intellectuality. This is not genius free and noble, it is synthetic genius, genius with its sublime origin ignored, a Divine inheritance prostituted from its high purpose for man's progress and happiness, diverted from its rightful ownership, and sold on the market for a mess of pottage in the lustful love of gain.

The intelligences, the geniuses, individual or collective, that can organize big business corporations, that can guide the vicissitudes of high finance, that can create industrial marvels, that can perform engineering miracles, that can direct political and social activities: all are swaying today on that tottering structure of accumulated errors, and if they are to survive for future better and nobler fields of action they will have to begin at once to rebuild on an entirely new foundation, for the days of patching-up have past.

Not all the efforts with the noblest motives, not all the intelligent conceptions of experience, can radically and permanently stem the pending avalanche, the natural result of past mistakes, unless indeed the process begin at once with changed and widened vision.

The overflowing reservoir of artificially dammed-up progress and deliberately retarded evolution, must be emptied, gradually but quickly, through the sluice-gates of common sense before the dam itself gives way and the impetus of pent-up rage and hate carry before it even the last vestige of hope for reasonable recovery. The Stream of Life and its activities must be allowed to flow for all mankind, in Nature's own channels, with Nature's own obstacles, not man's, to regulate its progress in its evolutionary course.

No more retaining-walls, built of selfishness and greed, to bank up and utilize the urge and the tears of the many for the worldly advantage of the few, who have usurped the right to govern by methods quite evidently no longer sane. The walls, the barriers, the dams can remain as monuments to a materialistic civilization and to a bogus culture, a civilization and a culture where the standards of success are measured by the dollar; where honors for intelligence and cleverness are divided between the astute interpreter of the law and the equally astute evader of it; where the standard of culture is measured by its thoughtless artificiality; where the peace of nations is measured by armies and navies and poison-gas; where money and debts stand steady while everything of intrinsic value falls; where enterprise and labor sink while the money-lender floats; where the substance can fade away and the spectral shadow stay.

Can the intelligences, the geniuses, of material miracles and incongruities like these save mankind and civilization from further chaos? Will they stand back and help the genuine intelligences they have repressed so long, who can save? Will they join hands and help stave off, during this transition stage, the menace of maddened ignorance that forms so large a proportion of the civilization they have misguided and abused? It may be, even now, too late.

Yes, there will always be differences of conditions and of grades, according to individual development, but these differences of conditions and of grades must be in conformity with Nature's laws of progression and not dictated by man's arbitrary discrimination.

This civilization of ours is but a patchwork pattern. Industry, Legislation, Education, Religion are all operating as so many divorced entities, so many distinct civilizations. Would that the intelligences, the geniuses, the brain-power that can make vast commercial combines could get one spiritual touch of vision, and make of these various civilizations a combine worthwhile, and prepare the material for the one to come, of homogeneous grandeur.

I say the civilization to come, because the true, the permanent foundation can only be laid by the children that are as yet unborn — the children, that will know their greatness before their minds are distorted and poisoned by spurious conceptions and petrified lines of thought.

When the children can start out in life knowing they are divine as well as human, that they are partners in the Universal Life and co-work-

ers in the Universal Scheme of Evolution; that this life is but a step in our eternal growth, that no dictates of man with promises of eternal reward or with threats of everlasting vengeance can change in one iota the divine law, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," then man's sense of responsibility will be his glory, his sense of greatness will transfigure his smallness and his meanness, his sense of brotherhood with all his kind and with the very air he breathes will be his happiness and the emancipation of his soul.

I address you, friends, not as a born Theosophist, but as a convinced one of many years' standing. I can also address you as a Christian because I was born in the faith, and was for many years a member of one of the most advanced of the Christian Churches, and I owe her a debt of gratitude for her very perplexities that prompted me to seek for that which seemed to have been lost. I sought it. I found it. I found it easily because I found it everywhere. I found it in my own shortcomings and in man's inhumanity to man. I found it in the tender ministrations of a lovely wife and in the misery of unhappy homes. I found it in the highest circles of society and in the lower, and I found it in the flotsam and jetsam of humanity. I found it in the lonely desert heights of the mountains, where the vast canopy of the heavens reveals so gloriously the harmony of the universe, in an all-pervading Consciousness with which everything conforms; yes, everything excepting Man.

And yet I still went on seeking and it was then I found it all spread out before me in Theosophy, and I did wonder. I wondered how anything could ever have been lost, for, paradoxical as it may sound, I could find no secret that had not been known even before the world was born.

For there I saw quite clearly before my eyes why "darkness 'was' on the face of the deep." I saw the progressive evolutionary procession of Light and Life, the meaning of the Eden, so often termed the Paradise, the Fall, the First Murder, the Flood, the Tower of Babel, the Still Small Voice, the Brazen Calf and so many of the symbological events and prophecies of the Old Testament. I saw them all in their grand significance; and then, the Birth in the Manger, the Star of Bethlehem, the Life of Jesus, the Betrayal, Crucifixion, Resurrection, Ascension, and so many of the mysteries and parables of the New Testament, some so beautiful, some so pathetic, some so tragic, while in Theosophy all so real, all so inspiring, all so sublime in their majestic meaning.

And yet Theosophy is nothing new, only new to this our vaunted

civilization. It is the Archaic Wisdom of the Ages, handed along by the Great Ones from the Eternal, the Infinite; yes, handed along for the guidance of mankind in this our pilgrimage on Earth.

Most of the faiths of today are limited and variously interpreted parts of this eternal knowledge, and these interpretations themselves were formulated in style to meet the mentality of those less enlightened days; yet one does not require to travel far to find that time and rush and egoism have habituated man to synonymize this stereotyped phraseology with Divine Revelation, to synonymize symbology with Divine Truth; yes, and to synonymize candles and stained-glass windows with Divine Illumination.

We are in the present chaos because we have stagnated spiritually; we fail to identify ourselves with the universe, and prefer to make this globe on which we are sojourning an independent State, making laws unto ourselves, establishing an autonomous, a magnificently impossible isolation in imponderable cosmos, much as an independent grain among the seashore rocks and sand, a drop of water independent of the Ocean.

Study with unbiased minds the pure unadulterated Theosophy brought to the Western civilization by H. P. Blavatsky, and you will be studying in the great University of Life; you will be studying in that University from which one graduates to take one's proper place in the Universal, the Divine Scheme of Things.

Study with unbiased mind Karma, Reincarnation, Evolution and the Law of Cycles — they are all one great oneness, although we speak of them separately at times — and then you will begin to understand what is wrong with civilization and ourselves today.

The lack of universal sympathy, Universal Brotherhood if you will, not as a beautiful abstraction, not as a poet's sentimental dream, but as the inexorable principle of Divine Law which is of the universe, of which we humans and everything that is are inseparable and integral parts — that is the Law, which as free agents we may contravene but only to our own detriment, suffering, and sorrow. That is the Law, by which as free agents we can attain to happiness and growth on earth, and onward and onward and onward, eternally.

