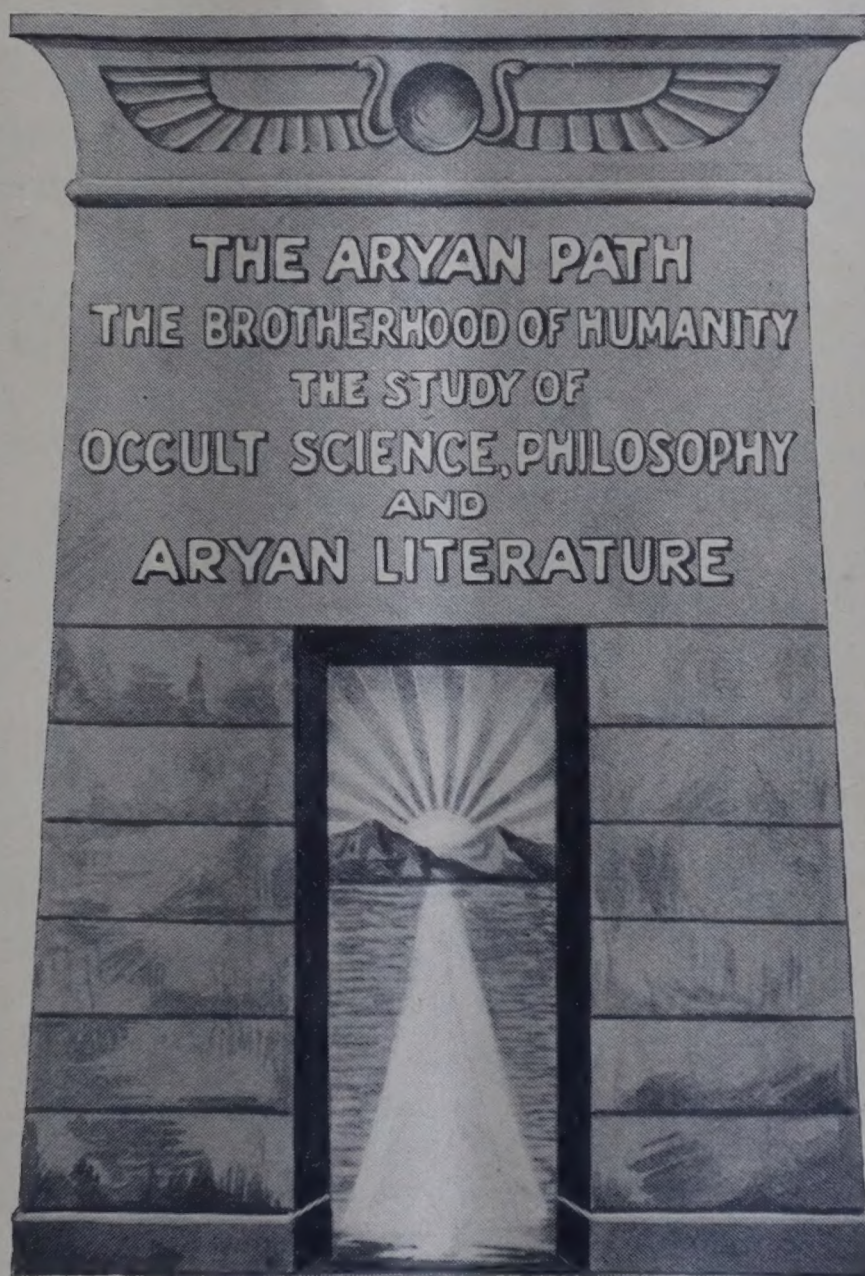




THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO



Vol. VII No. 8

June 17, 1937

The ideas we entertain of the Supreme, of Law, of Nature, and of our own Being govern the actions we perform. We are now acting according to the ideas we now hold. Are they the best and highest possible to us? If we change our ideas, we change our actions. All we have to do is to realize our own real nature, see what our defects are, strengthen our virtues, and *move on*. Just so surely as we do this, we shall find that our virtues and strength increase, and our defects gradually fall away.

ROBERT CROSBIE.

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- (b) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study ; and
- (c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

सत्यान्नास्ति परो धर्मः ।



There is no Religion Higher than Truth

BOMBAY, 17th June, 1937

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A FEARLESS WARRIOR

It is written in *The Voice of the Silence* that disciples at each new trial may "bend like reeds but never break." When one hears the story of the life of Robert Crosbie or reads between the lines of his writings, one continuously remembers that sentence. Many vicissitudes of his personal life were transmuted to enrich experience and this was used in the service of the Cause. His Theosophical career brought him innumerable tests, through all of which he emerged with a clarified vision. Bitter experiences did not embitter his disposition—his trust in humanity never wavered and his friendliness for all students and aspirants never diminished.

We write of Robert Crosbie because this month, on the 25th, falls the eighteenth anniversary of his passing. In the United Lodge of Theosophists we remember him always, for he was the Founder of the Lodge, through which he resuscitated the Theosophical Movement of the century in its darkest hour.

Through years of study of the pages of genuine texts the aspirant learns a mighty lesson—that to know a Soul he need not depend on contacting the personality of that Soul. There were many hundreds who contacted the Personality of H. P. B., but how many were really benefited? Similarly a large band of admirers contacted W. Q. Judge, the lawyer, the vice-president of the Theosophical Society, the Editor of *The Path*, but how many knew the Soul of Judge—"the greatest of the exiles"? Only the rare few succeed in piercing the veil of a great Ego's personality and catching the glory that it hides; such have broken the fetters of their own personalities, and the depth of their vision is proportionate to the height of their own overcoming.

Theosophical students of the present day should learn to contact the Mind of the Messenger and the Minds of those who succeeded spiritually because of her—such as Damodar K. Mavalankar, W. Q. Judge and Robert Crosbie. This can be done by a study of their writings and of their lives. Their precepts square with their practices and the

greater the success the more exact the squaring.

Active Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists have a special duty to perceive the Lines traced by Robert Crosbie, for thus they will see more and more the depth of the declaration of the Lodge, the correctness of the methods pursued and the righteousness of the policy kept ever in view. This is important as years pass and the turn of the cycle brings 1975 nearer.

Students of the United Lodge of Theosophists will grasp the teachings of H. P. B. and of W. Q. Judge better if they attentively read *The Friendly Philosopher* and *Answers to Questions on the Ocean of Theosophy*. Let us not mistake their simplicity for superficiality. Robert Crosbie's simplicity is like that of Nature—profound. All humanity is surrounded on every side with profound secrets of Nature but man's superficiality blinds him to Nature's simplicity. Another quality of Nature was preëminently Mr. Crosbie's also—sincerity. Simple sincerity and sincere simplicity—these shine through the writings of Robert Crosbie.

His teachings and his life-activities bring great encouragement to the student, however limited the latter's mental capacity, however many his mistaken moves. Mr. Crosbie's was not a giant intellect, nor was his life free from the zigzags and ups-and-downs of Karma. He succeeded because he tried ever to be simple and sincere like Mother Nature. The Great Mother, disturbed by the foibles and follies of her human children, restores broken harmony. She does this in a very simple way, with utmost sincerity.

To bend like a reed but never to break—both are virtues. The reed's strength lies in its power to bend before the gale, adjusting itself. To bend before the blow and emerge unscathed, that unfolds adaptability. The aspirant has to learn to emerge unscathed, adapting himself to new circumstances which Karma precipitates. This Mr. Crosbie ever did—always with his gaze fixed on the distant goal. In the surrounding darkness caused by the

failures of Theosophical aspirants he did not demand to see all, to know all—one step at a time was enough for him. What look like mistakes were but his sincere efforts to meet in as simple and straightforward a way the situations created by Karma. The sure success of each step is indicated in his emergence from trying events, each time wiser and stronger. The United Lodge of Theosophists is the manifestation of his final emergence from the Theosophical wreck; thus emerging he not only saved himself, he saved the Movement, making it possible for thousands now to follow the Path H. P. B. showed—the Path to the Masters. When the hour had struck he blossomed forth.

Each student-aspirant has to learn never to break—never to desert the Path seen, however dim the glimpse. He has also to learn to bend like the reed—gaining strength from the bending and growing ever upwards towards the Sun of Light and the azure depths, radiating friendliness and singing philosophy for all—however few be they who hear or heed.

WORLD PEACE

Wars, and rumours of wars, are the order of the day. They are not confined to international affairs. Within the confines of a single country, intrigue and discontent sow the seeds of hatred and civil conflict. Sir Arthur Keith, the eminent anthropologist, has just declared his opinion that the world “will have to sleep for ever with its loaded gun by its side.” In a foreword to *Darwin's Theory Applied to Mankind*, he writes that they “can conceive no substitute which would be equally adequate for the real health of humanity and the building of stronger races.” In this view he says that anger, love or vengeance, and a power to hate and be cruel, are qualities which have “survival values” in the struggle of the fittest.

