

ANCIENT WISDOM

A monthly journal devoted to teaching theosophical and occult truths

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."—Hamlet

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TODAY'S MATERIALISM

BY MARC EDMUND JONES, PH. D.

Materialism affirms that matter or physical substance, with its activities and its highly complex relations, is entirely responsible for the universe and the infinite content of space, including mind and all the manifestations of thought and imagination, together with all the everyday evidences of spirit and the higher values in existence. Thus what confronts Theosophical ideas is far more than a silly or illogical denial of intangible or invisible realities. Rather, these are accepted fully, if with a curiously distorted view.

Today's competent materialists in the fields of the physical sciences are thoroughly aware of the impermanence of atoms, and of the protean nature of even the most fixed actualities of human experience. Man, as a personality or in his cultural distinctions, is no longer considered in isolation from his total world, biologically, economically or ethically. Social science sees him as an entity which in no respect exists of and for itself alone. Psychosomatic medicine views his body as little more than an instrument for the manifestation of his consciousness. However, all the elaborate theorizing about the inherited and conditioning factors entering into each individual complex is still based on the acceptance of this world of time and space as the beginning and end of all that is, i.e., the approach is materialistic.

But the enemy here, as in so many areas of life, has adopted much for which occultism has fought and suffered, with blood and tears, to bring to a general acceptance, merely reshaping it to his limitations of perspective. As the old saying goes, the devil can be very adroit when it comes to quoting scripture.

Theosophy was launched primarily to combat this very development, all too accurately foreseen in 1851. But, it may be argued, if so many essentially Theosophical ideas have come into the structure of today's highly materialistic thinking, is that not a gain? It is true to a considerable degree, of course, in furthering a modern presentation of the eternal principles. There is far more substance of thought on which to build than in the days when *Isis Unveiled* was written.

On the whole the losses tragically overbalance the gains because the average person is so little able to recognize and deal with the subtleties of the

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IS REINCARNATION A FACT?

BY T. H. REDFERN

(Editor's Foreword: ANCIENT WISDOM seldom reprints articles which have appeared in other publications. It is not a digest. Its readers expect and pay for original material and with rare exceptions this is what they receive in each issue. Very occasionally, and where there appears to be an unusually good reason for departure from regular policy, such an exception may be made, as in the present instance. This article, which will be published in several instalments, reproduces (with slight changes to adapt it to American readers) a lecture delivered by Mr. Redfern, Editor of EIRENICON, to Peace Lodge of the Theosophical Society, Hyde, Cheshire, England. It was printed in EIRENICON and came to the attention of the Editor of ANCIENT WISDOM, who recognized it as one of the most forthright and logical presentations of the reasons in favor of the theory of Reincarnation to have been published in recent years. As few American readers are likely to have seen it, Mr. Redfern has kindly given permission for its reproduction in ANCIENT WISDOM. It will well repay careful study.)

Some very interesting conclusions about religious beliefs in this country have been published in a book on *English Life and Leisure* by Mr. B. Seebohn Rowntree and Mr. G. R. Lavers. Their work is based upon the modern technique of forming judgments by sampling the opinions and habits of a sufficient cross-section of the population, and on 1,000 personal interviews with men and women who explained the assumptions and practices on which their way of living is founded. These confirm conclusions already reached by other investigators on the need for more widespread knowledge on which to base a satisfactory art of living, in view of the continued decline of orthodox Christianity.

Mr. Rowntree made an important social study in York about 1900 and a supplementary comparison in 1935. From these he is able to draw the conclusion that church attendance has fallen from 35½% of the population at the turn of the century to 17.7% in 1935 and 13% in 1948. One wonders how many of the 13% go from motives of respectability, and inwardly would sympathize with the little boy who, during a rather long sermon, leaned over to his mother and whispered: "Mummy, will he let us go out if we give him the money now?"

In reviewing the book *The Manchester Guardian* drew particular attention to the following important passages:

"Large numbers of people, certainly the majority of those outside the Churches and very likely a majority of the whole population, have either explicitly, after careful thought, or instinctively, after little or no thought, rejected so much of the Christian story as related in the New Testament that no Church could recognise them as Christians at all."

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ENVIRONMENT, HEREDITY OR SOUL HISTORY

BY CHARLES E. LUNTZ

III

The average normal person does not often come in contact with the abnormal unless he is of the medical profession or in some vocation which brings it under his purview. The nearest he approaches it is usually acquaintance with someone or other who is a trifle "peculiar" or perhaps in his immediate family he may have a relative or two given on occasion to hysterical manifestations that no one can quite explain. But of outright abnormality such as the case books describe, in often repulsive detail, he is happily ignorant.

The present series is concerned with this unpleasant subject only in its relation either to the environment, heredity or soul history with which the series deals. That which is the exceptional, the exaggerated, the freakish, may open a trail of explanation far more quickly than the commonplace and habitual. And psychiatrists assure us that each individual is a little "off" on some point or other. If they are to be believed, none of us is a hundred percent sane. Ninety-nine and nine-tenths perhaps, if we are particularly well balanced, but even then one-tenth of one percent out of focus on something or other. Perhaps we are superstitious—regard thirteen as an unlucky number—or perhaps what might be termed would-be strong-mindedly superstitious and proudly proclaim it to be our *lucky* number. Then we look down our noses at the poor wretch who won't sit down thirteen to table, ignoring the fact that we have just informed the world that we are as superstitious—which means as mentally off-balance—as he is.

Or maybe we regard astrology as a superstition (and as practiced by some astrologers it certainly is). So without knowing a thing in the world about it, without ability to set up a horoscope or even to read the astrological symbols, let alone recognize their meaning, we cursorily dismiss it as "bunk." Mental unbalance again, as is any sort of prejudgment on the say-so of someone else without examination of the facts for ourselves.