The time is long past due for thinking men and women to drink once more at the Eternal Fountain.

CAGLIOSTRO  
A Messenger Long Misunderstood

P. A. MALPAS, M. A.

VI

(CONTINUATION OF COUNTESS VON DER RECKE'S REPORT)

“THIS evening Cagliostro made the following experiment, at my uncle's house and in the presence of some members of our lodge.

“First, he asked me the baptismal name of Herr N. N., which I knew very well, and also the baptismal name of my dead brother. After I had told him, he wrote the initials of these names and, between each letter, characters which I did not know. Then he remained alone in the room for a time, wrote all kinds of things, burnt some, then came and told us to prompt the boy to ask him to show him again such things as he had seen before. The mother bade the boy to persuade Cagliostro to let him see the forest which he had already shown him some evenings before, or whatever he wished. Cagliostro took the boy on his knee, rubbed the previously burnt paper on his head, kissed him, and said:

“‘Child! you also can be a great man some day! Come, dear lad, you shall behold things of greater importance.’

“Then he took him into the room where he had previously been writing. In the room there was nothing besides the usual furniture, excepting that two candles stood on my uncle's writing-table, and between the candles a sheet of paper with written characters. When the child had come into the room, Cagliostro shut the door and told him that he must wait quietly until the beautiful things of which he had spoken appeared. He must not be frightened by anything, for even if there were a noise in the other room it would be of no importance. We all sat in the ante-room in a circle opposite the closed doors. Cagliostro stood with a drawn dagger in his hand in the middle of the room and bade us all be silent, devout, serious, and calm.

“Next, he drew some characters with his dagger on the door of the room where the child was; then he stamped with his foot, now on the floor, now on the door, wrote characters in the air with the dagger, uttered many names, and words which we did not understand. The three

expressions that most frequently occurred were: *Helion, Melion, Tetragrammaton*. In the midst of this operation my aunt sent her eldest son to the other room to see if the other doors were also shut. Then said Cagliostro with astonishing force: 'For God's sake, what are you doing? Be quiet, be quiet, do not stir! You are in the greatest danger, and I with you!'

"He redoubled his stampings, called out in a terribly loud voice some unknown words and names, described all sorts of figures in the air, and again drew a circle round us with his dagger. He remained standing in the circle, and said in a most emphatic tone that we should all be most unfortunate if one of us stirred or even attempted to speak. Now he began anew his conjurations and bade the little one, who had hitherto been very quiet, shut in the room, to kneel down and repeat after him all that he should say, until he had a vision. Then Cagliostro stamped again with his foot, made various motions with the dagger, and asked the child: 'What do you see now?'

"*The Child* — I see the beautiful little boy who last time opened the earth for me in the forest.

"*Cagliostro* — Good! Now ask the boy to show you Herr N. N., and with chains round neck and hands and feet.

"*The Child* — I see Herr von N. N. and he looks very vexed. He is chained, hands and neck and feet.

"*Cagliostro* — What do you see now?

"*The Child* — The beautiful little boy draws the chain tighter around his neck.

"*Cagliostro* — Where is Herr von N. N. now? (Here the child named the estate of this gentleman, which lay at a distance of some miles from the town.)

"*Cagliostro* — Stamp your foot on the floor; order Herr von N. N. to disappear; and bid the beautiful boy to show you the blessed brother of your cousin von der Recke.

"*The Child* — The brother is there!

"*Cagliostro* — Does he look happy or sad? And how is he dressed?

"*The Child* — He looks pleased, and has on a red uniform.

"*Cagliostro* — Tell him to answer by a sign, Yes or No, to the thought that is in my mind.

"*The Child* — He says, 'Yes.'

"*Cagliostro* — What is he doing now?

*"The Child* — He lays his hand on his heart, and looks kindly at me.

*"Cagliostro* — What do you now see?

*"The Child* — The little girl who looks like your wife and who showed herself to me the last time.

*"Cagliostro* — What do you see now?

*"The Child* — The little girl is there.

*"Cagliostro* — Embrace the little girl, kiss her, and ask her to show you the forest. (Then we heard a sound, as though the child kissed the apparition. Herr Major von Korff and my uncle said that they heard also the kiss given by the apparition, but I heard only one kiss.)

*"The Child* — I see the forest and in it a tree cut down.

*"Cagliostro* — Bid the little girl open the earth.

*"The Child* — The earth is open; and I see five candles, gold and silver, all kinds of papers, red powder, and also iron instruments.

*"Cagliostro* — Now order the earth to be closed, the whole forest to disappear, and the little girl also; and then tell me what you see.

*"The Child* — All has disappeared, and now I see a splendid tall man. He has on a long white gown, and on his breast a red cross.

*"Cagliostro* — Kiss this man's hand, and let him kiss you. (We heard both kisses and then Cagliostro commanded this apparition to be the child's guardian-spirit.)

"Afterwards Cagliostro again spoke in Arabic, stamped with his foot on the door, and then opened it and let the child come out. Then he said we could now leave our places, reproved us for my cousin's having left the circle, and at the same moment fell into a kind of convulsive swoon. We brought him to, and when he was himself again, he told us all to be silent and serious. Then he went into the room where the child had seen the apparition, slammed the door behind him, and we heard him speaking in some foreign language in a loud voice. At last we heard a dull thud. Then he came again quietly, and when well out of the room told us with a triumphant look that Herr von N. N. had deserved punishment, and that he was now punished severely. Tomorrow we should hear that von N. N. had been very sick with throat-trouble and was having much pain in his limbs at the time when the child had had the vision and had seen him in chains. He also named the physician who would that night be called to attend the sick N. N.; and the next morning we heard that all that Cagliostro told us had happened.

"He said that the swoon had been caused by evil spirits, because my



cousin had stepped over the circle which enclosed us. For at every *séance* the evil spirits were aroused and were enraged against the one who, at the bidding of the Good Principle, made the summons. They were held back by the magic circle and robbed of their power of action. When I said that it was incomprehensible to me how a mere pass with the dagger could so hold the spirits in check, he replied, 'The action of the magnet was still more inexplicable. But the magic circle and the power it had would be understood by those who could by this means restrain the evil spirits.'

"This explanation certainly did not give us much enlightenment, but perhaps we should grasp it when we had made further progress in this science. The particular thing which had unpleasantly astonished me at this *séance* was that Cagliostro had used his power for the hurt of his fellow-man and had made Herr von N. N. suffer. I had the boldness to ask him to explain. He patted me on the shoulder and said: 'My good soft-hearted creature! How little do you know the right position and duty of a true magician! I and my like depend less upon ourselves than other everyday men. We are subordinate to Superiors to whom we owe unconditional obedience. If you only knew how it goes to my heart when I must make my fellow-men suffer occasionally! But when I think that often by so doing I save whole countries and peoples from destruction, and that perhaps even the one who feels my discipline may by it be freed from destruction, then I take courage to carry out with confidence the will of my Superiors. So long as you, my dear child, have not the strength to discipline and chastise for the benefit of your fellow-men when necessary, so long will you remain only in the fore-court of magic and will never penetrate to the sanctuary.'

