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# The Theosophical Quarterly

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### THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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JULY, 1924

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BREAD CAST UPON THE WATERS

"CAST thy bread upon the waters," says the Ecclesiast, "for thou shalt find it after many days." Beginning some fifty years ago, The Theosophical Society cast the bread of life upon the waters with open hands; as the wheel of the half-century returns, the word of the Preacher is being fulfilled; the thoughts concerning life and spiritual powers, so generously dispensed, are coming back to us, from the minds of many men. So true is this, that it would not be difficult to fill a series of our pages with clippings from the daily papers, which would hardly be distinguishable from pages of the *Secret Doctrine*. Let us illustrate,—not with the thought that these gleanings represent accurate scientific knowledge, nor even that they are necessarily complete or correct reports, but rather to show what the public of our day wants to believe and is inclined to believe.

Not many days before these "Notes and Comments" were written, a telegram from Philadelphia, distributed among our newspapers, announced the discovery, by Dr. Howard Chiera, the Assyriologist, of a tablet recording the reigns of eight antediluvian kings, evidently comparable with the Patriarchs of Genesis, but covering far longer periods. One newspaper drew attention to the fact that, according to one reckoning, the total period was 432,000 years. This piece of news, so eagerly spread by telegraph, can be found in the *Secret Doctrine*, which was published in 1888 and 1889: "Could Chapter V of the First Book of Moses be compared with the genealogies in our Archaic Bible, the period from Adam unto Noah would be found noticed therein, though of course under different names, the respective years of the Patriarchs being turned into periods, and the whole being symbolical and allegorical." The period of 432,000 years is alluded to again and again; it is the key to the Four Yugas of the *Puranas* of India. The connection between the Indian and the Babylonian wisdom is also made clear in the *Secret Doctrine*.

Again, we find a lucid exposition of the Avatar doctrine, this time from

Kansas City: "In Hindu mythology Vishnu is the second god of the 'trimurti,' or trinity, in which he figures as the preserver of the universe. His friendship for man was manifested in his avatars, or incarnations, which according to some authorities number ten, and according to others twenty-two. Of these avatars, the two principal ones were the seventh, as Rama, the hero of the Ramayana, and the eighth as Krishna, the hero of the Mahabharata." This piece of "news" also was reprinted in the New York papers.

These same papers some time ago quoted Mr. Algernon Blackwood as writing in one of the London papers concerning magic: "Its manifestations must occur according to clear-cut laws, and magic, therefore, must be due to the operation of laws not only unknown to most of us, but unknown even to science. These laws the magician, thanks to unusual study of himself in relation to nature, has presumably discovered. If science remains ignorant of them, this is due, claim the believers, to several facts. First, that science declines to study them, on the plea that no evidence worth study yet exists; second, that in the few instances where it has tried to study them, its method has been wrong; third, that only to a state of consciousness higher and more extended than our normal one can such knowledge be possible at all, and that the whole inquiry, therefore, lies outside the scope of science."

Among hundreds of passages in the *Secret Doctrine* that might be adduced in comment, we need quote only one, taken almost at random: "The 'invention of magic'! A strange term to use, as though the unveiling of the eternal and actual mysteries of Nature could be *invented*!" But Madame Blavatsky would never agree that the exploration of a state of consciousness higher and more extended than our normal one, lies outside the scope of science. Theosophy, divine science, is precisely the exploration, in the most exact way possible, of those states of consciousness which are higher and more extended than our normal one.

#### ODIC RAYS

Nor is it true to-day that the foremost men of science decline to study extra-normal phenomena. Here is one proof among many, once more taken from our daily newspapers, this time in a cablegram from Paris:

An Italian named Erto is said to have "produced luminous emanations twenty-five feet in length from his body while in a hypnotic trance and thereby confounded fifteen eminent savants, headed by Dr. Geley, president of the International Institute of Metaphysical Research, and Professor Charles Richet, to whom nothing in the metaphysical world is unworthy of research. Here is a man, according to these fifteen reputable investigators, who can emit electrical rays under what is believed to be not only absolutely fraud-proof conditions, but which defy all reproduction even with an apparatus of high voltage. It has been tested again and again. Professor Richet himself took out a photographic plate from a new packet, put it in a printing frame and sealed it with wax. After the séance the seals were intact. After they were broken by



Professor Richet and Dr. Geley the plates were immediately developed into prints, which revealed two large splashes of light similar to those obtained by X-rays or radium. The form of a hand was then distinguished. Analyzed later at the Prefecture of Police it proved to be the facsimile neither of Erto's hand nor of any of his assistants."

We conjecture that the word "assistants" is a faulty translation from the French, and that the sentence should read, "nor of any of those present," namely, the fifteen eminent scientists. Similar linguistic limitations mark the passages which follow in the cablegram, a part of which we may quote:

"Dr. Geley has obtained fifteen photographic impressions in this manner and has prepared an article on the subject for publication. Some of it is as follows:

"I ascertained during the medium's state of trance that there were emanated from the human body, as would emanate from a physical or chemical body, radiations, the nature of which is unknown.

"These radiations, by their physical properties, easily may be allied to such radiations already described and classified. When they have been minutely studied they will, no doubt, take place along with the others and not far from the X-rays or radio-actives.

"But the human radiations are neither purely nor exclusively physical. They denote plastic properties, an organizing capacity which we have not yet noticed, unless in the complex and mysterious phenomenology of the ectoplasm, and will perhaps help us to understand more easily the latter, allying it more closely to the normal biological processes."

For those who are acquainted with the *Secret Doctrine*, parallel passages are hardly necessary. But we may cite a sentence which that work quotes from the still earlier *Isis Unveiled*, written about 1876:

"The Nerve-Aura and the Fluid of the Magnetists; the Od of Reichenbach; the Psychod and Ectenic Force of Thury; the Psychic Force of Sergeant Cox, and the atmospheric magnetism of some Naturalists; galvanism; and finally, electricity—all these are but various names for many different manifestations or effects of the same mysterious, all-pervading Cause, the Greek Archæus." In the passage which immediately precedes this quotation, there is an allusion to "the invisible, but only too tangible, fluid that radiates from the fingers of the healthy magnetizer," which brings us back to the hand-prints on Dr. Geley's photographic plates. Perhaps, if the fifteen eminent scientists were to study the two books from which we have just quoted, they might no longer be "confounded" by facts which have been known for ages.

Choosing almost at random from many garnered clippings, we come next to this cablegram, from Italy: "Signor Caselli's telluric prophecies for last March, which were deposited with a notary here (in Spezia) some time in advance of the expected disturbances, were completely and accurately confirmed by subsequent events. His studies of the recent earthquake at Abbruzzi convinced him that telluric phenomena in their electro-magnetic manifestations unmistakably influence animals before the seismic movement begins.

Professor Caselli is inclined to believe the theory, which he says was known to the ancients, that great seismic movements may be produced by electromagnetic forces developed by the stars of our planetary system during the periods of their greatest proximity to the earth."

Once more, the *Secret Doctrine*: "As we are assured by Archaic Scientists that all such geological cataclysms—from the upheaval of oceans, deluges, and shifting of continents, down to the present year's cyclones, hurricanes, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions . . . are due to, and depend on the Moon and Planets. . . ."

#### THE ONE LIFE

Turning to another contribution to our daily papers, this time coming from Dr. J. C. Bose, "a British-Indian scientist," as quoted by Dr. Arthur Selwyn Brown, we may remember that the unity of all life is one of the most insistent teachings in the *Secret Doctrine*, and in the whole cycle of Theosophical writings. Long ago, *Isis Unveiled* quoted the Kabalistic dictum: "The stone becomes a plant, the plant an animal, the animal a man, the man a god." Dr. Bose brings forward striking experimental evidence that this is literally true.

Beginning with the plants, we are told that "poets and romance writers have long delighted in personifying flowers, trees and plants. Scientists are now demonstrating that what was imagined by the poets is really true. Flowers and plants have personalities and nervous organizations. The rose, lotus and lily are proud flowers, and are quite conscious of their long lineage and the perfection of their evolution. There is also reason for believing that they are able to gauge æsthetic values.

"Dr. Bose employed his instruments upon metals with similar remarkable results. The changes in crystalline arrangements brought about by temperature changes, by shocks and by the influences of foreign substances were demonstrated. He is able so to control the crystals in iron, copper, lead and other metals and alloys that he can compel them to assume a state of fatigue or idleness, corresponding to the idleness in men and animals, or he can cause a bar of steel to become so exhilarated that it will dance about and stagger like a man under the influence of alcohol.

"Much research into the causes of crystallization in metals and the changes caused by work, heat, light and moisture upon metals has been carried on in the last few years with remarkable results. It is now clearly seen that crystals have definite characters and personalities, and suffer or flourish in accordance with their living conditions. They have well-defined lives and in many respects their social habits and characteristics closely resemble those of plants and animals."

In closing his valuable and suggestive article, Dr. Brown rises to a passage of real eloquence, which we are glad to transfer to our pages:

"Symmetry in nature was observed by the Egyptians and Greeks. Plotinus based his system of æsthetics upon it. . . . Decorative art in Babylon

and Egypt was based upon symmetry. . . . Beauty is universal. Throughout nature we find an instinctive tendency toward order, regularity and symmetry. The minutest investigations of the microscope reveal little but beauty in sections of wood, stone, gems or metals. Order and beauty are the rule in life, and disorder and degeneration are exceptions. Symmetry and beauty lead to the elevation of things and the advancement of the world. The same æsthetic laws which cause beauty to be exhibited by ice crystals, the net-patterns in metals and their alloys, in the spiral growth of plants and flowers and in the dispersal of crystals in rocks, operate universally in the promotion of beauty in everything, in the light of the stars, sun and moon, in land and sea scapes, and in the song of a bird or a violin solo. Symmetry and symmetrical form are the basis of character in men and conduct. Plotinus and other classical philosophical writers were correct in basing ethical systems upon symmetry and sympathy because, as the latest investigations into the crystalline arrangements of solids show, all matter tends to arrange itself into geometrical forms in even groups of colonies attracted together by sympathy, and ever striving to assume crystalline forms. Herein we see how nature has planned to make beauty and a striving toward perfection a universal goal."

#### THE THEOSOPHICAL METHOD

Students of Theosophy have in all ages been branded as heretics. We do not forget the arraignment of Paul, the Theosophist, by Tertullus as "a pestilent fellow, a mover of sedition, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes," the more drastic reading of the Greek being: "the heresy of the Nazarenes." Therefore, students of Theosophy have a certain instinctive sympathy with those who are charged with "heresy," until the "heretics" become as dogmatic as the "orthodox," or, as often happens, even more dogmatic. Yielding to the self-centred tendency unhappily inherent in our present humanity, when they perceive a half-truth, or even a fragment of truth, they are inclined, simply because they themselves have recognized it, at once to proclaim it as complete, to give to it the august name of Truth.

Quoting once more from a daily paper, this time in a dispatch from Cleveland, Ohio, we learn that "Bishop William Montgomery Brown, retired, former head of the diocese of Arkansas" was on trial there before a Court of Bishops on heresy charges.

We are even more interested in some of the clauses in the charges made against him, based on passages in his book, *Communism and Christianity*, because some of these passages are statements of half-truths; the writer has caught a glimpse of truth from a single angle. Unfortunately, his tendency is to leap to the conclusion that his truth is not a fragment, but the whole, and he undertakes in a somewhat assertive spirit to declare that all other sides of the same truth are false. Take, for example, such sentences as these: "The world's Saviour—God—is knowledge. There is no other Christ on earth or in any heaven above it. . . . Omar, poetic astronomer, might have added a quatrain which would have closed, 'I myself am God.' This is, in effect, what

Jesus did say: 'I and my father are one.' This is as true of you and me, and of every man, woman and child, as it was of Jesus."

If in the first sentence the writer means divine knowledge, the Logos, then he is in agreement with students of Theosophy throughout the ages; he is in agreement with Paul, who spoke of Christ as "the wisdom of God." If in the second passage, he means that the divinity which was fully realized in the Master Christ, is potentially present, though not yet realized or even recognized, in every man, woman and child, then, once again, students of Theosophy would agree with him.

But when he goes on to say: "Gods in the skies (Jesus, Jehovah, Allah, Buddha) are all right as subjective symbols of human potentialities . . . but such Gods are all wrong if regarded as objective realities existing independently of those who created them as divinities and placed them in celestial habitations," he is asserting a great deal more than he really knows; he is adrift upon the sea of fragmentary truths. Jehovah and Allah are, perhaps, personifications and to a certain degree distortions of the real, and therefore, in a sense, objective Logos. As for the two great Masters whose names he intercalates with these personifications, many students of Theosophy hold that they have a better claim to objective reality than the good prelate who was tried at Cleveland; they belong to a far more permanent category of being.

Again, when he writes: "My god, nature, is a triune divinity—matter being the father, force the son, and law the spirit," he comes close to a tenet of the *Secret Doctrine*. But when he adds: "I ceased to believe in the existence of a conscious, personal divinity. Of course, my faith in the existence of a spiritual world and hope for a future life in it went with God," we can only regret profoundly that he had not the opportunity to study at least the elements of the divine science, or that, having it, he did not recognize it and use it. We have expressed the view that the Logos is entirely real, and objective in the sense that it is no figment of subjective imagination; but to call the Logos "personal," and in that sense a "personal God," is unphilosophical, because it belongs to an order of being far transcending personality. This has always been the view of students of Theosophy; yet students of Theosophy have been as unanimous in their "faith in the existence of a spiritual world and hope of a future life." To put it quite simply, the Bishop's conclusions do not in the least follow from his premises, nor do his premises appear to be fully understood.

We are ready to believe that Bishop Brown did not reach his rather Nihilistic conclusions without much real mental and moral suffering, and it is likely that the present broadcasting of these views may cause much pain to others. We are convinced that Truth could be as well served, nay, infinitely better served, and all this suffering rendered unnecessary, by the reasonable use of the Theosophical method: "Gently to hear, kindly to judge"; the motto which stands at the beginning of the *Secret Doctrine*.

These little minds of ours have space in them only for little truths, for tiny fragments of the great Truth. Why, then, when benign law reveals to us a

little truth, must we, in our egotism and conceit, seize on it and proclaim it to be all Truth and denounce our brother's fragment of truth as a delusion? Urbanity, tolerance, gentleness of heart and mind, are fair and graceful virtues, but they are something more: they are the indispensable condition for perceiving any truth; indispensable, if we would supplement our fragments by the fragments perceived by others. The spirit of the dogmatic and self-assertive "heretic," like the spirit of the dogmatic heresy-hunter, is the most effectual barrier to truth that the human mind, in its almost infinite perversity, can create.

#### MODERN SCIENCE GROWS MORE LIBERAL

It is a pleasure to turn from the jarring discords of theological controversy to an article, recently printed in the *New York Sun*, whose title we have taken to head this paragraph. The article begins:

"Step by step, without beating of drums, science has come to embrace several ideas it repelled with contumely when Mme. Blavatsky sprang them on our daddies in the fruitful 'seventies.' These were the days when a visit to the high priestess of esoteric Buddhism was one of the intellectual treats of New York.

"Also they were the days when science banked on the cave man as a primitive type of human forefather, not much less brutish than the man with a tail or the 'missing link' that the Darwinians searched for so anxiously.

"Naught but ridicule did the official paleontologists and other 'ologists' pour upon the Russian seeress's assertions—credited by her to the holy and powerful Mahatmas who were supposed to guide her from the fastnesses of the Himalayas—that our remotest ancestors were not ape men, but highly civilized men of a veritable golden age.

"Her dialectical attacks upon Sir E. Ray Lankester, in which she claimed a vastly greater age for the human race than science had hitherto allowed it, and baffled retort by claiming a civilized origin for the colossal statues of Easter Island and for certain other relics that mystify the savants, were among the high spots of the decade.

"And now Professor Henry Fairfield Osborn, head of the American Museum of Natural History, tells us that the cave man was anything but a roughneck, that he compared favorably with us moderns in brain capacity and in moral and spiritual culture. Also Dr. Osborn embraces Bergson's conception of 'creative evolution,' which corresponds perfectly with the metaphysics of Buddhism and other Oriental philosophies expounded by Blavatsky.

"Moreover, we recently had a renowned British scientist presenting the Royal Society with a mass of evidence he had collected in support of the idea that the whole habitable earth was dominated by a lofty civilization that was the parent of all the extinct civilizations of which we have historical or archæological knowledge—a theory supporting the golden age doctrine of Blavatsky and the legend of Atlantis, as repeated by Plato and earlier chroniclers.



"Some echoes of the stir of discipleship and opposition that 'H. P. B.' aroused in New York occur in Charles R. Flint's recently published *Memories of an Active Life*. . . .

"Scientists were more hardboiled in those days than they are to-day. The other day we learned that the Harvard psychological department was carrying on hopeful experiments in thought transmission across the Atlantic. And we didn't turn a hair.

"And now we have Dr. A. J. Rivière of Paris announcing the decidedly Blavatskian doctrine that the human body contains vital forces deriving their strength from the cosmic force, and that one person can attract or annihilate a thought in the brain of another person. And in several other directions science has taken a course that would almost make the professors of Blavatsky's day turn in their graves."

The passages referring to Madame Blavatsky in Mr. Flint's book are in part as follows. There is first the story of a lawsuit regarding certain lands on Long Island:

"After the court had taken the matter under advisement, Madame left the city, but wrote several letters to Ivins asking him as to the progress of the suit, and finally astonished him by a letter giving an outline of an opinion which she said the court would render in the course of a few days, in connection with a decision in her favour. In accordance with her prediction, the court handed down a decision sustaining her claim upon grounds similar to those which she had outlined in her letter." Mr. Flint further puts Mr. Ivins on record as stating "that Madame had surprised him by her remarkable intellectual powers and apparent second sight; that she was engaged at the time of the suit in translating such works as Buckle's *History of Civilization* and Darwin's *Origin of Species*, into Russian; and that she asserted that she could tell the contents of a book without reading it, and could specify material which appeared on any given page."

These events took place before the founding of The Theosophical Society, in November, 1875, and are, therefore, germane to our consideration of the period of fifty years which has since elapsed.

The words of the Preacher are justified. The bread cast upon the waters begins to return. The spiritual knowledge and inspiration poured out so generously into the thought aura of the world half a century ago, is breaking through, working outward through many minds.

So far, the story. Now the moral: What will come through, half a century hence, depends on what we do now.

# PLOTINUS

*Who knows from whence this great creation sprang?  
That, whence all this great creation came,  
Whether its will created or was mule,  
The Most High Seer that is in highest heaven,  
He knows it—or perchance even He knows not.*

RIG VEDA.

IT has been suggested that the School of Ammonius Saccas in Alexandria was an expression of the Theosophical Movement. Fortunately, we possess internal evidence supporting this supposition. Ammonius himself committed nothing to writing, but his disciple, Plotinus, embodied part, at least, of his exoteric doctrine in the *Enneads*.<sup>1</sup> Plotinus seems to have over-emphasized the abstract and intellectual side of it, at the expense of the practical and ethical; but there is no reason to doubt Porphyry's explanation, that Plotinus made a real effort to transmit the thought of the Alexandrian sage.

Of Plotinus, the man, we know only what Porphyry, his disciple, has recorded in a short biography. He was born at Lycopolis in Egypt (A.D. 205), and died about sixty-five years later near Rome. At the age of twenty, he began the study of philosophy and attended the lectures of many famous professors in Alexandria, but always came away, saddened and discouraged, until a friend suggested the name of Ammonius Saccas. After listening to Ammonius, Plotinus is said to have exclaimed: "This is the man I have been seeking." He passed eleven years in the School of Ammonius, but in 244, being eager to know at first hand the wisdom of Persia and India, he joined the army of the Emperor Gordian in the East. After the death of Gordian in Mesopotamia, Plotinus escaped with difficulty to Antioch, and a year later founded a school of philosophy in Rome. Here, he gathered together a small group of students, to whom he entrusted much of the teaching which he had received from Ammonius. His life was quiet, ascetic, and devoid of external adventure, although he was forced, like M. Bergson in our own day, to submit to a great deal of fashionable popularity. He made, indeed, one effort to apply his ideas to social life. The Emperor Gallienus greatly honoured him, and Plotinus tried to obtain his patronage for a colony of philosophers, to be established on the site of an old Greek city in southern Italy, and to be governed in accordance with Plato's *Laws*. Opposition at court put an end to the plan, and may have preserved the philosopher from a fiasco. In general, Plotinus seems to have given little thought to the grave social and political dangers, which

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<sup>1</sup> The manuscripts of Plotinus were edited by Porphyry, who arranged them somewhat arbitrarily in six volumes, each with nine tractates or chapters. The term, *Ennead*, is derived from the Greek word for nine.

threatened the Empire of which he was a citizen. He regarded all practical problems a little contemptuously, as being beneath the dignity of a philosopher seeking union with the Eternal. Here, in fact, we touch his weakest point, where he was in contact with the lassitude and fatalism of the cultivated classes of his time, who had long since abandoned the government of Rome to plebeians and barbarians. We shall refer later to his misconception of action,—a misconception rather latent than expressed. He was a great contemplative metaphysician, but he was not a sage. He did not always draw the practical conclusions, which might have been naturally deduced from his view of man's relation to the Universe.

"Plotinus was good and kindly, gentle and amiable. . . . Ever one-pointed in his thought, pure of soul, turning towards the Divine which he loved with all his being, he strove to rise above the bitter waves of this life. . . . Four times, while I knew him, he attained to union with the Most High, not in fancy, but in a real and ineffable experience." (Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus*, 23.)

Although the terminology and the form of his thought are Platonic, Plotinus was not an imitator of Plato. It is even possible that much of the difficulty in understanding Plotinus may be due to the fact that he uses Plato's terms without Plato's meanings.

Both Plato and Plotinus assert that the psycho-physical world is only a shadow of reality, and that it is the duty and privilege of man to separate himself from the shadow and to reunite himself with the reality, which in truth he is. But Plato tends to identify reality with a concrete state of moral beauty. His remedy for the evils of existence is distinctly objective,—to attach the imagination to those forms and ideals which most clearly manifest goodness, truth and beauty. Of course, he never advocates a permanent attachment to any one form, since above every form there must always be other forms revealing the Divine more perfectly. The point is, that Plato does not emphasize the immanence of God, but rather His transcendence, so that He is primarily to be sought in a state of existence above and outside the individual consciousness. Therefore, he devises a method of approach to God, by attachment to a succession of external forms. It is a method marvellously adapted to the Western mind and to an active, objective life of the Western kind. It is significant that the Church has often used it in one or another form.

In comparison with Plato, Plotinus has an Eastern mind and brings an Eastern solution to the problem of what constitutes reality. He is abstract and introspective, and seeks the God immanent in all consciousness. There is in Plotinus a certain impatience with all formal and external existence, as if this were a barrier between the soul and God. Thus, he "retreats within," following the traditional way of the East, meditating on the Being of the One Self, which is formless, as it is deathless and infinite. The affinities of his thought are often to be found in India rather than in Greece. It appears certain that Indian philosophy was studied and applied in the School of Ammonius Saccas.

But, in spite of the Oriental cast of his mind, Plotinus uses, as the instrument

of his thought, the language of Plato, a most typical Occidental thinker. We may surmise that one purpose of Neoplatonism was to bring together East and West, to base action on Self-knowledge and to manifest Self-knowledge in action.

Consciously or unconsciously, the system of Plotinus unites many Eastern and Western elements. It is incomplete, especially on the Western side, because he underestimates the significance of human action on all planes below the intellectual. That does not mean that it must be regarded as a record of complete failure. The *Enneads* may well be considered the most thorough and consistent metaphysical work of classical antiquity. It represents, however imperfectly, the superb effort of a human spirit to rise superior to the forces of darkness and decadence, at a time when the action of those forces was more than usually manifest in the break-up of a great civilization.

The Neoplatonic philosophy has been called the "emanation doctrine," because it conceives the Universe as a graduated emanation of divine life. Each state of consciousness is emanated by a higher state, which is in turn emanated by another still higher, until the one consciousness of the undivided Self, the ultimate source of all emanations, is reached. The order of beings is thus hierarchical, each individual entity acting as a mediator, receiving consciousness from above and passing on to lower entities as much of this consciousness as they can receive and contain. "In the Universe, life resembles a great chain, in which each being is a link. All things generate that which is inferior to them and are generated by that which is superior. They remain distinct but not separate from the higher being, and pass into a lower stage of being, but without being in any way absorbed." (5.2.2.)<sup>2</sup>

The emanation doctrine affirms the unity of the world and the law of correspondences. All things are contained within the consciousness of the Divine, the One Self. The only reality which things possess is this immanence of the Divine, which they share according to their degrees of receptivity. "The Universe tends to integrate itself in every atom." Therefore, there is continuity and correspondence between all parts of the world. What is true of the whole is, in a profound sense, true of every part.

The Divine is the creator and the goal, the substance and the life, the veritable Self of all beings. It is the First Principle (*to proton*) underlying manifestation, and it is the Unity, the One Substance, the One Self (*to hon*), in which all appearances of multiplicity or separateness are dissolved. Nothing can exist apart from it, and yet it is itself no thing. It is, indeed, called the First, but there is no second.