True these are very small unbalances—nearly everyone has scores, perhaps hundreds of them. The mote in our neighbor's eye may look bigger than

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INTUITION

We hear a great deal about intuition—especially in The Theosophical Society. Constantly someone will explain, "My intuition tells me . . ." Women, by the way, are popularly supposed to have more intuition than men, a supposition which astrology does not bear out. The presence or absence of intuition in the personality is clearly indicated by the strength or weakness in the natal chart of the fiery signs, the ninth house, the sign Sagittarius and the planet Jupiter, all of which rule this faculty. We may concede, however, that a woman in whom the intuitional factor is shown by the horoscope to be strong is more likely to use and develop it than a man.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to put intuition under the microscope and examine it objectively. It does not lend itself to that kind of analysis, being by its very nature a subjective thing. But Theosophy comes as close to such analysis as the elusive constitution of the faculty permits. It goes so far as to declare that intuition, like higher mind, lower mind and emotion, works through a vehicle or body which is far more subtle than these three principles, rarefied though they be. This intuitional body has a name in occultism—several of them, in fact. It is called in the Sanskrit, *Buddhi*, the Bliss body. Western Theosophists often term it the vehicle of the Christ Consciousness. It is the expression of perfect and unselfish love. It is the body of Wisdom not based on experience but on inherent Divine knowledge. It is in no way dependent on the reasoning mind. It "beholdeth the end of a thing at its commencement."

But this Buddhic principle is, in average man, not much more than a germ. Even in those of advanced spirituality it is not as yet anything resembling a body. It might be thought of as an embryo in course of gestation, if physical terms may be employed to represent something so far removed from the physical. It is being constructed a few atoms at a time in each one of us as life succeeds life, but its completion lies aeons in the future when man shall have achieved godlike stature and even his highest present vehicle, the Causal body, residence of the Ego,

will pass away and render up its fruits to the Eternal Monad. It is, in the words of Paul, "a Building from God, a House not made by hands, aeonian, in the Heavens."

The most intuitive among us, therefore, is not even a pale shadow of what all of us are destined ages hence to become. It is a matter of degree. But at our stage those who have perhaps developed at least a small carpet of these atoms of intuition still seem amazingly intuitive to those who have evolved virtually none or only a thin strand. And the Theosophist is or should be busily engaged in working on this carpet or mat, if he is so fortunate as to have woven that much of *Buddhi* into his composition, and trying to add at least a few more strands to it every year.

How does one go about this?

First let it be said that what many people declare to be intuition is nothing of the kind, but mere guesswork or astral impulse. Always this is the case if the astrological factors referred to above are missing. True intuition does not come from memories of physical experience oft-repeated, though these may lead up to it as we shall see further on. But intuition, in H. P. Blavatsky's fine phrase, should always be justifiable at the bar of reason. It begins, in fact, where the reasoning, the logical mind is forced to halt because it can go no further. Yet, rarely, it may come unbidden, without the earlier spadework of the mind.

If you would have intuition, first cultivate reason. It seldom appears without it or, if unwontedly it should, then reason has been pushed to its outer limits in past lives. Nature has no cut-rate bargains. She exacts the full price from everyone alike for her treasures of the soul. If to some she seems to allow a discount, it is a seeming only. They paid in advance long ago for the spiritual merchandise that is now being delivered to them. Thomas Edison, a firm believer in intuitions, which he constantly received and used, exemplified to the full the necessity for first exploiting reason and logic, physical research and experiment to their utmost reaches before intuition comes into play.

How may one determine if the flash received in the brain that this or that course of action is the right one, is true intuition or an astral imitation? It has been stated by those who should know because their own developed intuitions have brought them to greatness, that if, not being acted upon, the "flash" disappears, it is specious. But if it becomes more than a flash, settles down and proceeds to besiege the individual until he feels a positive compulsion to take the action it counsels, it is—subject to one condition—a true intuition.

This condition is that the action to be taken is free of harmfulness either to oneself or to others. Else it is no in-

tuition but that fearful thing, an obsession. It is not hard to determine. Every act of life can pass that test. Hitler, for instance, a curious wrong way mystic, claimed that his actions were based on a marvellous intuition which his horoscope failed to show that he in any degree possessed. He mistook obsession, which is inverted intuition, for the real thing. It led him to ruin and death. The simple test—is it harmful to myself or others?—and the all-too-apparent answer that it meant the destruction of millions of others—would have saved him had it been applied.

But those who follow their intuitions and whose intuitions lead them aright, well know that aside from tests the genuine thing carries its own credential within it. It is a certain conviction or assurance that the non-intuitive never experience and at which the materialist would scoff, that proclaims the validity of the inner vision in a way that cannot be doubted. It is something that eludes the words one would use to describe it—something that neither words nor logic will contain. Those who deny it do not have it and cannot—in this incarnation—have it. They may be past masters of the psychological science of the day and may fuss around learnedly, attributing the "curious" faculty to this, that or the other brain function—or perhaps, even, brain disturbance—but they will never explain it away. Never explain, either, the heights of achievement, so far above their own, to which it has in many cases lifted those who possessed it.

Many who became Theosophists knew by intuition, but certainly not by reason, long before Theosophy came to them, that somewhere in the world there existed an answer to the riddle of life. Knew that if they searched persistently they would find it. This writer was one of them and the intuition that told him so dated back to early childhood. It took a long time to actualize itself and it did so in a strange way and with several false starts and obscure clues en route. But that is the fashion of the inner sight. "The spirit bloweth whithersoever it listeth," declared One who had it in its fulness.