Is it any wonder that alarm is being felt at the declining birth rate, when cannon-fodder is in such demand everywhere, and so many scientists and churchmen still look upon man as primarily a fighting beast? The hand of *karma* may be seen at work in every country where the conception of man is based upon materialistic Darwinism. As a correspondent wrote in *The Times* (March 23, 1937):

It is entirely beyond argument now that, unless something happens not merely to check but to reverse the downward trend, the days of our greatness are numbered and our civilization is already under sentence of death, whether that sentence is executed in the life time of our grandchildren or at some slightly later date.

Repercussions there must be where the Law of Justice is violated. The nemesis that follows modern Western civilization is inevitable. Only

recently, the Great Powers were warned at Geneva by Mr. de Water, the South African delegate to the League of Nations. “European action in Africa leaves always its permanent mark,” he said, adding, “How often in the long history of Africa has the mark not become a deeply reacting scar.” He concluded:—

My Government and the whole people of my country, both black and white, view with deep concern, and with an anxiousness born of the instinctive knowledge of its consequences, the slow and apparently relentless march of the disease of war into our Continent. Let it never be forgotten: The long memory of Black Africa never forgets and never forgives an injury or an injustice.

Karma is balancing the accounts, not only between countries and continents, but also as between the different classes in each country. We read of the readjustments now in operation in the industrial life of the United States and France. The same story is repeated everywhere. In moving words, the position is put by Lady Rhys Williams, a noted social worker in South Wales, in a review by her of “The Second Industrial Survey of South Wales,” published by the Cardiff University Press, which appeared in *Reynolds's Newspaper* (March 21, 1937):—

“What is wanted is some one with the inspiration to think of man as what he is—a being created in the image of God and subject to no economic necessity but that imposed by the limitations of his own ideals. It is time the word “labour” was abolished.....as if it were a commodity to be despatched from pillar to post in the interest of Industry with a big I. There is room for a party devoted to “the restoration of the Rights of Man, and forgetful of the jargon and limitations of nineteenth-century materialism.”

In this world-wide war of ideologies, it is too often forgotten that rights derive only from duties properly discharged. And is there any hope of a solution to the myriad problems that arise unless we bear in mind, and hold continually before the minds of people everywhere, what Theosophy has to teach us concerning the common origin of Man? We must go back to Fundamentals. Referring to the Mosaic law of vengeance, H.P.B. in *The Key to Theosophy* remarks that “the perversity of this doctrine and of so many others, *Theosophy alone* can eradicate,” and, when asked by an enquirer “How?”, she answered:—

Simply by demonstrating on logical, philosophical, metaphysical, and even scientific grounds that:—(a) All men have spiritually and physically the same origin, which is the fundamental teaching of Theosophy. (b) As mankind is essentially of one and the same essence, and that essence is one—infinite, uncreate, and eternal, whether we call it God or Nature—nothing, therefore, can affect one nation or one man without affecting all other nations and all other men. (p. 34)

When are we all going to *act* on this teaching and all its implications?

SAYINGS OF ROBERT CROSBIE

The feeling of responsibility is the first step towards selflessness.

People are not aware that they act almost entirely under suggestion.

Attempt to reach to the basis of that which is suggested.

All evolution proceeds from beings.

True morality rests in an understanding and in a realization of man's own spiritual nature, and must of necessity flow from it, irrespective of all kinds of conventions.

Best interests of all are not served by the ideas that are generally held.

Man is spiritual, in fact, but, thinking himself material and separate, and acting in accordance with his thinking, he brings about the battle between the two natures in him.

We are bewildered by the very effects that we have produced by our thinking based upon wrong ideas.

We would have to go through the crucifixion of the false ideas in ourselves, and arise as the Saviour did, to the right hand of the Father—the Ego free from all those delusions which have caused him to maintain himself in sin, sorrow and suffering.

We have no greater duty to perform than to make clear and clean our natures—to make them *true*, to make them in accord with the great object of all life, the evolution of the soul.

We ought to be sure of the nature of the faith upon which our ideal is placed.

Service for ourselves is a creation which ties us fast to wrong conditions.

The only true path is the trusting to the law of our own spiritual nature.

It is, then, to the Teachings that attention has to be called—not to ourselves who are only handing them on as best we can.

Until each one clarifies his own perceptions he would not know gold of Ophir from base metal.

Our work is to inform, not to proselyte.

The Path of Brotherhood and the Path of Occultism are One Path.

It is not the "personality" but what "it" represents to us that is the danger.

It is by dwelling on our inherent perfectibility that we get rid of imperfections.

There is no time limit to effort.

People in general do not get the *meaning* of what is written, in the same way that they do not extract the *value* from their experiences.

All ability comes very gradually, imperceptibly—felt, grasped, realized rather than perceived in the ordinary sense.

To have Brotherhood among the many, it is

first necessary to realize brotherhood among the few, and the basis of brotherhood is the divinity inherent in all men.

Truth is not dependent upon the one who utters it, but upon its own self-evident nature.

SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHS

A letter from Dr. Nandor Fodor, Research Officer of the International Institute for Psychical Research (*Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research*, February, 1937) describes the photographing of "the ghost of Raynham Hall"—or rather one of the ghosts of that country house in Norfolk. The photograph, which was published in England in *Country Life* and in *Life* in the U. S. A., shows a transparent figure dressed in a cape descending the stairs towards the photographers. Dr. Fodor raises the question whether this ghost is the famous "Brown Lady" of Raynham Hall, whose appearance was testified to by reputable witnesses some eighty years ago.

The genuine "spirit photograph" is most often an objective copy from one of the *subjective* photographs which are constantly thrown out by our thoughts, words, and deeds and impressed on the ether of space—what is described in *The Theosophist* for April 1882 (III, 179-80) as "a more or less successful reproduction (the photographer remaining unconscious of it)—of a deceased person's features from an image already impressed in the aura of the living medium, or the persons present."

What makes this attempt noteworthy and argues that something was before the camera, is the claim that one of the photographers did see the ghost and called to his companion, who had his head under the black cloth, getting ready to make another exposure, "Quick! Quick! There's something! Are you ready?"

We reprint below the unsigned review from *The Theosophist*, to which reference was made above:—

"CHRONICLES OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF SPIRITUAL BEINGS AND PHENOMENA *Invisible to the Material Eye*," by Miss Houghton. London: E. W. Allen, 11, Ave Maria Lane, E. C.

A neat and curious volume "Illustrated by six Plates containing fifty-four Miniature Reproductions from the Original Photographs." The book is full of valuable testimony. It comes from some of the most eminent men of science and literature

of the day, who all testify to the fact that photographs have been, and are, taken from "Spirit Beings," their more or less shadowy forms appearing on the negative near or about the sitters in visible flesh and blood. "His Most Serene Highness, George, Prince de Solms," is one of the witnesses to the phenomena. In a letter incorporated in the *Preface* he remarks :—

I have examined the various explanations which have been offered of imitating the Spirit-photographs, but certainly none that I have seen, are sufficient to account for the phenomena. I am not aware of any possible explanation of photographs of this description, *of which the figure is displayed partly before and partly behind the person sitting.*

Another eminent witness, Mr. A. R. Wallace, the Naturalist, also gives his testimony. He says :—

If a person with a knowledge of photography takes his own glass plates, examines the camera used and all the accessories, and watches the whole process of taking a picture, then, if any definite form appears on the negative besides the sitter, it is proof that some object was present capable of reflecting or emitting the actinic rays, although invisible to those present. The fact that any figures, so clear and unmistakably human in appearance, should appear on plates taken in a private studio by an experienced optician and amateur photographer, who makes all his apparatus himself and with no one present, is a real marvel.

Quite so ; and the evidence is so strong in favour of the genuineness of the interesting phenomenon, that to doubt its possibility would be tantamount to proclaiming oneself a bigoted ignoramus. Nor is it the *fact* of the phenomenon we doubt. We are thinking rather of the causes underlying it. The more we study the clear, perfectly logical and connected evidence of the eye-witnesses gathered in Miss Houghton's interesting volume, the more we compare it with her own testimony, and then turn to the illustrations given in the book, the less we feel ready to recognize in the latter the direct work of Spirits, *i.e.*, of disembodied Egos. This is no sophistical cavil of prejudice or predetermined negation, as some of our critics may think ; but the sincere expression of honest truth. We do not even attribute the appearance of the figures, so mysteriously appearing without any seemingly physical cause for it, to the work of the elementary or the elementals—so odious to the orthodox Spiritualist. We simply venture to ask why such photographs, without being a fraudulent imitation—and even though one day recognized as phenomenal by the Royal Society—should be necessarily "Spirit pictures"—and not something else ? Why should the forms so appearing—often no forms at all, but patches of formless light, in which it is as easy to detect figures and faces and likenesses, as it is in a