"I proceeded, 'If you will pardon me, I should like to ask you a question.' 'Ask, by all means,' he replied.

"*I* — You appear to me to say, with a kind of triumphant look, that you have punished Herr von N. N., and from here have made him ill by means of your spirits. Is this worthy of a Friend of Mankind?

"*Cagliostro* — I had supposed you to have more penetration! Can I in my position always be myself? Must I not assume many characters in order to learn to know my pupils?

"*I* — But why do you need to do that when you can investigate us through your subordinate spirits?

"*Cagliostro* — My good child, you argue like a blind man about

color. Every day has certain hours only when I can undertake magical operations, and then very difficult and important duties are assigned to me. I have sought out three among you, whom I leave to be observed by my subject-spirits; the others I must test in social life in order to investigate their capacities of heart and spirit, and so place them in their proper sphere of action. Had you not been observed by one of my spirits for some time, I should today have directed my attention to you; for the boldness with which you speak, and the unspoiled human feeling which so speaks through you, would have caused me to suspect that in you profound capabilities towards magic lie hidden.

“After some days Cagliostro traveled with his wife, Herr von Howen, Herr von Korff, my father, and myself, to Wilzen to my uncle’s. We found him there, with his wife and daughter and two sons. Cagliostro took only myself in his carriage and there he talked to me about magic, which instilled in me a great respect for his moral character, of which I had begun to be a little mistrustful. I now received light upon many things which had not pleased me in him heretofore, and I must confess that his insight and knowledge of human nature astonished me hardly less than his magical experiments. I must here recount an incident before I proceed further with my story.

“Cagliostro asked me after some conversation what I thought of Z—. Could I not make him better acquainted with Z—? and he related some incidents of his life.

“I answered that I knew Z— too little to be able to gratify his wish. (I knew a story about Z—, the relating of which might cause him some harm, but I knew positively, that with the exception of a couple of friends and my mother, not another soul knew it. My mother had intrusted it to me under the sacred seal of silence.)

“Cagliostro looked me keenly in the face and said significantly, ‘So you know nothing of Z— by which you could make me more closely acquainted with his character and fate, which I am so anxious to know?’

“I — Truly, Z— is very little known to me.

“*Cagliostro* — Serpent that I nourish in my bosom! Thou art not speaking the truth! Swear, swear to me here that thou knowest no anecdote of the circumstances of Z—’s life, which is known only to three people besides thyself!

“I must confess that I was in a dilemma. I was silent for some minutes, considering within myself how, without breaking my word,

and without going counter to my principles of right and wrong, I could escape from the dilemma. Cagliostro looked angrily at me and said: 'Now, deceiver! What are you thinking of? Answer me. So you can tell nothing about Herr Z—?'

"I answered with great earnestness, 'Herr Count, your behavior alarms me. I do not know for whom you are playing this rôle since you have only myself at your side — I myself, who, as you say, am observed by your subject-spirit Hanachiel. Since I have nothing to be ashamed of before the eye of the All-seeing, who reads in my innermost heart, I have no fear of the observation of Hanachiel, if he, as a good spirit, reads my heart. And if he is not, he can tell you what he likes. I trust in Him who knows how to hold the demons and necromancers in check, and I am convinced that he will guide all the wrong in the world to the best end.'

"Then Cagliostro looked very kindly at me, pressed my hand and said, 'Dear soul! From your youth I had not expected such power of silence, strength of spirit, and wisdom. You have extricated yourself in this matter far better than I could have expected. Now I can tell you the gist of the matter. I was commanded *by my Masters* to put these catch-questions to you, after they had told me the whole circumstances of the case; and had even told me that your mother had related to you the story in order to enlarge your knowledge of human nature. Had you confessed the whole to me, I should have been afraid that at future inquiries you would suffer from weakness and would be wrecked on the dangerous rocks of magic. Had you been shameless enough to have sworn such an oath, then you would have taken the first step toward sinking into still greater difficulties, and I should gradually have had to withdraw my hand from you. We will now cease talking of these matters, but I will repeat that the path of magic on which you may proceed far, since you have all the gifts of the spirit and heart for it, is dangerous; and among a thousand only one at the most reaches the high goal through which one can inspire himself and others, when he has passed all trials without falling into the abyss.'

"Here Cagliostro was silent, and I answered nothing. Nevertheless these things made me very thoughtful. After a while he told me that I was to maintain silence with all the brothers and sisters of the Lodge, in regard to what had passed between us, for he had good reasons for concealing yet a while his power to read the souls of men.

“When we were not far from Wilzen he spoke and prayed to himself quietly in a foreign tongue, read something out of a little red magical book, and when we saw a wood, he said, with fiery enthusiasm: ‘There, there lie the magical writings buried! Thou Great Architect of the World, help me to complete the work!’ After a time he added: ‘These magical writings and treasures were watched by the strongest spirits and only spirits could take them away. Whether I am to be the fortunate one to take them away by their means, only He knows who sent me. But I will bind the spirits who guard the treasures in such way that my followers and helpers can undertake nothing without my knowledge, even if I should be three hundred miles away.’

“Immediately after his arrival in Wilzen Cagliostro went without a guide but accompanied by Herr von Howen, my father, and my uncle, to the forest which he had described. There he showed the broken tree, under which the treasure, watched by spirits, was said to lie. There he made an evocation for himself and bound one of his spirits to the place. The next morning between ten and eleven o’clock he made another magic experiment with the child, in the presence of all the members of our Lodge who were there. He acted on this occasion as he had done at the first experiment at which I had been present, only with the difference that the child was in the same room as ourselves, behind a screen, and Herr von Howen stood in the circle beside Cagliostro. Cagliostro had given the child a great iron nail to hold, and had bidden him kneel down and not rise until he had seen the ‘beautiful boy.’ After the latter had appeared to the boy, he summoned the spirit with the red cross to appear, told him to bind him on the nail, and so to guard the treasure in the forest that none could approach without his knowledge. In addition, the treasure was never to be found or raised without Herr von Howen present. Then he bade Herr von Howen kneel down, and bade the spirit with the red cross grasp him. Now Herr von Howen had to put some questions dictated by Cagliostro to the child; but when Herr von Howen spoke, Cagliostro touched him with the magic sword. Herr von Howen now had to repeat the following after Cagliostro, ‘In the name of my master and teacher, Cagliostro, I bid you, child chosen to be a seer, to make the subject-spirits of our great teacher show you the forest which holds the treasure, and to cause the earth which conceals it to open.’