Hold fast to your spiritual perceptions, but make them prove themselves "at the bar of reason." "Believe not every spirit," adjured the apostle, "but prove the spirits whether they are from God." The word he used in the Greek was *pneumati*, crudely translated "spirit" but meaning in reality "spiritual force," the nearest approach the language of the time provided for our modern word "intuition." No such word appears in the Bible, unless some of the many recent modernizations have introduced it.

Prove your intuitions and if, being proved, they ring true, follow where they lead . . . for they are the voice of your own inner God telling you of the way in which you should go.

TAKING THINGS FOR GRANTED

Animals and very young children take everything for granted. What is here is here—has always been here so far as they are concerned. It does not occur to them to ask why or how.

This applies not only to the works of nature but to the works of man. A horse is neither curious about its own structure nor about the manufacture of the saddle it bears. An infant with its eyes open observes a multitude of things around it, some of which it finds attractive, others repulsive—but until it reaches the age of speech and understanding it has no idea how those things got there, and no wish to know.

Why do we labor these obvious and rather puerile truths? Because there are human beings, mature, intellectual along some lines, clever, capable of reasoning in most matters, who take the universe for granted and life for granted and their presence here for granted, just as the horse takes its saddle and its stall and its oats for granted, and the baby takes its bottle and its crib and its playthings for granted.

We refer, of course, to those wise materialists who profess to search everywhere in space for an Intelligence that is running things—and never find it. They search with much greater eagerness through the columns of the newspapers for items about someone killed by an accident either on his way to church or coming from church or while in church. This, of course, proves that there can't be a God or he would never treat his faithful servants so shabbily. They advance the undeniable fact that there are earthquakes, tornadoes and other cataclysms of nature which take many lives, as evidence that nature is a blind force and neither knows nor cares what she is doing. The beneficences in the natural order are taken for granted. They, like the seeming malevolences, are all "part of natural law."

To which we may remark in the words of Patience Worth, "There be ne'er law without lawgiver."

These people commit the unpardonable sin for anyone who prides himself on his logical mind (as they do) of judging only by what they can see. To them the *appearance* is everything. Things *are* what they seem and if there *seems* not to be any Directive Intelligence but everything *seems* to be running itself, then there is no Directive Intelligence and things *are* running themselves. Superficial to the point of inanity. This crowd, considered collectively, may travel in airplanes today but they or their intellectual blood brothers were denying a few generations ago that such a thing as flight was or ever would be possible for man. Why? Because it looked impossible, *seemed* impossible. They are the figurative reincarnations of those who laughed at the notion that anyone could talk at a distance over a piece of wire. Their

more remote ancestors expressed their disapproval of anything that worked when it *seemed* that it couldn't by shouting "Witch!" or "the Devil!" and looking around for the faggots and a torch. True, the modern worshippers of appearances would become furiously angry at being likened to the skeptics and superstitious of long ago, but what is the difference? The latter judged by appearances only and so do the former. Their minds run in the same channels—only the details are different.

To look even superficially at the breath-taking natural order and deny that Intelligence had or has anything to do with it is surely no less appallingly unreasonable than to swallow some of the sorry schemes of salvation cooked up by quarrelling divines a thousand or more years ago. The deniers wax very merry at the expense of these believers, and the latter exhaust their vocabulary denouncing those who ridicule them. The Theosophist sees little difference between their mental processes. One set believes too little that is so—the other set believes too much that is *not* so. Same type of mind, only in reverse gear.

The over-all reasons for Manifestation, its grand Cause, its Methods and Systems and the Method and System by which first mineral, then plant, subsequently animal and finally human are brought to perfection in their respective kingdoms are true as taught in Theosophy and must be true because, in their entirety, they are the only explanations that *can* be true. They are the only explanations that hang together and make sense. The reasoning human mind—and note we say *reasoning*—refuses all other explanations because they do *not* hang together and make sense.

The atheist comes back with his perennial foolish question—the same question, by the way, as the child when first he starts to think, and just as childish—"Who made God?" He is easily routed by the simple inquiry, "Who made matter? Who made that eternal energy or substance of which you are so fond and which you insist has in some form or other always existed? If it is possible, as you insist, for this stuff of which worlds are constructed always to have had being, never to have been created, then it is a thousand, a million times more possible for Intelligence in nature, which you deny, to be uncreate—to have always existed. Backward or forward, it is always there—it never disappears.

Thus the atheists prove the case for the Deists. "How did God appear?" No one (except, perhaps, a Christian Scientist) can deny the fact that matter is here and either as matter or energy must always have been here. Yet the function of matter is obviously to serve as a vehicle for mind. The thesis that matter somehow generates or evolves mind is an assertion without a shred of evidence to back it. Mind *needs* matter, on this plane at

least, to serve as its instrument of expression. It organizes matter. It uses matter. It is superior to matter. To say that the instrument, the thing that is organized and used, is eternal and that which organizes and uses it is a product of its servant is not less illogical than are some of the wondrous superstitions dreamed up in the name of religion of which the anti-religionists make so much fun. They should not laugh too loud. They take just as much for granted, though in a different way, as the fanatics who think that God has no use for any faith but their own.

Theosophists who know Theosophy take nothing for granted and accept nothing just because it is told them with an air of authority. They must and should think all assertions through for themselves. Yet there are Theosophists who don't know Theosophy so well, who—perhaps because of early indoctrination—crave authority. But no one is willing to oblige them. Every responsible theosophical leader from Blavatsky down has repudiated infallibility. Their words are entitled to respect. They were great people with powers beyond those who look to them for guidance. They have been proved right in many things. But they were capable of error and said so. How ridiculous then to treat their every utterance as though it were a direct revelation from on High! You and you alone are your own final authority, and we urge every reader of this publication, and particularly those who are figuratively cutting their occult teeth, to challenge everything they hear or read along esoteric lines. Krishnamurti, like the Buddha, made that the keynote of his world message. "Challenge! Challenge! Challenge even what I say. Challenge especially what I say. If you can't take it—if it doesn't make sense to you—reject it. If it does—well it is still up to you what you do with it."