passing cloud, or even in a spot of dirt upon a wall—why should they be rather taken for the pictures from original human or any other Spirits than for the reflection of what is already impressed as images of men and things photographed on the invisible space around us ? A more or less successful reproduction (the photographer remaining unconscious of it)—of a deceased person's features *from an image already impressed in the aura* of the living medium, or the persons present, would not be a dishonest attempt to impose upon the credulous, but a *bona fide* phenomenon. Let us once grant for the sake of argument this hypothesis, and it would account perfectly for the "figure displayed partly before and partly behind the person sitting." Moreover, the theory would cover the ground and explain every unsatisfactory feature in such photographs, features hitherto unaccountable but on the theory of fraud. The "daughter of Jairus" would not appear in the aura of a Hindu medium, not if he were to sit for thousand years before a camera. But the said biblical personage is a very natural reproduction in the presence of a Protestant, an intensely pious medium, whose thoughts are wholly absorbed with the Bible ; whose mind is full of the miracles of Jesus Christ ; and who gives thanks, after every successful "Spirit-photograph," to the "wisdom of God" by blessing and praising his name. A Hindu or a Buddhist medium would evoke no "spoon" emerging from a ray of celestial light above his head—but rather his fingers with which he eats his food. But the biblical interpretation given by the author (pp. 78 and 79) to explain the apparition of the spoon after she had placed a marker in the Bible, (the passage referring to the twelve spoons of gold, the offering of the Princes of Israel) is just as we should expect it. Nor would an orthodox heathen cause to appear on the photograph, surrounded by a cluster of clouds, pictures "found to be a representation of the Holy Family"—for the simple reason that having never given a thought to the latter family, no such picture could be created by his mind, whether conscious or unconscious ; hence none being found invisibly impressed around him, none could be caught in the focus. Were, on the other hand, a picture of a boar or a fish to appear instead, or that of a blue gentleman playing on the flute ; and were a Hindu medium to recognize in the former the two *Avatars* of Vishnu, and in the latter Krishna, we doubt whether any Christian Spiritualist would be fair enough to admit the correctness of the symbolical interpretation, or even of the genuineness of the "Spirits," since no Christian sensitive believes in either *such* Avatars, nor in a cerulean coloured god.

The most remarkable feature, in the book under review, is in its illustrated plates. In their intrinsic

value, the miniature photographs are perfect. They do the greatest honour to both the talent of the artist and the perseverance and patience of the author required of her, before she could achieve such fine results. As "Spirit" photographs, however, they allow a large margin for criticism, as they leave everything unexplained, and the figures are by no means satisfactory. From Plate I. to Plate VI., with one or two exceptions, the figures of the Spirits exhibit a strange sameness and rigidity about them. Beginning with "Mamma extending her hand towards me" and ending with "Tommy's grandmother," (Plate I.), nine groups in nine different attitudes represent to our profane eye but two and the same persons on each picture: the author and a shrouded ghost—with features invisible. In each case, the Spirit is wrapped up in the traditional white shroud, very pertinently called by some correspondent in the work the "conventional *white-sheeted ghost*." Why it should be so, is not sufficiently explained on the theory given (p. 207) that "the human form is more difficult to materialize than drapery." If it is a "*Spirit Power*,...used in God's Wisdom to promote the visible appearance of spirit forms," as we are told (p. 21), then both the power and wisdom fall very wide of the mark that should be expected from them. And if not, then why such a servile copy of the conventional ghosts in theatricals?

There are many valuable, interesting and highly scientific attempts at explanation found scattered throughout the work, and evidence given by well-known writers of ability and learning. But the opinion we agree with the most, is contained in the extracts given from Mr. John Beattie's paper—published in the *Spiritual Magazine* for January, 1873—on the "Philosophy of Spirit-Photography." We will quote a few lines:—

All our most complete thinkers in the great schools of physical science...are forced to the conclusion that there exists an infinite ocean of ether, in which all material substance floats, and through which are transmitted all the forces in the physical universe...In photography we have to deal with purely physical conditions. Is there any proof that in the production of these pictures any other than physical conditions have had play?...In the spirit photographs taken under my observation, I had considerable proof that spirit-substance *was not photographed*. The forms were vague, but as photographs extremely well defined...these forms are such, and are so singularly related to one another that, even to the superficial, it is impossible not to see that such a series of forms could never have been conceived of by any one who would have had a mind to deceive...We daily hear of spirit-photographs being made, many of them said to be recognized as likenesses of friends...Now are these photographs any other than material resemblances, *moulded by spiritual beings*, of substances capable, when so condensed, of throwing off

energy very actively...I have seen many of the photographs said to be likenesses. I have two before me now: the same gentleman in both. In one there is with him a sitting figure half under the carpet, clearly from an etching of a face with a *profile type exactly like his own*; in the other there is a standing figure extremely tall and ill defined. *In both cases it is said to be his mother...No likeness could be discerned between the two.* The sitting figure evidently had been taken from some drawing."

I mention all this to combat the notion that the actual spirit can be photographed. I have seen a large number of them which I believe to be genuine, but in no case have I seen them indicating the free play of true life. Besides, we cannot believe spiritual light to depend upon physical laws such as reflection, absorption &c., but rather on states of the perceiving mind. If I am right, within the range of psychological phenomena, spirit-photography must take a high place in usefulness, if marked by suitable evidence without which all manifestations are worthless.

We heartily concur with all that is said above, but we disagree entirely with one of the conclusions and deductions drawn therefrom by Mr. Beattie. So far the genuineness of the phenomenon, called "spirit-photography," is sufficiently proved. But before we dogmatize upon the agency or rather the causes producing the phenomenal effects, we have to consider three theories, and choose the one which not only covers the most ground, but explains, in the most satisfactory way, the evident defects in the results so far obtained. Now the spiritualists maintain that these pictures are the photographs of spirits. Men more cautious than those of Mr. Beattie's turn of mind, would rather think that they are "Photographs *by* Spirits" the form of the object having been given from plastic invisible substance "by intelligent beings *outside* of it and moulded into shape for their purpose." And we (the Occultists) say, that they are objective copies from *subjective* photographs impressed upon the ether of space, and constantly thrown out by our thoughts, words, and deeds...

The final verdict as to who of us is right and who wrong, can be brought out by the jury of reason only after a better and more reliable evidence is obtained of the *facts*, and, upon a profounder acquaintance with the Invisible Universe and Psychology; both, moreover, have first to become entirely separated from, and independent of, anything like preconceived notions, or a sectarian colouring. So long as "spirit-photography," instead of being regarded as a science, is presented to the public as a new Revelation from the God of Israel and Jacob, very few sober men of science, will care to submit to a microscopic inspection "Mary the Virgin, Mother of our Lord," or even "St. John with a dove and three stars in the niche above him."

RELIGION

ACCORDING TO PETTAZZONI—BULLETT—REVENTLOW—FOSDICK

In "A Functional View of Religions" (*The Review of Religion*, March 1937) Professor Raffaele Pettazzoni of the University of Rome attempts a functional differentiation between "modern" religions—Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Zoroastrianism and the dead religion of Manichæism—and the "ancient" type, the religions of the Romans, Greeks, Egyptians, Babylonians, Hittites, Persians, Indians, Chinese, Japanese, Aztecs, etc. He assigns characteristics to both groups, but the classification is not altogether a success, aside from the ignoring of the substratum of truth common to them all. Zoroastrianism, for example, certainly does not proselytize; while popular Hinduism is as certainly not free from the idea of a saviour, which Professor Pettazzoni would confine to the "modern" religions. The religions of ancient type, he tells us, "bind *all* and *only* the members of a given state." By this criterion the newest cult of the totalitarian state is paradoxically an "ancient" religion!

But the functional classification of religions after they have hardened to rigidity around the kernel of living truth which each contains is at best of academic interest. Of greater value is Professor Pettazzoni's indirect testimony, in his discussion of the mystery religions, to the wide diffusion of the one Truth in antiquity. The origins of the "mysteries," he tells us, are lost in the darkness of time. He offers several proofs that they contain traces of "primitivism"—proofs which point rather to the survival of fragments of the once universally diffused Wisdom Religion even among the degraded heirs of mighty ancient civilizations. Such proofs include the employment, in the initiation of youths by the Australians, Melanesians, North Americans and Africans, of a rhombus similar in form and use to that employed in the Orphic Mysteries; the practice of tattooing common to primitive peoples and the Phrygian and Mithraic Mysteries, etc. "Likewise in the mythology of the 'mysteries' are found not a few survivals of primitive thought and belief"—a remark which equally lends itself to the Theosophical interpretation, that the root of all religions is the same and that "human religious thought developed in uniform sympathy in every portion of the globe." (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 341)

Every old religion is but a chapter or two of the entire volume of archaic primeval mysteries—Eastern

Occultism alone being able to boast that it is in possession of the full secret, with its *seven* keys. (*Ibid.*, I, 318)

One of the chief objects of *Isis Unveiled*, H. P. B. declared, was to prove :—

that underlying every ancient popular religion was the same ancient wisdom-doctrine, one and identical, professed and practised by the initiates of every country The proofs of this identity of fundamental doctrine in the old religions are found in the prevalence of a system of initiation; in the secret sacerdotal castes who had the guardianship of mystical words of power. (*Isis Unveiled*, II, 99)