“*The Child* — The forest is there, the earth is open, and I see a staircase and a long passage.

“Here Cagliostro bade Herr von Howen, who was kneeling all the time, to stand up, but to remain in the magic circle; and now he himself questioned the child.

“*Cagliostro* — Go down the stairs. Count the steps aloud, so that we can hear until you come to the end of the passage, and then tell me what you see.

“The child now counted the steps, and we could hear his footfalls. Also we could hear him go some steps farther. Then the little boy said, ‘Here are many gold rods; gold and silver coins; all kinds of iron things; written papers; and red powder.’

“Cagliostro ordered the vision to disappear. Then he made another conjuration and asked: ‘What do you see now?’

“*The Child* — I see seven very beautiful men, all in long white robes. One of them has a red heart on the breast; the others all have red crosses and something written on their foreheads, but I cannot read what it is.

“Cagliostro bade these spirits to attach themselves to certain objects as he thought of them. He told the child to embrace all the seven spirits, to give each one of them a kiss, and to let himself be kissed by them all. (We heard these fourteen kisses.) Finally Cagliostro told the apparitions to disappear. He let the child come out and went with him and the gentlemen to the forest, and there above the place where the magic documents should be lying he fastened the nail which had been consecrated by conjurations.

“After a week we went in company with our brothers who had been initiated into the magic circle, to Alt-Auz to my mother. For my father was constantly with Cagliostro, who was now residing with my parents in Mitau.

“In Alt-Auz we found my uncle, his wife, daughter, and little son. There Cagliostro several times held a kind of public lecture. Nevertheless, only members of the Lodge of Adoption, my stepmother, and two other *profanes* (non-members) formed the audience. At these lectures he did not remain in the same mood all the time. Sometimes he said sublime things, then there would be so much nonsense mixed up with his talk that we were all confused. But I can quite well explain to myself this wonderful mixture in him of deeply hidden wisdom, occasional foolishness, and apparent twaddle. He also imparted to our brothers the secret of preparing beaver (fine thread) out of bad flax.

“The first day of our stay in Alt-Auz, Cagliostro said to my uncle’s

little boy, without making any magical preparations: 'Go into the next room and there you will see a person in a long white robe; tell him to appear at one o'clock tonight and to prepare to answer conscientiously all that I shall ask him. When you have done this, bid the vision disappear.'

"The boy went boldly into the other room and after a little while came back and said, 'I found everything as you said, and arranged everything as you ordered.'

"On the second evening, in the presence of all who were there, Cagliostro made almost the same experiment as that which he had made in Wilzen with closed doors. Yet there was the difference that he used no nail here, and that he signed to Herr von Howen, in the midst of his conjuration, to come to him, and he bade him kneel. Then he asked the child, 'Who now appears?' The child said, 'Howen is on his knees.' Then Cagliostro gave him his watch to hold in his hand, asking, 'What do you see now?' The child answered, 'Howen holds the watch in his hand.'

"I should mention that the child stood in the next room behind a screen. Cagliostro, before the *séance*, had shown me the place where the child would have the vision; but there was no magic mirror; nor could the child see naturally, if it turned to all sides, what was happening outside the limits which enclosed it.

"I must confess that some things struck me at this *séance*. In the first place it appeared to me that there had been no sufficient reason for making a conjuration. And then Herr von Howen had overstepped the magic circle without having experienced any evil consequences. The whole story of this apparition, also, and the holding of the watch, appeared to me to be unworthy of magic. I explained my doubt to Cagliostro, who replied, 'You always judge like a blind man talking about colors. I must tell you that so long as you are only in the forecourt of this sacred science, you will find many things unexplainable. As for the magic circle which Herr von Howen has stepped over, I can tell you that it *was in the plan of my séance for today* to make Herr von Howen do so. And I commanded my spirits at my conjuration carefully to watch the place where Herr von Howen would step over the circle. But *I cannot tell you the reason why I let Herr von Howen appear today*. The watch I gave him to hold is a magic watch, which, if held at the hour of the *séance* by the one over whom Hanachiel or Gabriel watches, has

the effect that my Masters want it to have. At all other times the power of this watch is latent. But when the spirits hover round me at my conjuration, I should advise nobody to touch this watch without preparation. I can also read the soul of the one who under these circumstances holds the watch, much more quickly than that of others.”

*(To be continued)*

## CAN THE SUICIDE TRICK HIS FATE?

AXEL EMIL GIBSON, M. D.

**S**INCE the closing days of the Roman Empire, no era of human history has seen so many suicides as the present. And it is especially the stratum of society which holds the greatest claim on intellectual prowess that is stricken with this mania of self-destruction. Furthermore, when we consider that the one, central, dominant human force is self-preservation — its intensity increasing with the ascent and expressiveness of life — we are facing, in this swelling tide of modern suicides, one of the most perplexing problems of all time.

Self-preservation is the strongest of all human and animal instincts. And it should naturally be so, for without this overwhelming urge for individual existence, the continuity of the human race would be threatened by extinction. When, however, in the face of this universal influence, a person deliberately blows out his lamp of life, one of two things must have happened: either the individual has surrendered his mental sovereignty to an alien control, or he has lost the ethical estimate of his own survival value. In either case the situation is serious and indicates that, through some mental or moral crisis, the individual has lost the standard of that normal self-consciousness which alone insures his position as an individual integral unit in the evolution of humanity.

In other words, suicide and normal self-consciousness are incompatible. Before the individual can muster himself for the deed, some sudden, unexpected interruption of normal conditions has shocked and unbalanced his mental faculties. In place of accepting the situation as a part of our evolution — a vital prize-puzzle, to be carefully examined and worked out — the suicide gets bewildered, refuses to consider the issue at all, and throws the entire problem, himself included, on the scrap-heap of oblivion.

Back of such collapse of moral fiber must be found an already weakened personality. No true, self-sustained, self-respecting and humanly balanced mind can consider suicide as a means of solving the problems of life. Something has been undermining the moral resistance of the man. Something has caused him to feel like a soldier lost on the battlefield. In his short-sightedness he has deserted the army of humanity by neglecting to obey its protective principles. These protective principles are contained in our moral solidarity with the race, to which, by the very force of life, we stand under obligations of giving and receiving support and protection. There is no quicker route to insanity and self-destruction than to isolate oneself, in thought and act, from the destiny of that great, struggling, suffering, serving and sinning army of humanity.

But the subject of suicide goes deeper yet. The right to destroy a thing calls for its incontestable ownership; and how and where did the individual obtain that jurisdiction over his body that made him master of its life and death? Two ways alone can insure him such capital rights: purchase or inheritance. The former is inadmissible, as, at the time of transfer, the party to the deal was unconcious. Nor could he have obtained it through inheritance as he himself was its first historical possessor.