The human mind cannot imagine absolute unity. Therefore, it represents the One Self as a triad, which is a unity having two aspects. Thus, Plotinus

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<sup>2</sup> The quotations given are from the *Enneads*, the only authentic surviving work of Plotinus. I have made use of the translations of Stephen Mackenna and W. D. Guthrie. It has been necessary to paraphrase many passages, but there has been no alteration of the meaning. Dean Inge's book, *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, may be recommended to all who are interested in Neoplatonism, especially as regards its relations with Christian theology and mysticism.

develops a conception somewhat like that of the Three Logoi of the *Secret Doctrine*. He does not try to describe the One in terms of Itself, but only as it is revealed through its aspects of individual and personal consciousness. When he refers directly to the One Self—as distinguished from its aspects—he uses negative terms. It is not this or not that. He speaks positively only in reference to its supreme creative power, which is also one with the supreme mystery of Being. We may correlate this First Principle or Supreme Power, at the apex of the Neoplatonic triangle, with the First Logos and with Atma, the Higher Self in man.

"The One Self is wholly independent of chance and fate. It is the cause of itself and proceeds from itself by its own power, for it is itself its own principle and is above all manifestation." (6.8.4.) "Because the Self is everywhere in its entirety, it is not contained within omnipresence, but is omnipresence itself, and it imparts being to the nature which it contains. Being the Supreme, it holds all things in dependence. It moves within itself, loving itself, since it is itself both lover and beloved. . . . It is the nature of the One to be that which it is. It has had no beginning, but is eternal, and its nature may be called wakefulness. It is above existence, above wisdom and above the life of reason, for these derive their being from the Self, whereas the Self is what it is, because it wills itself so to be." (6.8.16.)

The First Principle is consciousness itself: therefore we may attribute to it a certain awareness of itself (*diakritiken heautou*), but, if it had remained eternally within itself, it would never have attained consciousness of itself in any individual or personal sense, for there is no distinction between being and nature, between subject and object, in the One Self. "Since the One is everywhere, it is not divided. Otherwise it would have parts, one here and another there. The unity of the Self would be annihilated by such a division; it would become a body. We must admit that the One Self is present as a whole at every point simultaneously." (6.5.4.) "If we imagine a multitude of rays proceeding from a single source, we shall understand how the appearance of multiplicity is born. In a physical circle, the rays are distinct, because the circle is a plane. But, when there is no actual radiation, but only the potentiality of radiation, all the rays must be conceived as centres, which are united together in a single centre. There will seem to be as many centres as there are rays, which come to shine in the one centre, and yet all these centres will in reality form only one centre." (6.5.5.)

The Divine Self is called the One, because outside itself nothing is, and because within itself there is no division or separateness of parts. It is called the Father and the Good (*to agathon*), because it does not remain inactive but uses its most beneficent power to create the Universe in its image. It is at once the efficient and the final cause of the world, the "beginning and the ending" of the manifested. Everything aspires towards and depends upon the Good, which is the measure and end of all creatures. (1.8.2.)

There is the great mystery, that the Self is; and there is the mystery, quite as fathomless, that the Being of the Self is beneficent. To be is to be bene-



ficent, and to be beneficent is to create. For creation is the radiation of consciousness and all consciousness is radiant, imparting itself to all creatures from the highest to the lowest. It is not by accident that Plotinus has called the First Logos the Supreme Good. It is supremely good, because it gives all that it is, and, just because it gives all, it loses nothing, but remains always the master of the powers which radiate from its Being. It is nourished by its own sacrifice.

"If the Self be the first power, it must surely be supreme, and all else must imitate it. That which attains perfection, cannot unfruitfully remain within itself. It must generate and produce. Not only beings capable of choice, but even those which lack reflection, have a tendency to impart what is in them to others; thus, fire emits heat and plant juices dye whatever they touch. All creatures in nature strive to imitate the First Principle, when they seek to gain a certain immortality by reproducing their species. How, then, can the Self which is the Supreme Good, remain self-absorbed, as if a sentiment of jealousy rendered it powerless to create." (5.4.1.) The Self is all things and yet is no thing. The principle of all things cannot be all things, except in the sense that all things are contained within its unity. But it is just because no entity exists separately within it, that all entities can issue from it. As it is itself perfect and acquires nothing and has no need nor desire, it has—so to speak—overflowed (*hypererrue*, cf. the Latin *emanare*). This overflowing or emanation has produced the semblance of a "second nature." (5.2.1.)

The "second nature" is called—according to the aspect named—*nous*, *noesis* or *noeton*, these Greek words having the same root as the Greek, *gnosis*, the Sanskrit, *jnana*, and the English, *knowledge*. Madame Blavatsky suggested the Neoplatonic use of *nous*, when she contrasted noetic with psychic action (Cf. *Lucifer*, Oct. 15, 1890). In this article she identifies noetic action with *sophia*, or the blended wisdom of heart, mind and act.

Wisdom may be described as being, in one aspect, the highest attainable state of an individual consciousness. We cannot know how individual consciousness originated, nor what is the nature of that mysterious blending of individual and universal, which constitutes the great heart of things. We can only say that the unmanifested Self appears to be absolute unity, and that the manifested Self appears to be a host, although it is present as a whole in every individual or monad of that host. Every individual is the absolute unity, at the same time that it is eternally itself and is distinct from all other individuals.

The manifested Self is the Seer,<sup>3</sup> the enjoyer of wisdom, who distinguishes between himself and other individualities, even while perceiving his union with them. His consciousness is that of the One Self, for what other consciousness can there be? But, in comparison with the undivided consciousness of the One, that of the Seer is veiled and incomplete. However, because it is individual, it is the highest of which our minds can have even the faintest idea.

<sup>3</sup> The term, Seer, is used to denote the supreme form of any ray of individual consciousness. But it must not be forgotten that Plotinus does not limit potential individuality to man. The words, Seer, Soul, and Nature are equally applicable to all grades of evolving consciousness, to microcosm and to macrocosm, to atom and to star.

In the One Self there is only a potential opposition of subject and object. But the noetic consciousness implies such an opposition in actual appearance. The subject is *nous*, the Seer, and the object is *to noeton*, the substance of the known, or wisdom. Joining subject and object, there is *noesis*, the vision and will of the Seer. In reality the three are one: "The *nous* knows by *noesis*, which is itself, the *noeton*, which is also itself." (5.9.5.) It seems like a distinction without a difference. How can there be a "pair of opposites," if the opposites are really one and the same thing? The unaided mind cannot answer and will only waste time by trying, unless it recognizes the truth conveyed by the intuition, that even in physical vision we are, indeed, one with what we see, for otherwise we could not see it nor recognize what we see. Because we are very little, we see very little. Wisdom is the ultimate expansion of the individual nature, so that the Seer, the perfected individual, embraces within his vision vast fields of cosmic existence unimaginable by us. In comparison with the human mind, the consciousness of the Seer appears infinite. But, because the Seer is still individual, he conceives other individuals as in some way external to himself. He is not the Self freed of all illusion, for he does not yet contain all things in himself.

Wisdom is incompatible with any gross illusion. The Seer is above time, as we conceive time. In all ages, mystics have testified to the unreality of that appearance of phenomena, which makes us regard them as succeeding one another in time. And, in our own day, mathematical theory has developed the idea that our consciousness of time is only a blurred and confused adumbration of a real and direct intuition of the fourth dimension of space. "As the existence of generated things consists in perpetually acquiring something or other, this existence is annihilated by the removal of its future. But the blessed Seer has no thought of the future, because he is already all that it is possible for him to be. He cannot receive in himself anything for which there might be a future, for his nature is complete and lacks nothing. For that which is truly existent, there is no time when it does not exist or when it changes the form of its existence." (Cf. *Bhagavad Gita*, II, 16.) We must not imagine intervals in real existence nor suppose that it develops or acquires anything or contains any succession of stages within itself. (3.7.3-5.)

The Seer is also above the limitations of our space. "In the real world no shadow limits vision. All beings perceive and interpenetrate one another. Every being contains within itself the whole of wisdom, and beholds it entire in every other being. All things are located everywhere. Everything is great, for the small also is great. In Heaven, the sun is also all the other stars, and again each star is the sun. One thing in each is prominent above the rest, but it also shows forth all. Each celestial being has its peculiar and proper essence, but it does not differ from the region in which it dwells, because wisdom is its region and it is itself wisdom." (5.8.4.)

Individuality is the necessary form for the manifestation of the One Self. There is One Being, but it is revealed by the infinite number of its aspects. Each aspect manifests the whole, but is not the whole. Each aspect partici-

pates in the others, but remains itself. "The things which participate in the universal unity are incapable of possessing a complete nature conformed to unity, but they enjoy the presence of some powers of the universal Being. If they do not have more, it is because they are not capable of receiving more from the presence of the universal. Evidently the Self is always present, where its powers are present. However, it remains apart, for, if it became the form of any particular being, it would cease to be universal." (6.4.3.) The individuals of the noetic host may be compared to the Monads (Buddhi manifesting Atma). They act as mediators between Self and personality between God and the world. They have been said to resemble the circle of blessed spirits round the throne of God in the *Paradiso* of Dante.

From the *nous* or Second Logos proceeds the Third, Soul or Life (*psuché*). "The Seer emanates an image of himself, just as the Seer is himself a radiation of the One Self. The manifestation of the Seer is the Soul. Though the Soul is born from above, its creation is not caused by any diminution of the Seer's nature, even as the Seer was brought into being by the power of the Self, without thereby altering or weakening the nature of the Self." (5.2.1.)

The Seer emanates the Soul by the power of its contemplation (*energeia theorias*), "the yearning to create many forms." (4.4.22.) The Seer, contemplating the reflection of the Good in his nature, is drawn upwards by devotion towards identity and union with that unmanifested Good, which is the One Self of all beings. But, as the undivided life and love of the Self "overflows," and thus brings the Seer to birth, so the love of the Seer for the Father "overflows" to the plane below and becomes incarnate there as personality or Soul. Throughout the Universe, "as above, so below," there is this dual current of ascending and descending motion, so that it is impossible for spirit to rise, without thereby imparting more life to matter. Perhaps such is one meaning of the dark saying of Heraclitus, that "the way up and the way down are one and the same." The mystery of creation is not to be distinguished from the mystery of redemption.

The Soul is the personal life of the Seer. The Soul is dependent upon the Seer for existence and power, but the Seer is also dependent upon the Soul, which gives personality and form to his individuality. Without Soul the Wisdom of the Seer would remain abstract and static. Unity does not exist alone and self-enclosed, for then all things would remain hidden in that Unity. All would be formless and no beings would achieve existence. Again, the individual Seer cannot exist, without giving birth to the inferior nature destined by its rank to be Soul. It is not even sufficient for the Soul to exist, unless it reveal what it can create. It is natural for each nature to produce something beneath itself and to draw this creation out of itself by a development similar to that of a seed. But even while creating, no principle ever departs from its own nature. There must be a continuous procession of beings, until all things have descended to the extreme limit of the material existence which is possible for them; for it is the nature of an inexhaustible power to communicate all of its gifts to every being and not to disinherit any. There

is nothing which prevents any being from participating in the Good, in the measure that it is capable of doing so. Since matter has eternally existed, it must also participate in the Eternal. The excellence, power and goodness of Wisdom are, in turn, revealed by sense-objects. There is an eternal connection between divine beings, which are self-existent, and sense-objects, which derive their existence from divine beings by participation in their essence and which imitate their power to the extent of their ability. (4.8.6.)

The forms reflected in the Soul's substance are vestures or images of the Seer and make his being explicit. Contemplating the reflection of Wisdom in its nature, the Soul is drawn upwards towards the reality above the reflection. The Seer responds to the aspiration of the Soul, by absorbing its nature into himself, so that he and the Soul become one. Through this union the Soul gains wisdom and power, and the Seer's individuality assumes the personal consciousness of the Soul, without ceasing to be universal. Indeed, he needs personality to become aware of his universality. He becomes Self-conscious, by perceiving the image of his being in the Soul, and he can only perceive that image, in proportion as the Soul imparts to him its own faculties and experience. There is a constant interchange of consciousness and force between the Logoi. One cannot be imagined without the others. They are co-eternal aspects of a Divine Unity, like a series of overtones. (Cf. 6.5.4.)

The life of the Soul may be best described in terms of its powers. The Soul is the creator or imager of the psycho-physical universe extended in space and time. The material world, when conceived apart from Soul, is absolute illusion, but we only conceive it thus, when deceived by its glamour. For, if we represent the Soul as the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of space and time, the material world appears as a great crucible, in which personality and Self-consciousness first take form.

The Soul creates by the power of its Nature (*phusis*), and it redeems itself and its creation by the power of its Reason or discursive thought (*dianoia*). It thus contains within itself two principles or degrees, which we may correlate with Higher and Lower Manas. Only it must be made clear that Nature, or the lower part of the Soul, is not in itself evil, but is the overflow of Reason, this overflow being an invariable accompaniment of the contemplation of the world of the Seer by the higher part of the Soul.

"The universal Soul does not remain at rest, but enters into activity and thus generates an image of itself. On the one hand, by contemplation of the principle from which it proceeds, the Soul attains union with that principle; on the other hand, by advancing—as it were—in an opposite direction, it generates an image, which may be defined as the principle of sensation and growth in things. Thus the Soul vitalizes even the vegetable kingdom, inasmuch as plants derive their power of growth from the Soul. But it is not the whole Soul which passes into a plant. The higher part of the Soul remains in contact with the plane of wisdom. We may say that there is a procession of beings from the First to the last, and that each being occupies its proper place in this procession. In every instance, that which is emanated is subordinate to that

which emanates, but the two are similar in essence, as long as they remain in contact." (5.2.1-2.)

Nature is the last or lowest reality in the spiritual Universe. It creates the material world according to the pattern of Reason. For Nature has a dreaming and elemental consciousness, and is rapt in the contemplation of the Reason which is both above and within Nature. But Nature only becomes aware of Reason, in so far as it is able to embody Reason in the ordered forms of the physical world, to which correspond the bodily senses. Nature is as indispensable to the Reason of the Soul as Reason itself is to the Seer. It provides Reason with a succession of vehicles or incarnations, without which personality could never acquire form and definiteness. "The manifested being an imitation or reflection of the unmanifested, it appears that the purpose of emanation is not generation and action, but is rather the production of objects, which may be contemplated (by the unmanifested)." (3.8.7.) Incidentally, is not this the true function of all art?

Below Nature, or, rather, outside Nature, is non-being or indeterminateness (*to apeiron*), which is often identified by Plotinus with matter (*hyle*). Non-being is the condition of the "sense of separateness," of the illusion that our individual and personal lives are absolutely self-sufficient and isolated from one another. It is, in a sense, the negative aspect of material existence, as the positive aspect is the form or quality, which is an expression or emanation of Nature. We recognize non-being in the shadowy ephemerality of all phenomena, in the state of constant change in space and time, to which all material things are reduced; so that nothing material may be said really to exist, since everything eludes our touch as in a dream. The future becomes the past, before we can hold it even for an instant, as it passes phantom-like through the present. As an ancient philosopher said: "No man ever stepped twice into the same river."

But, as applied to the manifested world, both being and non-being are relative terms. In general, it may be said that every plane appears negative and indeterminate, in terms of the consciousness of the next higher plane. Soul or personality has the same relation to the enlightened consciousness of the Seer, that physical matter has to the form which it embodies. Spirit and matter are different stages of differentiation of the same substance, as is said in the *Secret Doctrine*.

Physical matter belongs to the plane where the power of creation or emanation comes to an end. Matter cannot transmit anything; it can only reflect back what it receives. It shines with a borrowed light, like the Moon, which has been, from time immemorial, a symbol of all material things.

Because it mirrors the forms of Nature, the material world is an image of Nature and of the great Hierarchies, which stand between Nature and the One Self. Man still needs the mirror of matter where the Real is reflected, for he cannot yet stand before the Real, face to face. Even in the grossest illusion of the senses, there is hidden a seed of Truth. Thus, even time is not wholly fluid and elusive. It contains rhythms, periodicities, cycles, recurring accord-



ing to immutable laws, from which neither the world as a whole nor any part thereof can be exempt. All forms here below pass away, but they return again and again, testifying that the Consciousness of which they are an expression, is immortal and does not change.

Matter is often called evil. But Plotinus often confuses his terms in his discussion of the problem of evil, because of the constant distinction which he makes between the relative and the absolute. He does not admit the existence of absolute or cosmic evil, as he makes very clear in a vigorous polemic against the Gnostics who professed belief in an evil world-soul. (2.9.) Evil comes into the world with self-conscious personality—on this planet, with man—and proceeds from a misuse of free-will. Self-will both creates and is established upon the “dire heresy of separateness,” which is fostered by all psychic brooding upon the concerns of the body. All souls are one in the Oversoul, but when the individual soul identifies itself with the body, and perceives the world only with the eyes of the body, it no longer recognizes the interpenetration of all forms, and loses consciousness of the One Life.

The question must arise,—how did Plotinus apply the emanation doctrine to practical life? We must postpone the effort to answer that question, and meanwhile invite the patient reader—after making allowance for the defects of our presentation—to make an application of the emanation doctrine for himself.

S. L.

(To be continued)

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*It is commonly said that education ought to make men dissatisfied and teach them to desire to improve their position. It is a pestilent heresy. It ought to teach them to be satisfied with simple conditions, and to improve themselves rather than their position—the end of it ought to be content.—A. C. BENSON.*

# STICKING POINTS

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SOME time ago a paper was published in a medical journal entitled "Sticking Points in Development." Its argument was based on data observed in physical and mental fields, but if it has any substratum of reality it can just as well be applied spiritually, if not by the writer then by the reader; and with the hope that it can be so stretched, it is submitted in partial quotation to the QUARTERLY. This writer began by saying what we all know, that precisely as the body may be developed by exercise, so may it degenerate by inertia, and that this development or this degeneration is an actual physiological change occurring within the bodily cells. His illustrations are drawn from the experience of wrestlers, pugilists, oarsmen, and so on, who are kept under close observation during training, and especially from the millions of men in the late war whose cellular systems were deliberately raised from far below to far above normal, by systematic training.

Of the plant world also this is true: "When we first undertake to reproduce a plant by cuttings, we often find it difficult to make it grow that way, but if we take a cutting from the first plant raised from a cutting, we find the second will grow more easily than the first, and the third more easily still, and so on. . . . But when a plant is continually reproduced by cuttings, it is not being reproduced by seed and therefore is not exercising its seed-producing power. The result is that plants which are reproduced regularly by cuttings gradually lose their power of producing seeds, or seeds which will germinate." Here we have simultaneous gain and loss—gain in one direction by exercise, and loss in the other by disuse.

Now in all varieties of development by use, it has been the observation of our writer that we come to what he calls "sticking points." Whether we draw our illustrations from experiments with animalculæ in the laboratory, from the records of trotting horses, from the yield of milch cows, from the school work of children, or the college work of adolescents, we find these inexplicable temporary arrests, which may be turned into lasting stoppages by bungling efforts to force past them, or by inert acceptance of them as finalities. Although we may not understand sticking points, our obligation is to recognize them and presently to pass them. An illustration drawn from physics may serve here: "We do not know why, when we apply heat to ice at zero, each addition of heat will raise the temperature till we get to  $32^{\circ}$  and a sticking point. For a time, further addition of heat does not raise the temperature, but only results in changing the material from ice to water at the same temperature. When that change is completed, each addition of heat increases the temperature till we come to another sticking point at  $212^{\circ}$ . Here, for a long time, further addition of heat does not raise the temperature in the least. It results only in changing the water into steam which is of the same temperature as the water. This

point passed, further addition of heat increases the temperature until we find another sticking point at which steam is disassociated into hydrogen and oxygen." Here are facts which, if not understood, are daily and hourly acted upon. But perhaps enough has been said to suggest the trend of this writer's argument, and to prove his contention that such sticking points do occur often enough and in sufficiently varied guise in the lower kingdoms, to make search for them in higher kingdoms of interest and perhaps of value.

When we pass on to the mental and moral worlds, those who have the guidance of the young are well aware of snarls and sticking points. Some of these are racial, stereotyped, punctual, while others are daunting in their mysteriousness, because they are personal, idiosyncratic, and only to be dealt with as unclassified phenomena. As typical of the first, who does not recognize Johnnie, snaggle-toothed and debonair, who "simply loved" the dictionary a year ago, was a sort of interrogative gnat—avid of information and drunk with polysyllables, but who now finds "*aw gee*" sufficient for his simple conversational needs, and who has become so contentedly worthless that his mother is driven to a review of his paternal in-laws to account for him at all. Then look at Mary—the *best* little girl, *absolutely* no trouble—obedient! impeccable! pious! But the snarl period approaches; the smooth skein ceases to unwind; let no one ask for Mary now, for "it is impossible to do a thing with her"—Mary has become an evil changeling. But all is not lost, these are only sticking points. Johnnie will presently acquire the fifty words or so needed for the minimum of human interchange, and Mary will vary no more from type than does a paper doll.

Sometimes the change is not one of morals or manners but a veritable mental stoppage. The task but yesterday so lightly mastered is to-day an impossibility; interest has flown; ambition is dead,—or sleeps; and it is going to take a patient expert, with a heart, to judge between the temporary and the final, to recognize a momentary saturation point, to decide between lashing and coaxing. The temptation to personal reminiscence is irresistible here, so vivid is the remembrance of a mishandled sticking point in the past, one of such disastrous consequence to the victim that the error rankled long. There came a day, a precisely verifiable moment even, when, without warning, a hitherto serviceable and unbalking memory struck work. Right in the middle of a table of imports and exports it repudiated its job. Fed up by months and years of senseless stuffing, it lay down without a struggle, the saturation point reached. Given a bewildered protesting youngster, and a group of elders with no gleam of psychological sense to bless them, it is safe to suppose that the wrong thing will be done, and it was. Fifty years ago only two types of apprentice were recognized—the idle and the industrious, and who ever heard of such nonsense as brain-fag in the young! Memories that can work and won't work must be made to work; therefore add to the tasks, increase the pressure, cut off any odds and ends of leisure that may be visible, decree that nervous systems do not exist, and that examinations shall be passed. So much for the theory. The result has been, in one case at least, that a memory, starting out as a receptacle,

was transformed into a polished metal surface on which information is breathed in vain. It should not take much intelligence to divine that a fairly average student does not turn into an abnormally stupid one between Monday and Tuesday, unless something has gone wrong. The medical writer, drawing an analogy from a steam boiler, says: "If we continually raise the pressure of steam in a steam boiler, we finally come to a time when we can raise it no further without causing an explosion and consequent destruction of the boiler. But if we shift our efforts for a time from pressure-raising, to thickening or bracing the boiler shell, we can resume the process of raising the pressure. But after a time we must again pause to thicken or brace the shell before we can go on again": here are sticking points safely passed by patience and common sense (boilers being expensive things), and proof that a properly handled sticking point should be a new starting point.

If there were no "sticking points," there would be no oysters, no crab apples, no morons, no "busted chelas." Scientists tell us that oysters decided millions of years ago to stick in the mud and maintain a policy of inaction. This they did with the result that all bon-vivants so gratefully recognize, but they lost thereby their manvantaric chance, and that is why we meet no oysters winging their way through our woods and warbling with the nightingales. The philosophy of this can be applied all up the line.

Would that some wiser pen might make the spiritual application, and yet surely it makes itself, for what is poor complacent humanity to-day but an incarnate sticking point? Thousands of years behind schedule and slowing up all the time? Analogies come crowding,—let a fashionable hotel at the foot of a mountain furnish one. The people who rock upon the porches and play games need not interest us, for after all you cannot stick unless you start, and this they will not do. But many have gathered for climbing and some have begun. The guides move among them, erect storm-beaten men with kind and steady eyes, who whisper of a race of royal Master Guides beyond, whose servants they are. There are other guides, restless and vociferous, surrounded by restless and vociferous followers; they talk of themselves; one begins to classify the groups by the noise they make; some are marvellously attired—surely nothing less than the summit will suffice for such caps, such knickerbockers, such alpenstocks! Do not be deceived—they are going no further than their noses; to dress up and run about the foothills, shouting, is one thing; to live the life of the climber is another. A certain number will reach the first stopping place, for it is easy of access; the road is straight and smooth and green, and the place itself like a sunny glade in the dark forest depths. Here luncheon is served and there is much talk of brotherhood. Some of the least wise of the guides declare this to *be* the top, and many believe them. It is a sticking point. Those who pass on find the road still verdant, but it is steep and winds up hill to its rocky top. Grey mists overhang its rough and stony height, and all is dark beyond. Doubts assail the climber; he thinks of that comfortable hotel, that cheerful friendly luncheon, and fear walks with him—fear of the path, fear lest he be a fool. But he recalls his morning rapture and

climbs on; he struggles for surefootedness, for harmony, for adjustment with the eternal laws; and then for patience, patience with himself and with his fellows. Now he nears the half way point, and in its tranquil calm his spiritual will awakens. Here many groups stand huddled like sheep before some barrier. It is a famous sticking point and strangely populous, for those who reach it are spoiled for the foothills and loath to turn back; yet few pass on, for here stretches an abyss which each must face alone. In vain the patient guides plead for the supreme effort, in vain they whisper of the glories beyond; of "Virya, the dauntless energy that fights its way to the supernal Truth" and is the reward of courage; of the splendours of "the summit lost in glorious light Nirvanic," and of those great Master Guides whose "well done" awaits them. It is the immemorial sticking point of the soul of man, for as a man thinketh so is he, and here he is betrayed by his own thought progeny, by the careless thinking of all the careless years, by his inmost secret weakness. To pass *this* sticking point is to pass into reality; henceforth the pilgrim's way is clear, his Guide is more than friend or brother, and love, the magic word that crowns the first gate, crowning the last, is LOVE.