The secret doctrines of the Magi, of the pre-Vedic Buddhists, of the hierophants of the Egyptian Thoth or Hermes, and of the adepts of whatever age and nationality, including the Chaldean kabalists and the Jewish nazars, were identical from the beginning. (*Ibid.*, II, 142)

Mr. Gerald Bullett is therefore quite right in challenging, in his "Notes on the Way" (*Time and Tide*, 20th March 1937) the popular assumption that a Personal God must have been the earliest theistic conception. But when he adds: "To equate religion with belief in God is surely a very insular error, in view of the existence of such ancient systems—both religions, and both atheistic—as Buddhism and Taoism," then "atheistic" must be understood as connoting disbelief only in a Personal God. H. P. B. writes :—

It is wrong and unjust to regard the Buddhists and Advaites Occultists as atheists. . . . Indeed, if the Parabrahman of the Hindus may be taken as a representative of the hidden and nameless deities of other nations, this absolute Principle will be found to be the prototype from which all the others were copied. Parabrahm is not "God," because It is not *a* God. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 6)

Esoteric philosophy . . . proves the necessity of an absolute Divine Principle in nature. It denies Deity no more than it does the Sun. Esoteric philosophy has never rejected God in Nature, nor Deity as the absolute and abstract *Ens*. It only refuses to accept any of the gods of the so-called monotheistic religions, gods created by man in his own image and likeness, a blasphemous and sorry caricature of the Ever Unknowable. (*Ibid.*, I, xx)

Mr. Bullett says that "religion in its essence is an intuitive loyalty to something beyond oneself." The religious impulse to self-dedication has been and is being exploited. He cites Nazism which has been able to command the devotion of "the

warm immature romantic idealism" of "innumerable young men generously eager to give themselves to what they conceive to be a great cause."

Mr. Bullett rightly stresses the importance of what a man believes for, as he puts it :—

As a man thinks and feels, so he acts. Not as he thinks he thinks and feels, but as in truth he does It is vitally important, I suggest, that we should not believe in certain traditional and still widely prevalent conceptions of God, and vitally important that we *should* believe in the possibility of human regeneration.

The theology of Christendom, H.P.B. declared sixty years ago "to be, on the whole, subversive, rather than promotive of spirituality and good morals." (*Isis Unveiled*, II, 639) But substituting one religion for another, as the advocates of a return to the ancient Teutonic mythology propose, is not the solution. If the Germans discarded only the excrescences that now obscure the teachings of Jesus, they would find left the same universal truths which were the core and kernel of ancient Nordic mythology and which are common to all faiths. But then what would become of the claims of Nordic uniqueness and superiority?

Graf E. Reventlow's *Where is God?*, analyzed in Pamphlet 47 of the "Friends of Europe" Publications, does not champion Teutonic mythology, but, for all its obvious sincerity, it casts a revealing light upon the warped Nazi ideology, with its concept of an "Eternal Germany." On some points the author is quite right, and not for Germans only, as in declaring, "We require no salvation. We shall save ourselves"; provided he refers to the responsibility of each for his own salvation. But if he has any idea of vicarious salvation by the Nazi State he is no less deluded than are the faithful of the churches. As Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick points out in his Foreword to the pamphlet, the book, preoccupied with differentiating the German God from the God of the Jews, ignores that above these tribal gods is the Divine Unity upon which rests the fact of human brotherhood.

As the white ray of light is decomposed by the prism into the various colours of the solar spectrum, so the beam of divine truth, in passing through the *three-sided* prism of man's nature, has been broken up into vari-coloured fragments called RELIGIONS. And, as the rays of the spectrum, by imperceptible shadings, merge into each other, so the great theologies that have appeared at different degrees of divergence from the original source, have been connected by minor schisms, schools, and off-shoots from the one side or the other. Combined, their aggregate represents one eternal truth; separate, they are but shades of human error and the signs of imperfection. (*Isis Unveiled*, II, 639)

CHURCHIANITY

The Rev. H. G. Proctor, Curate of a parish church in England since 1932, has given up Christianity, stating :—

I find myself unable to believe the doctrine that Jesus of Nazareth is in any special sense a Divine person. One can believe in God and live a good life without being a Christian.

One *can* believe in God, but in what kind of a God, and one *can* live a good life but guided by what kind of principles? Anyway the Curate has bettered his soul-prospects by leaving the church; but it is a negative step. What next will he do? Search for and accept Truth wherever it comes from? Be open-minded to examine ideas which are foreign to his own view-points? And live up to those which convince his reason and elevate his heart?

But apart from the Curate! What do such incidents indicate if not the disintegration of churchianity which seems to be proceeding fast. A writer in *Cruel Sports* (February) says :—

I can most truly say that much experience has led me to the conclusion that the Church, as a Church, is either ignorant of, or indifferent to, the dreadful sufferings of animals, at any rate in sport and science; and these are actually, too often actively, openly supported by the clergy!

This is not the first time we have heard of the Church—Catholic or Protestant—being thus charged. The root cause of this attitude of the Church is lack of knowledge of philosophy and mysticism. Without Wisdom no society, no church can exist and that Wisdom must be a living power in the lives of its members and followers. A tilt in the House of Lords on March 2nd between the Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Ponsonby further reveals the moral confusion and lack of integration in Christian orthodoxy. (*News Chronicle*, March 3rd). Charged by Lord Ponsonby with having said, "Christians are entitled to draw the sword for a righteous cause," the Archbishop claimed that he had quoted St. Paul. Lord Ponsonby retorted :—

The Primate ought to have brought St. Paul's words up to date, and instead of the sword he should have said, "chlorine, phosgene, mustard gas; Lewisite and thermite." Then he should have asked his fellow-Christians if they were justified in using those in any cause at all.

In the face of the refusal of the Church to face moral issues squarely and to think them through, is it surprising that the Bishop of London is quoted as saying :—

Christianity is fighting for its life, and it is not at all certain of winning.

PERSONALITIES

[Below we reprint an article from *The Path* for September, 1890.]

It cannot be said that the members of the Theosophical Society are yet free from the trouble which the study of and delight in personalities are always sure to bring about. We should not be the imperfect human beings that we know we are, had we reached such perfection. But surely some effect ought to be produced upon all earnest members in this direction by the philosophy they study, as well as from a sincere attempt to carry out the objects of the organization.

Looking into the rules laid down for the pledged disciples, there is to be met an absolute prohibition against their talking to each other either about what happens to them, or the experiences they are having, or the progress they are making. With them there are two reasons for this, one the tendency to make trouble, and the other that vanity is certain to follow upon one's talking much to others about what he has done or experienced in the theosophical field of investigation, especially if there have been any abnormal phases to it. Long experience has shown that for the beginner vanity is a most insidious foe lurking everywhere, and which is as likely to attack the earnest as those who are neither earnest nor sincere, and its immediate action is to throw a veil over the mental sight, making things appear to be what they are not, tending to make the victim centre more and more in himself and away from that tolerance for and union with others which it is the aim of theosophical study to bring about.

The civil law has always held that there is a wide distinction between a discussion or criticism of a person's work and of that person himself. It is permitted to say as much as one pleases regarding or against what another has said or written, but the moment the individual is taken up for consideration we have to be careful not to commit libel or be guilty of slander. In the theosophical life this excellent rule should be extended so that there could be no criticism of persons, no matter how much is said about their writings or the ideas they give out; and, in addition, another rule well to observe is to avoid as much as possible the retailing of what may be called gossip about the doings and goings to and fro of other members.

All those who are personally acquainted with H. P. Blavatsky and who have not been blinded by their devotion to personalities know that during all the years she has worked in the Society her constant

goal has been to so educate those who were willing to listen that they might be able to think for themselves upon all points and not be led away by the personality of any leader or writer. Many have thought that in the Society her word is law, but no one denies this more than herself, she always insisting that we must accept and believe only that which we have decided is true after a careful study. Here the mistake should not be made of supposing that because one is told to have regard for what she says, therefore he is believing on her authority in place of accepting an idea from its inherent truth. Others again, carried in the opposite direction by their very fear of relying upon any person, have thought it right as a general rule to oppose whatever she says. But this is as great a mistake as the other. Respect for a leader of thought means that, as we have come to have belief in the general soundness of that leader's views, so when any come from that source we naturally give them more consideration than those uttered by persons of small repute and known paucity of knowledge. This readiness to give attention to a leader's views is not belief in any idea because such and such a person has put it forth, but solely a natural protection against waste of time in analyzing worthless notions.

I have known a great many of the theosophists who were prominent in the Society's work in India in its early history, and have been privileged to meet many more in England and be present at several so-called crises in our progress, and have noticed that in almost every case the whole trouble has been never about ideas but always about persons. Persons may foolishly think that either they or others may rule the world or some small section of it, but as fixed as fate is it that never persons but always "ideas rule the world." Persons are transitory, moving over the field of mortal view for a few brief years and then disappearing forever, but ideas persist through all these changes, and rule the different personalities as they flit out from the unknown into the objective sky and plunge soon again into the darkness of the beyond. So long as there remain in our ranks the devotees of the personal, just so long will we have to struggle, but as soon as we flee from all consideration of persons the entire Society will escape into the free upper air where every effort will have its perfect work.