Being obtained neither by purchase nor inheritance, the problem of possession can be solved only by accepting the body as a trust, subject to all the moral and ethical obligations involved in outside ownership. In other words, the individual holds the same relationship to his body as a chauffeur holds to an automobile with which he has been trusted.

An inestimably far more perfect instrument than an automobile, the body reacts to every phase of abuse to which it is subjected — in thought or act, physically or mentally. No covering up of records, no denying of evidences is here possible. Individual responsibility is associated with every attitude of life in the existence of a human being, and no act or motive, be it ever so subtil, but is followed by reaction on the mind and body. Science is unanimous in declaring the indestructibility of force, and if this is applicable to physical conditions it should certainly be much more so to conditions of the mind. And, furthermore, if we accept physical laws as unfailing guaranties for the safety of human existence, how can we refuse to accept the guaranty and power of moral laws — of which physical laws are mere reflexions?

Now every expression of life has its center and origin in the mind.



In fact, the mind holds the same relation to the body as an engine with its motor power holds to the wheels and pistons in the factories of industry. The engine holds a position all its own and runs its course even if every machine in the factory had been suspended and destroyed. The mind is not subject to physical laws, and no thoughts or feelings can be stopped by a dose of prussic acid, or the discharge of a gun. Its mental motors are merely detached from old modes and methods of expression and attached to new. Cause and effect, order and justice, sense of responsibility and power of judgment, are as balanced and active as ever. Not a momentum of the individual's self-consciousness has been destroyed. A suicide pursues the course of a musical student, who in his failure and impatience to bring out a certain note, may dash his instrument to the floor, and trample on it — yet that does not eliminate the difficulties in mastering his lesson. All that the suicide has accomplished is the destruction of his physical brain — his thought-factory — while thought itself, with its feelings and emotions, is adjusted to other centers and modes of expression, and is more alive than ever.

In a study of our physical world we are constantly impressed by the accuracy of time, and the infallibility of process throughout the entire field of organic life and motion. The staggering accuracy in the rising and setting of the sun; the arrival on the second of stellar orbs by a schedule involving thousands of years; the reaction-time of nerve impulses; the cycles of the heart; the definite rise and fall of temperature to given conditions — the periods of time are minutely connected with growth and birth in the generation and evolution of things.

From every point of order and logic, the same unerring accuracy of time and process that governs physical phenomena, governs mental and moral. The schedule connected with man's birth is not less accurate than that connected with his departure. Now the suicide may stop his physical vehicle at any point of its progress, but he cannot stop his own thinking, feeling, immortal self from pursuing its course in absolute accord with the scheduled time set for his arrival, by the very law and necessity of his being. Like a smashed-up auto, he has to be assisted by a salvage-transport under the compulsion of a new directing power. By the destruction of his own nervous motor-service the suicide is reduced to a helpless, will-less dependency for further progress. Escape is impossible. He can stop his body, but not his mind. His career is destiny, his future is regret, and his conductors are memory and reflexion

that will keep before him the wantonness of his act and the failure of his existence.

In its very nature the act of suicide is a paradox. The individual who commits suicide tries to slay the very self which prompts his suicide, and looks for escape in the destruction of the very vehicle that would promote his progress. Only a madman can hold it possible that the body, which is a mere tool or expression of the mind, should have the power to destroy its own sustaining and inspiring essence. It is as if an egg should hold the power to blast the hen that laid it — or a fruit be able to destroy the tree by which it was evolved. Moreover, in the statements of modern science, no principle is more universally accepted than the indestructibility and continuity of life and consciousness. In a word, immortality has become a logical necessity for the understanding of man and nature. The difference between instinct and self-consciousness, between personality and character, between sensation and intellect, is so immense that it takes ages of time and conditions for one group of consciousnesses to evolve into another.

In his act of committing suicide, the individual cuts himself out of all nervous and sensory connexion with the world. As his mind is still with him, he has yet the power to think, to feel, to desire, to hate, and to suffer. But his mind has lost its body, has lost its relations with earthly existence. Isolated from personal contacts, unknown and unseen yet in the midst of life, the suicide is full of burning desires, with racking cravings for indulgence, yet with no nervous system to gratify his raving appetites. There is a striking resemblance between the racking appetites and taunting temptations of the suicide in his hopeless underworld, and the relentless fires in the orthodox hell. In fact, the anguish and regret of the suicide in the midst of an inescapable, self-evoked tragedy, is more graphic in its crushing logic than all the lurid hells pictured in the litanies of early orthodox Christendom. Suffering is a rate of vibration, and the swifter the rate the keener and more consummate is the suffering. This leads to the further realization, that as the vibrations of the mind must be of an incomparably higher rate than those of the body, the sufferings of the mind must involve agonies of which mere physical pains can give us no adequate conception. It was this realization that inspired Hamlet's soliloquy on suicide, and made him endure present troubles rather than to fly to others of which he knew nothing.

And finally, as a last appeal to the individual who contemplates suicide, should he not consider the obligations under which, as a moral being, he stands to the achievements of art, science, and literature of his age. Should he not see to it that the "footprints on the sands of time" he leaves behind him are those of an explorer in search of new glorious achievements for the human spirit, rather than the furtive steps of a sneaking coward, trying to find a hiding-place wherein to escape from the duties, obligations, and service he owes his people and his traditions. In place of adding a glimpse of light, or a push of energy to further the advancement of this great, struggling, seeking caravan of humanity, the suicide adds to his trials distrust, cowardice, and contempt of life. From every point of view suicide is an assault on manhood, a blot on civilization, and an incalculable misfortune to the suicide himself.

## PER-AO LIVES FOR EVER

CAPTAIN WALDEMAR BRUNKE

Work, my brother, this — your day —  
 Per-ao needs your labor.  
 Rock may crumble into clay;  
 Lands may rise and wash away;  
 Khem may live and Khem may die —  
 Per-ao needs your labor.

**W**HEN the wind of dawn strummed melodious chords on the harp of Nature on top of Khnum-Khuf's palace on the Plain of Gizeh, young Sepes, first-born of the Pharaoh of Egypt, threw back his cotton coverlet, and jumped from his high, lion-bodied bed down to the mosaic floor. He ran nimbly to the spouting fountain in the center of the vast chamber. He was as perfectly proportioned as a brown *efreet* of the Nile. He glowed with health as he reveled in the cool shower. After a thorough rub-down with a rough linen towel, he anointed himself with the seven sacred oils from the alabaster jars which stood on an engraved stone shelf against the wall, above his cedar-wood and ivory dresser. Swiftly he donned a short blue tunic that had the golden Suten-bity hieroglyphs of royalty embroidered across the breast. He chose a plain broad leather belt that had sheaths attached to it. From a miscellaneous assortment of arms and tools he took a copper dagger, a light boomerang, and a fire-making drill, but instead of taking a bow and arrows,

he chose a reed flute. Whistling softly he put a plain gold band on his head and stepped into sandals of woven grass. He would go far this day. A long trip might drive the restlessness from his heart, a restlessness which prevented him from thinking clearly.