L. S.

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*How profound is God's sky, how high to become so blue! How short are our ladders, our rocks how miniature.*

*The blue of the peaks is Heaven's blue, the mountains seem so high. Mount, mount, behold the snows. Higher yet, the sky is always blue.*

*The sky recedes at each step. O summits pale that stretch above us!—How short are our ladders, O God, my God.—PAUL FORT.*



# THEOSOPHY<sup>1</sup>

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THERE may be some here this afternoon who have no defined understanding of The Theosophical Society and its purpose. It has one admirable clause in its Constitution, with which not all its members, perhaps, are familiar: That every member has the right to believe or disbelieve in any religious system or philosophy, and to declare such belief or disbelief without affecting his standing as a member of the Society, each being required to show that tolerance of the opinions of others which he expects for his own. This is the high ideal of the spirit which really seeks truth, because no spirit not tolerant can ever find truth.

The second object of The Theosophical Society is the study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences; and we shall seek to study together certain points in religion, philosophy and science which have been the subject matter of rather sharp conflicts of public opinion during the last few months: namely, the conflict between the Fundamentalists and the Modernists, on the one hand, and the conflict between the Darwinists and the Adamists on the other hand. I use the term, Adamist, with some hesitation, because it really has a much deeper meaning than that currently given to it. For the present, I mean the traditional, literally understood descent from Adam and Eve.

The conflict between the evolutionists and the special-creationists had better come first. And it should be remembered that, while I am setting forth views which I hope may be clear, I am not speaking for The Theosophical Society. The Theosophical Society as such has no doctrines or dogmas, and no one has a right to say that this or that is the teaching of The Theosophical Society on any points outside our declared objects and the Constitution and By-Laws. Therefore, it is as a student of Theosophy that I speak, a student of truth; perhaps representing the opinion of other students of Theosophy, but with no claim to any authority, to any dogmatic orthodoxy or representative capacity for what I say. I speak only as one seeking truth.

Students of Theosophy throughout the ages have been evolutionists. That is equally true of the Gospels and the Puranas. The Puranas, the ancient records of India, teach a very clear system of evolution, pre-Darwinian, and in many ways wiser and fuller and more satisfactory than Darwin's system. If you study the Gospels, you will find that they are nowhere committed to the view of special creation, as stereotyped by its modern adherents. In the Gospels, Adam is mentioned only once, in the genealogy in Luke, which breaks the narrative, and is apparently a later addition, no part of the teaching of the Master Christ. Many of that Master's similes are similes of evolution, of

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<sup>1</sup> A Lecture by Charles Johnston, on April 27, 1924, on the occasion of the Convention of The Theosophical Society.

things that grow and develop. The spirit of the Gospels is evolutionary, not only upward from protoplasm, but, infinitely more important, onward toward divinity. When the Western Master says, "Be ye therefore perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect," he commits himself and us to an evolution of tremendous magnitude. Nothing but an evolution lasting for ages can conceivably make us mortals perfect as our Father in heaven.

Students of Theosophy, therefore, or many of them, are evolutionists; and, so far as the doctrines at present emphasized among biologists and paleontologists go, there is no very marked discrepancy. We have our own views, our own lines of study, but over much of evolution we can shake hands with the students of the Museum of Natural History. They had an interesting symposium there, the other day, concerning our putative cousins, the anthropoid apes. We, as students of Theosophy, would not hold that the anthropoid apes are absolutely separate from mankind in every quality and characteristic. We may not quite agree with the biologists about the precise relationship, but they have reached certain conclusions, which were formulated at that symposium, which many of us have long held. For example, it was there pointed out that the gorilla, the anthropoid ape which stands nearest to man, is not strictly an evolving type, but a degenerate type. The soles of his feet and his heels indicate a being which should stand upright, but the gorilla tends to stoop over, to become once more a quadruped in his later years. He is losing the power to walk upright. He is an animal which, formerly walking upright, is turning back to the quadruped stage. There are other things pointing in the same direction; for example, the skull of a baby gorilla bears a fairly close resemblance to the skull of a human baby. But each year the baby's skull grows better, while the gorilla's skull grows worse, till he finally comes to have the enormous ridges on the forehead which make him so inhuman in appearance. Therefore, it seems clear that the gorilla, physiologically our nearest kin, is a degenerate and not an evolving type. If he continued for a million years, he would not, biologically speaking, evolve into a human being.

The same thing is true of the moral nature of the anthropoids. Dr. Hornaday pointed out, in a recent book, that the baby chimpanzee is exceedingly amenable to training, he is apt at learning, and for ten or a dozen years, is a very hopeful scholar. After that, he becomes morose and ill-tempered, and tends to lose whatever approach to human sympathies he had gained. Therefore, as regards his moral nature also, he is a degenerating and not an advancing type.

So the main difference in view between students of Theosophy and the students of the Museum of Natural History is that, while they say "cousin," we might say, of the anthropoid, that he is the "nephew" or "grand-nephew" of a vanished human race. But, if you consider the matter more closely, you will find that it is not we, but he, who might be inclined to disavow the relationship. Look into his conduct; he is not given to drunkenness or corruption of any kind; he is not wantonly destructive, nor prone to evil speaking, lying and slandering. It is he who may have the right to say, "I will not own this very questionable cousin."

Regarding the evolution of the body, therefore, students of Theosophy have no great cause for disagreement with biologists, though there are still a good many points to be adjusted between us. We, as students of Theosophy, say: "You have left out half the story; you have left out the half that really counts. You have traced, imperfectly, as we think, but nevertheless suggestively, the evolution of the body; we hold also the evolution of the soul." We hold that, if there be an immense past history of the human body, much of which is still a series of gaps in the theory of the biologists; if there be, for the body, a heredity of a hundred thousand, five hundred thousand, or a million years, there is a far longer heredity of the soul. Human history in the narrow sense begins where soul and body come together and join forces. In books written by students of Theosophy, and notably in *The Secret Doctrine*, you will find the thought of the evolution of the soul worked out in great detail, and supported by the teachings of many religions, as, for example, in the Puranas: the thought of the descent of the soul meeting the ascent of the body, and the almost infinite ages over which the descent of the soul to the body is spread.

In a certain sense, the whole practical purpose of Theosophy, as a student of Theosophy may venture to conceive it, is this: to recover the power, the liberty, the light of the soul, which at present is obscured through our incarceration in the body; to win back what we have lost, the splendid heritage of the soul; and, therefore, to possess the treasures of both worlds, and from that point to begin our real human life.

So far, for the moment, the controversy between the evolutionists and the followers of special creation. Let us come to the other controversy between the Fundamentalists and the Modernists. There are certain quite definite points about which that controversy has raged, and we may note that the spirit of the controversy has been on the whole urbane, tolerant, and to that degree theosophical. Not long ago, a very interesting book was published, dealing with Erasmus, and the controversies, just four centuries ago, over kindred themes. There was the genuinely theosophical tolerance of Erasmus, beset on the one hand by fanatical and degenerate elements among the Orders of monks, and on the other by the bigotry and egotism of Martin Luther and his adherents. We know very well how those controversies of four hundred years ago worked out: the burning of Servetus, the fires of Smithfield. There is a great advance, when we note the controversy waged to-day, a noteworthy increase in theological urbanity on both sides. To that extent has the spirit of Theosophy won its way in the world. Certain questions are being hotly debated; and on these questions, students of Theosophy can, perhaps, shed some light, just because they have, as their principle and practice, the comparative study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, with the one purpose of finding truth.

We spoke a moment ago of recovering the heritage of the soul, the heritage lost in a sense, yet not lost; the heritage which will be ours when we reclaim it. We hold, as students of Theosophy, that there has been no age in the immensely long history of mankind without those who have claimed, and who have won

again, the heritage of the soul and their full divinity. That is a truth testified to by more witnesses, and by better witnesses, than any other fact in history. The witnesses are, in the Western world, those of the stature of Pythagoras and Plato, or of the stature of the Western Master, Jesus; or the Buddha. If truth can ever be established by the unanimous testimony of indisputable witnesses, then the existence of the Masters is such a truth. Take this thought; let it be for us, for the moment, only a hypothesis: the thought of the existence of a Master, who has won again the superb heritage of the soul, who has won again man's forfeited divinity. We are here, for the most part, bound by the chains of necessity. We are the soul, the "wanderer o'er eternity;" but we have come here, not of free will, but of constraint, bound by the chains of our desires, tied to earth by our earth-seeking tendencies; what in the Eastern world is called the thirst of desire has drawn us back to earth. Can we not conceive that there are those who come back, not under constraint, not bound by the chain of necessity, not oppressed by the yoke, not drawn by the thirst of desire, but of free will, through compassion; not to seek even the world itself for themselves, but in order to help us, who so sorely need help? Can we not conceive of a Master, who had painfully, through ages of infinite struggle and conflict, won back the heritage of the soul, thereafter remembering the pain and the struggle and the endless sorrows he had passed through; seeing us in the midst of these sorrows, and, tragedy of tragedies, not perceiving them, but thinking our misery to be our happiness; can we not imagine such a Master, electing to come again, perhaps many times, after all his debts were paid, after he had entered again into his divinity, coming again to help us? How would the age-old symbolism of the world represent that fact? By the symbol of the Virgin Birth, a symbol as old, perhaps, as any record of man, and always standing for the same truth. Therefore, we students of Theosophy venture to say that rightly to understand the Virgin Birth is to know that it must be true of the Western Master, to know that it represents, and is the hall-mark, in a sense, of the authenticity of his mission. Perhaps something of the same kind may be conjectured also of Mary. Perhaps she also may have been a spirit coming from afar, from some celestial realm. Perhaps that truth is represented in the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, meaning that the heredity of sin, coming from Adam, did not reach her; that she was born apart from, and free from, that heredity of sin.

The hard and fast dogma which connects together the story of Adam, which we may not call a myth, because it is a symbol of profound meaning, and the mission of Jesus, his death and resurrection, is based, not on anything in the four Gospels, but on a phrase of Saint Paul, himself a mystic, speaking of Theosophy, and as a student of Theosophy. He used the phrase, imperfectly translated, incompletely understood, on which that dogma is founded: "As in the Adam all die, so in the Christ shall all be made alive." That is what Paul wrote. That is exactly the teaching which we have been considering: the dual heredity of mankind, the immensely long evolution of the body, the far longer, and, in a sense, deeply tragical, devolution of the soul; yet with the

possibility of regaining the soul's heritage, of restoring the soul's divinity. In the Adam, the body which has come up from the earth, all die. We know and recognize that fact, and are foolish if we forget it for a moment. As physical bodies, we all die, and the sooner we face the fact, the happier we shall be about it. But in the Christ, in the soul, in the divine nature, we shall all be made alive, through the help of the Master, through the help of those who belong to him. That, I think, is the true meaning of that much discussed text, turning it from a dogma of theology to a tenet of Theosophy.

So far, then, regarding the first bone of contention between the Fundamentalists and Modernists. The second is concerned with the body of the resurrection, a theme of which one speaks with hesitation, with all humility, with a knowledge that one may easily err, but with the thought that students of Theosophy may have a light to shed on it. We would suggest this: the whole solution of the mystery is in the New Testament, if we read it wisely. The teaching of the spiritual body is there set forth, with its birth, its growth, its powers; and we can see that the Master Christ was in full possession of the spiritual body, not only after the resurrection, but before the crucifixion. That extraordinary event which is called the transfiguration, consisted, in the view of students of Theosophy, in the opening of the consciousness of Peter and James and John, an opening of the spiritual eyes, so that they could behold the spiritual body which that Master already wore, and had worn, as we should believe, for ages. He himself said that Abraham had rejoiced to see his day, he saw it and was glad. We can hardly consider this to mean anything except that, in Abraham's day, that Master wore a body, as a fully developed individuality. So we conceive that Master as wearing the spiritual body for ages, wearing it during the life when he bore the name Jesus, rising with it in all its life and power from the tomb. And we may thus reconcile the conflict between the Fundamentalists and Modernists: the Master rising with the same body, yet not the earthly body. In a sense, both the views put forward are true. In a sense, neither is more than a half truth. As students of Theosophy, we think that there are two halves to that, as to every truth. In the truth of evolution, there is the evolution of the body and also the august evolution of the soul. So also the resurrection of the body is a twofold truth.

On the whole, therefore, we shall find no very sharp conflict either with the Fundamentalists or the Modernists. The symbols are eternal, and they are true. The conflict between the two parties in the Church may be reconciled by seeking truth in the spirit of truth, by looking for the other half of every truth, by showing for the opinions of others the tolerance they expect for their own. As members of The Theosophical Society, we counsel them to do this, certain that along this way, truth may be found.

If, then, there be so little of sharp discrepancy between the views of students of Theosophy, on the one hand, and the views of the science and religion of the day, on the other; if it be a question only of filling in, of supplementing, of adjusting, does it follow that our work as members of The Theosophical Society is almost done, almost completed? The truth is that only now are we

ready to begin. What is that work? We have already suggested it: the recovery of the heritage of the soul, the restoration of our lost divinity; a great adventure on which we embark, not without exemplars, not without leaders and commanders. We spoke of the ideal of a Master, further saying that there is no age in history which does not bear record to Masters who won back the heritage of the soul and regained the forfeited divinity. If that be true of the past, it is true to-day. It is true to-day, it will be true to-morrow, it will be true in every century to come. As some of us conceive it, a great part of our future work in The Theosophical Society is to make clear to those who seek—and seekers are many—to make clear, so far as we may, the reality of the existence and the spiritual powers of the Masters. That is a major part of our task, for a reason already suggested: by conquest and by birthright, they are the commanders of the human race, and they will be the effective leaders as soon as humanity has the common sense to recognize the fact. Imagine an army which could not see its leaders. Imagine an army going to war, with the leaders there, and with the men in the ranks so stupid, so dull, so blind that they could not see their commanding officers. That is a fair simile of humanity to-day, and largely of ourselves.

There is a beautiful phrase in one of Tennyson's later poems: "I hope to see my Pilot face to face, when I have crost the bar." Tennyson's own comment on that phrase is even more notable: "The Pilot has been on board all the while, but in the dark I have not seen him." We of the human race are in the dark, because we have tied a black bandage over our eyes, and will not let anyone remove it.

Our first task, then, is to show the reasonableness of our belief in living Masters. What are Masters? Supposing that you were to ask me that, how should I try to answer?

First of all, they are men; men with bodies like ourselves; not by any means "spirits" in the Spiritualistic sense; men with bodies, perhaps of finer, purer texture. The bodies of our day and generation are saturated with every disease and impurity; not so with bodies like that. Secondly, they are gentlemen. I think it was Dekker who, speaking of the Christian Master, called him "the first true gentleman that ever breathed." We should thoroughly endorse the "true gentleman"; we should be less willing to endorse the "first." Thirdly, they are warriors. And let us begin to realize, among other wholesome truths, like the truth about our bodily mortality, that we are not at the end of the age of wars, or anywhere near it. I do not know how many hundreds, or thousands, or millions of years it will be, before the day of the Great Peace, but that day is far distant, and we may as well look the fact in the face. Students of Theosophy are, perhaps, exceptional in their willingness to look certain ugly facts in the face. We are quite convinced, for example, of the existence of evil, and therefore of the reality and existence of devils, and of devils in human form. A wise and witty Frenchman said that we should be grateful to the Germans, because the belief in the Devil had almost slipped away, and they had restored it. They proved the truth, as we prove all truth, by being it.

It should be quite clear that, so long as the spirit of the Devil may possess men and nations, the devil of malice, of uncleanness, of destruction,—to talk of peace when there is no peace, is unwise. It is another of those points at which we bind a black bandage over our eyes.

Therefore, in the long war, physical as well as spiritual, the Masters, as warriors, will have their part to play. If they are to be, if by inheritance they are, the commanders, the leaders, the generals of the human race, it must follow that they have the practical wisdom that a real leader must have; and that practical wisdom we believe they possess, because they have regained the heritage of the soul. They have regained divinity, and wisdom is the very fabric of the soul and of divinity itself. "Wisdom and goodness, these are God." Therefore we hold, on the evidence of the best witnesses in all history, the wisdom and goodness of the Masters.

The next characteristic which I shall speak of will, perhaps, come as a surprise; nevertheless, it is profoundly true: Masters have a supreme sense of humour. Even in the Gospels, overshadowed by tragedy, there are touches of exquisite humour. The story of the importunate woman and the unjust judge is one of the most humorous in all literature. The judge feared not God, neither regarded man, but when the importunate woman besieged him, he surrendered and avenged her. That he feared not God, and regarded not man, is told simply to bring out the point of humour. So it is with that other phrase: to strain out a gnat, and swallow a camel. We have only to make the mental picture of a man trying to swallow a camel, to see how humorous the image is.

In the Buddha's teachings, there are admirable examples of humour. The Buddha often taught by describing former incarnations of those to whom he was speaking. A certain disciple was held back by certain difficulties. The Buddha described a remote incarnation, in which that disciple had been an animal, grey all over, and with very long ears. In that incarnation, the disciple comported himself in a way which accounted for his present moral limitations. It was a parable, but a notably humorous one. Perhaps the Masters are compensated by the sense of humour, when they have to deal with some of our peculiarities; without it, they might long ago have given up the task in despair.

The Masters have undying courage; always the readiness for absolute self-sacrifice; sacrifice of everything which even Masters may hold dear, because they have realized that sacrifice is the fundamental law of the universe. "God created man together with sacrifice," says the *Bhagavad Gita*; and it has been well said that God himself made the first sacrifice when he created the universe. Therefore, realizing that sacrifice is the sovereign reality, it is the law which Masters have laid down for themselves, and which they follow with that perfect fidelity which is theirs.

The Masters are immortal in their continuous, conscious being, because they have recovered the immortality of the soul. They are powerful beyond our imagination, because the divinity, which is our heritage when we choose to

claim it, is already unfolded in them, and shares with them its treasures and its powers.

So the ideal of Masters is, in a sense, entirely natural: Men, gentlemen, warriors, endowed with a sense of humour, with indomitable courage, with the genius of sacrifice, and with the powers which we can conceive as latent in our souls. We are, as Wordsworth finely said, "haunted for ever by the eternal Mind," and there is not one of us who, in his best moments, does not feel that haunting presence, and that it is the only thing in life that is worth living for. There is a beautiful phrase of Tennyson's, which speaks exactly to that point; he is recording the inspiration which had come to himself:

The light retreated,  
The landskip darken'd,  
The melody deaden'd,  
The Master whispered  
"Follow the Gleam."

Follow the Gleam. Follow the inner light through the darkness, till the darkness gives place to light. The ideal, therefore, of Masters is sane, wise, normal, healthy, wholesome in every way. It is a bright ideal of the sunshine; there is nothing of darkness or shadow about it. It is the ideal which is the salvation of humanity, when humanity comes to wake up to its desperate need. We may remember here the wise words of Ruskin: "Exactly in the degree in which you can find creatures greater than yourself, to look up to, in that degree you are ennobled yourself, and, in that degree, happy." What inspiration, what happiness, then, awaits us, when we find the Masters, to look up to!

What is the first practical, reasonable thing to do, to meet this thoroughly practical and reasonable situation, as we conceive the reality of Masters to be? To endeavour ourselves to do what they have done before us: to follow in their footsteps along the small, old path which the Seers knew and trod. To do the same things: first of all, to understand this dual heredity of ours. There is the body with its marvellous gifts and powers. It represents ages of achievement by nature. There is the soul, infinitely more wonderful, with its proved powers in their luminous divinity. Let us seek, therefore, the soul and the things of the soul. Seeking, we shall find. There are infinite riches of instruction ready to hand. Those who have spent years with the ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences can assure you that there is abundant instruction, thoroughly understood, systematized and organized, for those who are willing to seek and find. Every step of approach to Masters, every step of approach to our own inheritance in the soul, every step of the way back to our divinity is charted; there are detailed, intelligible instructions, there is guidance for us, if we have the purity of heart, the unselfishness, the loyalty and the valour to set forth on that same way.

Consider the manner in which geologists, for example, have laboured for generations, in many countries, creating a body of knowledge which is one,



consistent, uniform, with a fine texture binding it together: all these human minds seeing into the mysteries of past time, the mysteries hidden in the rocks. After all, these rocks exist to-day, they are not in the past; yet the intelligence of those men has seen in the rocks of to-day the millions of years of the past. By constructive imagination, they have projected that almost infinite past backward out of to-day. Geology is one, though geologists are many.

Or take the simile of Shelley's, where he calls the poetry of the nations "episodes to that great Poem which all poets, like the co-operating thoughts of one great mind, have built up since the beginning of the world." Consider the superb achievement of the world's poetry, one of the treasures of mankind, in literal truth the work of one great mind, of the infinite soul of man. What is needed is, that we, students of Theosophy, we, seekers after our divine inheritance, shall unite with the same oneness of heart, the same singleness of purpose, to discover the history of the soul in the immense geologic ages, in the eons of its spiritual development. We shall recover the inspiration and the beauty, the elements of divine shining; we shall recover them in life, as the poets have, in the one great poem of the world. There is our task. These are our marching orders.

One thought more, and we are done. We have spoken of humanity as a blind army of privates, who cannot see their leaders, and of the Masters as men and gentlemen, as warriors, commanders. Let this be our last thought: the soldiers are not waiting for their commanders; the commanders are waiting for the soldiers to take the bandages from their eyes. Humanity is not a helpless, hopeless sufferer, waiting for the Masters to come and take command. The Pilots are already on board, but in our darkness we do not see them. We are not those who are waiting. Those who are waiting are the Masters of Wisdom.

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*The one-talented man was not judged for the mis-use of his gift, but for its non-use.—AMBROSE SHEPHERD.*

# THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

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## XIV

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER

### PART II

THERE is another side of Xavier's character—the side of worldly wisdom—which must be shown; worldly wisdom used, not for self, but in the service of Christ.

Ignatius had sent out other members of his Company to work under Xavier in India, and Xavier was responsible for their spiritual direction as well as for their outer activities. Their unfitness and their disagreements, in spite of their good qualities, added very heavily to the burdens Francis Xavier carried. It was their need of direction in their various undertakings that called forth a considerable portion of his letters. Those letters reveal the different sides of Xavier's character, and are very precious documents.

Among the recruits who reached India in 1548 was a Belgian, Gaspar by name, a man of exhaustless energy, in gratitude for which, Ignatius is said to have prayed: "Lord, send us Belgians." After several tentative plans, Xavier finally decided to send Father Gaspar on a mission to a city at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, the city that the poet Milton, for the sake of euphony, called Ormus, usually spelt Ormuz, famous and fabulous for wealth, and equally infamous for depravity. It was a meeting-place for the uncontrolled and licentious of three continents, where Asiatics and Africans and Europeans could, by turns, contribute whatever the others might lack of complete moral depravity. To this centre of luxurious self-indulgence, Father Gaspar went alone; and, for his guidance, Xavier wrote a very long letter of instructions.<sup>6</sup> The letter shows what Xavier's own methods had probably been. It is a very valuable record. Its worldly wisdom, directed to the guidance of a man of religion, would make it a fruitful study to-day, both for people in religion and also for people in the world.

In it, Xavier reminds Father Gaspar that the undertaking will come to naught, unless he take as his first duty the care of his own inner state, the clearing of his conscience, and a seeking of the Divine Will at every step. He gives Gaspar directions for the care of the poor and ignorant, the teaching and catechizing of children, etc.,—directions which Xavier had tested in his own practice. He directs Gaspar to go privately, as soon as he reaches Ormuz, to the men of best repute there, and to inquire of them about dominant evils, prevalent frauds, etc. This will give him, a newcomer, the benefit of their

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<sup>6</sup> This letter is to be found in H. J. Coleridge's collection, Vol. II, pp. 109-138.

longer residence and their acquaintance with people and things. Information gleaned in these private interviews with the best citizens, will furnish material for use in public as well as private ministrations. For his sermons, Gaspar is to choose "clear and unquestionable truths, which tend to the regulation of manners and the reprehension of vices"; he is to avoid "sublime speculation, perplexed questions, scholastic controversies"; he is to make "no display of erudition or of memory, from the old Fathers." "Let your sermon set before their eyes, and let them see in it plainly as in a mirror, their own restless devices, their cunning artifices, their most vain hopes and imaginations, all the deceitful designs which they entertain in their souls. . . . But to set forth what their own interior feelings are, you must first know them; and the only way to know them is to be much in their company, to study them, observe them, pray with them. So turn over and over again these living books; it is from these that you will gain everything—how to teach them with efficacy, how easily to act on and affect and turn and move sinners whither it behooves them to be moved for their souls' salvation."