Bangkok, June, 1890.

A. P. RIL.

“THE LITERATURE OF THE OCCULT”

In our issue of March 1937 we noted with regret the complete omission of Madame H. P. Blavatsky's works from the syllabus of an extension course of the University of London on the above subject, a course given by Mr. Bernard W. Bromage, M.A., whose name we erroneously printed as B. W. Bernard, for which we apologize to the lecturer. A Parsi writer resident in London has written a protest against our paragraph, which we print in full :

Such a wilfully stupid failure to grasp the nature of the intensely interesting course of lectures recently given at the Marylebone Literary Institute by Mr. Bernard W. Bromage M.A. under the auspices of the University of London (the lectures referred to being a course of University Extension Lectures) is, in the own words of the writer of the paragraph upon page 71 of your March issue only to be explained by ignorance or/or/and [*sic*] prejudice. This series of lectures, as the writer of the paragraph in question would have discovered, if he or she had taken the slightest trouble to study the prospectus carefully or listen intelligently to this brilliant series, was concerned with recognised Masterpieces of *Literature* written upon or around occult, magical or psychic themes, tracing the growth and development of these motives in *established literary classics*. That is to say these lectures were what they purported to be, lectures dealing with *literature*, not with occultism as such.

Further that such a reckless caricature of the work of a very distinguished lecturer and writer should appear in a periodical whose motto is “There is no religion higher than truth” is piquant to say the least of it, if, in these days unsurprising! And the “fine frenzy” of misrepresentation has seized hold of your paragraphist to such good—or—evil—purpose, that even the lecturer's name is inaccurately given.

Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji

With all due respect to our irate correspondent we unqualifiedly reaffirm our position in the paragraph in question. Ignorance or prejudice alone can account for the complete omission of H. P. Blavatsky's writings from so comprehensive a course in “The Literature of the Occult.”

Any one who has read *The Voice of the Silence*, Madame Blavatsky's exquisite translation from the Mahayana *Book of the Golden Precepts*, will readily concede her a place, even a high place in English letters. Admittedly that gem of devotional books does not fall specifically within the purview of such a course as Mr. Bromage's, but many of her writings most decidedly do. Her *Nightmare Tales*, including “The Ensouled Violin,” “The Cave of the Echoes,” and “A Bewitched Life,” to say nothing of her *Caves and Jungles of Hindustan* and *People of the Blue Mountains* are literature of the occult in the eyes of any but the hopelessly prejudiced. There are other stories in *Lucifer*, the magazine she edited. That unquestionably her motive in recount-

ing these stories was not to amuse but to invite investigation of hidden powers in nature and in man detracts no whit from their interest for the fiction reader or from their literary merit.

Even the omission from the course of all fiction from Madame Blavatsky's pen, however, would not have moved us to protest had some at least of her more serious writings, such as *Isis Unveiled* and *Raja-Yoga or Occultism* been included among the books of reference. The long list of the latter which the syllabus includes testifies to the fact that the course was not confined, as Mr. Sorabji implies, to consideration of the writings studied purely from the standpoint of their literary value, but aimed at giving those who took it some idea of the background of such writings and of the rationale of the phenomena with which they deal.

We maintain that it was an injustice to Mr. Bromage's students not to give them access to the most valuable reference books available on the phenomena which are the subject-matter of the literature of the occult.

Those who read occult fiction merely for the thrill, with no serious interest in the phenomena described, are like so many children playing with fire because it is pretty, instead of men seeking intelligently for rational explanations of the mysterious. Madame Blavatsky's own words about the occult phenomena which her profound knowledge, spiritual and psychic, enabled her to perform apply with equal force to her occult fiction :—

It was supposed that intelligent people, especially men of science, would, at least, have recognised the existence of a new and deeply interesting field of enquiry and research when they witnessed physical effects produced at will, for which they were not able to account.... It was in the hope of arousing and utilizing this spirit of curiosity that occult phenomena were shown. It was believed that this manipulation of forces of nature which lie below the surface—that surface of things which modern science scratches and pecks at so industriously and so proudly—would have led to enquiry into the nature and the laws of those forces, unknown to science, but perfectly known to occultism. That the phenomena did excite curiosity in the minds of those who witnessed them, is certainly true, but it was, unfortunately, for the most part of an idle kind. The greater number of the witnesses developed an insatiable appetite for phenomena for their own sake, without any thought of studying the philosophy or the science of whose truth and power the phenomena were merely trivial and, so to say, accidental illustrations. (*Raja-Yoga or Occultism*, pp. 46, 47)

Similarly, “the literature of the occult” would have a better claim and hold upon serious minds if they were given recourse to the rational and verifiable explanations of the phenomena which Madame Blavatsky's works pre-eminently afford.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED

"Let us compare all things, and putting aside emotionalism as unworthy of the logician and the experimentalist, hold fast only to that which passes the ordeal of ultimate analysis."—H.P.B.

चित्रं वटतरोर्मूले वृद्धाः शिष्या गुरुर्युवा ।

गुरोस्तु मौनं व्याख्यानं शिष्यास्तु चिन्तनसंशयाः ॥

"Ah! the wonder of the Banyan Tree. There sits the Guru Deva, a youth, and the disciples are elders; the teaching is silence, and still the disciples' doubts are dispelled."

Q. In *The Voice of the Silence* four Halls are mentioned—of Sorrow (p. 4), of Ignorance, of Learning, and of Wisdom (pp. 6-7). What is the difference between the first and the second? Is not the Hall of Sorrow, the Hall of Ignorance also?

Ans. They are the same and yet there is an important difference. All human beings live and toil, experiencing pleasures and pains, both of which bring suffering and sorrow. It is the Hall in which men and women develop a strong sense of "I-ness" and see themselves as separated from all others. Egotism is mistaken for Ego-hood. In that condition they do not even suspect that they are on the wrong track. All they know is that somehow or other sorrow is (first of the Four Noble Truths of the Buddha)—why it should exist and how it can be overcome are subjects which do not interest them seriously. Primarily they are concerned with "getting on in the world," which implies strengthening the sense of acquisitiveness through combative struggles to get to the top. To elbow aside other people to get to the front is considered not only legitimate but also righteous. The garish light of the world is mistaken for real sunlight. They are in darkness and even "the twilight that precedes the valley of true light" is unknown to them. In this condition they do not suspect that "this earth is but the dismal entrance" to something real, something true and good and beautiful. Building a strong personality, *i.e.*, developing egotism or *ahankara*, they allow pride and prejudice to rule their Will, and so pain and suffering overtake them and sorrow overpowers them. Until a man asks the meaning of pain and the purpose of existence, sorrow and more sorrow is his lot. Affliction is an awakener and therefore it is said, "Woe to those who live without suffering." Sorrow compels a man to look into the cause of sorrow—(second of the Four Noble Truths of the Buddha) and therefore Shri Krishna says in the *Gita* that among the four classes of men dear to Him are the afflicted—not the ordinarily afflicted, but those who, though

afflicted, work righteousness, seek Krishna and become dear to Him.

The lot of those who go from bad to worse in the Hall of Sorrow and who do not know what the Hall of Ignorance is has been described—they become "men of Myalpa," denizens of Avitchi. The *Gita* speaks of them as those who, "inclining towards demoniacal dispositions, do not have recourse to me." Their nature and devolution are referred to in the Sixteenth Discourse.

But when through suffering and sorrow a person awakens and enquires the why and how, the whence and whither of life, he enters the Hall of Ignorance. This very state and attitude of questioning imply his recognition of his own ignorance. Unless a man knows that he does not know there is little hope for him. The first and primary object of our propaganda through the U. L. T. is to arouse men and women to the recognition of their ignorance. Rich men, poor men, good and evil men, strong and weak men, victorious or crushed men—all, all have to pass from the Hall of Sorrow to the Hall of Ignorance, or else devolute into the condition of the Lost Soul. The Hall of Ignorance shows the light by which we recognize that so far we have been in darkness. In the Hall of Ignorance the process of *unlearning* begins and it is not a short process. To unlearn, to dissociate ourselves from false knowledge takes time. Theosophical knowledge reveals how deep has been our ignorance: those things which we prized most turn out to be valueless; wealth, fame, power, even human love, reveal themselves as Dead Sea Fruit. In this Hall of Ignorance we have been living without recognizing its true nature, and now we must so live in it that we must die—we must give up our life so that we may live.

After unlearning what we had gathered as knowledge, after differentiating between the personality and the Inner Ego, we begin to live anew—we are as one newly born, knowledge of Karma tells us that we shall have to pay our debts, to accept our deserts, and in doing so to utilise the process as a Rite of Purification, Baptism by Water.

The same world, the same human kingdom, brings us fresh lessons. The thinking mind plays an important part at this stage, as the senses ensouled by desires were important in the earlier stage. The fancy and the phantasy of the mind make the Hall of Learning which is explained as *Probationary Learning*, and therefore dangerous; but we are not concerned with that here.