Three people saw him leave the palace and walk swiftly toward the stone pier on the bank of the Nile, where ships and boats were moored. Neither of the three was aware of the presence of the other two. All three hurried away, bent upon following Sepes, yet each with an entirely different purpose in mind.

Sepes unfastened the rope of a light reed canoe, and entered it with a running start. With a few deft strokes of his paddle he sent the tiny craft flying across the river toward the mouth of a palm-fringed lagoon.

When he reached this inlet, he followed the shore-line just clear of the tall reeds. His gaze was fixed on the ancient temple ruins in the distant jungle — that anyone might be following him, never entered his mind.

When he reached the end of this lagoon of mimosa, sycamore, and willows, he stopped to consider which way to go. He decided that it didn't matter, so long as he put the miles behind him. In physical exhaustion he hoped to find the necessary peace of mind to solve his problems. He paddled up a winding stream.

His father, Khnum-Khuf, had told him a week ago that it was time he found a wife and settled down. Sepes was fifteen, which meant in Egypt that he had reached manhood. It was the custom of the land to marry young, so that the children should grow up under the protection of the parents. He had another choice. If he didn't want to establish a household of his own, he could become a priest of Amen Ra. That would be the easiest way of the two! In that case his brother would be the next Pharaoh. To become Divine Ruler of Egypt, a prince had to pass through an initiation in the Per-ao, the Great House (one of the names of the Great Pyramid), then be the servant of the Brotherhood of Light until he could don the uraeus and know what was good for Egypt's two kingdoms.

He looked back to the Per-ao which loomed between the treetops. His stroke slowed as indecision swayed him. Initiation, he had been told, was mortal hard. Many failed to pass. And if there was no prince with a powerful enough mind to become Sekhem, then a great commoner would take his place. On the other hand, as Heri-Aata, High Priest of

Amen Ra, one could drift pleasantly through life — be a figure-head at the festivals, while the lesser priests bore the burden of keeping up the prestige of the temple. . . .

Ashore, he heard the roar of an angry lion. "Let him roar!"

An adept of the Per-ao was above the level of the people. They called him 'Sekhem,' the Shrine of Divine Power. And Master! And there was one who was never seen, the Sekhem Ur Sekhemu. . . . They said he was one of those divine beings who kept the dark powers from exterminating mankind on Earth.

That lion made altogether too much noise!

Sepes swerved the canoe into an opening in the reeds. Shortly he saw what the great cat was roaring about: a crocodile had him by the tuft on the end of his tail and was pulling him, inch by inch, towards the water. Sepes drove his canoe up on the mud; with a bound he was on dry land.

Utterly devoid of fear Sepes walked toward the struggling beasts. He looked at them a moment, then took his boomerang and tapped the crocodile lightly on the nose. "Be off to your mud, Dragon without Wings!" he ordered; and when the crocodile meekly obeyed, Sepes turned to the furious lion who was getting ready to spring. "Back to your jungle, Master of the Big Head!" he said in an even voice. "You were foolish to let a crocodile catch you napping."

The lion relaxed. He yawned. With a grumble he lay down and began to lick his wounds.

"If you will keep quiet you can stay," Sepes told him, and seated himself on a huge sycamore-root close to him. "This is a quiet, restful spot." He pulled the lion's mane. "Quit bemoaning the consequences of being unwary; I want to think." The lion yawned once more, put his head on his paws, and stared at him unblinkingly with his golden eyes.

Soundlessly the cedar skiff of Princess Nefert-Sat-Sneferu nosed through the reeds and came to a stop beside the canoe. She watched the tableau: Sepes lost in thought, pulling idly on the mane of the lion. Behind them, the crafty face of Ra-hotep, priest of Amen Ra, watching through the bushes.

Princess Nefert was the most beautiful maiden of marriageable age in all Egypt, and she knew it. The one rival she feared was her cousin, Meri-ankh. That young lady was merely passably good-looking but she had a mind as brilliant as the noonday sun gleaming on the white

walls of Memphis. And besides Meri-ankh, Nefert was afraid of the cunning Ra-hotep. . . . Ah! If only that man in the bushes were the future Pharaoh instead of this dull young prince who cared more for the affection of a beast, such as that lion, than for the love of a beautiful girl like herself. . . . But win Sepes she must, if she wanted to realize her ambition of becoming Queen of Egypt. She took up her lute and began to sing seductively.

“Follow your heart’s desire, my beloved!  
Listen to love’s sweet plea on my lute—”

The lion growled and came to his feet, facing her, his tail twitching and his haunches set to spring.

Sepes glanced up. “Didn’t I tell you to be still, Rash One?” he chided the lion. As the great beast relaxed again, Sepes turned to the girl. “What brings you here, Royal Cousin?” he asked with grudging courtesy. “I would advise you to sing no more; the lion might object to it, and even my power over the beasts of prey has its limits.”

Princess Nefert smiled winsomely. “Is my song then so distasteful to you? Have I taken so much pains to array myself in finest byssus and my best girdle and necklace that I should find favor in your eyes, only to be asked, ‘What brings you here?’ I am a royal princess!” She drew herself to her full height and posed like a wood-nymph. “You, Sepes, soon must choose a wife. . . . Look at me, Sepes! Am I not beautiful?”

“You are,” he assented in a matter-of-fact way that bordered on impatience. “So are the dunes behind the pyramids at sunset, and the dawn reflecting the Temples of Mena and Senti in the Nile. I heard my royal father ask my mother Ra-mert if it would be wise to build more granaries against a famine. . . . What would your answer have been, Nefert?”

“What a silly question!” she replied. “What should *I* know about that? A woman is expected to be a glowing jewel in her husband’s house. Ask me about the new dance, the best cosmetics, and where to buy the finest cloth, and I will answer you. What should I care about a famine? The people will live somehow!”

“My tutor told me that brotherhood was once the supreme law in Egypt,” said Sepes thoughtfully, as if weighing her. “The Senui Hetchet, the White Brothers, were the chiefs of the people before the heav-

ens fell and the great waters washed the foot of the pyramids the second time. . . . Your skin is beautiful Nefert, and your form as perfect as a statue of Merit, Goddess of Love — but your heart is as cold as if you were indeed of marble. Egypt needs hearts that burn with love like the sun!”

The lion arose, looked toward the bushes and growled. Ra-hotep, eager not to lose a word, had come out of his hiding-place. Now that the priest saw himself discovered, he smoothed his yellow and white tunic and strutted boldly forward, swinging the Ankh-headed staff of his rank. The lion gave him a look of aversion, then walked majestically off and merged with the trees.