That is one of the things about Theosophy that has always appealed most strongly to us. That is the reason we have always resisted attempts to force Theosophy into the narrow groove of "What Blavatsky said" or even "What the Masters said." The Masters veiled a great deal of the truth and said so. Their messages were not always correctly relayed by the disciple to whom they were entrusted. They said that, too. They are sometimes couched in language extremely difficult to understand—perhaps for that very reason.

This is not an attitude which will appeal to the comfortably minded who want all their beliefs to be thought out for them by someone else—who want everything, even salvation, to be cut and dried.

But who wants to be comfortably minded at the expense of truth? And having the Truth brings a peace of mind beside which the "comfortableness" of authoritative inventions is a tawdry imitation.

THE SECRET DOCTRINE SIMPLY EXPLAINED

Divine Sonnet*

BY CHARLES E. LUNTZ

IV:3 (b) Then the Three, the One, the Four, the One, the Five—the Twice Seven, the Sum Total.

At first sight this looks something like a set of football signals and one is prepared for a lengthy, mysterious and involved decoding. Quite nonchalantly, however, H.P.B. informs us that it merely means 31415, the sum of which when added totals fourteen (twice seven).

She follows with the interesting revelation that this—the 31415—is “the numerical Hierarchy of the Dhyan Chohans of various orders,” the Dhyan Chohans being Divine Intelligences charged with supervision of the Cosmos. In a footnote she tells us that an American Cabalist has now discovered the same number for the Elohim. The Elohim, mistranslated “God” in Genesis are the Creative Hierarchies who bring a universe into being. The number 31415 seems meaningless, something snatched out of the air, until Madame Blavatsky reminds us of a fact learned in our Elementary Geometry days that the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter (π , as it is called, symbolized by the Greek letter) is 3.1415. Actually it is 3.141592, which makes it very close to 3.1416 but as that would not add up to 14, an esoteric number absolutely necessary to cover the other part of the symbolism, the fifth and sixth decimal points are ignored. One is reminded of the famous saying of Pythagoras, “God geometrizes.”

We recognize the Christian “Three-in-One” in the words, “Then the Three, the One,” and also the Hindu *Trimurti*. For Theosophy accepts the age-old teaching of the Trinity, and unlike the mystified theologians, who wrap it up in a babble of words, understands exactly what is meant by the term.**

“The Four the One” would be intelligible to advanced students of Theosophy without H.P.B.’s explanation that it refers to “The Four Kumaras (pronounced koo-MAH-ras). According to very ancient occult tradition these are godlike beings from the planet Venus who completed the equivalent of their human evolution ages before ours even started. Millions of years ago they migrated to the planet Earth to superintend its evolution and guide its destinies. This presupposes life on Venus, of course, but not necessarily life as we know it here.

It also may seem a strain on the credulity by those who have no difficulty in believing that three angels sat

down to a meal of roast veal with the patriarch Abraham, or by those who believe that no one either started evolution or superintends it—that it just started all by itself, made its own laws and works them out, although having no intelligence whatever.

Theosophy claims—and no Theosophist need accept the claim unless, after thinking it through he decides it is reasonable—that one of the seven great Paths open to perfected humanity of this or any other planet is the Path of Service to the unperfected humanity of other planets. Not all the offices in this high field of Divine Government are as exalted as those of the Kumaras. One full rank (initiation) above even that of our own Adepts, they are charged with duties connected with the Inner Government of the world beyond the ken of the most advanced Ego in incarnation.

Does it seem strange that Beings of sufficient capacity to undertake so stupendous a task should have had to be “imported” from another planet? Even today—6½ million years later—we show few or no qualifications for a labor of such colossal magnitude. A very few great intellects of the pre-eminent quality possessed by George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin and Abraham Lincoln, flash comet-like across our horizon at rare intervals. Perhaps they are in the early training stages for post-human careers that may in aeons to come fit them for Kumara-like parts in worlds yet unborn.

Madame Blavatsky in her further commentary on this passage is silent as to the meaning of the esoteric *Fourteen*. Earlier (page 135 Adyar Edition) she refers to a “pantheon of mysterious objects—the ‘fourteen precious things’ . . . cannot be given here.” They are explained, she writes, only at the fourth Initiation. Fourteen appears to be a very sacred and significant number in esotericism. There are also, says H.P.B., fourteen worlds, seven subjective and seven objective. This latter statement deals with what Occultism terms the seven globes of our Earth Chain, a fascinating subject to the student with a good background of theosophical knowledge, but too technical to go into here.

The “fourteen” symbology is found in our own Bible, as are most of the other esoteric symbols if one knows how to recognize them. In Numbers XXIX Moses establishes a “holy convocation” to last eight days and on each of the first seven days a number of animals—bullocks, rams and he-goats—were to be offered, up but always, in addition, *fourteen* lambs. The number of the other animals varies but the number of lambs never varies. Always it is fourteen. On the eighth day alone it is cut to seven—perhaps because by that time they are running out of lambs but more probably by reason of a definite occult symbology.

These animal sacrifices are of the highest esoteric significance. Though they were undoubtedly put into practice objectively in the days of the Jewish Temples, they were never intended to be taken literally any more than the preacher intends his congregation to take him literally when he enjoins them to “wash in the blood of the lamb.”