Then, in contrast with their wretched sinfulness, Gaspar is to bring before their eyes, Christ's life and passion. How unmistakable is the centre of Francis Xavier's interest! No matter what his topic might be, in conversation or in writing, sooner or later he reached the point where he could no longer keep silence about what he loved—Christ and his passion. "You are to mingle with all these considerations the remembrance of the cross, the wounds, and death of Christ, by which He vouchsafed to atone for our sins; but you are to do this in as moving and pathetic a manner as possible, by figures and colloquies proper to excite emotions in the mind, such as cause in our hearts a deep sorrow for our sins, on account of the offence done to God thereby, even so as to draw tears from the eyes of your audience, who are then to be led to make resolutions of cleansing their consciences as soon as possible by confession, and of celebrating their reconciliation to God by due reception of the holy Communion. This is the one true idea which I wish you would propose to yourself for preaching profitably."

He warns Gaspar against making any personal charges in his public utterances. When it becomes necessary to admonish some vicious official or other public personage, it must be done privately. If public speakers of the present day were to follow that wise counsel of Xavier's, what headlines would disappear from our newspapers! Father Gaspar is next shown how to proceed in a difficult and disagreeable private interview. "Let it be a matter to which you pay continued and unrelaxed attention, to show yourself, to all those with whom you have to do, with a kind and calm countenance, getting rid of every sign of severity, overbearingness, arrogance, suspicion, sourness, anger, and threatening. You ought much rather to put on an appearance of courteous affability, using the gentlest and most winning smiles, and the like, whenever you have to reprove any one in private on account of some fault of his which requires admonition. Temper the sternness of your reproof with the serenity of your air, a smiling countenance, and gentle glances, and much more by the

civility of well-mannered words. These things are the honey and preserves which are mixed with and which season the bitterness of the dose, unpleasant in itself, and which will turn out of no use if it be administered without some such condiment, to men whose stomachs are likely to be turned by it." What a student of humanity this letter shows Xavier to have been!

Here are some other directions given Gaspar in regard to private interviews. Xavier tells him that certain men whose consciences have been for a moment aroused, will inquire how to make amends for past wrongs. Gaspar is to "rake down" to specific wrongs, especially in the matter of fraudulent gains—and is to insist upon immediate restitution. "If they have injured the reputation of any one, let them retract what they have said; or if they are engaged in unlawful attachments and have been living in sin, cause them to break off those criminal engagements, and remove at once the occasions of their crime. However solemnly and seriously they may promise to do these things at a future time, it is not safe to trust them without the actual performance of their engagement. Let them perform beforehand what they declare they will do. There is not any time more proper to exact from sinners these duties, the performance of which is as necessary as it is difficult. For when once their fervour and excitement of mind have grown cold, and their familiar enticements have begun to drag them back with fatal persuasiveness to the sins to which they have been accustomed and which they have but just left off for the time, it will be in vain to ask them to keep their promise."

Not the least wise and valuable suggestion made to Father Gaspar is the recommendation to be *motherly* in dealing with certain individuals who are backward and shy: "Meet them more than half way, telling them that they are neither the only nor the first persons who have fallen into such foul sins, that you have met with far worse sins of that kind than those can be which they want the confidence to tell you. Impute a great part of their offence to the violence of the temptation, the seductiveness of the occasion, and the concupiscence innate in all men. More than this, I tell you that in dealing with such persons, we must sometimes go so far and so low, in order to loosen the chains of this miserable shame in these unhappy persons whose tongues the devil has by his cunning tied up, as of our own accord to indicate in general the sins of our own past lives, so to elicit from these guilty souls the confession of the sin which they will otherwise hide, to their irreparable loss. For what can a true and fervent charity refuse to pay for the safety of those souls who have been redeemed with the blood of Jesus Christ? But to understand when this is proper to be done, how far to proceed, and with what precautions, is what the guidance of the Spirit and your experience must teach you at the time in each particular conjuncture."

Another of Xavier's wise and prudent recommendations concerns the acceptance of gifts which may be offered. The Royal Treasury having undertaken to bear the expense of the mission to Ormuz, Xavier recommends that Father Gaspar shall accept from the Treasury whatever he needs, and shall accept nothing from any one else. "What others offer you, even of their own accord,

reject; for it is of signal importance for the authority and liberty of one who has the charge of souls, to be under no obligation on the score of the supply of his food, which is, in fact, to owe his life and breath, to any one of those whom it is his duty to direct in the way of salvation, and to correct and pull up whenever they go astray. The common saying is very true as to gifts of this kind: 'He that takes, is taken'; for he loses all confidence as to finding fault with or using his right of censure with a man towards whom he has allowed himself to take up the humble position of a dependent, and thus bound himself to him by the reverence due to a patron."

Xavier makes an exception of gifts which have slight intrinsic value, such as fruits—these may be received for the sake of cultivating the good will of the donor, but should at once be sent off to some public hospital in order that no suspicion may be incurred of seeking favours for oneself. The last direction given in the long letter is that Father Gaspar shall read it at least once a week.

With Ormuz and many other fields of work well planned, Xavier sailed from a Malay port for Japan. It would be a mistake to think that the voyage to Japan was merely a reduplication of the one from Lisbon to India. Dangerous and unpleasant as the first voyage was, it seems, in comparison with the second, like luxurious travelling. He left Lisbon under the Portuguese flag, as the honoured guest of the new Governor whom the King was sending out to the colonies. Reckless and hardened adventurers as most of his fellow-passengers were, in that Portuguese vessel, they were still Europeans, and they shared certain common traditions. Bloodshed or death would cause them no quaver—but in the long-drawn-out stress of disease, tempest, or shipwreck, even those dare-devil spirits would welcome one who held out a crucifix, and spoke comfortable words to cheer them. When Xavier sailed for Japan, it was under the Chinese flag, which the Chinese captain of the vessel would have hauled down with little hesitation, replacing it with the black flag of piracy. The Chinese crew showed no regard whatever for Xavier or for the agreement they had made with him—and, when in danger, they wanted none of his ministrations. They had a convenient and pliable god set up in the stern of the boat, and they consulted him, when danger threatened. The replies the god gave indicated strong animosity for the heathen European who was on board; indeed, Xavier was in constant danger of being murdered. The missionaries suffered also from the variability of the god's mind about the voyage—usually, the god's mind was set contrary to the wind, and Xavier, eager to reach the journey's end, was never free from the fear of being abandoned upon some barren island. At last, however, Japan was reached; they disembarked at the little town to which the young man, Yajiro, belonged, and Xavier, with his companions, was warmly welcomed by Yajiro's kinsfolk, and thirteen months were spent in that town.

The Japanese campaign was altogether different from that conducted in India and in the Malay region. In those countries, it was the ignorant and outcast that Xavier met; in Japan, it was the learned and noble. The method that succeeded in India was ill-fated in Japan. The mendicant's garb did

not win the respect of the Japanese nobles, and even the street children, whom we have seen flocking about him in India, hooted and derided. In view of that disfavour, Xavier changed his tactics, laid aside his beggar's rags, bought handsome Japanese clothing, presented letters of recommendation from the commandant in India, and represented himself (as he could, in all truth) as a special agent of the Portuguese government. He was received cordially enough in some places, and was given permission to preach his religion. A few accepted the new belief, but conversions did not move apace. The Japanese listened eagerly and with intelligence and they asked many questions; two were reiterated. One was: Why did Xavier's God of love, whom not to know is death, leave Japan so long without knowledge of himself? The second question was: If Xavier's teachings were true, why did not the Chinese, those venerable people of antiquity, know something about them? In their years of intercourse with China, the Japanese had heard no mention made of Christianity. The Chinese would not have failed to speak to them about the Christian religion, they thought, if that religion were true. That second question showed the Japanese habit of referring, in all matters, to China as a standard of truth and right; and, by reason of that Japanese habit, another lure was gradually formed in Xavier's mind,—the lure of China, his last illusion.

It was not only his mendicant's garb that Xavier had to change in Japan. He was wise enough, when need arose, to bend his opinions to suit occasions. We have seen that in India he had regretted the Portuguese absorption in commercial interests, because that absorption was detrimental to his own aim. He perceived, however, beneath the civility and cordiality of the Japanese nobles, and their toleration of his preaching, their hope and wish that, through him, they might make connection with Portuguese traders. He found it necessary, in order to win continued toleration, to invite, even to urge the coming of Portuguese trading ships. Further, in order that the Portuguese traders might not find their hopes frustrated, he counselled the ware they should bring, namely, pepper. He added that the amount of pepper brought should be limited to one ship load, because the value of the pepper would fall if the Japanese were to see too great a supply.

The expected harvest of souls in Japan was not reaped; it was almost white, almost ready for the scythe; a slight diversion from the track—toward China—then the full harvest of both those mighty countries would be gathered in. This new illusion having risen in Xavier's mind, it crowded out all feeling of disappointment on the score of Japan; it was the last illusion, the final dream,—the lure of China. Death ended Xavier's course before this final dream was shattered by hard fact. It is not entirely clear how he imagined the quick reform which he looked for, was to take place in Japan, as a result of the adoption of Christianity by the Chinese. He had painted a very dark picture of the moral depravity which, he thought, characterized the Japanese houses of religion (Buddhist); and the Japanese priests seemed to him deliberately insincere. He must have believed his own statements on those matters. Perhaps he was

deceived by the intelligence of the class with which he made connection—the nobles, in contrast with the outcasts of India; the numerous questions they asked appeared to indicate genuine interest. At all events, he brooded over conditions in Japan, and over that reiterated question the Japanese asked: why had not China in its venerable antiquity heard of Christian truth? As he brooded, he began to weave a spell, and to make of China a new El Dorado. He resolved to meet that objection of the Japanese, and to remove their excuse for not accepting Christianity. He would go to that ancient land, "superior to all Christian states in the practice of justice and equity"; China would accept his truth, and, as a consequence, Japan would immediately follow the Chinese example. He wrote to this effect, to his friends, in far-off Europe. "Opposite to Japan lies China, an immense empire, enjoying profound peace, and which, as the Portuguese merchants tell us, is superior to all Christian states in the practice of justice and equity. The Chinese whom I have seen in Japan and elsewhere, and whom I got to know, are white in colour, like the Japanese, are acute, and eager to learn. In intellect they are superior even to the Japanese. Their country abounds in plenty of all things, and very many cities of great extent cover its surface. The cities are very populous; the houses ornamented with stone roofings, and very elegant. All reports say that the empire is rich in every sort of produce, but especially in silk. I find, from the Chinese themselves, that amongst them may be found many people of many different nations and religions, and, as far as I could gather from what they said, I suspect that among them are Jews and Mahometans.

"Nothing leads me to suppose that there are Christians there. I hope to go there during this year, 1552, and penetrate even to the Emperor himself. China is that sort of kingdom, that if the seed of the Gospel is once sown, it may be propagated far and wide. And moreover, if the Chinese accept the Christian faith, the Japanese would give up the doctrines which the Chinese have taught them."<sup>7</sup>

The last lap of the race is before him. It is 1552, and he is forty-six years old, still on the green side of fifty. He feels no diminution of vigour, he writes; but his hair is white, and that, perhaps, shows how he had poured his vitality into his tasks. A new and worthy goal awaits him,—the last citadel. Overthrow that remaining fortress (nothing more is needed thereto than the preaching of the Passion), and the gates of all the Orient will fall; Christ will take possession of his own, Victor and King. Once more Xavier hastens back to India, to compose quarrels, to untangle mistakes, and to plan for all those precious souls, from Goa on the west shore of the Hindustan peninsula, around the Asian coast and islands, to Japan. With his captains and lieutenants posted as advantageously as is possible on that widely extended battle-line, Xavier prepares for the *grande entrée*. For, profiting by the experience in Japan, where the beggar's guise had not been respected, he plans now a scene of magnificence that shall impress even the opulent lords of the Flowery King-

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 347 ff.

dom. He will not go as pilgrim and beggar, but as ambassador, Ambassador of Heaven: he will go in company with an Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary from the King of Portugal. Without difficulty Xavier induced a loyal lay friend, a wealthy trader, to assume the expense of the ambassadorial equipage. The initial outlay, Xavier reasoned, would be amply remunerated by the trade concessions his friend would receive from the Chinese. It was to be a "field of the cloth of gold." The splendour of the secular ambassador would suggest that the grandeur of the King of Kings outshines all human conception and representation; for the ambassador's overlord, is, in his turn (though King of Portugal) only a fief of that sovereign Lord.

Thus the plans were made. From the famous and infamous Ormuz, Father Gaspar brought brocades and other Persian textiles, to be used as gifts for the Chinese Emperor. A galleon was outfitted, such as, floating down the sun's path or the moon's, might appear even to the wealth of China an argosy of golden sail, a visitant from a diviner world. All had been brought together in the Malay harbour, and the two ambassadors—of Heaven and of Portugal—were ready for their embassy. Then a sudden bolt fell. The local governor of the harbour confiscated the splendour, and used force to prevent Xavier's friend from proceeding with the enterprise. The governor's motives were, first, jealousy; then fear lest the trade concessions to be made, should interfere with his own private smuggling gains. Xavier threatened the governor with civil and ecclesiastical punishment; but both Portugal and Rome were too distant to terrify this desperado, who laughed alike at the threat of prison and of excommunication. The governor finally sent a crew of his own to man Xavier's romantic pinnacle—"Holy Cross," it had been christened—saying that, with conditions thus changed, the voyage might proceed. Xavier decided to go, shorn of splendour, his plans thwarted, and troubled in heart over the expense he had led his friend to incur without chance now of any remuneration. Frustration of hope marked this last adventure from beginning to end. In six weeks' time, with three companions, he reached an islet about one hundred miles from Canton, which was his immediate objective. From August until November, he tried unsuccessfully to induce some Cantonese smugglers (who came to this islet of San Chan to trade with the Portuguese), to get him into the city. Promises were made but never kept; and, after another fruitless month, Xavier, who was always fertile in resource, began to think of the possibility of sailing to Siam, and thence entering China afoot. It was not to be. He had crowded his forty-six years with many labours, and had won a period of rest. Fever rescued him from further undertakings. In a scant shelter of straw, with his beloved crucifix in his hand and on his lips, he left behind this sluggish world, two days after Christmas, 1552.

Ardent, wonderful boy! Who does not see his deficiencies? Who can emulate his devotion and his zeal? The defects of another, like the duty of another, may be full of danger to those who observe them. To shame our own defects out of existence by reverent study of his virtues—that would be our profitable course. Too much has been said in this sketch, about Xavier



himself; too little of the Great Companion in whose service he laboured. It would be a matter of pain and surprise to Xavier himself to find so many pages taken up with his own performances; "to love, praise and serve God" would be the account he would wish to have given. In truth, Christ is the foreground and the background in the picture of Xavier's life,—the centre and the circumference of his thought and being. His outer life is full of adventure and romance,—it lends itself easily to treatment and valuation according to the standards of the world. His inner life is hidden in Christ, inaccessible to "the world's coarse thumb and finger." A hint can be given, however, of what that inner life was. "And now I have nothing more to tell you," Xavier wrote back from the East to his friends in Europe, "except that so great is the intensity and abundance of the joy which God is accustomed to bestow upon those workmen of His vineyard who labour diligently in cultivating this part of the same, that for my part I do really believe that if there is in this life any true and solid happiness, it is here. It often happens to me to hear one<sup>8</sup> whose lot it is to labour in this field cry out, 'O Lord, I beseech Thee overwhelm me not now in this life with so much delight, or at least, since in Thy boundless goodness and mercy Thou dost so overwhelm me, take me away to the abode of the blessed. For any one who has once known what it is to taste in his soul Thy ineffable sweetness must of necessity think it very bitter to live any longer without seeing Thee face to face.'"<sup>9</sup>

Such was the man, Xavier, and such his love for Christ. In complete devotion and utter forgetfulness of self, he gave himself to praise and serve his Master. Let us turn to our own spiritual profit some of the lessons suggested by his life.

C. C. CLARK.

<sup>8</sup> This is the humility characteristic of the saints; they for ever try to avoid mentioning themselves.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 162.

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*We are always praying if we are doing our duty, and are doing it to please God.*

—LASANCE.

# THE CREST JEWEL OF WISDOM

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ATTRIBUTED TO SHANKARA ACHARYA

## VI

**B**UILT up of unreality is the false conception that this is the real world. What division can there be in the one Substance, without mutation, shape or difference?

What division can there be in the one Substance, in which there is no distinction of seer, seeing, seen, without mutation, shape or difference?

What division can there be in the one Substance, like the world-ocean infinitely full, without mutation, shape or difference?

What division can there be in the secondless, supreme Real, free from difference, wherein the cause of delusion melts away, as darkness melts away in light?

What trace can there be of division in the supreme Real, the very Self of unity? Even in dreamlessness, which is joy only, who has ever found division?

After the awakening to the supreme Real, in the Self which is Being, the Eternal, undivided, this world no longer is, whether past, present or to come; as there is no serpent in the rope, nor a drop of water in the river, when the mirage has been recognized. (406)

This duality is Glamour only; transcendently it is non-dual: thus says the Scripture, and this is immediately experienced in dreamlessness.

That the attribute has no being apart from the substance, has been perceived by the wise. The distinction is born of illusion, as in the serpent imagined in the rope.

This distinction has its root in the imagination; when the imagination ceases, it has no longer being. Therefore, concentrate the imagination in the higher Self, whose form is hidden.

In soul-vision he who has gained wisdom recognizes within his heart that mysterious being which is perpetual illumination, formed of perfect joy, incomparable, immeasurable, ever free, in which is no desire, boundless as the ether, without parts, without sense of separateness, as the perfect, the Eternal. (410)

In soul-vision he who has gained wisdom recognizes within his heart that reality, void of the changes of the manifested world, of unimaginable being, in essence equal, peerless, eternal mind, far above bondage, revealed by the sacred teachings, everlasting, revealed by us, as the perfect, the Eternal.

In soul-vision he who has gained wisdom recognizes within his heart that being, unfading, undying, which by its very nature can know no setting, still as the ocean depths, beyond name, wherein potencies and changes have come to rest, immemorial, full of peace, the one, as the perfect, the Eternal.

Intending the inner mind upon it, behold the Self in its own being, its partless sovereignty. Cut thy bonds stained with the stains of the world, by strong effort make thy manhood fruitful.

Come to consciousness of the Self dwelling within thyself, free from all disguises, which is being, consciousness, bliss, undivided; so thou buildest no more for going out.

Freed from the burden of the body, cast aside as a corpse, seen as but the shadow of the man, a mere reflection, a fruit of works, he of mighty soul puts it on no more. (415)

Drawing near to that being whose form is ever stainless illumination, joy, put far from thee this disguise, inert, impure; let it not even be remembered again, for to remember as an object of desire, that thing that has been vomited, brings contempt.

Burning this up root and all, in the fire, the Self of being, the Eternal beyond separateness, thereafter he, excellent in wisdom, stands as the Self, through the Self, which is pure illumination, bliss.

The body is knotted of the threads of former works, unclean as the blood of kine; whether it depart or remain, the knower of the Real regards it not, as his life dissolves in the Self of bliss, the Eternal.

Knowing the Self, the partless bliss, in its true being, desiring what, or with what motive will the knower of the Real pamper the body?

But of him who has attained, free even in life, who has gained union, this is the fruit: to taste without and within the essence of being and bliss in the Self.

Of ceasing from self-indulgence, illumination is the fruit; of illumination, the silencing of desire is the fruit; from realizing the bliss of the Self, peace is the fruit; this, verily, is the fruit of silencing desire. (421)

So long as the latter of these is unattained, the former has not borne its fruit. Supreme content, the peerless joy of the Self, is liberation.

Not to be perturbed by the griefs of the manifested world is the renowned fruit of wisdom. Nor, after he has gained discernment, will a man work again the many blameworthy works done in the time of his delusion.

To be freed from the unreal is the fruit of wisdom; to be entangled in it is seen to be the fruit of unwisdom. If there be not this distinction between wise and unwise, as in the recognition of the mirage, what then is the reward of the wise?

When the heart's knot of unwisdom is destroyed without remainder, how can the presence of objects be a cause of entanglement for him who is without desire? (425)

Where no dynamic mind-image arises in the presence of objects of desire, this is the perfection of freedom from self-indulgence; when the feeling of "I" no longer arises, this is the perfection of illumination; when the being dissolved in the Eternal returns no more, this is the perfection of silence.

Rich is he, to be honoured among beings, who, because he stands ever in the nature of the Eternal, is free in soul from the tyranny of outer objects, regarding as little as does a sleeping child the enjoyments deemed alluring

by others, who views this world as a world of dream, who dwells in a certain realm possessing his soul, reaping the fruit of infinite holiness.

That saint stands firm in wisdom who enjoys the bliss of being, for his Self is dissolved in the Eternal, he is changeless, risen above action.

That condition is said to be spiritual wisdom, which is all consciousness without sense of separateness, plunged deep in the unity of the Eternal and the Self stripped of every veil.

In whom this wisdom is well established, he is said to stand firm in wisdom. He whose wisdom thus stands firm, whose bliss is unbroken, by whom this world is well nigh forgotten, he is said to be free even in life. (430)

He who, with soul dissolved, is yet awake, free from the bondage of waking life, whose illumination is without dynamic mind-images, he is said to be free even in life.

In whom the circle of birth and death has come to rest, who is individual though without separateness, whose imagination is free from imaginings, he is said to be free even in life.

Even though the body remains, he regards it as a shadow; he is without the thought of "I" and "my": this is the hall mark of him who is free even in life.

He seeks not to delve into the past or to unveil the future; he is the disinterested spectator: this is the hall mark of him who is free even in life.

He regards as equal all things in this world full of contrasts, with quality set against fault: this is the hall mark of him who is free even in life. (435)

Whether good or evil fortune come, he regards it as equal in the Self, remaining unchanged by either: this is the hall mark of him who is free even in life.

Because the saint's heart abides savouring the bliss of the Eternal, he distinguishes not between what is within and what is without: this is the hall mark of him who is free even in life.

Without the thought of "my" and "I" in what is to be done by the body and the powers, he stands as the disinterested spectator: he bears the hall mark of him who is free even in life.

Who knows the Self is one with the Eternal, according to the power of the Scriptures, who is free from the bondage of the world: he bears the hall mark of him who is free even in life.

In whom no thought of "I" arises regarding the body and its powers, nor does he separate himself in thought from what is other than these: he is said to be free even in life. (440)

Who through wisdom discerns that there is no division between the hidden Self and the Eternal, nor between the Eternal and the manifested world: he bears the hall mark of him who is free even in life.

Who bears it with equal mind, whether he be honoured by the holy or afflicted by evil men: he bears the hall mark of him who is free even in life.

Into whom flow all manifested things sent forth by the Supreme, as rivers of water enter the ocean's treasure house, causing no change, because he and they are one Being, that saint has attained liberation.

For him who has discerned the true being of the Eternal, the ancient circle

of birth and death has ceased. If it remain, he has not discerned the being of the Eternal; it still lies beyond him.

But if they say that birth and death still beset him because of the impetus of dynamic mind-images, this is not so; the dynamic mind-image loses its power through discernment of oneness with Being. (445)

As the most lustful man's desire ceases before his mother, so is it for the wise when the Eternal is known in fulness of bliss.

The Scripture says that even in him who has attained to meditation the conviction of the reality of outer things remains, because his former works are working themselves out.

As long as pleasure and pain are felt, so long are former works working themselves out. The arising of the fruit is because of former works; where there are no longer works, there is no fruit.

From the discernment that "I am the Eternal", works heaped up through hundreds of millions of ages are dissolved, as dream-works on waking.

Whatever be done in time of dream, whether good or manifest evil, after he is awake how can it visit him with heaven or hell? (450)

When he has come to know the true Self, which rises detached like the sky, he is no more entangled in future works for ever.

As the ether enclosed in the jar is not tainted by the smell of the wine, so the true Self within the vesture is not tainted by the properties of the vesture.

The momentum of works begun before the sunrise of wisdom does not cease without bearing fruit after wisdom is gained; it is like an arrow aimed and shot at a mark.

The arrow shot with the thought that there is a tiger does not halt when it is seen to be a cow, but quickly pierces the mark because of its impetus.

Works already entered on retain their energy even in the case of those who have attained wisdom; only through being experienced are they consumed. Former works, works accumulated, and future works melt away in the fire of perfect wisdom. They who perceive the oneness of the Eternal and the Self, and stand ever in the realization of that oneness, for them the three kinds of works exist no longer; they become the Eternal, free from limitations.

For the saint who stands in the Self, through the oneness of the Self with the perfect Eternal, which is free from the qualities of the vestures, the myth of the reality of former works exists no longer, as for him who is awake the myth of bondage to things seen in dream no longer exists.

For he who has awakened no longer keeps the thought of "I and my and that" with regard to the dream body and the world belonging to it; he comes to himself simply by waking.

He no longer wishes to gain the things of his dream, nor does he seek to grasp the dream world. But if he still pursues the things of the mirage, it is certain he has not yet awakened from sleep.

He who dwells in the supreme Eternal stands ever in the Self, beholding nothing else; as is the memory of something seen in dream, so for the wise man are eating and other bodily acts.

Though the body which is built up by former works continues to work out the works that are entered on, these works are not bound up with the beginningless Self, for the Self is not built up by works. (460)

"Unborn, eternal, everlasting," says the Scripture, which cannot speak in vain; therefore, what building of works can there be for him who stands in the Self?

Works entered on retain their force so long as the body is held to be the Self; but to think of the body as the Self is false; therefore, let works entered on be renounced.

Even the building of the body by former works is also an illusion; whence can come the reality of what is only imagined? How can there be the birth of what is unreal?