“Well spoken, Prince Sepes!” Ra-hotep bowed before the royal pair. “Egypt needs great hearts to spread the power of Amen-Ra far and wide, so that the people may live bountifully in the reflexion of His glory. The temple of Amen-Ra wants a new High Priest. . . . Why should a promising young prince like yourself bury himself for years in the gloomy passages of the Per-ao to learn a lot of antiquated superstition? If you become the Lord of *our* Temple you can have all the earthly pleasures that make life worth living.”

“Superstition indeed!” Sepes frowned. “And you a priest, Ra-hotep? Would you dare to repeat what you said before one of the Brotherhood? I wonder! To you the passages of the Great House would surely be gloomy. You and all your companion-priests have lost the golden thread that holds mankind to the One of Whom your new god is only one of countless aspects. . . . Under your manipulations the Nameless Hidden Divinity has become a local god — the means of giving you and your kind earthly wealth and power. Take care that your cupidity does not destroy you! I am young and have much to learn — yet I know that it is well to listen to the inner voice! Your offer finds no favor in my thoughts.”

Sepes, lost in a brown study, drew two hieroglyphs in the sand — a circle with three rays streaming from it, and a tablet with a tied knot in the middle of it. The priest glanced from the symbol to the prince, consternation on his features. He threw his arm over his eyes as if to ward off a blow. Swiftly he backed away, then turned and ran into the jungle as if possessed.

Princess Nefert made a step toward Sepes to avail herself of the opportunity to talk with him undisturbed, but a tall ascetic approached

them leisurely. He was clad in a simple white tunic and wore a broad gold band with a uraeus on his forehead. Princess Nefert cowered, terror written in her eyes. She ran to her skiff and paddled hurriedly away. That newcomer belonged to the White Brotherhood!

Sepes arose when the ascetic halted before him. "In peace, Lord Antef!" he smiled. "I came here to be alone. It seems the place is popular. You are welcome, Sekhem of the Per-ao!"

"What is the meaning of your symbol, Prince Sepes?" Antef inquired, watching the expression of the other's face.

"Khu-fu, Established Divine Power," Sepes answered, unaware that the symbol written by his hand might have a hidden meaning.

"Why did you write it in the sand?"

Sepes looked at him in astonishment. "I had nothing in mind," he replied. "But —"

"Go to your mother, Queen Ra-mert," suggested Antef. "Ask her the question that will come to your mind. Then follow her advice." He bowed and walked on.

Sepes returned to the royal palace, pondering over what Antef had told him. When he flung open the carved cedar door to the queen's chamber, his mother Queen Ra-mert and her ladies were engaged in conversation with an ambassador and his retinue from the Land of Punt. She was sitting on a dais. Sepes waited until she was at liberty, then approached her.

Queen Ra-mert studied her son with eyes of wisdom. "You look troubled, Sepes," she remarked. "Is there anything you wish to tell me?"

"The Lord Antef suggested that I should ask you the question that would come to me," he replied. "While I spoke to Ra-hotep, the priest, this morning, I had a vague impression that something is wrong with Egypt, something that is pulling it down. I wanted to ask you about that, but the question that persists in my mind is: "Why has no king of Egypt ever called himself Sa Asar, the Son of Osiris?"

Queen Ra-mert gazed at her son strangely, then sighed. "No king, nor commoner, would *dare*," she said. "And that is the reason behind the gradual collapse of this ancient land: it has lost contact with what Osiris stands for — the Nameless, Who embraces all existing things in one great Brotherhood of All."

She motioned to the Lord of Ceremonies that the newly-arrived for-



cign visitors must wait, and proceeded: "Look at all those hieroglyphs on the wall. . . . They are symbols which tell the story of our existence on earth. It is a constant battle between the powers of Light and Darkness — Cycles of Day and Night struggling for supremacy. Growth and Decay, Good and Evil, are ever writing the pages of the Book of Life and Death, which records the progress of our evolution — an eternal mill that revolves by the power of Cause and Effect.

"Because Egypt's priesthood has ventured on the path of darkness, and, because the people hail their dogma of a personal deity with acclaim, this glorious Land of Per-ao will degenerate. Her great souls will withdraw from Egypt to take up their work among younger nations elsewhere.

"When the pyramids were built, not only as monuments to the Ancient Wisdom, but also to preserve the seed of man and beast and plant when Nature should sweep the dross from this land with a deluge, Osiris was revered as Ast-en, He Whose Throne stands supreme of All — the enthroned That, the Nameless. Two aspects of the Nameless, Asar and Tehuti, were then worshiped as the Divinities of Bringing into Being.

"After the deluge Egypt flourished once more for many thousands of years, but never again did it reach the heights on which it once had stood. Tmu and Tanen replaced Asar and Tehuti. And when another deluge wet the foot of the pyramids and brought in a new cycle of precession of the sun, Asar became Ausares the Lord of Amenta, and Tehuti was the Recorder of Life and Death.

"Amen Ra and the Circle of Gods of Anu more and more personify the lost divinities of Old Egypt. Only the Brethren of the Per-ao are now instructed in the Wisdom of the Ancients and know what Asar — Osiris — once stood for.

"You *may* call yourself the child of Amen, but I know you will not — he is only a man-made god. You are indeed the son of Ast-en, the Nameless, but before you become so highly evolved that you can guide the hierarchy of a star like our Earth, be content to call yourself the Son of the Sun. The Sun is a mighty divinity but, even so, only an insignificant cog in the great Wheel of the All. Be satisfied, therefore, with the name of Golden Horus when you return from your initiation into the White Brotherhood. Your personal name you have already written this morning, though you do not know it.

"I have the power to see beyond ordinary vision. I was with you

on the banks of the lagoon this morning. . . . It is my wish that you go to the Per-ao today and become an Initiate of the White Brotherhood. Your father has gone on an expedition to find new building-material; if he were present he would give assent to my request. There is the Lady Meri-ankh. Do you wish me to give her a message, my son, before you take your departure?"

Sepes beheld Meri-ankh speaking to a foreign dignitary. She appeared to radiate spiritual power. Beautiful she seemed to him with a beauty that came from within.

"Tell the Lady Meri-ankh that I require her assistance against the day when I shall rule Egypt," he said. "The Princess Nefert would make a splendid ornament for a royal court, but her vision does not penetrate outside of a circle that revolves around herself. In peace, Mother; I go!"

The Lord Antef greeted Sepes, as the young prince climbed up the steps to the pyramid-entrance: "Hail Sepes! What do you seek at the door of That, which is Hidden?"

"I seek Light and Truth! I seek spiritual power that I may be able to guide my people wisely! I would ask admission to the White Brotherhood to help keep alive the Ancient Wisdom."