We also hear in II Chronicles XIII of a King of Judah named Abijah who went to war with the King of Israel and defeated him, slaying according to the restrained biblical account, 500,000 men. Quite a feat, without anything to do it with but spears and bows and arrows. What interests us in the present instance is that Abijah married fourteen wives (poor chap!) who presented him with twenty-two sons and sixteen daughters. Occult, of course. Note the highly esoteric 22 and the 16 which is the same in numerology as 7—6 plus 1.

In the first gospel (Matt. I:17) our attention is specifically directed to the fact that “all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon (the Exile) are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.

Does anyone suppose that Matthew or whoever wrote the gospel “according to Matthew” inserted these statistics as a sort of Ripley oddity? These fourteens conveyed something to him, very deep or he would not have wasted valuable papyrus and scarce ink recording them. Enshrined within that number are profound secrets of evolution, of thaumaturgy, and of the ways and workings of the great Hierarchy in whose keeping is the destiny of our world.

(To Be Continued)

MINSTRELSY

A Selection from the Poems
of Patience Worth

Questioning

I cannot say it is well.
I must make question.
If day deals dross, I shall accept
But not without question.
I have given, yea given.
But how!
But in exultation
But in accord with the law,
That of sacrifice.
I cannot accept without question.
Yet within me is a wick,
A taper, separate from the day—
It is mine alone.
I must tend this wick
In the sacred spot apart,
Where I kneel.

*A Sonnet has fourteen lines.

**See ANCIENT WISDOM April 1945 “Theosophy and Orthodox Christianity.”

DO YOU KNOW?—

That Theosophy has an answer for the often asked question, "Why did God start the Universe in the first place when He was already Absolute and Perfect?"

* * * *

That this answer, supplied by the great Esoteric Eastern Religions, is the only possible one, the only logical one, the only satisfying one, and therefore must be true?

* * * *

That the answer is divided into several parts but all based on the same great principle?

* * * *

That the first part is: God, being Love, must by his very nature have beings to love, therefore such beings must come into existence or God would not be fulfilling His own nature?

* * * *

That the second part is: God, being Beauty, must by his very nature express Himself in form, without which Beauty is only an abstract idea incapable of fulfillment?

* * * *

That the third part is: God, being Wisdom, must express that Wisdom in the mighty order of Creation else it, too, can only be an abstract and unfulfilled concept?

* * * *

That the fourth part is: God, being Power, must bring into being Worlds and Living Things through which to manifest that Power or, remaining unused, it would be no more than an unexercised potential?

* * * *

That all other of the Attributes which necessarily must be possessed by the Supreme or He would not be the Supreme, need activity, matter, form and everything which exists, for their expression or they would be as without meaning?

* * * *

That profound meditation on these deepest of Truths opens up understanding of that greatest of all questions—the reason for Cosmic Manifestation?

* * * *

That the only other answers to the problem—both equally unsatisfying—are a lame, "We cannot know," or the equally feeble, "A mystery into which we must not inquire"?

* * * *

That the first of these weak evasions is negated by the magnificent reasons advanced by Occultism and the second by the desire to know, which can only have been implanted into the human heart to encourage the search for a Truth so noble and uplifting?

* * * *

That as with all theosophical concepts in the realm of spiritual inquiry, the conventional "explanations" which do not explain or insult the intelligence of the questioner by their quibbling and sophistry, are put to rout by this

GOD IS NON-SECTARIAN

God is not a Catholic, a Protestant, a Jew, A Buddhist, a Mohammedan—which all admit is true.

Yet sometimes members of a faith take such a lofty perch.

You'd think the Lord would patronize no other than their church.

This situation seems absurd and not a little humorous.

There are so many different sects—religions are so numerous;

And if you want your worship to be heeded by the Lord.

You must be in the right one or you'll surely be ignored.

But God is neither orthodox, exclusive, nor sectarian;

Not Lutheran nor Methodist nor Latitudinarian.

No favoritism does he show to "Faithful" or Dissenter,

For all who do the Heavenly will shall into Heaven enter.

Then join whatever church you wish, or none if you prefer.

It's no one's business but your own—your conscience is your spur.

Of people to be snubbed "up there," the angels have no list—

Not "infidel," iconoclast, nor yet Theosophist.

The Lovingkindness that is God is shared alike by all.

Man, as of yore, is Eden's child; there never was a Fall.

So tightly cling to your beliefs, though others may condemn.

And laugh at those who claim the Lord belongs alone to them.

When we receive, as we often do, a dozen renewals of subscription with kind words for ANCIENT WISDOM and then open up a blast from somebody assuring us that because of our stand on this, that or the other thing they will never—no, *never*—read our miserable publication again, it does bring home the curious propensity of certain minds to want everyone to think as they do. For ourselves we read articles constantly with which we are in complete disagreement but it never occurs to us to stop buying the paper or magazine on that account. And when Theosophists take such a position . . . well how about that "Together Differently" slogan of Dr. Arundale? Shouldn't it mean something more than merely a catchy phrase?

To the Theosophist it is a perpetual source of wonder how anyone can be satisfied to grow old and eventually die, with no hope of ever seeing this good old earth and being young again.

forthright and unanswerable Reason for Creation, the only Reason worthy of consideration by a "Thinker in Depth"?

TODAY'S MATERIALISM

(Continued from Page 81)

present and extraordinarily sophisticated materialism. The early scrimmages were easy, in the course of the great battle, because the individual who spoke against the spiritual insights was running counter to common sense. He affirmed a nonbelief in the inner life which most people were able to answer out of their own direct experience with divine insights or through a highly personal revelation of enduring things. Now any sort of spiritual exaltation, except for the person able to cloister himself in the haven of some holiness group, is explained away in the popular Freudian terminology which nearly everyone uses and almost nobody understands. The inner life has become a fashionable calisthenics for the psyche, and there are glib explanations by which any decency of inspiration is reduced to sheer embarrassment. There is a current psychological immodesty which undercuts all but the strongest will to any true illumination. The enemy has made a theater of the church and put up the holy sacraments in labels, as though spirituality were a nostrum to be used according to prescription.