The questioner will do well to study the passage in *The Voice of the Silence* (pp. 4-7) in the light of what is said above and it is hoped that the answer may prove helpful.

THE MESSENGER

AN INCIDENT : WAS IT AN OMEN ?

The year 1831 in which H. P. Blavatsky was born was a year of much suffering for the people of Russia as well as of Europe. Death carried away thousands through epidemics of more than one disease. Her birth, it was said by the members of her family, was quickened by several deaths in the house. H.P.B. entered the world full of coffins and desolation. It was feared that the baby herself would not live : for one thing it looked weak ; for another it apparently was no denizen of this world. The family record states :—

“ A hurried baptism had to be resorted to, therefore, lest the child die with the burden of original sin on her soul. The ceremony of baptism in ‘ orthodox ’ Russia is attended with all the paraphernalia of lighted tapers, and ‘ pairs ’ of godmothers and godfathers, every one of the spectators and actors being furnished with consecrated wax candles during the whole proceedings. Moreover, every one has to stand during the baptismal rite, no one being allowed to sit in the Greek religion—as they do in Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches—during the church and religious service. The room selected for the ceremony in the family mansion was large, but the crowd of devotees eager to witness it was still larger. Behind the priest officiating in the centre of the room, with his assistants, in their golden robes and long hair, stood the three pairs of sponsors and the whole household of vassals and serfs. The child-aunt of the baby only a few years older than her niece aged twenty-four hours,—placed as ‘ proxy ’ for an absent relative, was in the first row immediately behind the venerable *protopope*. Feeling nervous and tired of standing still for nearly an hour, the child settled on the floor, unperceived by the elders, and became probably drowsy in the overcrowded room on that hot July day. The ceremony was nearing its close. The sponsors were just in the act of renouncing the Evil One and his deeds, a renunciation emphasised in the Greek Church by thrice spitting upon the invisible enemy, when the little lady, toying with her lighted taper at the feet of the crowd, inadvertently set fire to the long flowing robes of the priest, no one remarking the accident until it was too late. The result was an immediate conflagration, during which several persons—chiefly the old priest—were severely burnt. That was another bad omen, according to the superstitious beliefs of orthodox Russia ; and the innocent cause of it—the future Mme. Blavatsky—was doomed from that day in the eyes of all the town to an eventful life, full of vicissitude and trouble.”

Was it an omen ? Was this incident a symbol of the future activities of one who was to expose the hypocrisy of Christian priestcraft and preach against the mummery of church ritualism ? Or of the future martyrdom she was to suffer throughout her life and which began with the abuse she received on this occasion for no fault of her own ?

SUGGESTION

Dr. Leopold Thoma recounted recently in *The Listener* his successful hypnotizing of a chimpanzee in the London Zoo. There is nothing surprising, however reprehensible, in a chimpanzee being hypnotized as men can be. Hypnotic power can be used upon ordinary animals as well. (See, for example, *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, pp. 470-471)

Dr. Thoma has experimented also with “ acoustic fascination ” with human subjects. With eyes blindfolded and back to the audience, speaking slowly and impressively, he can “ take possession of the conscious and subconscious mind of the subjects.” Thus he succeeded in throwing one hundred and eighty people simultaneously into hypnotic sleep. He recorded his suggestions on gramophone records and found that he could influence people at a distance. His conclusion is :—

I have proved that the whole phenomenon of hypnotism is merely a kind of auto-suggestion, because I have proved for the first time in the world [a large claim !] that the presence of the hypnotist is not essential. And I claim that in the right use of this auto-suggestion lies the future of psycho-therapy.

True, not all hypnotism involves mesmeric passes or the transfer of the mesmeric fluid. The public has, therefore, not even the restricted protection promised in H.P.B.’s statement (*Lucifer* II, p. 414) that “ No magnetizer can work upon a person whom he has never seen or come in contact with—and this is one blessing, at any rate.” But how can suggestions from the operator be termed “ *auto-suggestion* ” ? What says H. P. B. about suggestion :—

Experiments in “ suggestion ” by persons ignorant of the occult laws, are the most dangerous of pastimes. (*U. L. T. Pamphlet No. 19*, p. 14)

Whenever the healer interferes—consciously or unconsciously—with the free mental action of the person he treats, it is—Black Magic. (*Five Messages*, p. 25)

Is it not evident that...the divine Law of Retribution, which we call KARMA, must visit with hundredfold severity one who deprives reasonable, thinking men of their *free will* and powers of ratiocination ? From the occult standpoint, the charge is simply one of black magic...Verily the man or woman in the unconscious possession of such dangerous powers had much better never be born. (*Lucifer*, March 1889, Vol. IV, pp. 8-9)

Attention is invited also to the section on “ Suggestion ” in “ The Signs of the Times ” reprinted from *Lucifer* in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT for January 1935. (Vol. V, p. 35)

MODERN EUROPEAN SCIENCE

Under the title, "How Far Has Science Gone?" the *Svenska Dagbladet* recently summarized the returns from its questionnaire sent to some three score leading scientists from Jerusalem to California and from Stockholm to Rome. These had been asked to answer three questions :— (1) what gaps in scientific knowledge in their respective fields should be filled first ; (2) what problems are most immediate and of chief importance ; and (3) what possible tasks should be set men of science as immediate or remote objectives. The answers, from which we reproduce a few translated extracts, are of great significance as indicating the growing trend of science away from materialism, its new humility before the mysteries it cannot solve, and its increased sense of responsibility.

Prof. Max von Laue of Berlin, winner of the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1915 :—

The gaps in physics are so many that it would be absolutely impossible to count them.

Prof. Fritz Kögl of Utrecht :—

In the field of chemistry there are so many problems and new questions, that I don't like to speak of the "Gaps" in our knowledge, but rather look upon our so far acquired knowledge only as isolated islands in the great sea of the unknown.

Prof. A. Szent-Györgyi of the University of Szeged in Hungary :—

One of the most sensational discoveries in the biochemical investigations is that all life in the animals as well as in the vegetables is in reality one.

Dr. H. Bergmann of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem :—

We are in need of a psychology which, freed from all materialistic prejudices, is prepared to acknowledge man as a spiritual being in his essential nature....The most important and burning problem for investigation is man himself.

Dr. F. W. Aston of Cambridge, winner of the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1922 :—

Man's increasing power over nature must not be misused.

Prof. Szent-Györgyi of Hungary :—

To find out how to prevent the misuse of scientific discoveries for destructive purposes is the most pressing task of scientific research. According to what use one

makes of the scientific discoveries, they may either lead to the greatest blessings or become the cause of the most awful miseries. So long as the tendency is to follow the latter direction, which is the tendency of humanity to-day, further progress is not only meaningless but pernicious. This is, however, a social problem, but until it is solved science ought rather to help in its solution than to continue to make further progress in its own field.

Since the dangers of the knowledge already at public disposal are recognized by scientists themselves, is it not understandable that the more powerful occult forces are kept from falling into profane hands by the deliberate efforts of Those who possess the keys to them? Of one such force H. P. B. says :—

For surely Psychists and Spiritualists—of whom there are a good number in the European armies—would be the first to experience personally the fruits of such mysteries revealed. Thousands of them would find themselves (and perhaps with the populations of whole countries to keep them company) in blue Ether very soon, were such a Force to be even entirely discovered, let alone made publicly known. The discovery in its completeness is by several thousand—or shall we say hundred thousand?—years *too premature*. It will be at its appointed place and time only when the great roaring flood of starvation, misery, and underpaid labour ebbs back again—as it will when happily at last the just demands of the many are attended to ; when the proletariat exists but in name, and the pitiful cry for bread, that rings throughout the world unheeded, has died away. This may be hastened by the spread of learning, and by new openings for work and emigration, with better prospects than exist now, *and on some new continent that may appear*. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 563).

Leaving the matter of psychic forces aside for a moment, the poor use made of scientific knowledge by organized business—suppliers to the world of food-stuffs, patent medicines, etc.—is enormous and even dangerous, the like of which was unknown to the ancients. The old world must have been a better place to live in ; for how true are the words of H.P.B. (*U. L. T. Pamphlet No. 7*, pp. 9-10) :—

Time rolls on, leaving with every day the ages of ignorance and superstition further behind, but bringing us in their stead only centuries of ever-increasing selfishness and pride. Mankind grows and multiplies, waxes in strength and (book-) wisdom ; it claims to have penetrated into the deepest mysteries of physical nature ; it builds railroads and honeycombs the globe with tunnels ; it erects gigantic towers and bridges, minimizes distances, unites the ocean and divides whole continents. Cables and telephones, canals and railways more and more with every hour unite mankind into one "happy" family, but only to furnish the selfish and the wily with every means of stealing a better march on the less selfish and improvident.... At what time of the history of mankind, during its darkest days of ignorance, when was there known such ghastly starvation as we see now ?

But turn to the knowledge aspect and even in learning the ancients were superior to men of modern academies.