How can there be the destruction of what has not been born? How can there be former works of what does not exist, if through wisdom the effects of unwisdom are dissolved, root and all?

How does this body subsist? The Scripture declares the development of works exists, to bring growth to those who are full of doubt and inert in mind, through the perception of external things, but not to establish in the wise the belief in the reality of the body and outer things. (465)

The Eternal is complete, beginningless, endless, changeless, one, secondless; in the Eternal there is no diversity.

The Eternal is the sum of being, the sum of consciousness, everlasting, the sum of bliss, without action, one, verily, and secondless; in the Eternal there is no diversity.

The Eternal is the one hidden essence, full, unending, in all directions conscious, one, verily, and secondless; in the Eternal there is no diversity.

The Eternal cannot be diminished or excelled, the Eternal cannot be apprehended, nor does it need any support; it is one, verily, and secondless; in the Eternal there is no diversity.

The Eternal is without qualities, without parts, subtile, without separateness, without stain, one, verily, and secondless; in the Eternal there is no diversity. (470)

The Eternal is in its nature indefinable, not to be reached by word or thought, one, verily, and secondless; in the Eternal there is no diversity.

The Eternal is the riches of being, in itself perfect, pure, awakened, unlike aught else, one, verily, and secondless; in the Eternal there is no diversity.

C. J.

*(To be concluded)*

# A STUDY OF CONVERSION

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MR. HAROLD BEGBIE, in his new book, *More Twice-Born Men*, has made a remarkable contribution to the literature and *raison d'être* of religious conversion. He narrates, or paraphrases, the autobiographical accounts of seven conversions amongst representative and prominent University men in England and the United States. These were in each case effected through the influence of one man, who prefers to remain anonymous to safeguard the continuance of his work, and who is designated throughout the book as F. B. This man himself experienced a deep and abiding conversion, which is also graphically described;—and he has spent his life since that event in the truest kind of missionary labour, seeking the reformation, one by one, of men who like himself were not “down and out” as the world sees such things, but who nevertheless lived divided, sinning, unhappy, worldly lives. Mr. Begbie describes F. B. as “so unimpressive” that he repels many people at the start. His American voice and manners grated on English sensibilities, yet sooner or later his “inner light” shone through. “He helps one to believe that the truth may yet be an even greater force in human affairs than personality” (p. 20).

Yet Mr. Begbie, despite his sincere and obvious admiration, is frankly unsympathetic to many of F. B.'s methods, and also “disapproves vigorously” his explanations about his work—his “theological opinions.” We feel that Mr. Begbie hardly does justice to one who might be termed the hero of his book, because F. B.'s experience has enabled him, perhaps, to see something of the real significance of what lies back of, and vitalizes, time-worn Christian phraseology,—while Mr. Begbie's mind prefers to reinterpret in terms of modern psychology, or to discount entirely, what does not fit into his own experience. “His mysticism,” he writes of F. B., “might suggest even a surrender to superstition. He attributes, without question, to the Deity certain motions in himself which another might well assign to movements of his own unconsciousness. For example, it is his habit to wake very early from sleep, and to devote an hour or more to complete silence of soul and body; in this silence he is listening to the voice from heaven, and the voice comes to him, and he receives his orders for the day—he is to write to one man, he is to call upon another, and so on. Psychologists would tell him that those orders proceed from his own unconsciousness, and are the fruit of sleep's mentation, the harvest of his yesterday's thought and solitudes. Such an explanation, of course, does not rob these motions of their spiritual value” (p. 21). Mr. Begbie thinks his explanation will help “those whose conception of Deity entirely prevents them from believing either His interposition or His colloquies with the human soul”—which latter he apparently believes “degrade the human spirit to the mechanical level of a gramophone” (pp. 21-2). No student

of Theosophy but would realize that Mr. Begbie has completely failed in understanding at this point. He has not grasped the significance of such personal experience on F. B.'s part, and in consequence inevitably weakens his entire presentation, and misses the vital essence of F. B.'s work. After all, it takes a mystic to comprehend a mystic, and mystic Mr. Begbie is not! Were it only F. B.'s "unconsciousness" which was operative,—the unconsciousness of one described as unattractive often to the point of antagonism—how account for the power to produce such marvellous changes in the hearts and natures of men?

This point is additionally important, because it reveals a misconception due to sheer lack of logic. It is also a stumbling-block in the way of those modern psychologists who are at the same time students of mysticism. This has been pointed out before in the *QUARTERLY* as true of so acute and intellectual a writer as Miss Evelyn Underhill. Can the Absolute, All-pervading Deity (Atma), have direct personal intercourse with the microscopic consciousness of an individual man? asks the psychologist, and he answers rightly in the negative. To explain, therefore, such experiences as those of F. B. (or of Joan of Arc or others), where a definite Voice gives definite directions, the modern psychologist takes refuge in the unconscious realms of the man's own nature—his sub- or superconscious,—ὁ θεὸς ἐν ἡμῖν. How does that explain the following? One of Mr. Begbie's converts writes of himself: "At last, sure that this feeling was true, and absolutely wretched about myself, I got hold of F. B.'s address and went off to see him. He was out. I wanted to see him so badly that I sat down at the table in his room and began writing him a letter. All of a sudden he bounced into the room, breathlessly. 'I knew there was someone needing me,' he said. It turned out that he was on his way to see somebody else when he felt himself stopped dead in the street and ordered to go to his room. The other appointment was important, so he had run all the way back" (p. 78).

To limit this experience to some intuitive perception of F. B.'s unconscious, working in touch with another man's unconscious, and impressing itself successfully at the psychological moment on F. B.'s busy and normal waking consciousness, is to reconstruct human nature on startling lines, and to create innumerable difficulties. The reason assigned for F. B.'s ability to be aware in these ways, is that he has completely surrendered his will to the Divine will, and that his whole life is given in unhesitating and unqualified obedience to that will. The Deity—God's will—is conceived, not in personal terms, mediated to the finite and personal consciousness of the man F. B., but in Cosmic and Universal terms, as the general and pervasive *Élan Vital*, or Spirit. The hierarchical structure of the Universe is ignored. The Voice that F. B. hears cannot be the Voice of the Deity, we are told; therefore it must be a voice in his own head,—an echo of his own superconscious *alter ego*.

Thus we see the psychologist, striving to avoid a crude anthropomorphism, and to keep the conception of Deity universal, nevertheless failing to accomplish his end, since he does not include intelligence and limitation, with



will, in his attributions. God must be infinitely great, but also infinitely little; He must be at once impersonal and personal. Therefore, as our natures are dual, both higher and lower, not single, we see and interpret correctly when we view the manifestations of Deity in terms of ascending and descending hierarchies or degrees. God may speak to us directly, but it must be in terms of descending manifestation, by means of the Logos, His Word through the Lodge of Masters; through a particular Master; through that Master's representatives. The man who aligns his will completely with the Universal Will, finds his most immediate contact with that Will (since he himself is a finite personality), in the nearest personal Will above his own which is at least an approximate expression of the Divine Will, and to some extent, therefore, at one with it. This personal Will above his own may be that of Christ (to the Christian), if he have reached so high, or of some disciple of Christ (cf. Joan of Arc's heavenly monitors, St. Michael, St. Catharine, St. Margaret),—or even of Christ's "Father"; but it will in the very nature of things be personal, and intensely personal. Mr. Begbie argues in one place for the logical necessity of the survival of the personality beyond the dissolution of the physical vehicle,—why does he not see that one who, while still in the physical, succeeds in opening the doors of his soul to spiritual consciousness, will of necessity come into touch with the souls of "just men made perfect," with those who before him have actually won their immortality, and are perhaps (as they have so often said) striving to reach and assist men on earth? Once surmount the obstacles raised by self-will, pass beyond the mental fogs of a mechanistic and material conception of the life about us, and mystical experience becomes a simple and natural *rapprochement* with the spiritual order of consciousness, and with all those *personalities* which have already attained self-conscious existence in that order. This higher consciousness cannot be less than human consciousness as we know it; but, since there is always an overlapping in the intermediate stages, it must be the realization and fulfilment of what we can already recognize as worthiest and best in the human.

Despite this lack of insight, a lack which is widespread both with scientists and theologians to-day, Mr. Begbie strives to do his friend full justice, and because he does represent him with considerable fairness and detachment, one is able to guess at much which seems to be left unsaid.

Aside, then, from what is this distinct limitation on Mr. Begbie's part, he has written in an introductory chapter a most excellent *rationale* or philosophy of conversion, and, in a concluding chapter, as a result of his view of conversion, he has also written a profoundly interesting and significant essay on immortality. These will bear brief analysis and quotation, but the reader is urged to study the book for himself, especially pages six to nineteen, one hundred and forty-five, and the whole concluding chapter.

F. B.'s postulate, which Mr. Begbie endorses, is that a direct and living consciousness of God is the natural state of things. Sin, which is the will of the creature opposing itself to the will of the Creator, prevents the natural state of things. "Always it is sin, and only it is sin, which blinds the eyes and hardens

the heart of mankind. It may be the smallest of sins, one of those sins which we describe as merely amiable weaknesses; but let it be in charge of a soul and directing its course, let it be a sin which we find ourselves unable to give up, which we recognize as unworthy, and yet cling to, and we are living in the cold, we are moving in the shadows, and all our faculties are in gyves" (p. 6). We might interject here that Mr. Begbie states this all important fact, but does not give the reason, which is that even the smallest sin is part of the lower nature, and while clung to, the man is still identifying his consciousness with lower nature, and so lives in the cold shadows of isolation from Reality—shut out from the radiance of the spiritual life.

Mr. Begbie points out that the divided state of will explains why so many people who profess religious beliefs and devote themselves to religious work, lack power and charm. "Men may live very religiously and yet fail to dislodge their will from some form of selfishness which is fatal to their possession by the grace of God. They may be perfectly pure, and yet vain; or wonderfully generous with their time and money, yet intolerantly wedded to their own ideas; or they may lay down their lives for their religion, and yet never have loved anybody so well as themselves. Perfectly to realize the divine companionship seems to depend solely and exclusively on one act of the will, an act which denies all the values of the animal senses. . . . It is a hard challenge, but there it is; and one must agree that the universe itself is hard. . . . Perhaps the attribution to the Deity of a softness, a vacillation, and a sentimentalism which would be contemptible in a man, has done far more to weaken in humanity the sense of the moral law than the earlier attribution to Him of such miserable bad qualities as jealousy, vindictiveness, and a gross partiality" (p. 7). The struggle is hard for all men of divided will. It is not hard "for those whose souls are doped by the swill in the trough of animalism" (p. 8), —and, we might add, thorough worldliness is often a more complete "dope" even than animalism. Nor is it hard for the man whose will is united to the Divine Will.

In the history of mankind, ascent is the consequence of desire. "The greatest of all human words, because it denotes the greatest of human powers, is the word love—a word which signifies desire at its highest intensity. What a man loves with all his will he finds it easy to obtain; the struggle entailed in getting what we want can be measured, and is absolutely determined, by the quality of our desire. . . . To hunger and thirst after a virtue rightly commands that virtue; half-heartedly to wish for a virtue rightly brings only a fragment of that virtue into our possession. To obtain a living and creating consciousness of the divine companionship our will must desire that blessing to the extremest intensity of love, certainly to the exclusion of our own petty wishes (p. 9). . . . Love of God—the will conformed to the will of God, the heart hungering and thirsting after God, the affections of the mind set upon the things of God—this is sufficient to deliver the soul from its sins: and this is the heart and centre of the Galilean revelation (p. 18). . . . The question asked of man by the universe is not 'What do you believe?' but 'What do you love?' Any man who

makes honest answer to that simple question can determine his own value to the universe, his exact place in the stages of evolution" (p. 19).

The bare outline is here given, but the quotations, it is hoped, make the principles clear. A man gets what he really wants—what he desires. As long as his desires (the wills of his higher and lower natures) are divided and opposed even to the smallest degree, he stultifies himself, and sooner or later evolution passes over him and degeneration sets in. So *Light on the Path* says, "The whole nature of man must be used wisely by the one who enters the way," and another Master said long ago that *love* of God and of one's neighbour is the summation and fulfilment of the law, and that a house divided against itself cannot stand.

In the concluding chapter on "Immortality," with concise and often brilliantly worded paragraphs, Mr. Begbie surveys man's ascent through a million years—ascend won by hard labour, by intelligent action, but above all by innumerable choices of the higher over the lower. Life itself, and environment, impelled him to this; but, "The higher organisms gradually substitute internal for external stimuli." *Know thyself* was a great utterance; *The Kingdom of Heaven is within you* was a greater revelation of truth" (p. 152). With the moral freedom of man, "Evolution brings *personality* into existence . . . ; what reason have we to think that it has now switched off its vitalizing current of creation? . . . Science seems to teach that life never ceases to be, but will not yet admit that *personality* persists after the collapse of the physical instrument. But this is a progress towards nothing, a race with no goal but the starting-point, an ascent, the topmost peak of which is the bottomless abyss of beginning" (pp. 153-4).

Mr. Begbie then points out that it is the testimony of all evolution in man, whether of things terrestrial or in great spiritual experience, that "a subordination of their lower nature establishes for them a new relationship with reality—a relationship so pervasive in its effects that they liken it to a new birth (p. 154). . . . Just as science must control animal senses by reason, in order to arrive at physical reality, so, we are told by religion, man must control those same senses if he is to arrive at spiritual reality. And just as science teaches us that all progress in evolution has depended on the establishment of a new relationship with the actualities of environment, so religion tells us that spiritual progress depends on the establishment of a new relationship with the ultimate reality of the universe. The religious man, it would seem, carries the work of physical science to a logical conclusion (pp. 155-6). . . . Does it not seem a natural inference from the theory of evolution that a race which rises above the stagnations of animalism, and which produces individuals who live spiritual lives, is capable of attaining to a spiritual consummation? Why this freedom of man's soul? Why this infinite labour of evolution? . . . The natural reward of the man who desires spiritual satisfactions (in religious language, *who loves God*) is the opportunity to enjoy those satisfactions. The natural punishment of the man who desires animal satisfactions (in religious language, *who denies God*) is the death of his soul—that part of him which can

only be satisfied by spiritual growth, that immortal part of him which hunger and thirst after righteousness might have rendered immortal. Such a theory of rewards and punishments not only furnishes the mind with an honourable idea of the Creator's justice, but provides the evolutionary hypothesis with a completing purpose worthy of its travail" (p. 157).

These are truly memorable words, and would carry with them the unqualified endorsement of any student of Theosophy. Love is the one thing in the world that cannot be forced, though it can be cultivated; and when man turns in love to God, he becomes, as the heir of all the ages, one "who grows into the likeness of the thing he loves, who becomes immortal because with all his heart, and with all his mind, and with all his strength he hungers and thirsts after the things of immortality" (p. 158). "Such a thesis of existence gives a new dignity to religion," adds Mr. Begbie, and we say heartily amen, because his thesis of existence is Theosophy, a statement of that Wisdom of God which is age-old, which has lain behind the myths and precepts and traditions of all religions, and which is at once the goal of all our knowledge and the aspiration of our souls to-day.

Conversion, then, occurs when a man realizes that "any form of wilfulness in the mind is a vital bar to a vital consciousness of God," and that "as soon as the mind, with real honesty and a consuming desire for that divine consciousness, hates its sin and turns to God, the will is new born" (p. 161). Life in such a man becomes transfigured; he is joyous because freed from the weakness and irresolution of a divided personality, he has a new sense of his relation to the spiritual order, and he finds, liberated within him, creative power which not only transforms him, but reaches out to, and lifts up, the lives of his fellow men. Immortality is conditional upon conversion; therefore conversion is something to be ardently desired and to be won at any cost; and this process, with its goal, alone explains the purpose of existence.

F. F.

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*A grain thrown into good ground brings forth fruit, and a principle thrown into a good mind brings forth fruit.—PASCAL.*

# ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

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THE Convention of The Theosophical Society had stirred the Historian deeply. "I wish the impossible," he lamented. "I wish the Convention could have re-assembled after an interlude sufficient to give us an opportunity to think over what had been said. There was so much 'in the air,' or 'between the lines,' which only meditation could bring through into consciousness. At the end of a week I was positively oppressed with a speech I wanted to make,—an exhortation if you prefer, addressed to myself primarily, but to which others might have responded."

"What was it?" we asked.

"The dominant theme of the Convention, in my opinion, was the effect of the theosophic ideal on contemporary civilization. That ideal—the ideal of chelaship, of 'the superior man' as Confucius expressed it—the ideal of absolute self-mastery and of conscious co-operation with the Lodge of Saviours and Adepts—that great ideal, having been brought down to us 'from above' through the sacrifice of Madame Blavatsky, Mr. Judge and others, met at last with the response which gave it physical life on this plane: that is to say, with the response of love, desire, and *action*. It became embodied. Since then, the daily efforts of hundreds of men and women have sustained that response, ceaselessly reaffirming it, reinforcing it, lifting it constantly a little nearer to its source in the Lodge, nourishing it, as the gods are nourished,—by sacrifice. That ideal, therefore, has become an enormous though imperceptible power in the world where it is now rooted, and just as purity consumes and destroys impurity, so this ideal of chelaship, of spiritual knighthood, is disintegrating and destroying the material and unreal idols of the world,—the idol of comfort, the idol of physical sensation, the idol of commercial supremacy, the idol of universal suffrage, the idols of self-will, self-indulgence, of self-exaltation, and a score of others. Most of them it will take ages to destroy, though all will go in time, under the creative, preservative, and *therefore* disintegrating influence of the theosophical ideal-made-real. One or two are putrefying already, and we can see to-day on the surface of the world the seething, fermentative, hideous stir of their decay. Chief among these is the idol of government by the mob, for the mob,—an idol made in Birmingham, though Celts have been the chief among its priests. Carrion-Jews are feeding on it, sometimes cawing 'Sovietism' and sometimes cawing 'Reform.'

"Often I wonder if members of the Society realize their responsibility. To see the light in any degree is to become responsible to that extent. It was an Avatar who said, 'If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke (excuse) for their sin.' The revelation of the Lodge was made; the *call* of the Lodge went forth, and all of nature echoed it. To-day it rings in our ears, more clearly, perhaps, than ever before—heart-

ravishing, magical, and yet stern as the call of God's Warriors must be. We shall indeed be without covering for our sin if we fail to do more than admire."

The Historian rose and gazed intently before him.

"There were souls about to be re-born. They knew that they had seen, and that they had failed, not once but often. Vanity or ambition or lust or sloth had swamped them. They had been cruel to those they loved, unfaithful to those who had trusted them,—they had turned from the inner light. So, with vision momentarily cleared (the soul indrawing before its return to earth), these souls prayed from the depths of them for *one more chance*. Their prayer was heard. Their Master gave from himself—as the pelican gives—to balance their Karma, that the chance they begged might be granted. Those souls to-day are members of this Society. Some struggle royally, breasting the waves with eyes fixed on their goal. Others . . . Yet surely it cannot be that anyone now would betray him! For 'thirty pieces of silver'—for the yet cheaper admiration of the world, for some brief sensation, or from sheer inertia—could any fail to throw their hearts ahead of them, and then follow after?"

The Student was tired. "Thank you," he said. "You have done me good. I feel at times as if I were driving a lame pig to market!"

"Who made the pig and who made it lame? You did. What do you expect? A race-horse to carry you there!"

The words ripped out like shots from a revolver. The Sphinx, usually so silent and benign during his rare visits, hits out invariably at the least suggestion of what he calls "negativeness."

The Student pulled himself together. "You're right," he said. "I suppose I'm growing flabby in my old age!" (he is far from old). "You remind me of a story told of Damodar. Do you remember it? He was very young and very frail. He and Olcott used to bathe together in some small river near Madras. Damodar could not swim and was a terrible coward in the water, shivering if it came up to his knees. H. P. B. and Olcott teased him unmercifully, but without result. Finally Olcott said to him: 'Fie! A pretty adept you will make when you dare not even wet your knee.' Damodar said nothing at the time, but the next day when they went bathing, he plunged in and swam across the stream, having decided that he would swim or die. No wonder that he succeeded where hundreds of others failed! The Historian, quoting, spoke of the worship of the mob. I am afraid that some of us are afflicted with a worship of obstacles. I know one or two people, in any case, who brood over them most industriously, and, in spite of my exclamation, I sincerely despise that. Obstacles so obviously are like the steps of a stair,—there to be used, to be mounted, as our only means of ascent."

"Speaking of mob-worship," interjected the Philosopher, "what do you think of England? The British workman seems to have worshipped himself with such intensity and for so long, that he has at last drawn all other classes—with a few individual exceptions—into the current. They appear to unite in adulation of the so-called workman, merely because he does not even

pretend to be a gentleman. In this country, where the mob is so firmly in the saddle, and where everyone is so familiar with the horrible result, the English worship of inferiority is comparatively unknown. Hatred of superiority is of course common to both countries; but in England, a candidate for office seems to be admired, even by educated people, solely on the ground that his mother was a washerwoman. A candidate for the Presidency of the United States will make immense capital out of the fact that he started life as a newsboy, and will have himself photographed as often as possible with his poor old mother, specially dressed for the occasion in her 'working' clothes. Senators and Secretaries of State will be careful to have their wives photographed while hanging up the family wash in the back yard. But this is done in all cases to show how 'democratic' they are; to show that they wear no 'frills,' and that the mob need not hate them because of their real or imagined superiority. This has nothing to do with the worship of inferiority. The concentrated essence of the oldest and most superior families in the United States would not be tempted, I believe, to grovel at the feet of a man merely because his origin was more humble than *he* is (and they can't be so very humble when any one of them is willing to govern a nation). An English Duchess, on the other hand—at least so far as I can make out—is prepared to hug almost anything in over-alls, from miner to house-painter, indiscriminately. I'm sorry for her, but she will deserve her fate. The Princesse de Lamballe has not been dead for long, and if ever a fact ought to have been stamped indelibly on the human mind it is that superiority is the deadliest of insults, the most unpardonable of outrages, to all but the humble of heart. It is so deadly an insult that it is not admitted, except in theory, by the vast majority of people. God alone is superior, because he's so far away that he doesn't count.

"A queer world! I have no objection whatsoever to a man because his mother was or is a washerwoman, but I cannot for the life of me see why he should be elected to office *because* his mother was a washerwoman. A superior washerwoman is perhaps better than an inferior Duchess,—is certainly better than a vulgar Duchess; but no one can deny that the son of the most superior among washerwomen may be a rogue. In any case I should prefer to elect the mother to office rather than a son who will trade on the poor old woman's working clothes, posing by her side (in the photograph) with his arm affectionately around her, while hoping that the hole in her apron will come out clearly as it will be worth at least ten thousand votes. So 'home-like,' that hole!"

"But don't forget what a perfectly lovely time the British aristocracy are having," the Engineer expostulated, sardonically. "A brand new sensation,—that of being governed by men who might have been their gardeners or footmen: the world upside down. Imagine some typical Lord Percy (his elder brothers killed in the war: how much that means!), discussing 'politics' at the club with his bosom friend, Lord —, while sipping his third whisky and soda: 'There's no blinking it, my son, we're a perfectly worthless lot, the most hopeless rotters. Why, look at my Dad: the old boy turns up about once a year in the House, and simply drewels. What d'you think is his latest? Wants me

to go to South Africa and *work*,—wants me to grow ostriches! Seems to think an ostrich is some kind of a camel. I went to the Zoo to find out, and bless my soul if the creature isn't a bird—the thing with the feathers, you know. Yes, we're a wretched lot, and I don't wonder we've been kicked out so as to give these other duffers a chance, don't you know. I'm all for them. They can't make things any worse, and it's time they had a show, *I* say. It makes the old boy ripping. He says he's going to rent 53 to some Yankee, and will raise cabbages and pickles and things in Shropshire, till it's all over. Oh Lord!"

The Engineer can be dramatic when he wants to be, and had acted the part as if he were faint from boredom. Perhaps he thought we needed a change after the Convention! But he was serious beneath the surface.

"They exasperate me," he said. "I could wring their miserable necks. They have such splendid stuff in them, as the war proved; but they're fools and worse until the gun pointed at them goes off under their noses. Nothing less than that will wake them up. Just look at Germany, coolly preparing for her next onslaught, in full sight of everybody, while England opposes whatever move France makes for her own defence, and which France makes, therefore, indirectly, for the protection of England!"

"How do you account for it?" the Recorder ventured.

"Mixed motives as usual," replied the Engineer. "First, jealousy of France—an old jealousy, going back hundreds of years. England does not want France to be too powerful; she wants to keep France and Germany about equally balanced. The Napoleonic wars, and the war of 1870, prove that; also England's warning to Bismarck in 1875 (was it not?), when a too powerful Germany again threatened to attack France. Second among the instincts, or sub-conscious motives, actuating her—for her 'reasons,' as the London *Spectator* exemplifies, are quite irrational—is unadulterated selfishness. England is no longer in danger, because the German fleet no longer exists. That the surrender of the German fleet to England was the result, not of a naval victory, but of the Allied victory on land, for which France was chiefly responsible,—does not touch the spot from which this selfish sense of security originates. Danger to France *alone*, does not worry her.

"England's third motive is in part the perversion of a negative virtue, and in part the lack of a spiritual quality. That spiritual quality is the ability to feel deep and real anger. Very few Englishmen are capable of it. Their anger is ephemeral, superficial, childish. Most of them are so undeveloped in this respect that they would accept the accusation as a compliment: they simply wouldn't understand.