Materialism, which in the time of Gautama Buddha came into expression as the veritable salvation of man, today is sheer mechanism. All dominant in this age is the conception of achievement as a process, with the implication that it is only necessary to turn a crank, so to speak, to solve any problem at hand. A new sort of definition is needed, over the composite and common one which the dictionaries provide, and it is through the genuinely seminal ideas in Theosophy that this is possible. Thus it may be said that the enemy is to be recognized because he insists always that the things known or identified or thought about in human experience are essentially primary, that is, that they are fundamentally more real than their meanings.

The fallacy at this point was the first item of instruction given to Arjuna by Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita, specifically verse 16 of the second chapter. Like so many men today, the young hero of the epic had gotten himself completely snarled up in his conception of his world and his relationships to it. He himself could hardly realize the fact, but his point of view was materialistic in precisely the same fashion as modern man's acceptance of immediate realities in their outer and superficial terms. Here were factors of intellectual confusion which Arjuna felt he could hardly challenge when they intruded in his experience, and so he sought to meet the issue of an inner upset by hurling clichés against what he allowed himself to identify as the inevitabilities of his predicament. To do what he ought to do seemed a wrong to him, and yet for him not to live up to that ought was another wrong

IT MAKES NO SENSE THAT—

The Theosophical Society, being custodian of a mighty and specialized knowledge, obtainable in its fulness from no other source, should fritter away its energies on propaganda and objects which many other organizations exist to further.

* * * *

With so few of us to perform the immensely important task of disseminating the sorely needed Truths of Occultism which, if accepted, would make over this half-ruined world, we should waste our time and effort on matters wholly outside of our proper sphere.

* * * *

The Theosophical Society as such should attempt to duplicate the work of the Churches, the Masonic bodies, Ethical Societies or like fellowships, even though unconsciously.

* * * *

Schisms in the Society, such as have developed in the past to the great detriment of the movement, should be again invited by dalliance with outside activities unconnected or remotely connected with our primary objective—to spread Theosophy.

* * * *

Those who recognize the harm that can be done by squandering our energies on things irrelevant to our real purpose should keep silent in the interest of a false brotherliness which is far removed from the genuine quality that word should convey.

* * * *

We should play into the hands of those who resent the existence of The Theosophical Society and would be very happy to see it perish, by following illusionary paths which lead nowhere so far as our ultimate aims are concerned.

Since doing was thus a double wrong, he felt he must refrain from act with a righteous "I won't," not quite sensing that this was a third wrong springing promptly from the other two.

As is characteristic of Eastern thinking at its best, the principle is put down first and then, since principles are always fogged the moment they are put in words, it is approached in and through those progressive modifications of mind and understanding through which it can be approximated (along the lines of the calculation of pi, or any approach to a hypothetical absolute). The naught cannot achieve naught, or the naught be carried into naught (as Chatterji translates the verse with perhaps the least ambiguity, since the word *being* has so many implications in English). And then, complementing the observation, the truth, conclusion or ultimate insight about

IT MAKES SENSE THAT—

The Theosophical Society should stick closely to its own knitting, which is the vitally important work that constitutes the reason for its existence, and allow other groups, organized for other work and able to do it better, the liberty of carrying it forward without our unwanted, unnecessary and not too efficient assistance.

* * * *

We should concentrate on the things we know well and can do well—the things in which we are, or should be, specialists and experts and not dabble in fields where our activities are not required and where we are rank amateurs.

* * * *

Individual T.S. members should follow their preference in affiliating with and working for other altruistic groups but should hew strictly to the line of Theosophy in Theosophical Society work.

* * * *

Unity and harmony within the Society demand the great unifying factor of the membership's common interest in theosophical teachings which all of us wish to see universally propagated and accepted.

* * * *

Members should never quit the Society because they disapprove of temporary policies as it is quite certain that by so doing they will not change the policies and will hurt only themselves, but they should remain and support efforts made in the right direction and if possible initiate such efforts.

* * * *

We should keep out of our Lodge halls what does not properly belong there and not allow our presentation of Theosophy to degenerate into a chaotic hodge-podge of sensational eccentricities masquerading as revelations of new Truth.

both has been perceived by the seers of truth, that is, those who recognize the thatness of existence or the thingness of things. In other words, if a thing is not, that proposition is what has to be kept in mind about it, and if it is, the fact that it is becomes the necessary basis in any thought concerning it. Here is where the present world has no reality per se, while also preserving every facet of the real, and the transition in understanding is from mechanism to the organic view which is true Theosophy and to which a next article may be devoted.

THE ZODIAC IN
ALEXANDER POPE

Capricorn

Teach me to feel another's woe
To hide the fault I see.

—The Universal Prayer

IS REINCARNATION
A FACT?

(Continued from Page 81)

"There is no doubt that the speaking, publications, and even way of thinking of the Church are simply not in harmony with the way of life of the people."

The authors report that they "have found so widespread a dislike of the ministers of religion of the Anglican and Free Churches that it can only be described as anti-clericalism," which reminds me of a clergyman who wrote to the Press not long ago to point out that the surest way to get a compartment to yourself in a train is to wear a clerical collar! Other travellers come to the carriage door, see a parson and go away to look for another!