ANCIENT HINDU SCIENCE

Some noteworthy points are made in Sir P. C. Ray's article on the "Progress of Chemistry in Ancient India." (*Science and Culture*, April 1937) He brings out that not only was India the cradle of the mathematical sciences, including arithmetic and algebra, and the originator of the "Arabic" numerals, but also it achieved many centuries ago a high development of the physical sciences, notably chemistry and metallurgy.

The attention of claimants of experimental methods as the peculiar glory of modern Western science is invited to this quotation from Dhundukantha's treatise on mineral preparations, *Rasendra Chintamani* :—

They are alone to be regarded as real teachers who can show by experiment what they teach. They are the deserving pupils, who, having learnt the experiments from their teachers can actually perform them. The rest, both the teachers and the pupils, are merely stage actors.

Rasarnava, a treatise of about 1,200 A.D. refers to the identification of metals by the coloration of their flames. Sir P. C. Ray is "not aware of similar tests being applied anywhere at such an early date." Two thousand years before Dr. Joseph Black in 1755 gave Europe its first scientific explanation of the difference between caustic and mild alkalis, the old Hindu work, the *Susruta*, distinguished clearly between them and gave directions for the preparation of each.

The process as given in the *Susruta* is so scientific that it can be bodily transferred to any modern textbook on chemistry.

Similarly the elaborate description in the *Rasaratnasamuchchaya* of the process of extracting zinc from the ore (calamine) "might be quoted almost verbatim in any treatise on modern chemistry." This is the more noteworthy because the very name of the metal zinc occurred in Europe for the first time in the writings of Paracelsus, early in the sixteenth century.

The iron in the iron pillar near Delhi, reputed to be over 1,000 years old, has properties which enable it to resist corrosion much better than modern wrought iron. Sir Robert Hadfield, after experimenting at his works upon iron from this pillar has declared "with a full sense of responsi-

bility" that in spite of all the scientific advance which has been made in the metallurgical field the pillar of Delhi is, so far as he can judge, a metal of much better quality than anything which could be produced to-day.

Sir P. C. Ray quotes the illustrious French chemist, Jean Baptiste André Dumas, who, exclaimed before the London Chemical Society in 1869 :—

What an awakening for Europe! After two thousand years she found herself again in the same position to which she had been raised by the profound intellect of India and the acute genius of Greece.

The honest modern scientist could say with Bernard of Chartres, who lived eight centuries ago :—

We are like dwarfs who have climbed on to the shoulders of giants so that we may see more than they and further; but not because of the sharpness of our own eyesight or the tallness of our stature, because we have been lifted up and exalted by the greatness of the giants.

As H. P. B. inquired in *Isis Unveiled* (I, 239) :—

If modern masters are so much in advance of the old ones, why do they not restore to us the lost arts of our postdiluvian forefathers? Why do they not give us the unfading colours of Luxor—the Tyrian purple; the bright vermilion and dazzling blue which decorate the walls of this place, and are as bright as on the first day of their application? The indestructible cement of the pyramids and the ancient aqueducts; the Damascus blade, which can be turned like a corkscrew in its scabbard without breaking; the gorgeous, unparalleled tints of the stained glass that is found amid the dust of old ruins and beams in the windows of ancient cathedrals; and the secret of the true malleable glass? And if chemistry is so little able to rival even with the early mediæval ages in some arts, why boast of achievements which, according to strong probability, were perfectly known thousands of years ago? The more archæology and philology advance, the more humiliating to our pride are the discoveries which are daily made, the more glorious testimony do they bear in behalf of those who, perhaps on account of the distance of their remote antiquity, have been until now considered ignorant flounders in the deepest mire of superstition.

The "Doctrine of the Eye" is for the crowd; the "Doctrine of the Heart" for the elect. The first repeat in pride: "Behold, I know"; the last, they who in humbleness have garnered, low confess: "Thus have I heard."

—The Voice of the Silence

SEX PURITY AND YOUTH

The ancient Indian ideal of the student as the *Brahmachari*, living a life of celibacy and purity, has suffered by contact with Western educational systems which stress intellectual training above moral discipline. In his convocation address at the Haridwar Gurukula University, Mr. Satyamurthi truly said :—

It is not a mere physical state, it is also a mental state, and to the extent to which you produce trained Brahmacharis, who at the end of that period of training here, will enter the Grihasta life, you are building secure foundations of Hindu and Indian life.

One reason why the present-day educational systems fall short of the ancient ideal is indicated in a forthright article on "Our Present-Day Education," by Mr. Hanumanprasad Poddar (*Kalyana Kalpataru*, March 1937). He writes :—

According to the educational system of our ancient Gurukulas it was not permissible for the student to read any sex literature. The present-day boys and girls also do not require any lesson on erotic subjects or subjects pertaining to sex. What they require is to know how to control the sexual passion.....It is the duty of artists and litterateurs to place only pure and elevating thoughts before young boys and girls, and thus help them to rise to the full height of their moral and spiritual stature.

Gandhiji maintains in *Harijan* (20th March) that in the Grihasta stage what he describes as "Married Brahmacharya" can and should be observed. When sexual union takes place only when there is a desire for offspring, a person "though leading a married life attains the same state as and is equal in merit to one who completely abstains from the sexual act, which is only a means for procreation, never for self-indulgence."

In *Harijan* (27th March) Gandhiji quotes a letter from an American teacher with thirty years' experience, commending Gandhiji's attitude, which is also that of Theosophy, towards birth-prevention by any other means than self-control.

Just lately I read a review of your conference with Mrs. Sanger, the Birth Control advocate. I was so deeply moved that I am writing you to express my appreciation for your stand....When Mrs. Sanger was in my neighbourhood, the high school boys and girls took advantage of the information to carry on their illicit intercourse with no fear of results. Should Mrs. Sanger have her way, the time would come when the whole world would seek the sensual and love would die....I fear she mistakes passion for love, for love is of the spirit and never born of lust...Mrs. Sanger is wrong in saying that most doctors believe abstinence is harmful. I find many leading doctors and scientists belonging to the American Social Hygiene Association hold that control is beneficial....You are one of the few who have this higher spiritual viewpoint on the sex question....I reach out to you across the great waters in fellowship.

The teacher quotes from one of his talks to boys :—If you are merely seeking the sensations of

the flesh with no thought of creating, or even trying to avoid the aim of creation, you are perverting nature and killing your spiritual powers.

The truth of the last statement will be apparent to those who have studied the article on "The Pineal Gland and Morality" in our March issue.

Commenting on his correspondent's reference to his own talk as "like a prophet crying in the wilderness," Gandhiji writes :—

A voice in the wilderness has a potency which voices uttered in the midst of 'the madding crowd' lack. For the voice in the wilderness has meditation, deliberation and unquenchable faith behind it, whilst the babel of voices has generally nothing but the backing of the experience of personal enjoyment or the false and sentimental pity for the unwanted children and their suffering mothers. Argument of personal experience has as much weight as an act of a drunkard. The argument of pity is a trap into which it is dangerous to fall. Sufferings of unwanted children and of equally unwanted motherhood are punishments or warnings devised by beneficent nature. Disregard of the law of discipline and restraint is suicide. Ours is a state of probation. If we refuse to bear the yoke of discipline we court failure like cowards, we avoid battle and give up the only joy of living.

Many of the doctrines of the modern Chinese teacher, Tuan Szetsun, who founded the Moral Society some thirty years ago and whose followers are said to number many thousands are reminiscent of Confucius' sayings, despite the personal element introduced by the modern sage's conviction that his "Grand Tutor" has commissioned him to save the world. The "Principles of the Great Learning," with which this teacher impressed him, included the familiar self-cultivation, family regulation, government and the pacification of the world. He blames the prevailing chaos upon the failure of cultivated persons to live up to their responsibilities. He is convinced that "Sincerity and reverence will lead the world in tranquillity."

Aside from apparent belief in a God who can be communicated with in thought and moved by prayer, a belief incongruous with most of his teaching, there is much in the septuagenarian teacher's doctrine which is in harmony with Theosophy.

He speaks of Heavenly retribution as based upon cause and effect. "Heaven blesses the good and curses the wicked." He would have people aim at "the welfare of mankind, the carrying out of the Great Way and Universal Brotherhood, regardless of religious sects, racial differences, and territorial divisions."

"Self-independence" he calls "the road to virtue and the stepping-stone to holiness."

Man is the mind of the Universe....So man is the body of the Great Way who is so supreme and so esteemed that when his cultivation reaches its perfectness he can represent the Great Way to stabilize the Universe and to raise all creations.

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

In *Freedom in Our Time* (Fabian Tract No. 244) Olive and Ivan Cruchley analyze the legal position in regard to personal liberty, liberty of discussion, of public meeting, of association, of property and of presenting petitions. They show "a lacuna ever widening between the theory and practice of English liberty" and, in the last twenty years, an "unmistakably retrogressive tendency in the legislation affecting freedom."

Liberty, never static, slides slowly backward... The time has come for a decisive stand against any further encroachments upon civil liberties... These liberties are a very precious heritage and any process of devitalisation whether patent or latent must be fully resisted.