Antef smiled and his eyes shone with spiritual light and kindness. "Follow me, Great One to Be!" he said gently. "Great One who has returned! Your spirit's flight shall show you that which links the life-spark of an atom to the immeasurable power of the Universe of Universes — while you meet each aspect of the Nameless All. You shall see the Hierarchs of Hierarchies, even to the star Saau where Isis governs the Flames of Being, and to Aahu the Moon, whence you came here. . . . And while your spirit seeks its source, Khnum-khuf shall give way to Khu-fu — the Source of Divine Power make room for Established Divine Power, because your father's work is done for this incarnation."

Sepes was puzzled about Antef's last sentence; somehow it struck a familiar chord in his memory which eluded him. But the time for asking questions was past. He was in the realms of a silence that spoke to him.

Sepes followed the guiding hand of Antef through utter darkness. A tremendous weight seemed to rest on his mind, as if the vast bulk of the Pyramid were pressing down on him. A resonant voice demanded:

“Who seeks to pass this gate?” He answered mechanically: “A soul seeking the Throne of Light,” and found himself alone in a chamber illumined by rose-colored light.

Seven chambers he passed through, opened to him one by one; three were light, four dark. In them he gained an understanding of the different principles which made up his being. Then he was in a dark passage again.

“Who approaches the gate of the Chamber of New Birth?” another deep voice demanded.

“A wanderer on the Road of Past, Present, and Future, going where Time and Space are only names,” answered Sepes. “I am one who seeks the Lost Eye of Destiny. Universal Brotherhood is my name; O Lord of Two Scepters, who doth mete out justice by the Law of Cause and Effect.”

“Pass, Wanderer of Eternity! Eternity opens its door!”

Sepes entered a good-sized chamber. It was bright as day, though he saw no lamp. On a stairway in the center stood an empty sarcophagus. Sepes ascended the stairs. The illumination faded. The room became dark. A voice commanded: “Enter your bed and see yourself! Then follow your spirit to the Realms of Light and learn Wisdom from the Divine Ones, who guided you here.”

Heavy silence reigned. In the blackness Sepes saw dancing globes of light which he knew to be phantoms of the change from light to darkness. He felt a cold chill of utter isolation creeping into his heart. He lay down in the sarcophagus, his mind picturing to him a fathomless abyss in which churned whirlpools of fire. He felt himself drawn into one of these vortices. His brain whirled. A globe of light approached at tremendous speed; it came to a stop, and became a screen of fleeting pictures.

Sepes followed these pictures from the dawn of human life on earth, to the present. He saw ethereal giant-growths shrink with the size of the earth into less gigantic beings, which were more material, but still boneless. Then came ape-like creatures of colossal stature, which gradually assumed compact smaller form though still gigantic. They separated into man and woman. Their color was red and blue. With a cataclysm of water and fire they disappeared and golden-colored, brown and black races replaced them. These, too, and their continent were wiped off the earth to give room to the Fifth Race, which sprang

from them. Part of this, the Aryan race, ultimately settled in Egypt and flourished there as a nation. Hundreds and thousands of years they lived in harmony on the banks of the Nile. Then the forces of evil gained a new foothold in the land. The reigning king was powerless to keep his people from following the new gods. This king was his father Khnum-Khuf, who planned the pyramids.

Then Sepes saw his own likeness as a new king. He was Khu-fu, Established Power, the ruler who built the three pyramids and the network of passages beneath them with the help of his two brothers, Kha-f-ra and Men-kau-ra.

Sepes watched the construction of the mighty monuments on the screen. The enormous blocks of stone in the quarries stood on metal sheets of iridescent color. Little winged disks that hummed lifted these stones high and a great winged disk on the place of erection shot streamers of radiance toward them and guided them with magnetic attraction to the bed which they were to occupy. The magnetic force used was that same twofold cosmic energy which is at the Poles of the Earth, keeping the Earth revolving in its orbit and suspended in the aether — the force which counteracts gravity and fosters gravity.

The work progressed with astonishing rapidity. When the three pyramids were finished and water-tight, Khu-fu and a number of chosen men and women entered them with all their belongings. Then raging billows closed over the scene long enough to destroy everything outside on the land.

When the waters had receded, flat-nosed people came from the south and settled on the banks of the Nile. They made room for a white people with long straight noses. Five times in all a different type of people seized the reins of government. And always his father and his three sons were there to guide them when they needed help.

A second deluge came. When it was over the present, light-brown Egyptians overran the two lands. These were men of blood, wielding weapons of iron and bronze. They called themselves Blacksmiths after their supreme deity, Ptah. When they attacked the White Brotherhood of the Per-ao, they were stricken with palsy. Filled with terror they sued for peace and made one of the Sekhems their king. They adopted some of the old Wisdom-Religion. But the old order of things had departed from the land. The Blacksmiths belonged to a cycle of darkness — they reveled in bloodshed.

The scene shifted to the Upper Nile, showing Khnum-Khuf's ship stranded on a reef and the body of the Pharaoh floating lifeless down the river. Then the screen became a blank.

The next picture took shape. Sepes saw his father, Khnum-Khuf, appearing on the screen. The Pharaoh spoke:

"Salutation my son, from your father who has passed on! You are now the Pharaoh Khu-fu, the divine ruler of the Two Lands of Khem. Always Khu-fu, Established Power, followed Khnum-Khuf, Source of Power, executing the plans made by his predecessors. I am giving you my plans now. The casing-stones of the pyramids were crumbling away. I tore them down. It is for you to build them up. Harken to my counsel.

"You have seen how you once built the pyramids in the long ago. The people over whom you will rule cannot be trusted with white magic, since the priests of the temples would corrupt it with sorcery. Therefore it is forbidden to use magnetic energy when you give the pyramids a new outer coating of limestone. I have invented a cradle for you to lift stone. Use it! The work will be slow — a lesson to you in patience. Thousands of years from now, when you follow me once more as the head of the White Brotherhood, building up what I plan, it will be permitted to use the hidden force again, because it can do no harm.

"Build your house on Truth, my son. Remember that when you are the Per-ao, the Great House, the people will look to you for guidance. . . . Begin with the impersonal love which guides you, that you do not fall from your high estate. For a period your will is the will of the gods. You become to a certain degree the maker of things. Remember then that the Cement of the Universe is Love. In your right eye shines the Sun, in your left the Moon, and around you the stars. Let the uraeus on your forehead keep you in the White Road, so that the Immortal Three may in health progress with the four who bind you to earth.

"I go. My blessings are on you and Egypt. Release the atoms of my body with fire according to our ancient law. Tarry not! Go hence when you awaken; you can become a Sekhem when you awaken! There are those who would usurp your place. Farewell!"

Sepes awoke with the sun's rays shooting from mirrors into his eyes. He was in the House of Light on the Throne of Truth. A venerable man with silvery hair stood regarding him anxiously, with mystic eyes

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

of the Jewels of Esoteric Wisdom begun in H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*, the further unveiling and more general diffusion of the teachings made possible by *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, are as much a part of this New Age as sunrise is of morning.