There can be "no certainty that the community will continue over a long period to be guided by the Christian ethic," say Mr. Rowntree and Mr. Lavers, and if there is to be a reconversion of England to Christianity it will not come through institutional religion, but through the faith of individual Christians; for they find that, although churchgoing has greatly declined, there has been conversely an improvement in neighborly consideration and unselfishness, and in the practice as contrasted with the profession of Christianity; yet they report that in conversations with about 150 persons of both sexes between the ages of 18 and 50 who were all interested in social questions, only 49% believed in any form of life after death, and half of those did not believe in individual survival. The whole trend of this report therefore underlines the theosophical case that the failure of Christian clerics to think straight and face the impacts of new discoveries intelligibly has resulted in a grave deficiency in the body of generally accepted beliefs, and the need for a more convincing thought-setting for the natural, kindly impulses of mankind. Our purpose is to consider whether the idea that we are born many times is true, and therefore a valuable contribution to the pool of public thought. A wholesome life can of course be lived without acceptance of reincarnation, but is the lack of this teaching a cause of weakness, and will its dissemination help to restore spiritual values by presenting an intelligible conception of how truths of science and religion may be integrated?

We are all ignorant of much. We know a little, but we have learnt different parts of life's lessons of experience. So, inevitably, we consider the question IS REINCARNATION A FACT? from the differing starting points of our distinctive present emotional make-ups, and the answer must be an individual one from everyone who considers it.

It is convenient and helpful to hold ideas in 4 groups:

1. There are those ideas known by experience. We have taken part in the events, or have employed the ideas and

they have worked. We know them to be true.

2. There are those which, while not within our personal experience as yet, are so probable that we accept them as part of the working equipment of life. For example, Australia—I have met men who say they have been there, read books by men who describe the land, seen photographs and films that depict it, but I have not been there. Men lie, books can be works of imagination, photographs and films can be faked, and a Solipsist can make a good case for the impossibility of proving anything through the senses, but it would be crazy to deny the existence of Australia!

3. There are those which could be true but we do not know.

4. There are those which can be shown by reason to be false; usually they contain truth distorted, and correction consists in demolishing a constrictive element that is causing a mental deformity.

It save a lot of confusion if, with every idea as you consider it—whether new to you, or an old one recurring to mind—you assign it to one or other of those 4 parts of your mental playhouse—let it be placed deliberately either in the first six rows, the second six rows, the third twelve rows.

Now this is not a static arrangement of course. There should be a steady recruitment to the first circle as we widen our experiences in life. Other ideas will be passing from dubiety to probability; and by critical analysis new mental friends may be made by striking off fetters of error in the 4th group.

There is reverse traffic also only if we have been credulous in the past, if we have mistaken belief for knowledge and preferred comforting notions to probabilities. Then, if we would be real truthseekers, we may have to usher treasured thoughts to less prominent mental stations, with pain if they have been held with attachment, yet with compensating exhilaration and relief.

My aim is to show grounds for putting the concept of reincarnation in the second category—probably true, is a measure that warrants accepting it as part of our working assumptions, and I am taking for granted in the same category certain other ideas, the existence of spirit and soul in man, the factuality of life after death and the material character of the conditions of experiences after death—subtler, more tenuous than physical matter, but still material. I am assuming those ideas to be probably true not from any reluctance to debate them and show grounds for their acceptance, but because they have already been dealt with here, and there is not time to cover the ground again.

Nor am I dealing with them in the second category to detract in any way from the first-hand experience of those who have it. There are those who

know in varying measure that I am speaking of a realm of tangible and dynamic realities, and I participate in that in some degree, but personal experience while reportable is incommunicable. Anyone else's experience is second-hand to me, as mine is to you. So all verbal communication as to whether reincarnation or any other idea is factual is confined to probability. If it is a fact in your experience, the answer to the question is "yes" and you have no need for this article, which is written for those who do not know, who wonder and want to know.

You may still ask: what of testimony? Can we not accept reincarnation as true upon the experience of others? As a truthseeker you cannot accept reports of others as final knowledge. There are those who have had experiences that are valid to them as memories of past incarnations, and they appear sane and sensible people whose testimony warrants acceptance. There are others making similar statements whose balance is questionable. There are too many one-time Cleopatras and Platos about!

In considering testimony it is necessary to discriminate. Someone says he remembers past lives:

Is he a deliberate liar for a conscious motive?

Is he a romancer enjoying the focus of attention or power over others through his claims?

Is he honest in intention, but unconsciously imaginative or self-deceived?

Is he psychically attuned to the akashic record of the life of some admired historic character, or has he some affinity with an attractive period?

Is he truly remembering a past life of his own individuality?

However sure you may be that he is reliable, honest and sane, however much cumulative testimony may add to conviction, reincarnation is still not knowledge to you unless and until you remember your own past lives. So the farthest we can go in answering our question, short of that knowledge, is an assessment of probability.

The first thing to be considered in this assessing of facts and probabilities is why each one of us accepts certain ideas and rejects others.

Do we select beliefs because they are comforting, and disbelieve ideas because they are difficult to live in accord with or require courage to face? If we do that we are not yet honest truthseekers.

Do we reject reincarnation because life has been difficult and we don't want to come back? If reincarnation is a law, your not liking it will not stop it working—you will come back; but it may make a difference to the conditions in which you come back.

Do we believe in reincarnation because we personally like life and don't want to die? You will die as a personality if reincarnation is a law—your personal self does not normally return.

Tom Redfern is just a label on a psychological plexus focussed in this particular lump of meat and bones! What reincarnates will have a new label, and a new set of habit formations. Tom Redfern will never come back! If anyone wants to say "Praise be the Lord for that," I'll echo it! I think he's a pain in the neck!

Let us be clear about what we mean by reincarnation. First of all, not metempsychosis—that term is generally used to embrace the idea of return in animal or other subhuman form, which has been held at various times and places, probably sometimes as a popular misconception, though sometimes by distinguished philosophers.