"The other part of it—the perversion of a negative virtue—lies in the fact that England does not bear malice (neither does France; Germany *does*). Not bearing malice; rather despising malice, England prides herself on what she chooses to call her good sportsmanship. If an Englishman has thrashed anyone, or has helped to thrash him, the more soundly the man has been thrashed the more inclined is your Englishman to shake hands with the wreck-age—now the 'under dog.'



"This combination of motives, none of which she appears to recognize, has turned England, in effect, into an ally of Germany—Lloyd George and Curzon equally responsible for having led the way."

The Philosopher took up the refrain. "Neither of them is a Pacifist," he said, "but they will have to share with the Pacifists of America, the responsibility for Germany's next war."

"I come first!" interjected the Student. "You may talk about your Pacifists in a minute. I want to finish up with Germany. One of the shorter editorials in the *New York Times*, which appeared on January 2nd, with the sub-title 'Honour Among Generals,' should be re-printed in the 'Screen of Time'—for remembrance. Here it is:

"The last volume of the *Reminiscences of Field-Marshal Conrad von Hoetzendorff* was recently published in Vienna, and has been summarized in "The London Times." It discloses nothing particularly new about the origin of the war, but has a certain significance in the dispatches which passed between military men in Vienna and in Berlin. Both General Conrad and General Moltke were nervous about their respective Foreign Ministers and monarchs. Both officers felt that war was inevitable, and at least Conrad strongly desired it; but they were fearful that it would not be got going under the most favorable conditions from their common point of view.

'Among the telegrams and letters which were interchanged by Moltke and Conrad none are more significant than those which related to the attitude of Italy. The German Chief of Staff continually urged the Austrian to make "an honest arrangement" with Italy. By this he meant to buy her off with promises of territory in the Trentino. The idea appealed to General Conrad who, in discussing it, remarked that "after a successful war one perfidy could be repaid by another and the Trentino could be retaken from the blackmailers." Possibly the Italians were not so dull as not to guess what was intended! This may account for their coldness to the Austrian advances, then and later.

'As for General Moltke, he had no scruples about the scheme to entrap Italy. To the Austrian representative at German headquarters he gave the advice to pay the necessary price to Italy. He added the comment: "Once the war with Russia is finished, you can always challenge Italy, and Germany will stand by you."

'After the war had actually got under way, Moltke sent a cordial letter to his brother in arms, General Conrad. It began with the admission: "Our proceedings in Belgium are certainly brutal, but it is a question of life or death, and who gets into our way has to bear the consequences."

"The ease with which people forget, leaves me gasping," continued the Student. "No wonder that it takes several million years of evolution to learn that stealing and a few other things are wrong; when such an experience as

that of the great war, with its renewed revelation of the German national character, has not left so much as a dent in the Christian Science attitude of England and America. No one dares to say 'forgive,' when there has not been even a pretence of repentance; but while England denies in effect that Germany is the same Germany, there are multitudes in America who are denying other facts which the war and the peace have made as clear as daylight, and who, to cap the climax, are asserting that war is incompatible with righteousness."

The Student waived to the Philosopher that his turn had come. "I'm not so sure that righteousness concerns them," the Philosopher responded. "In any case, their favourite term is 'un-Christian.' You spoke of 'multitudes,' however. I speak of the highly paid Secretaries of the Y. M. C. A., who, backed by rich Presbyterians, are doing their utmost to de-nationalize the youth of the country. They have inaugurated a 'National American Youth Movement' At a Convention of the International Student Volunteer Movement held recently at Indianapolis (the 'Youth' Movement being a part of it), Dr. Eddy, Associate General Secretary of the International Committee of the Y. M. C. A., delivered a pronunciamento on the condition of the world in general, on the evils of 'the old social order,' and particularly on the iniquity of the Ruhr occupation by France. Dr. Eddy was followed by Dr. Robert E. Speer, President of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ, who spoke more cautiously but with the same intent. A day or two later, at the same Convention, the real purpose of this Y. M. C. A. propaganda was allowed to appear. A statement was submitted declaring 'that war is un-Christian.' Of the 7400 delegates said to have been present, it was reported that some 6000 approved this principle.

"The Y. M. C. A. is a pacifist organization. For that reason, it is anti-Christian and anarchical. To declare that war should not be waged against burglars and murderers and blackmailers, merely because they act nationally instead of as individuals, is more corrupting and more sinful in many cases than to be guilty of those crimes, because those who make these declarations are better educated for the most part than the so-called criminal class, and ought, therefore, to be more responsible."

"Meanwhile," asked our Visitor, "how about France? Look at the way she has repudiated Poincaré!"

The Historian undertook to answer. "Don't you think," he said, "that a nation should be judged as we judge an individual? Even a good man has his lower moments. Men of genius have been known to behave outrageously. Further, just as an individual is often 'a house divided against itself'—until a stage of evolution has been reached, far beyond the stage as yet attained by any nation—so a nation should be considered in terms of its nobility on the one hand and of its mob on the other hand. Clearly, the English mob, the French mob, the German mob, have totally different characteristics. All of them are hateful, but in different ways. Similarly, if we were to think of officers in the army as representative of the official aristocracy

or nobility of a nation, we should see an even greater difference between the 'nobilities' of England, France, and Germany. Think of the difference between the army officers of these nations as they revealed themselves during the war!

"All the older nations, therefore, if we would understand them, must be thought of as we think of individuals; and the way to think of an individual is to see him in terms of his interior conflict—the struggle between his 'nobility' and his 'mob.' Sometimes, as in the case of Germany, a man's 'nobility' is only a psychic counterfeit, as when a drunkard, in his sober moments, preaches the Gospel until he becomes inebriated by his own emotions. In France, however, there is a real nobility. Democracy has placed it at the mercy of the mob, and sometimes the mob follows, and sometimes it rebels. We must judge by tendencies; by the continuing standards to which the individual or the nation reverts. The mere fact that you can exclaim, 'What has happened to France!' is proof in itself that she has departed from her normal course,—for who would ever dream of asking, 'What has happened to Germany?' merely because Germany had misbehaved!"

The Sphinx had listened attentively. Now he spoke. "France," he said, "France—or, more properly, the French people, have forsaken their first love; have departed from *their* truth. They no longer seek guidance from above, through a King by God's appointment; they seek guidance from below, from their own desires. Someday they will return to their love of earlier days; they must, to fulfil themselves. Then will those come back to them from the past—servants of the Great King—who in the past have led them, so often to victory, and who will come to them again to serve, to lead, to conquer, when the Great King wills it so—though he will not permit this, or any perfect victory, so long as they follow the glamour of their false ideal.

"Much has been said in the QUARTERLY in favour of France, particularly during the great war, when her cause was the cause of all humanity; but to suppose that France is perfect or impeccable would be absurd. Her history shows how woefully she can sin. To-day, in a certain sense, there is more of the spirit of France in her soil than there is in her people,—her soil is alive with the blood of sacrifice. Have you not felt there the love of the Great King, blessing the seed of the future? Yet France has a bitter path to tread before she can undo her past and win to the heights which a divine hope reserves for her."

"If I may revert to the Historian's last suggestion," said the Student, "I should like to ask if you would say of England, 'What has happened to her?' in the sense which he gave to the same question about France."

"Yes, I should feel that about England," the Sphinx replied. "She has departed from her normal course. She has not been showing herself at her best, but at her worst. It would be a mistake, however, not to see beneath what the Historian described as the seething, fermentative process of decay, a new life emerging. There are indications of it in many quarters. Quite small movements, among quite ordinary people—such as the spread of 'Toc. H.' and its purposes—are indicative of what is taking place in England's soul, proving

conclusively that the theosophical ideal has been at work, creating, preserving, disintegrating, and, as it disintegrates, throwing up to the surface the greatest possible contrasts to itself—as fever may denote the successful effort of nature to consume and expose some hidden elements of disease. Those who love England must grieve for her to-day; for she is not herself. Yet we must hope, for are not Masters the great physicians—the obstetricians of nations as of souls! They are not omnipotent, but they can take your sacrifice and prayer, and can multiply these until the whole world rings with them.

“You are very modern people from my standpoint,” he added, laughing. “Some of you know, from observation, that radio-amplification, to an almost unlimited extent, is a fact. Was it not suggested, at a meeting of the New York Branch, that this is merely a reflection, on lower planes, of an eternal spiritual law?”

Then we adjourned. A day or two afterwards the Recorder received the following note from Cavé:

“The world reels madly on, drunk with its own emotions. To-day is its Mardi Gras,—before its Lent begins! It has fed itself on poisoned lies, any one of which spells death; yet, though the poison be slow, its work is none the less sure, and grows swifter towards the end. Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad, and there is much that the gods would destroy to-day—practically all of that which calls itself ‘modern,’ in arrogant boastfulness; and what the gods would destroy is destroyed, whatever the world may say or do about it.

“Calmly can we afford to wait, therefore, since, rooted in Truth, the ‘eternal years of God’ belong to us; and, in the end, all these piteous masquerades and criminal insanities will be forced to work together for the fulfilling of the purposes of the Great Law. The Great Law! not one jot or tittle of which but shall be fulfilled. There is a thought to ease and quiet our hearts, no matter how giddy the outer pace.

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“I was reading the other day of the claim to the recent discovery of this deadly radio force. It seemed to bear such analogy with our work, our real work as disciples in the world. Passing through the crowded streets, the concentrated, purified force of a disciple will automatically disintegrate the evil in the hearts and minds of those he passes, as it will vivify every tendency for good. To exercise such beneficence is surely the *real* service of humanity; of which so-called ‘humanitarian’ work is the present ghastly travesty. This service we are able increasingly to render as we ‘become.’ So may we truly accomplish Masters’ work in the world, unknown to that world,—most often unknown to ourselves, yet none the less effective. One disciple, meditating in the retirement of his room, transforming the atmosphere of a great city! Let us wait then calmly, but let us also labour ceaselessly to make of ourselves such servants and instruments of the Lodge.”

The Recorder is most grateful to Cavé for this Conclusion to our talk.

T.

# LETTERS TO STUDENTS

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April 10th, 1911.

DEAR ———

I have your letter of the 9th, which I answer at once, as I do not know how soon you may wish to use the information.

I do know of people who have found the middle of the night the only possible time in which to get a clear half hour for meditation, and for many reasons it is a very good time. The objections to it are twofold; first, the practical one of loss of sleep in case they cannot go to sleep as soon as they are through; second, the fact that it is at night, when we are asleep, that our inner bodies, our souls, get that refreshment and rest without which life would not be bearable. This refreshment, however, comes during the hours of deepest sleep, say between the hours of midnight and four A.M., and if you do not wake until after four I do not think this objection serious. In other words, on the whole I think the very early morning hours a good time for this purpose. But we must use common sense about it as about everything else.

The difference between our possibilities and our achievement is a mortification, almost an absurdity, with all of us. But this is not a healthy thought. Dismiss it, if for no other reason than that you have no idea of what your achievement really is. You do not know what veils you have worn thin, and which may break away entirely at any minute; you do not know what old adhesions you have broken down, leaving your spirit free. You really do not know anything about your real inner condition at all, and you do know that your outer condition is no index whatever of the inner state. "Grow as the flower grows, unconsciously," etc. Bother about our progress and our condition is, after all, only a form of egotism. We have enough to absorb all our energies if we attend to the work we have to do, and to the duties of each moment, which is the way the Master is training us and the medium through which he trains us. The results do not matter. This may sound unsympathetic, but I do not mean it so. We all have to learn, and we, none of us, yet have learned, not to bother about results whether in connection with ourselves or some other thing or person or event. It is simply one of the necessary steps we all come up against and stay in front of until we mount them. . . .

I would not go further with your friend than to tell her that she will find in the T. S. the heart doctrine she craves, and which she did not and will not find in any other organization; and you can add that the T. S. is the gateway to inner bodies to which no one is eligible until he is a member of the T. S. I think, by the way, that the great difference between our organization and the Adyar Society is in just this connection. We try to live the life, they try to learn about it; and in consequence really devotional people feel them to be barren, as indeed they are. Give her several copies of the QUARTERLY and tell her to read it with

the object of discovering the spirit which underlies it and the Society which produces it. If she is incapable of finding that spirit there, our organization will not appeal to her. . . .

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

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May 20th, 1911.

DEAR ———

Your last letter, written on the 20th April, did not ask any questions. Indeed I think you must be beginning to realize, more and more, that these things in which we are interested are not matters of the mind at all. The good we get out of meetings is from the exchange of our power and light with the power and light of each other person. That is why anything in the nature of disharmony is so fatal to any advance along the Path. Naturally this is a general reflection and is not directed towards you in any way whatever. It is, however, a point that we must keep in mind for we are all very human, and it is very human to criticize others mentally, even when we never allow it any expression; and mental criticism is just as harmful as if spoken. Indeed it is often worse, for it festers if kept bottled up within.

We all need the same things; we all need what the old books call a "steadier walk." We must go along smoothly, not by jerks and swings. We must conquer the tendency to have periods of inspiration when we feel that we can do anything, and periods of dryness when we lack any kind of power at all. This vibratory existence must be stopped; this oscillation of consciousness makes any kind of definite union with the divine side of things entirely impossible. We must find power somewhere, somehow, to keep us always up to the mark. This is hard and is where we all fail, but we must learn to do it. I know of no royal road; it is just a question of pegging away, faithfully, doggedly, doing those things which we know we ought to do with such cheerfulness as we can muster. It all makes for progress; and some fine day, perhaps when we least expect it, we shall find that our efforts have finally worn the veil so thin that the least additional effort tears a big rent in it. That is the moment we must work for and long for.

I shall be glad to hear from you.

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

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June 29th, 1911.

DEAR ———

There is some work on the QUARTERLY which you can do for me. You can write a 3000-word article on "Why I joined the T. S."; and the best yoga practice I can recommend, is that you shall at once repress *all* the objections and obstacles to doing the article, and quite simply go ahead and write it. When finished send it to me. . . .

Your faults are mainly due to lack of self-confidence, as I have said before. It is not often that we have to encourage a student in such a direction. You lack faith in yourself, in your personality as well as in your soul; your attitude towards life is too deprecatory. Your existence requires no excuse, and your abilities are above the common. Use them, and be yourself in a more positive and virile manner. This can be done (must be done) without self-assertiveness (which is most objectionable), and without vanity (which is foolish).

Is this what you want?

With kindest regards,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

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October 28th, 1911.

DEAR ———

I very much appreciate your letter of yesterday, and we shall all be most happy to help you with the work of ——— if you get stalled.

I am glad to hear of the outcome of the business move. The next step is to do these things without perturbation and nervousness. They mar the excellence of our endeavours.

With kindest regards,

I am sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

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January 2nd, 1912.

DEAR ———

I have read the records, which I return to you, with interest and appreciation. There appears to be a week missing.

You should draw up a Rule of Life. I enclose a paper which, while not meant for just your case, contains hints that will be helpful. I shall be glad to discuss the matter with you. I told you to do this a year ago, but apparently you did not understand; although you have been actually living a kind of Rule, as witness your hourly and finally your quarter-hourly meditations or moments of recollection. In due time you can compare your Rule with those of others and get ideas from them, but do not try to live according to another's Rule unless direction to do so is given you.

There is much misdirected energy in your case. Perhaps the chief criticism that I can make is that you are looking for some big thing to do with or about yourself—forgetting that saintliness has been well described as "perfection in the doing of little things." It is the minutiae of life, and the way they are attended to, that differentiates the disciple from the ordinary good man—that and the fundamental underlying reason why he is doing it all,—love of, and desire to serve the Master. There is nothing, not a detail of your life, which is not a concern of the ——— to which you aspire. You want something definite to work on; take your clothes. Surely they can be made closer to the ideal. It is through apparently trivial matters, and not by direct attack,

that we get at such a thing as self-will. You will be surprised to discover how much self-will is mixed up in your thought, or lack of thought, about clothes.

Your use of slang or colloquialisms, especially in writing, is another, even smaller point, but important, nevertheless. You should never write the most trifling note which you would be ashamed to have submitted to a committee of Lodge members, who were to pass upon your qualifications as a disciple. That is the ideal to strive for. The Master wants his disciples to be perfect in *every* particular—to be finished men and women of the world.

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

January 3rd, 1912.

DEAR ———

Your letter of January first made me very happy, for the two ways in which we can be made happy are by the realization that we have been of service to the Master and of service to our fellow disciples. These are the two real and abiding joys of life.

Last night I prayed to him for a gift for you, because of the happiness you had given me, and the impression I received was to try and make you realize his love for you.

Take your love for your mother, for ———, for anyone and everyone: unite all these feelings in one great whole, keeping it intimate, personal, familiar: then multiply it a thousand fold, and you will begin to know something of his feeling for you.

Use your imagination freely in trying to realize it: take up the different elements of an ideal love, one by one, and try to feel each in turn;—the yearning, the tenderness, the passion, the depth, the sympathy, the complete understanding of every nook and cranny of your heart, the desire to reach you and pour out love upon you,—everything you can think of. Go over them, one by one, and feel them, and then make a deliberate effort to open yourself to the sum total of it all: let it flood your whole being.

This is the path to the Master, and you can travel it as fast as you will.

As always,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

January 7th, 1912.

DEAR ———

Hereafter, please make a regular practice of writing down a four or five line description of your day, and particularly of your interior condition, and the excellence or otherwise of your daily meditations and prayers; and at the end of each week send it to me.

You will find this a helpful practice, as it is a necessary one.

With the best of good wishes,

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.



January 17th, 1912.

DEAR ———

Many thanks for your weekly Ledger. It is very good for a beginning. A friend suggested the following:

"This student is afraid to use imagination freely—the barrier being mental, therefore; and is absurdly looking for results."

Never allow yourself to feel discouraged for a second. It is foolish as well as wrong!

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

February 4th, 1912.

DEAR ———

I congratulate you on the typewriter, and the excellence of your work on it.

There is no earthly or heavenly reason why you should not talk to us about your inner life. The ability to do so is one of the things you must acquire. Just do it. Like everything else it is much easier in the doing than in the anticipation.

I return last week's ledger; it shows improvement. "The Master that thou feelest but as yet thou canst not see." Try to *feel* him. Try prayer instead of meditation. Talk to the Master, and try to hear him reply, keeping still, mentally as well as physically, in order to listen.

Referring to your outer effort and the disappointment you record: it was probably designed to rouse your courage and determination. The fault probably was in looking for results. If you had not had your mind on *results*, you would not have been disappointed and suffered the reaction because nothing (apparently) came of it.

Sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

February 15th, 1912.

DEAR ———

I am much obliged to you for the review you wrote. I have not made up my mind whether to print it or not. I am also grateful for the work on the article. I do think we should have some simple articles for simple folks.

I return your ledger. It is rather meagre. Did you get no ideas or help from the comments on the last one? You speak of not understanding the lesson of the previous week. Did the comments help you to an understanding?

With kindest regards,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

July 25th, 1912.

DEAR ———

I return the last two installments, without further comment than to say that you are learning and growing, and that I am proud of you.

You really understand things and work things out very soundly with your head. Do not forget, however, that we *feel* our way into Heaven. The road to the Master is through love, and we often learn to love him through love of others. Afterwards, we love all others by means of his love for us, and ours for him.

I am hoping for time between now and Saturday morning to get at the QUARTERLY material that is ready, but there may not be time—if not I will write. These be strenuous days.

As always,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

P.S. I forgot to give you our address in Switzerland—and to say that I shall expect you to send your reports and a letter there regularly, weekly.

October 13th, 1912.

DEAR —

I return herewith the accumulated "Ledgers," for which many thanks. I often wonder why you trust me with such things. I marvel at my own assurance in receiving them, and I occasionally grow cold with a sense of complete inadequacy. All of which shows you that I am still under the influence of my "cold," or I would not write in such a way,—which is deplorable, for we should be above such little things.

If you are not ready for your meditation, why not spend ten minutes getting ready? All religions teach the need of preparation before going into the Master's presence.

Dead days come from the heart. The head goes on as usual, and sees no difference, but the heart is not functioning properly.

This failure in meditation was caused by lack of co-ordination between head and heart. Your heart felt the meditation, but the influence did not reach and affect your head. The whole of spiritual progress is made up of failing and beginning over again. We grow by a succession of failures, not a succession of victories. Personally I believe in going at the root of the matter in meditation and trying to *control* the mind, rather than to *amuse* it. But people vary.

There is nothing the Master likes better than for us to have a good time—provided that it is innocent.

I am afraid you are not growing as the flower grows—unconsciously, yet eagerly anxious. I find too much introspection in this Ledger, and yet I do not want you to feel that this is inconsistent with my request for a full report. If you received such a report from someone whom you were detailed to help, what would you tell him? What would you advise? You are trying too much with the head and not enough with the heart. Feel more, let yourself go more in love. Can you pray until you weep? You need to be loosened up. To become more conscious, you want to keep more in mind the Master's love; try to feel it. Think of it every hour as the clock strikes. You are making a new

start in the right direction. Keep it up, and do not let that self-depreciatory attitude undermine your confidence and faith.

Bid your friend keep her desire to help people. That desire in itself is a force which will make possible the giving of many blessings to them which they otherwise might not be enabled to receive. That is the major part of a woman's work in the world—to bring down love and blessings on others through her love, her desire, her prayers—the better if no one else suspects; then it is a secret between herself and God. Remind her that the self that loves the Master *is herself*, which is another way of saying that she loves the Master devotedly, only its perception is veiled somewhat to her understanding. Let her assert and live by the fact, and its realization will come quickly.

Progress toward the Master means, in part, realizing that a part of you is already within him; and as soon as you identify yourself with "that portion of yourself which you have with pain created for your own experience"—the Path is entered in reality, and you become a disciple.

"Particular love": the solution of this problem is found when you realize that you love others with a part of your love for the Master, and his love for you. All the power of loving we have, we get from him.

The Master sometimes asks us to do things which we think will be difficult and disagreeable, but when we go ahead, quite simply, and do them, they always turn out to be something we are very glad about. Why not let the Master share in our happiness? He is glad to do so, if we will let him. He will get great happiness and satisfaction out of *our* happiness and satisfaction from music, flowers, beautiful scenery, love of friends, what not,—if we will share it with him. You can test the propriety of your happiness by seeing if you are willing to share it with him, to tell him about it.

You must keep on the higher plane, so as to starve out the lower. Every time you go back and live in it, as you do thousands of times each day, you feed it and give it a new lease of life. You try too much to explain all these things of the inner life to and with your mind, and you accept the barriers of your mind, as *your* barriers. They are not.

Too much mental gymnastics! You are mistaken in thinking that, in any real sense, one *glance* at a speaker would mean more to you than hours of listening. It might satisfy your mind more, though even that is doubtful. No one was ever satisfied by "tests." The more they get the more they want. The only faithful members of old times in the T. S. to-day, are those for whom H. P. B. did *not* perform phenomena. You already have the inner faculty which corresponds to the glance of the eye, but you, at times, and your mind always, refuse to realize and recognize it.

You must be a thing before you can understand it. In this case, you are told to do something which you will not understand until, to some extent, you have done it. Knowledge and understanding will come from action.

With kindest regards,

I am, Sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.



## REPORT OF THE ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

### *Morning Session*

The Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society was called to order at 10:30 A.M. on Saturday, April 26th, 1924, at 64 Washington Mews, New York, by the Chairman of the Executive Committee, Mr. Charles Johnston. Temporary organization was effected by the election of Mr. Johnston as Temporary Chairman of the Convention, and Miss Julia Chickering as Temporary Secretary. The first business of the Convention being to determine what Branches of the Society were duly represented, either by delegates or proxies,—it was moved and seconded that the Chair appoint a Committee on Credentials, with instructions to report as soon as practicable. The Committee appointed was: Professor Henry Bedinger Mitchell, Treasurer T. S.; Miss Isabel E. Perkins, Secretary T. S.; Miss Martha E. Youngs, Assistant Treasurer.

### ADDRESS OF THE TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN

MR. JOHNSTON: While the Committee on Credentials is at its work, it is my great privilege and happy duty, to bid you all welcome to the Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society. A year ago, something was said about our fifty-year cycle, the great importance that would attach to it, and how we might make our response to that cyclic period really effective. The same principle is vital to-day, but I wish to speak of it from a different direction. First of all, let us not consider, with mathematical accuracy and anxiety, just when the old cycle ends, just when the new cycle begins. Let us say that we will hold that spirit which shall begin the new cycle *now*. A year ago we may have come to the Convention questioning what we might receive, in order that we might understand and forward the purposes of the new cycle. Now let us change our polarity: let us see what we can give. Let us make it the beginning of a cycle of giving, not of receiving. We have the splendid generosity of Masters to set us the example. They have loaded us with gifts, boundless gifts of the bread of life,—not crumbs but armfuls of loaves. It is time for us to show, in return, something of that generosity. First of all, to give ourselves—our hearts, our minds, our souls, our strength; to give in meditation, in thought, in sacrifice, in devotion, in action. Whenever we have spare time, to give that time; whenever we have energy, to give that energy,—a cycle of giving for the Cause of the Masters, for the honour and work of the Lodge. In the World War, we heard the phrase, Give until it hurts. I had rather we should turn that around, and say, Give until it heals; give until it blesses; give until it redeems. Let us make this a new cycle—a cycle of giving our hearts and ourselves.

### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS

PROFESSOR MITCHELL: Your Committee has examined the credentials presented, and finds that 18 Branches are represented, entitled to cast a total of 90 votes, the votes being

vested in the Branches, and each one entitled to representation proportioned to its membership. The Branches thus represented are:

Altigracia, Altigracia de Orituco, Venezuela	Krishna, South Shields, England
Aussig, Aussig, Czecho-Slovakia	Middletown, Middletown, Ohio
Blavatsky, Whitley Bay, England	Newcastle, Newcastle-on-Tyne, England
Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio	New York, New York, N. Y.
Hope, Providence, Rhode Island	Norfolk, Norfolk, England
Indianapolis, Indianapolis, Indiana	Pacific, Los Angeles, California
Jehoshua, San Fernando de Apure, Venezuela	Toronto, Toronto, Canada
W. Q. Judge, Gateshead, England	Venezuela, Caracas, Venezuela
Karma, Kristiania, Norway	Virya, Denver, Colorado

It was moved, seconded and voted that the Report of the Committee on Credentials be accepted, and that the Committee be discharged with thanks. The accredited delegates, being now in position to effect permanent organization, nominations for a Permanent Chairman were requested. Professor Mitchell was nominated, elected, and took the Chair.

#### ADDRESS OF THE PERMANENT CHAIRMAN

THE CHAIRMAN: My first privilege as Permanent Chairman—a privilege you have made mine for many years past—is to welcome you home again. When we come home, when as brothers we reassemble in our father's house, words may be very few. No one ever really craved an address of greeting, but which of us has not known a homesick hunger for the simple heartfelt welcome of his own kith and kin. It is such a welcome that is mine to voice to-day. No new thing, its value and significance are that, ceaselessly renewed, it is ever the same. It matters not at all what the world has brought you in the intervening year. When you come here all that matters is the will and spirit in your hearts. If these be unchanged, then the welcome is unchanged, for it is the eternal welcome of the Spirit to its own,—the welcome of The Theosophical Society to its members. Thus, though you permit the voice to be mine, the welcome is from something infinitely greater than I; and it is well for us to pause and think from what and whom that welcome really comes, and what it opens to us.

Our thoughts turn first to those whose faces look down upon us from these walls: Madame Blavatsky, Judge, and our other great predecessors and companions of the past. It is their welcome which we feel to-day—were it not so we should be but trespassers in this house of life they built and which for ever must be theirs—and it is to their spirit and their fellowship that their welcome admits us. They place in our hands the harvest of their lives: their wisdom, their love, their aspiration and devotion, their faith and hope and indomitable courage, the living power of their sacrifice,—all that they lived for, all that they died for, all that The Theosophical Society has gained through its forty-nine years of labour, they offer us here to-day. Yet The Theosophical Society is itself but one of the cyclic expressions of the age-old Theosophical Movement,—the movement of the Spirit, descending into the world to seek and reclaim its own, to kindle the souls of men with its primordial fire, to reawaken the sleeping memories of their immortal heritage, to draw them home. It is to that Spirit, incarnate in the Great Lodge of Masters, that The Theosophical Society owes its existence. It is because it has reached and touched us, that we are here; and it is it which welcomes us; it is of it that we are made free. Behind Judge and Madame Blavatsky, and those through whom Theosophy came to us, stand the Masters themselves. Behind and beyond The Theosophical Society is the infinite sweep of the Theosophical Movement. So great a thing, so ancient, so enduring, the hundred year cycle is but a day and night to it. The few score years between man's birth and death shrink to the littleness of atomic space beside it; and yet—it is by human lives alone that it can live and be transmitted. By such dependence of the great upon the small, human life receives dignity and significance, and with them responsibility. In the great waves of the sea, that troop in endless sequence from horizon to horizon, each drop of water moves but a little way, rises and falls in but a narrow orbit, yet by its mo-

tion passes on the mighty rhythm,—by its response enables others to respond, so that the wave sweeps on. If the drops were inert and unresponsive, immobile and fixed, there could be no wave. Throw a stone into a half frozen pond and watch the ripples spread in widening circles till they meet the edge of ice. There the motion ceases or turns back upon itself. But wherever the water is open the wavelets advance. So it is and must be with the Theosophical Movement. It can advance only where it meets hearts which respond, lives which move—in however narrow an orbit—in obedience to its spirit, and which, by their movement, pass that spirit on. It has come to us and touched us,—that is the meaning of our presence here, the reason we are welcomed. Through us, through the response of our hearts and lives, it must be transmitted to the future; or, in us, beating in vain against our inert wills, it must be turned back. The responsibility is ours.

It is a great responsibility, a great opportunity. It must call forth all that is best in us, that we may be true to it, that we may respond in act as well as in feeling, so that our lives may be contagious and not sterile, so that we may gain wisdom with which to guide our course and the course of the Society which is now in our hands. How are we to gain that wisdom?

When we examine the nature of the light by which we see and choose our way, we discover that it is of two different kinds. There is, first, the light of our own minds: our common sense, our reason, our judgment, which we must make sane and sound and true, as best we can. It is our duty to cultivate our intelligence, to learn to see impersonally, and to deal with even the smallest things in accordance with great principles. But at best this light of our own reason is like a lantern which a traveller by night may carry in his hand. So long as the path is clear, the little circle that it sheds around our feet is sufficient to enable us to follow it; but when we come to some forking of the road, or when, having wandered from the way, we need to find it by reference to some more distant landmark, then that little light is not adequate to reveal the heights or vistas which should guide us. No light of our own can show us the heights; it needs God's sunshine or the lightning of His storms. Neither of these is continuous. Day passes and night falls. The flash of lightning, which for a moment illumines all the scene, leaves the darkness darker still, our eyes more blinded. We cannot always see our goal; but, having seen, we can remember. If we take our bearings in the light of day, the lantern of our own minds may show us the compass needle even in the darkest night. The Theosophical Society has known both storm and sunshine. There have been days of clear illumination, in which we could see our goal plainly, and the way to it, and understand the Masters' will for this Movement which they have entrusted to us. There have been other times, times of trial and darkness, when some sharp crisis has lit the scene as by a lightning flash, showing us the same vistas, the same goal and path, and compelling the same understanding. These things are matters of record in the history of the Society, and it is our duty to study that history in order to learn from the past and apply what we learn to the future; that we may store in our minds the map of our path and remember the bearings of our goal.

Mr. Johnston has just reminded us of one of the great lessons our past teaches, and which our welcome here to-day should make vivid and vital to us. It is that our aim must be service; that our only worth lies in what we can give. As we think of those who welcome us, as we look at Mr. Judge's picture and Madame Blavatsky's, and call to mind the men and women who have made the Society what it is—to look no further back than through these forty-nine years—do we revere them, do we rejoice for them, and value their welcome, because they gained something for themselves? because they were rich or comfortable, enjoyed leisure and ease, had acquired learning or fame? We know they did not think of these things. We know that the reason we honour them lies, not in what they took from life, but in what they gave to it. They rank

“Not by the wine drunk, but the wine poured forth;  
For love's strength standeth in love's sacrifice.”

Surely, when we come in thought and heart into the presence of the past, when we face our predecessors and think of the Lodge of Masters whom we seek to serve, there must come to

consciousness some question of our right to receive, of our title to admission. It is a question like the challenge of a sentry. Who comes, friend or foe? What is the sign and counter-sign? What the password? We shall not find it in what we have gained or taken for ourselves. If we look to our virtues and abilities, they pale and fade away. We see that they were gifts to us, and that we bring them back less than we received them. Our comforts, our fulfilled ambitions, personal victories and successes, seem as thefts. Only where we have suffered, where we have endured, where we have sacrificed, where we have given instead of taking, can we find anything to encourage us, for the spirit of the Theosophical Movement is the spirit of service and of sacrifice,—of the life laid down, not kept for self. That only is immortal which is poured forth into the Immortal. We find that immortality here, our past living in the present. It is placed to-day in our hands; but we can take it only as we give to it.

At the conclusion of this address, the Chairman asked that the permanent organization be completed. It was then moved, seconded and carried that a vote of thanks be extended to the Temporary Chairman for his services. Miss Perkins was duly elected Permanent Secretary of the Convention, and Miss Chickering Assistant Secretary. It was also moved, seconded and carried that the Chair appoint the usual standing Committees—the Committee on Nominations; the Committee on Resolutions; the Committee on Letters of Greeting. The reports of the officers of the Society were then called for.

#### REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MR. JOHNSTON: Those formal acts which the Executive Committee performs each year, such as the issuing of diplomas and charters, have been duly carried out and recorded by the Secretary of The Theosophical Society. There have been, as the Committee reported a year ago, no visible cyclones, no upheavals, no earthquakes which called for special action by the Executive Committee. This Committee, however, does not exist only to issue diplomas on the one hand, and to deal with cyclones on the other hand. It has the very vital function of continuity. Perhaps one might say that the Executive Committee constitutes the vertebræ of that vertebrate organism, The Theosophical Society, securing continuity: continuity in action, continuity in history and in tradition. Perhaps at the cyclic point which we are approaching, and from which we are advancing, it would be illuminating to call upon the memory of the Executive Committee regarding cyclic points in the past.

We have heard much of the crises of events in years like 1884 and 1885; 1894 and 1895, and so on. Many of us have noted the great opportunities which then seemed to be lost,—opportunities especially of service for the Masters, of service for the world, of spiritual service that might have had a radiant result. We may also have noted the checks which held the Movement back—whether due to faults of self or defects in spiritual power. It is essential for us to understand those checks in order to seek them out in ourselves, and with the aid of the Divine Powers, to remove them. But that is not the side of our history of which I wish to speak. There were superb opportunities which were checked; yet let us regard them as opportunities not lost, but simply delayed. Let us realize that whatever was possible of forward action, of large undertakings, of rich endeavour, in 1885, is possible now—and more possible. The opportunity was not lost then. It was held back for us until now, if we have the valour, the humility, the vision to take it. The same thing is true of 1895, and of 1898. There were vistas visible then, of things luminous and splendid; those opportunities are ours if we have the consecration, the wisdom and the sacrifice to take them now. In that light we would wish to consider, not only the long, eventful, vital history of the Society and the Movement, but also to consider those treasures, those delayed opportunities. Let us resolve that, with the help of the Masters, we shall take them now and fulfil them as the Masters would wish that they should be fulfilled.

Professor Mitchell said something about history—I am going to offer you a quotation from a book that is well known and little understood: "Get wisdom, get understanding. . . . Forsake her not and she shall preserve thee: love her and she shall keep thee. Wisdom is the principal

thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding." That is what we need. The great difficulties arose in the past, not so much from lack of zeal, but largely from lack of understanding; and to get understanding is for us not an intellectual obligation, but a moral and a spiritual obligation. So the Executive Committee would have us look back that we may look forward—looking back at past opportunities delayed, only that we may take them now and act.

PROFESSOR MITCHELL: In connection with the report of the Chairman of the Executive Committee, I, as a member of that Committee, have been requested to call attention to another aspect of the work of the Society, which it is deemed of importance that you should understand as clearly as may be—that you may draw courage and strength and new vigour from it. It is desired that you should understand what it is that The Theosophical Society is accomplishing now, and shall accomplish in the end, for the whole of the race. The Theosophical ideal is the ideal of chelaship—the ideal of Masters and of human perfectibility, the ideal of service of the great Spiritual Hierarchy. That ideal is not native to the world. It came down from above. It was given to us from the great Lodge of Masters, as it had been offered to the world in century after century through the past,—never arising from the world itself as a worldly thing, for it is foreign to every concept of the world. This ideal was offered to the world through Madame Blavatsky. It was received and accepted, at least intellectually, by some of the early members of the Theosophical Society. To many it remained merely an intellectual ideal; but to others, in the course of time, it became much more than that, and through them, and by their labours, it was passed on, so that a group came into being, in which this ideal lived and grew and kindled will and heart, as well as mind, until it became the single end and purpose of a life. By this means a vehicle was formed, drawn from the world, into which the ideal incarnated. Chelaship, in the world, became a fact. This is the origin and history of The Theosophical Society as a spiritual entity,—the origin and history of the ideal of chelaship and of service of the Masters, coming down from above, meeting a response which provides for it a vehicle from below; so that the result is a complete, incarnate entity.

This incarnated soul must possess the three fundamental aspects of reality—Brahmā, Vishnu and Shiva. It must be creative. That it is so, we all know. Its ideal is that of a new order. As we incarnate it, that ideal, that new order, comes to birth—at first in a very limited circle, small, as the nucleus of an atom is small; but from the ideal, new life radiates in ever-widening circles. Each one in whom the ideal of Theosophy lives, finds his own life being re-created in accordance with it. Preservative, it draws out from the world all that is in harmony with it, draws from past movements, all that pertains to the spirit. All that is noble and true and good it seeks to cherish, to preserve. Where does the Theosophical Movement not labour to keep all that is of the spirit, all the best of the old? But it is also destructive, disintegrative. It disintegrates all that is opposed to its ideal, all that is of the ideal of the world,—if so be we can apply the word "ideal" to the perverted desires of the world. What is the ideal of the world? It is a difficult thing to define; and the more we try, the more we perceive the reason for that difficulty. However definite it may appear, the world's ideal is in reality not definite, but full of contradictions,—trying to move in two opposite ways at once, so that there is no lasting cohesion, no permanent structure. It includes gain for self, but gain to be achieved with as little effort as possible; a maximum of gain for a minimum of effort. It is a commercial ideal. And those two elements, of being willing to sacrifice little or nothing, and of desiring to gain the utmost possible, are inherently self-contradictory; that is its innate weakness. In the midst of that amorphous mass of the world's ideal, there is now this definite, coherent, clear-cut ideal of chelaship, which counts no cost too great, and which has been co-ordinated and solidified by the self-abnegation and devotion of those who have given their lives to further it. As those two ideals come into contact, the ideal of the world is being disintegrated. Where the mob is most worshipped, there this disintegration is most obvious to those who have eyes with which to see it.

The world's ideal: greed, luxury, avarice, ambition. In the *Illustrated London News* of March 15th, 1924, there is an article by Ferrero which is significant in many ways. It speaks of the



nineteenth century, of modern civilization, and points out that it has been founded upon what was known to the old Romans as *ambitio, luxuria, avaritia*—ambition, luxury and avarice. Difficult as it is to define the ideal of the world, does not that come close to it, and is not that the exact opposite of the Theosophical ideal? Are we saying that nothing good has come from the ideal of the world? Nothing from the ideal itself, as grapes do not come from thistles; but from man's blind and ignorant pursuit of it, good has come,—since the great Lodge can use even our departures from the Law to give us training in the Law. Ferrero points out some of this training, as it was pointed out here, and discussed at length more than a year ago, at a meeting of the New York Branch. He says that never before, in his judgment, has there been such a monastic discipline impressed upon the world,—so many men rising and going to business all at the same time; going back home, eating dinner and going to bed, all at the same time, whether they like it or not. Why? Because such conformity is the necessary means whereby their worldly ambitions, their desire for luxury, may be gratified. These spiritual gains which the world will not seek or take for itself, it has been compelled to take by its very adherence to its own desires. The discipline is gain, but it has been accepted only as a means of attaining ends in which discipline has no part.

Nothing can endure that is based upon the search for self, upon taking as much as possible, and giving as little as possible. All this great civilization of ours: its railroads—why else were they built? its vast buildings—why were they constructed except to make money? ninety-nine hundredths of its literature—with what is it concerned but self-gratification? Even if it be scientific literature, it is mostly about ways in which knowledge of nature can be turned to man's personal comfort or aggrandizement. If it be fiction, again it deals with luxury, ambition, avarice. These things must of necessity disintegrate and decay the instant they are brought into contact with anything that is real, like the ideals of the Theosophical Movement. And the good things—the discipline, the accomplishment, the learning—would be swept to destruction with the false, if it were not for the power of a spiritual entity, of the new ideal, to preserve the good as well as to destroy the ill.

I should like, if I could, to give you a picture to carry away with you, of what the Society is doing, what *you* are doing for the world when you bring this ideal into the world and hold it there. I should like you to read in the modern history of the world the effect of the Theosophical Movement. If you can do so, it should give you courage and understanding. You would no longer think of yourselves as few. We *are* few in this room, and how impotent we are as mere men and women!—but what can we not accomplish as the exponents, as the vehicles of a great ideal, of a living, spiritual entity which has life in itself? If you have that vision, you will no longer think of what you are doing as being merely an effort to make yourselves a little less selfish, perverse, foolish, or weak. True, even a little self-conquest is worth great effort, but in itself it is not an inspiring ideal; it does not give us support and courage in our dark moments. It turns us back upon ourselves instead of lifting us above ourselves. But if we think of ourselves as called to be exponents of the Lodge ideal, we should find in that thought both inspiration and power. Thoughts are things, though there is nothing more ineffectual than thought that is left as thought alone. To go into one's own room, where there is no temptation to evil, and to think loving, sweet thoughts, high thoughts, which one makes no attempt to carry out—what could be more futile, more impotent? But a thought that is made an ideal, given a soul by our love and reverence, given power by our act—that is not left to evaporate in the psychic world, but is given a vehicle in the material world, brought down and made to act here in the midst of the amorphous ideals of the world,—what limit is there to the effect of such a thought as that? True, it acts beneath the surface, but it is there that the tide turns first; and while the evil of the world still triumphs outwardly, there is being formed beneath it the germ of a new order, based upon a new ideal, that of the hierarchy of the spiritual world—the ideal of discipleship and of service. Slowly, but surely, as diamond dust disintegrates substances of looser structure, the *fact* of discipleship is disintegrating the materialism of our time, acting to destroy the evil but to preserve the good. That is what The Theosophical Society is doing, and what you, as its members, may help it to do.

MR. HARGROVE: I should like to say a word on the subject broached by Professor Mitchell. It seems to me that all of us must have been helped to see beyond the mountains, the harvests of the future ripening. What he has outlined to us is a matter that concerns each one of us personally, because I think it is fair to assume that no member of the Society present here to-day, would be capable of leaving this task to his fellows; would wash his hands of it, with a feeling that this great undertaking will be attended to by his fellows in New York, or by those of his associates who have more time than he has to attend to spiritual ideals. My hope is that every one of us, having listened, will feel: *This is my job*. To feel less than that, clearly would be to feel less than a man.

The ideal of discipleship, the ideal of chelaship, the ideal of Masters, imposed upon the world in spite of the world, and the world blissfully unaware of what is happening to it! Blissfully unaware that its low standards are being undermined, that its godless civilization is being shattered!

The world has forgotten how to look up. It believes in God, it says, but many of you will remember Emerson's fable, in the form of a poem, about the mountain and the squirrel. The squirrel looked up at the mountain, and because it was a mountain, the squirrel got quite "het up"; but if, instead of a mountain, it had been a cloud, it would have been impossible for that little squirrel to have been so disturbed and so positive in its attitude. For the world in general, God is only a cloud, and when the world looks up, it sees nothing but a cloud. Therefore it is not afraid of God any more; it merely "loves" God,—which means that the world no longer does or abstains from doing because of God. In no case, however, whether as cloud or as mountain, does the world see in God its ideal. To see that, it would have to look down, not up; for the truth is that the ideals of the world are a little lower than it is itself.

Very different is the ideal of which Professor Mitchell was speaking. Instead of a cloud, it is a living reality which confronts us every moment, not only as a far-off mountain-top, to which we look up, but as almost within reach, at the end of our next step onward.

To see beyond the mountains the harvests of the future ripening! Yet it is work which it remains for us to do; it is a victory which it is for us to win: for although it is true, on the one hand—as was said years and years ago—that all these matters are held by the Lodge in the hollow of its hand, it is equally true, on the other hand, that it would be fatal for us, and fatal therefore for the Lodge, if we were capable of adopting an attitude of resignation, of acceptance, or of "Thy will be done" in that mistaken sense in which a man lies down and leaves fate to take care of things. Think of a man going into a battle; suppose he begins by saying, "Thy will be done,"—and in the midst of the battle, confines his activities to repeating, very hard, very often, and very emphatically, "Thy will be done"! Is his attitude that of a soldier? Surely, he has no more chance of winning that battle than a fly would have to tread down an elephant. The high gods put our fate in our own hands, and we have to fight the battle of our own lives, for the sake of the souls that are in us, for the sake of the souls that we *are*. We have to decide, each one for himself, what he will be, as well as what he will do; and it is given to us at this Convention to make that decision.

Professor Mitchell has described the process of disintegration that is taking place and has to take place, before the civilization of the future can be formed. It is for us to say, for individual members to say, how long that process shall take, how long the Lodge shall be kept waiting; for this thing is in our own hands. Once more let me suggest that it is not the task of the officers of the Society; it is not the task of a few of the older members. Unless every one of us leaves this place saturated with the conviction and with the determination: *This is for me to do*,—it might be said that this Convention will be a failure. But to think of it as a failure is impossible; to think of your failure to respond is impossible. It will be a success,—and it will be a success because you will feel and know that you are reinforced by all the efforts of the past, by all the efforts of your fellows of to-day, and by the blessing of the great Lodge that always has stood, and always will stand behind each one of us who determines to do and to be,—so that the Cause of the Lodge may triumph and that humanity may persist.

THE CHAIRMAN: Before calling upon the Secretary to make her report, the Chair would announce the appointment of the following standing committees:

*Committee on Nominations*

Mr. K. D. Perkins, *Chairman*  
 Mr. C. Russell Auchincloss  
 Mr. T. J. Danner

*Committee on Resolutions*

Mr. E. T. Hargrove, *Chairman*  
 Mr. J. F. B. Mitchell  
 Mr. Charles Saxe

*Committee on Letters of Greeting*

Dr. Archibald Keightley, *Chairman*  
 Dr. C. C. Clark  
 Mr. Stanley V. La Dow

## REPORT OF THE SECRETARY T. S. FOR THE YEAR ENDING APRIL 25TH, 1924.

The annual reports from the Branches of the Society show that this has been a good year among them—and it is to be hoped that isolated members, who wear the official title of members-at-large, have also shared in the rising tide of theosophic life. Did time permit, I should ask permission to read those reports, that the Convention might form its own impressions of the devoted work done by our distant fellows. It would, I think, be evident that the spirit of last year's Convention is alive in those reports. We were then urged to make preparation for the critical years which, by analogy, must precede the beginning of that third 25-year cycle on which the T. S. will enter in 1925. Clearly this call was heard; in our different centres of work a new spirit is manifest, distinctive and yet common to them all,—the spirit of the whole Society in Convention assembled. It is also equally evident that there is, at the same time, more individuality and coherence in the work of the different Branches. Personalities are far less prominent in the accounts of their activities; there is a new sense of solidarity in responsibility.

*Preparation for service*, would appear to be uppermost in the hearts of our members, all over the world. There was a time when Branches conducted their public meetings with the avowed object of gaining recruits. There was much exposition and exhortation; many felt obliged to brave the perils of "the teaching perch." Now the one-time teachers are studying, with their fellows, the practical, every day application of theosophic truth,—no longer content that it should be merely some part of their mental fibre, but determined to incorporate it in desire and will. The stream of visitors who came to sample our wares, is being replaced by what Branches call their "steady visitors." These visitors take part in the discussions and interest themselves in the practice of Theosophy. It may well be that a new method of acquiring active members is being established. In the early days of the T. S. when the seed was scattered as widely as possible, the garden over which Masters deigned to preside presented a curious medley of young growth, of most diverse types. Every shoot had its chance to take root, but great was the mortality! Fortunately for us there were sturdy survivals, and thanks to them, it is now a fruit-bearing garden. Perhaps additions are now to be made in the form of grafts, carefully prepared for insertion and as carefully tended. At least we are coming to realize that the vitality, the capacity for fruitfulness, is resident in the Movement itself, not in its adherents—and also that, through it, those most lacking in that capacity may yet come to fruitage.

There is, as would be hoped, much variety in the form taken by the Branch work, but nearly all conduct Study Classes—and in several localities Study Classes are laying the foundation for new Branches. At some centres, members meet only once a month, in others two or three times a week; some meet throughout the year; others celebrate vacation season by holding informal outdoor meetings. There are also several which have a number of distant members, to whom they send accounts of their meetings, regularly,—and they offer this assistance to any detached members who would like to join them and to participate in their activities. It would not be keeping faith with our foreign Branches, were no record made of the gratitude they express for the reports that have been sent to them of the meetings of the New York Branch. They explain the means that they have taken to avoid that well beaten track—"in at one ear and out at the other"—in the use of this material. When translations have to be made for

members who know no English, the translators are without doubt the gainers. Some Branches ask their members to pay toll for the reports,—circulating them with the request that each member add his own comment before passing the material on to the next member.

Your Secretary has deep sympathy for Branch officers who are contending with cases of "sleeping sickness" among their members. There is the constant dread lest isolated members of the Society succumb to this infection. Every year our record of the life history of some of them is this: they have paid their dues; they have taken their copies of the *QUARTERLY* from the hands of the postman,—and that is all we know of them. Some are so situated that they never have the chance to discuss their problems, face to face, with any other members; and the cares of outer life make correspondence about inner problems seem difficult or unpromising. While there are many at Headquarters who would welcome the chance to share with an isolated member what they gain from contact with the centre of the work,—few take advantage of these invitations so frequently given.