The Cruchleys' point is well taken. The optimum conditions for soul growth include the maximum of individual freedom compatible with the common good. From the Theosophical point of view the menace of the totalitarian state lies less in its patent injustices which arouse resentment in a few than in the passive acquiescence of the many in a domination which spreads like creeping palsy through the social frame. A child who is always carried will never learn to walk; so the citizens of a paternalistic state are deprived of their rightful opportunities of developing self-reliance and discrimination by making their own choices and learning from the results of their self-induced and self-devised action.

Sir E. Denison Ross, writing editorially on "Religion To-day and To-morrow" (*Religions*, April 1937) questions "whether religion in its popular or exoteric expressions can survive the impact of destructive criticism, of a social system which nurtures the less fit and encourages them to reproduce their kind, and of mechanized, material civilisation." What he concludes should be among the main objects of the "Society for Promoting the Study of Religions" reads like an echo of the second object of the present-day Theosophical movement:—

To discover the sources, currents and cross-currents of religions past and present, to analyse the religious problems of to-day and to-morrow, in Britain as well as elsewhere, and to strive to co-relate what is vital to a living faith with all that is essential in ethics.

Coincidentally the Editor of *The Personalist*, Mr. Ralph Tyler Flewelling, in its Spring 1937 issue, asks "Can Christianity Save Itself?" He traces the present situation to "a moral debacle on the part of the people," among the manifestations of which are "a loss of faith in moral values, a new dependence on compulsion," and he speaks of the present-day "demand for amusement which over-

rides every serious interest." A revolution, intellectual, social and religious, is in progress.

Are Christians willing to submit every institution however hoary or loved, every dogma however comforting, into the furnace of the world's thought to take an even chance with all other religions, even with atheism itself, that whatever is pure gold in any of them will stand the test? This, Christianity is called upon to do, not in the interest of saving an institution but in the interest of bringing what truth she possesses home to all men... We must now face Moslemism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Taoism, in the spirit of love and humble learning, content to let our favourite forms perish so only the love of Christ shall be exalted.

Did not H. P. B. declare in 1888:—

It is only by studying the various great religions and philosophies of humanity, by comparing them dispassionately and with an unbiassed mind, that men can hope to arrive at the truth. It is especially by finding out and noting their various points of agreement that we may achieve this result. (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 49)

Once get a man to see that none of them has the whole truth, but that they are mutually complementary, that the complete truth can be found only in the combined views of all after that which is false in each of them has been sifted out—then true brotherhood in religion will be established. (*Ibid.*, p. 38)

"Writers Who Find Inspiration in Sleep" is the sub-title of a very interesting article on "The Literature of Dreams," by Mr. Vincent Brome (*John O' London's Weekly*, January 15th). Besides the well-known instance of Coleridge's *Kubla Khan*, Mr. Brome cites Daniel Defoe, Shelley, Dickens, Tennyson, Charles Lamb, Walter de la Mare, Æ, Yeats, George Moore, W. B. Maxwell, Miss Marjorie Bowen and others who have put dream experience to considerable purpose in their works. "That perfect example of melodrama, *The Green Goddess*, came to William Archer in a dream." Stevenson's profoundly occult "*Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* was built up from a series of dreams in which the idea of a voluntary change becoming involuntary repeated itself insistently."

Mr. Brome brings forward several hypotheses upon the dream process, and repeats the views expressed to him by the late Æ, George Russell, whose intimate connection with Theosophy was described in *THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT* for August, 1935 and in *The Aryan Path* for December, 1935:—

Sleep showed him whole new worlds, and it is not unreasonable, he held, to postulate an intellectual creator, able to work magically on psychic substance. At times, in the midst of writing, he sensed a change in the flow of words, as though they no longer sprang from waking consciousness, but were delivered to him by some genie of the innermost self.

Æ could see no reason why these activities of the innermost self should be attributed to blind working of

the subconscious. "I might with as much wisdom," he said, "assume that if, in the darkness, I took my little son's box of alphabetical bricks, and scattered them about blindly, when the light was turned on I might find that the letters composed a noble sentence. I can reasonably take either of two possibilities, one being that the dream was self-created fantasy only, and the other that it was the mirroring in the brain of an experience of soul in a real sphere of being."

Pierre Lhande, the well-known Jesuit preacher, in the *L'Inde Sacrée* boasts of the trickery resorted to by Jesuit missionaries. How they are encouraged to take advantage of the noblest qualities of their victims such as Devotion and Sacrifice, twisting them to their own ends is detailed in numerous examples from which we choose the following. Father Trincal

knowing the profound impression a life of prayer and mortification makes on the Indian mind, constructed a hut at the entrance of the village where he shut himself up with a servant... "The Sannyasi is meditating" he told the curious. "Hush, do not disturb his communion with God." ...After waiting a few days one enquirer was permitted to enter. *As if emerging from a contemplative trance* (italics ours) he murmured in bated breath: "All is vanity save the love and service of God." He attracted many visitors whom he instructed and several of whom he converted.

Christian missionaries in general encourage where they can the debasing system of caste. We are told of two priests faced with building a church to house both Vellages and Nadars.

This church consists of two naves...converging toward a common altar. A double-walled passage leads from the entrance to the sanctuary (dividing the two castes). Vellages and Nadars each undertook the construction of their part of the church...From 1877 to 1910 this church has been the scene of gravest disorders.

But Jesuit methods remain—caste remains—H. P. B.'s strictures in *Isis Unveiled* remain.

China's early use of ephedrine, the drug which orthodox medicine so recently has found efficacious for asthmatic complaints, is described by a correspondent of *The Manchester Guardian Weekly*, (25th March). The "new" drug is obtained from the herb Ma Huang, "the yellow hemp," which has been used for ages in the East for asthma, bronchitis and whooping-cough. Records are said to show that it was identified and recommended by a great Chinese Emperor over 5,000 years ago.

The *Pentsao*, in which Ma Huang and hundreds of other drugs are classified according to their origin and their medicinal use, is attributed to Shen-Nung, one of the five great Rulers of Chinese antiquity. The stories about these great Rulers, whom some modern savants would brush aside as largely legendary, are comparable with the traditions of Divine Kings in many ancient lands. H. P. B. refers to

"the *divine* Dynasties such as were claimed by the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Greeks, etc., to have preceded their *human* kings," and she adds: "They are still believed in by the modern Hindus, and are enumerated in their sacred books." (*The Secret Doctrine*, II, 316)

A little over ten years ago this drug was unknown to European medicine. Yet it was selected from a systematised *Materia Medica* and personally recommended by a competent medical authority in old Cathay well over a thousand years before the civilisation of Greece and Rome had taken place.

No wonder that the writer remarks of the story of Ma Huang:

Well does it point out how so much of the advance of Western civilisation is but a rediscovery of the knowledge of the East.

Writing on "Intellectual Starvation in Prison" (*The Penal Reformer*, April 1937), Mr. Gerald Heard calls mental starvation an offence against the community not less grave than physical starvation. He regards criminality as mainly a mental condition and to occupational therapy and libraries Mr. Heard would add furnishing the prisoners with pencil and paper.

To write out what comes into one's mind is undoubtedly one of the easiest and best ways in which a mind baffled and suddenly uprooted may see itself or begin to see.

Seeing oneself is half the solution but recognizing a universe of law and finding one's orientation in it is the other half, and just as indispensable. Interesting in this connection is a letter (*The Theosophist*, v, pp. 120-121, February, 1884), in which Mr. W. D. Abrew described the effect which an able exposition of Karma had upon a notorious Ceylonese thief and desperado, one Peris Sinno. Addressing the prisoners in the jail where Peris Sinno was confined, Colonel Olcott had cited the case of Angulimala, the notorious outlaw who had reformed after hearing the Buddha preach the Perfect Law. He had brought out also that while the law is inexorable there is hope for a man if the course of his life be turned to a beneficent channel. Peris Sinno had listened intently and had been a changed man from that hour. Subsequently eight years of his sentence was remitted for good behaviour and when freed he was meticulously honest and truthful. He himself explained to Mr. Abrew that "his hopelessness of any chance for redemption in this life or of any happiness in a future existence, had made him more and more reckless, but since the time he realised what possibilities were held out by the Law of Karma, he saw that his was not an entirely helpless state, and that his future depended solely upon him." Nothing, Mr. Abrew believed, could turn him from the path of rectitude, which he had found to be that of happiness.

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DECLARATION

THE policy of this Lodge is independent devotion to the cause of Theosophy, without professing attachment to any Theosophical organization. It is loyal to the great founders of the Theosophical Movement, but does not concern itself with dissensions or differences of individual opinion.

The work it has on hand and the end it keeps in view are too absorbing and too lofty to leave it the time or inclination to take part in side issues. That work and that end is the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the philosophy of Theosophy, and the exemplification in practice of those principles, through a truer realization of the SELF ; a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.

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*"The true Theosophist belongs to no cult
or sect, yet belongs to each and all."*

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