(To Be Continued)

ENVIRONMENT, HEREDITY OR SOUL HISTORY

(Continued from Page 81)

the beam in our own, but he and ourselves have quite a collection of beams and notes that have accumulated over the ages in which we have had hundreds of pairs of eyes to accommodate them.

These little "offs," however, are very mild divergencies as compared with the monstrous affairs with which the mental therapists are called upon to deal. Our present problem is, where do these really come from and why are they permitted to afflict and torment a segment of the human race, destroying reason, driving to suicide or early death, peopling the mental institutions and crowding the bookshelves with "explanations" that explain only superficially—that give no hint of the *primary* causes, which may pre-date by centuries and lives the secondaries that started them off in this one.

The books refer learnedly in their case histories to (a) heredity (b) environment but (C), and we capitalize it because it is by far the most important, is never given a tumble. (C) is *soul history* which conditions both heredity and environment. Conditions, too, the particular circumstances which shall befall the individual to the extent that he will be affected, during his impressionable years, by occurrences which powerfully register in his consciousness for good or ill.

Sometimes it seems that nature has been very cruel in allowing the child to be brought into contact with ugliness and viciousness which put a mark on the life for years afterward. The conduct may be blighted entirely by treatment or scenes which one of better balance might ignore or forget. A bad environment may bring out willpower, intelligence and effective work, even with poor heredity. The same environment may make another, even with good heredity, a criminal, a shirker or an outright bum. Leaders of men have developed from inferior heredity and poor environment. Failures in plenty are to be found among those whose ancestors were successful and

(Continued on Page 88)

REACTION OF A T.S. LODGE
TO THE
ASSOCIATE STUDENT PLAN

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The following letter from THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN FORT WAYNE is quoted by express permission:

"Dear Mr. Luntz:

The Theosophical Society in Fort Wayne were introduced to your Plans for an Associate Student Group and were so enthused over this most excellent idea that the motion was made to let you know about it and I was asked to carry out the correspondence involved.

What we would like to have, to beg, borrow or steal, even to buy—is your permission to have the form on the back of your September issue printed up so that we can furnish it to the prospective students in our own vicinity. We would leave it just as is, for it is only natural that in time they would, if sufficiently interested, make a more intimate contact with our own Fort Wayne group and perhaps some of them eventually join. Somehow, silly as it is, distance does lend enchantment and a portion of them might at first write St. Louis that wouldn't seek us out here in Fort Wayne. Perhaps I haven't made clear just what I mean, but I know that you will get the idea back of it exactly.

This could be a great aid in helping us with a public study class here in Fort Wayne. We have a grand group of trusty and very loyal members even though there are only 13 of us and my new home has a room here used exclusively for our Lodge meetings. We are all working long hours and this outside aid would be a great help, which, I should imagine is just what you intended for it to be. New members will be welcomed. Theosophy needs them! We need a publication for news-stand sale with articles of popular appeal. Our whole set-up needs a shot in the arm!"

★ ★ ★

The above request was, of course, immediately granted and similar permission will be given to any other T.S. Lodge desiring to use this effective means of fostering the interest of those who feel attracted to our great philosophy.

Lodge officers will gladly be given more details upon request as to how this live new activity is being handled. A personal reply by the Editor will be sent to any from whom we may hear and specific questions gladly answered.

★ ★ ★

For the original announcement of this plan see January 1951 ANCIENT WISDOM, page 92. A free copy of that issue will be sent to any Lodge officer who signifies interest.

ENVIRONMENT, HEREDITY
OR SOUL HISTORY

(Continued from Page 87)

whose early environment was full of opportunity.

The environment-heredity theory—either or both—will not stand up. It is shot full of holes. Individual cases tending to prove the one or the other or a combination of the two are offset by many more cases that prove nothing at all but that certainly disprove the facile belief that it all depends on your ancestry or it all depends on how you were brought up. These things are important—very important. We do not belittle them. There are such things as criminal traits in a heredity line. Vile conditions do breed viciousness, criminality and failure. But there are too many exceptions—many more exceptions than examples—to permit acceptance of the heredity-environment rule.

The loose ends may now be gathered up and we will see if a case—and a good one—cannot be made for the (C) factor, which has no exceptions.

(To Be Continued)

Don't get an inferiority complex when people smile in a superior way if they find out you believe in Reincarnation. Find out what they believe in and you won't even bother to smile. It's too absurd.

Rebirth is the most sensible explanation available of why we are here and the reason things happen as they do. Which is the reason it is always rejected by people who prefer to believe in something that doesn't make sense.

It is disturbing to know that we have knowledge that in ancient days was sought after by the greatest of mankind and communicated in utmost secrecy to a few elect, chosen after severest tests as in the Greek Mysteries, yet it goes begging. If we get disturbed enough maybe we shall do something about it.

The stuff that non-Theosophists write about Theosophy in their magazine articles and "best sellers" is—we regret to say it—with a scant few exceptions, complete twaddle.

Unless there is another chance—unless there are many more chances—for the wretched Chinese, dying like flies in a war which not one in a hundred of them understands or cares anything about, this is—and we do not mean it profanely but literally—a hell of a world.

The aim of the Theosophist is to go through life on close and good terms with his Ego.

If all the world knew with what assurance one can live—and die—when he possesses the understanding of living and dying that only Theosophy gives, all the world would be Theosophist.

Didn't you always feel in your bones that somewhere, if you sought long enough, you would find an explanation of this strange business of living that

really explained? We did. And as soon as we contacted Theosophy we knew we had found it.

Thirty years ago the Editor, if he thought about it at all, supposed Theosophy to be some sort of curious phenominalistic cult for the less intelligent who liked that sort of thing. Twenty-nine years ago he discovered it wasn't.