Commendation of the *THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY* might be taken as an implication that those here present are not familiar with it, but they might like to know that it has many constant readers outside our ranks. Through the propaganda fund, it has been possible to put it into a large number of libraries. Thus many people have opportunity, if Karma be propitious, to make the acquaintance of Theosophy. Occasionally, those who encounter the Movement in this way take steps to connect themselves with it. But for the most part, we get only sidelights on what happens with our library readers. One exclusive library, for instance, had maintained its subscription, year after year, although its periodical room was devoted to a different range of magazines. By chance, we learned that a certain small number of its patrons, none of them connected with our work, demanded and always read the *QUARTERLY*. Then there are those who regularly purchase it from their bookseller, apparently finding security in that strictly anonymous relation. As is natural, there are some among our members who first came to us as subscribers. On the other hand we have an increasing number of regular subscribers who are wholly unknown to us. Some of them have been on our list so long that the card on which their renewals are recorded is filled up on both sides; yet no communications ever come to us from these seasoned readers of our literature. Is there not, in this persistent cohesion, some basis for the hope that the fire of the Movement is spreading underground, as well as within our ranks,—perhaps to blaze up one of these days in some unsuspected quarter, where the Masters of Wisdom may even now be accumulating fuel for the feeding of its flames?

Respectfully submitted,

ISABEL E. PERKINS,  
*Secretary, The Theosophical Society.*

THE CHAIRMAN: It would seem to the Chairman that commendation of the work of the Secretary's office, as reflected in the Secretary's report, might be open to such unfavourable implications as she suggested would be the result of praising the *QUARTERLY*. There is no one in the room who does not know the devotion, the sacrifice, the constant labour that have been given by our Secretary. Perhaps no one knows it so well as those who are closest to it. I know that I shall be expressing the feeling of the whole Society if I ask that, in accepting this report, a vote of very grateful thanks be accorded to our Secretary for her labours, and that in these thanks be also included the Assistant Secretary and all those who so generously and unceasingly help in the work of the Secretary's office.

This motion, seconded by Mr. Hargrove, was unanimously carried.

The next business being the report of the Treasurer, Mr. Johnston was asked to take the Chair.

#### REPORT OF THE TREASURER

PROFESSOR MITCHELL: Once again, I am afraid that the voice is mine, but the substance not mine. Your thanks—and you have reason for thanks—for the activities of the Treasurer's office, are all due to the Assistant Treasurer, Miss Youngs, who has borne all the labour and

whose compilation of the results is here before me. It is those which I shall read, as confirmed by the examination of the books and bank account of the Society:

## APRIL 27, 1923—APRIL 26, 1924

<i>Receipts</i>		<i>Disbursements</i>	
Current Dues.....	\$636.94	Pension.....	\$240.00
General Contributions.....	692.36	Printing and mailing, THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY (4 numbers)...	2848.17
Propaganda Fund.....	1005.40	Stationery and Supplies.....	100.64
Subscriptions to the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY.....	560.60	Postage.....	13.26
		Rent.....	150.00
	\$2895.30	Miscellaneous:	
1925 Dues, prepaid.....	58.00	Moving.....	\$24.25
		Flowers (Mrs. Gregg).....	5.00
		Bank collections.....	.70
Total receipts.....	\$2953.30		29.95
Balance April 27, 1923.....	1624.54	Total Disbursements.....	\$3382.02
		Balance April 26, 1924.....	1195.82
	<u>\$4577.84</u>		<u>\$4577.84</u>
<i>Assets</i>		<i>Liabilities</i>	
On deposit Corn Exchange Bank,		1925 Dues, prepaid.....	\$58.00
April 26, 1924.....	<u>\$1195.82</u>	Excess of assets over liabilities. . .	1137.82
			<u>\$1195.82</u>

HENRY BEDINGER MITCHELL,  
*Treasurer, The Theosophical Society.*

April 26, 1924.

PROFESSOR MITCHELL: Taking up first the Receipts for the year, the current dues amounted to \$636.94, and the contributions to \$692.36. So that, as has almost always been the case, the general contributions that come in the mails from our members, have outweighed the actual payments for dues,—this year, by about fifty dollars. The Propaganda Fund was initiated some years ago to enable us to keep the price of the QUARTERLY at twenty-five cents a copy, instead of raising it as every other magazine has had to raise its price during the past ten years. To that fund, members were asked to subscribe in accordance with their desire and their capacity, considering their other obligations. This year, that fund has amounted to over \$1000, and enables us to keep the QUARTERLY at a price of twenty-five cents, thus making it available for everyone. The subscriptions to the magazine, for copies sent to non-members, amounted to \$560. Our total receipts were \$2895.30.

With the figures before you, it would be evident that the four numbers of the QUARTERLY had cost within fifty dollars of the entire income of the Society. Then there are other necessary items of expense—stationery and supplies; postage stamps; rent; pension, etc.—making our total disbursements \$3382.02. That is, our expenses run, this year, four or five hundred dollars over the receipts; but since we started the year with a balance, we are able to wind up the year with a satisfactory balance also. Regarding the sum of \$2848 for the four numbers of the QUARTERLY—I want to point out that the QUARTERLY is not only unique in continuing its publication at a price much less than half of its actual cost, but also unique in that it pays no salary of any kind to anyone; thus reflecting the unique character of the Movement which pays no salaries of any kind to anyone. The expenses involved in issuing the magazine are the sums paid to the printer, the paper maker, the United States Government for postage. There is no editorial expense, no office expense. That same principle runs throughout the Society. I like to point it out, because it is part of our fundamental procedure of which I think we should not lose sight. Everything that is done for the Movement is done as a gift of love. In pre-

senting this report, I should like to add, formally, my very grateful thanks to the Assistant Treasurer, and to those who have aided her in the work of the Treasurer's office.

It was moved, seconded, and unanimously carried that the report be accepted, and that the best thanks of the Society be given to the Treasurer and the Assistant Treasurer and to all who co-operated in the work. Professor Mitchell then resumed the Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: At this point we have, of recent years, liked to remind ourselves of our indebtedness to Mrs. Gregg, our former Secretary, for all her past services; and have liked to express our thanks by sending her, since she is unable to be present, some little token, some flowers, from the Convention. If that is your pleasure again, I should be glad to receive such a motion.

It was moved, seconded, and unanimously carried that the Chair be empowered to send flowers to Mrs. Gregg, with the best wishes and remembrances of the Convention. It was then announced that the next business to come before the meeting was the report of the Committee on Nominations.

#### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

MR. PERKINS: The Committee reports that two members of the Executive Committee are to be elected by this Convention. The Committee consists of six members, each serving three years, in addition to the Treasurer, who is a member *ex officio*. Two members are elected each year, so that there are always four members standing. The Committee recommends the re-election of Mr. Hargrove and Mr. Johnston, whose terms expire at this time. [This recommendation was immediately acted upon and Mr. Hargrove and Mr. Johnston were duly re-elected to serve for a term of three years.]

The Committee next recommends, for Treasurer, the election of Professor Mitchell; for Assistant Treasurer, Miss Youngs; for Secretary, Miss Perkins; and for Assistant Secretary, Miss Chickering. [These recommendations were put to a vote and unanimously accepted. The Secretary of the Convention was instructed to cast one ballot for the Committee's nominees.]

THE CHAIRMAN: This ends the formal business of our morning session. If Mr. Woodbridge were here, we could count on him to speak to us of what we shall do during the intervening period—how we shall have the privilege of meeting together in two's and three's, talking over old times, enjoying ourselves in what is certainly one of the most pleasurable and perhaps one of the most valuable ways that the Convention makes possible. As he is detained by illness, I should like to ask that if any member from a distance has not already some plan for luncheon, he or she will be good enough to speak to any of the men of the New York Branch, including myself, and let us make provision.

After various announcements, the Convention adjourned until 2:30 P.M.

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#### *Afternoon Session*

The Chairman announced that the first business before the Convention was the report of the Committee on Letters of Greeting.

#### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LETTERS OF GREETING

Dr. Keightley, the Chairman of the Committee, having been unavoidably detained, Dr. Clark presented the Committee's report. He said that the members of the Committee had gone over the letters with the deepest interest and appreciation, and had been greatly impressed with the force and devotion made manifest in these messages from our distant comrades. Selections had been marked by the Committee, which he would read to the Convention, but it was hoped that, as in former years, the complete letters might be printed in the JULY QUARTERLY, as an important and integral part of the Convention proceedings. [The Letters of Greeting appear as an Addendum to this report.]

It was moved, seconded and unanimously carried that the report of the Committee be accepted and the Committee discharged with the thanks of the Convention.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think it possible to listen to such letters of greeting, giving back to us our own feeling for our distant members and reflecting their feeling for us, without a very sincere appreciation of what those letters mean. Perhaps when we come to the report of the Committee on Resolutions, they may have something to suggest to us as to the response or answer we should make. The next business is the report of the Committee on Resolutions.

#### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Hargrove, as Chairman of the Committee on Resolutions, has asked me to introduce the following three stock resolutions:

1. That Mr. Johnston be authorized to reply to the Letters of Greeting.
2. That the Convention requests and authorizes visits of officers of the Society to Branches.
3. That the thanks of the Convention be expressed to the New York Branch for its hospitality and for the use of the room in which the Convention is held.

MR. HARGROVE: I know that when Mr. Johnston, on behalf of the Convention, acknowledges the receipt of those letters of greeting, he always expresses the deep pleasure that they give, and does everything in his power to make the writers feel that what they have written has really been helpful. It is not easy for some of us to take in things by our ears only. We like to read these letters afterwards, as they are printed, and that will be our opportunity later on. No one, for instance, could possibly have listened to the letter from Mr. Leonard, Secretary of the Branch in Los Angeles, without a feeling that there, on the West Coast, we have fellow members in the truest and deepest sense of the word. Also I should like to express my own disappointment and that of many, at the absence of Mr. George Woodbridge. I have a sincere affection for Mr. George Woodbridge, Junior, but he is not his father, and until he can become his father, he cannot take his father's place! I particularly regret the cause of that absence, which I know is illness.

I asked for the privilege of adding a word to the formal resolutions introduced by Mr. Mitchell, because the Committee on Resolutions has undergone certain transformations since it was first brought into being a number of years ago. It used to be a committee that prepared written resolutions which served as a sort of text, giving everyone an opportunity to ventilate his pent-up feelings. Since then it has become a committee on individual resolutions, and instead of pent-up feelings, we live in hopes of resolutions of the will—not like New Year or birthday resolutions, but resolutions of a peculiar and uncommon sort, resolutions that are made and kept. And so it has become, I will not say the prerogative of the Chairman of your Committee, but an opportunity seized by him to suggest certain personal resolutions (collective resolutions, if that be possible), which he thinks it would be well to make.

A good deal was said this morning about the ideal of The Theosophical Society, and about the power of that ideal. I remember expressing the hope that every one present would feel, "This is for me to do." I want to add a word or two to what I said then, because really it does amount to a resolution. This is my task, but *how*, and *where*, and upon what terms and conditions? Of course the "where" is easy. The "where" depends entirely upon where you happen to live, where your duty takes you. It does not matter whether it is New York City or Kansas City, or that third place which was suggested by Ingersoll, some years ago, as an equivalent. The place will provide the opportunities, because it will provide the difficulties, the obstacles. We need to learn how to use these as means to our end.

What do you hope to gain from Theosophy? The answer, of course, can be expressed in many different ways, and what I am suggesting is only one of the ways. But you might say that what you want is, to learn what to do, how to do it, when to do it,—to learn how to act wisely and well. Possibly you have met those with a positive genius for doing the wrong thing,—saying the wrong thing without any exception whatsoever, until you have stood open mouthed and speechless at their ingenuity. A friend of mine not long ago was ill, and had a pain in his foot in the middle of the night. He called in the night nurse, and the nurse said, "Yes, I have seen gangrene start in that way, time and again. I am so sorry for you!" The patient, much amused, related the incident to a friend, and the friend said, "That night nurse had had wide experience; according to his lights he was being tactful; most people like to have

their sufferings and symptoms exaggerated, and feel that lack of gloom means lack of sympathy!" It was a reminder that one man's meat is another man's poison; that if you are talking to a certain type of peasant, you must not tell him that he is not so very sick, but that if you are talking to a man of average intelligence, it is a mistake to suggest he has gangrene when even at two o'clock in the morning he knows he has not! It was a reminder also that it is not easy to speak wisely to all sorts and conditions of people. Yet this, among other things, is what we must learn to do as a part of discipleship, seeing that discipleship includes the whole of wisdom, with the strength of character to obey, to perform, that which wisdom reveals,—for to see and not to do, was and is the beginning of every blindness.

It may be taken for granted, therefore, that no matter where we may stand in the scale of evolution, or on what plane we may be functioning, the essence of what we should like to know is how to act rightly and wisely. We should realize, then, in the first place, that every stupidity, every blindness, is due to a moral defect, to a defect in the will. All of us, in the eyes of Masters, must be inconceivably stupid,—even though, among ourselves, there may be degrees of stupidity! In any case, our own stupidities, whatever they may be—our lack of intelligence and of understanding—should certainly concern us, and, looking for a cure, we should begin with the basic realization that they spring from moral defects. There is nothing the matter with our minds. There are those who are born insane; their brains are diseased. But our brains are not diseased. Our minds are all right. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred, the man who is a genius at doing the wrong thing owes his genius to his self-indulgence. Self-indulgence: we have a great many ways of doing as we like. Some of you may remember an essay that Matthew Arnold wrote, at about the time of the foundation of The Theosophical Society. He called it, "Doing as One Likes" (from *Culture and Anarchy*). He was dealing with conditions in England, but you will agree with me that there is not much difference between English human nature and American human nature,—although, recently, the Englishman seems to have been giving freer vent to his nature, with disastrous results. This was the way Matthew Arnold put it:

"More and more, because of this our blind faith in machinery, because of our want of light to enable us to look beyond machinery to the end for which machinery is valuable, this and that man, and this and that body of men, all over the country, are beginning to assert and put in practice an Englishman's right to do what he likes; his right to march where he likes, meet where he likes, enter where he likes, hoot as he likes, threaten as he likes, smash as he likes."

You might think such an objective an exaggeration of the aim and objective of any aspirant for discipleship. I do not think it is, because too many of those who make up their minds to the effect, "This is for me to do," purpose to carry out that task on their own terms. They are going to become disciples their own way: and of course the tragedy of that proposition is that it does not work; it cannot be done. When we begin to assert to ourselves the right to do as we like, to hoot as we like and to smash as we like, we are running directly counter, not only to the ideals of Theosophy but to the ideals of decency and to the ideals of common sense. The truth is that just in order to live and to become human, we must deny nearly all of our inherent, native impulses and inclinations. Irrespective of that, which I suggest as a theme for discussion, it is certain that if we are going to consider the subject of discipleship, we must face the fact that most of the time we shall have to work against the grain, against a very strong current of inclination. Someone once said that he had come to the conclusion it was never safe to write a letter unless he was strongly disinclined to write that letter. When we have a strong impulse to do something or other, experience ought to have taught us to be wary of that impulse. When there are three or four duties to be performed and you do not know which of them to attack first, all you have to do is to go ahead and do the one you least want to do,—and you can then be almost sure you are doing the will of the Almighty. You do not have to create your opportunities, seeing that you have already created your obstacles, and that they run to meet you. Always and from all quarters, Karma, the benevolent Law, sends us our opportunities; sends us the stuff out of which discipleship can be made, sends us things to resist and which resist us, so that ultimately we may become



strong. It has well been said that no bird could ever learn to fly except for the opposition of the air, the beating of the air. We can never grow, never become anything, never learn how to cease blundering, except by means of overcoming the inclinations within us.

It would not be wise if we were to think that discipleship is a path with roses under foot, roses to the right and to the left, with angels and others pushing us from behind and dragging us from before. It is nothing of the sort, and I think that it must be in accordance with your own observation of life in general, that growth on those terms would be impossible. You have all seen an infant learning to walk, and you know that the child stumbles and falls. You are not alarmed, and you know he must learn to move his own feet, to do these things for himself. The Lodge of Masters cannot do everything for us. They can steer us occasionally, they can pick us up, but we have got to do the work ourselves. Also let us beware if we feel particularly pious. When we feel that we are having wonderful inner experience, let us beware,—especially if we are hugging ourselves because of it. Be grateful for it, yes. But again, there are distinctions, there is the true and the false. Nearly always, true experience brings further opportunity for sacrifice. Anyone who has loved at all, knows that to love is to suffer. Very young and inexperienced people think that to love means merely a delicious sensation. But ask a mother with ten children, and she may know more about it. You do not even have to go to the mother with ten children—I suspect that one child would be quite enough! To love *is* to suffer. There is no escape from it. It is a law of life. Go one step further back, and you will find that love *demands* suffering.

We read, and perhaps know of Masters; and we know, theoretically or otherwise, of their love for mankind, of their love for those above them to whom they look up and whom they adore. But do not forget that the greater their love, the greater their suffering, and that it is impossible for great love ever to suffer enough. And so, if at any time we should be inclined to feel too gay about our discipleship, let us repeat to ourselves some such verity as that; let us turn our eyes to Masters and remind ourselves of what they are and of how they became that eternal marvel. So we shall learn. Looking up, we shall have an opportunity at least to become humble. It has been said that humility is the foundation of every spiritual growth. Whether we understand these things, or whether we do not—whether we are inspired by them or whether we are not—I, for one, would say,—begin to be a disciple, and understand afterwards. That simple, ignorant, blind resolution, if honestly taken, if honestly worked at, day by day, will lead inevitably to light, to understanding. None of us has enough of it. Such as we have we seek to give: but blessed is the man who starts to work at discipleship, regardless of his light. The doing of the next duty as he thinks a disciple might do it, is enough. If he will keep on with that he will become, in his time, a teacher of Adepts. So, while this great ideal presents enormous difficulties, yet I think it is so simple that a child can grasp it and live it and be it, and move forward to true manhood. There is no difficulty in the way of the man who says, “I will do it. I will die, if need be, but I will do it.” In that spirit, anything can be attained, and it is God’s truth that nothing can be attained without it.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is with hesitancy that, before asking you to take action upon the Report of the Committee on Resolutions, I venture earnestly to urge each one of you to apply what has just been said, not to someone else, but to yourself. On the doors of private offices one sometimes sees a sign, reading—“Keep out. This means *you*.” When we are told to keep out of easy satisfaction with ourselves; when we are told that if we are to serve and follow the path of discipleship, it must not be with self-indulgence; that always and for ever it must mean sacrifice, and real sacrifice—not sacrifice of something someone else likes, but sacrifice of something *we* like; that it must always be in the path of duty, against the grain, (if our task be easy, be what we already like, what could we accomplish by it?),—when Mr. Hargrove tells us that wearing out the lower nature, which clogs and blinds and holds us, is the Way,—I want to add to each one, without exception, “This means *you*, and not another.”

It was moved, seconded and carried that the report of the Committee on Resolutions be accepted, and the Committee discharged with thanks. It was then requested that the Convention might hear from the Branch delegates and members-at-large. As a member-at-large, Mrs. Gitt was first asked to speak.

MRS. GITT: As I said last year, there is a religious war on in Washington. We get the best and the worst there, and if one goes around Washington with open eyes, one can see what is happening all over the world. The outlook in the churches there is better than it was last year—they are getting their equilibrium. One surprising thing is the amount of theosophical teaching that is being disseminated in all the denominations, of course without that label. The clergymen who are progressive as well as intelligent are finding it difficult to please all sections of their congregations—some call them atheists and others revere them as Christian mystics.

We have also had a flood of psychologists, this year—two of whom captivated the city, with their new evangelism, which is applied psychology with religion added; and they offer the lure of practical, definite instruction in the underlying principles of physical, mental and spiritual law. People in these days are craving such teaching, are even willing to put it into practice—but the churches have none to offer, having no esoteric centre. There is much restlessness in the air, and I have asked many people what it is that they want. They cannot always tell, but what they say boils down to this: they want to have the other man fully considered; they want the race to have good sound bodies and a better adjustment of the things of this life. I am convinced that there will have to be new legislation along this line, but clearly there is more to be done than that—for most of the ills in life are due to stupidity and self-indulgence.

MRS. GORDON: I am always glad to speak for the Middletown Branch, with which I keep closely in touch although I am living in New York. Some of the members are very devoted to the welfare of the Branch, others are indifferent, and do not feel any obligation to come regularly or to give anything to it. Mr. Roberts, one of the oldest members, really carries the responsibility for the Branch, and during the winter he contributed some articles on Theosophy to one of the local papers. There are a number of outsiders who are becoming interested, and may be good material for the future. I have been asked to give the greetings of the Middletown Branch to the Convention, and to say that we, its members, are struggling hard to keep the link there unbroken.

MR. DANNER: The thought that I should like to express was suggested to me by one of the resolutions that were referred to as stock resolutions. It has been my privilege to come here for a number of years, and to vote thanks to the New York Branch for its most gracious entertainment. I have had it in my heart, before this, to say that I hardly feel that simple vote of thanks to be enough. It is no small thing to plan for and take the responsibility of a Convention. When we are uplifted as we have been to-day, I should feel selfish if I did not say what is in my heart to say. There are three thoughts, in fact. First, that I believe everyone who comes here, from far or near, is more than grateful for all that is done for us during these two days. Then the second thought,—what does the Convention do for me? I think each one of us should ask himself that. If we simply come here to be uplifted, and then go back home and merely wait for the next year and another uplift, it would hardly be worth travelling a thousand miles to come. But it means more to me. As my problems meet me, or catch up with me, sometimes I call on the Masters for assistance, and at the same time, the faces of those who mean so much to us here come before me and help far more than they would realize. "Let your light so shine"—and the light that we see here does radiate almost daily, and does help me to meet the problems that arise, does help me to serve,—a thought which has been so beautifully expressed here to-day. What is there in life, if we are not willing to try our level best to serve as God has given us the privilege to do? The time would be almost wasted if it were simply for self that we came here. We must go home feeling that we have this wonderful inspiration, this wonderful example that we may carry through the year, carry it on until we come again next year. Then there is the third thought, of the QUARTERLY. There is no greater spiritual periodical than that, and the New York Branch is largely responsible for it. Not only do we have the great inspiration and help of the Convention, but month after month, that wonderful magazine carries us along. I think, then, that we who come here should express in some way our appreciation of all that is being done for us—not only once a year, but every month and every day.

MRS. REGAN: I am glad that Mr. Danner has spoken about gratitude to the older members

of the Society, for it gives me courage to say what is in my heart. It is filled with gratitude for the privilege of being here, and to those who have had the understanding to guide the Society. We all know that the best way to show our appreciation of it, is to try to increase our understanding of the principles that underlie the T.S., and to use them in our every day life. Clearly, the real life of a Branch does not lie in its meetings, but in the wise and unselfish effort of its members to live the theosophic life.

MR. FORBES: I am a member-at-large, and this is the first Convention that I have had an opportunity to attend. I am deeply conscious of the privilege and of the great benefit that, in common with everyone here, I am deriving. A member-at-large is more or less isolated. He has no one who feels as he does, to turn to in times of doubt and difficulty and "weak knees." We have not been thinking about Theosophy long, before we realize that Theosophy is a *living* principle. We must live it, but all our surroundings are organized differently; the thought, the feeling and the concerns of the world around us are polarized in other directions. There are times when one becomes sceptical,—the tremendous difficulty, the obstacles in the way of living a theosophic life are so great. One opens a book like *Light on the Path*, and it seems impossible that a poor worm like oneself should ever be able to walk on that Path. Of course one does not always stay on these low levels, but these are the times when we isolated members feel keenly the lack of the inspiration that comes from close comrades, who are striving along the same way. Of course we have our compensations. Those of us who are not habitually surrounded by this great aura of inspiration and achievement that is centred here, may be more profoundly impressed by it. When we come here, and find life and light enclosed in personalities—a living, breathing thing, a light shining out from another human being whom we can know—it gives us a feeling of hope for the future, though we are only poor specimens ourselves, as yet.

DR. TORREY: I have felt something to-day that I have not felt for a long time before, and I am glad I came. I had said I was not coming, because I could not give anything and would be a weak link. In reply, I was told that it was better to be a weak link than no link at all. We who are separated, become engrossed in our work or our study; and soon the light fades away and we get into that curious deadness that makes us wonder whether, after all, we have not deluded ourselves, whether there is anything in us at all. I have been working with young men, and I feel that they are willing and glad to receive this sort of thing, if given the opportunity. It is amazing, the response that one gets, from young men in the colleges; as yet they are idealists, still looking for something real and satisfying in life. That has been most forcibly brought home to me by experiences I have had in teaching.

MISS RICHMOND: I suppose that we ought always to do the thing we hate most to do—in which case, I must stand up. My thoughts go back to what Mr. Hargrove said. Why should we not all expect the pentecostal flame to descend on the Society? The disciples were all gathered in one place with one accord.

MRS. DANNER: It seems to me that this Convention has been ringing with that line from *Light on the Path*, "It is not well; thou hast reaped, now thou must sow." And also with those lines from Emerson:

"Hast thou named all the birds without a gun;  
Loved the wood-rose, and left it on its stalk;  
At rich men's tables eaten bread and pulse;  
Unarmed, faced danger with a heart of trust;  
And loved so well a high behaviour,  
In man or maid, that thou from speech refrained,  
Nobility more nobly to repay?  
Oh, be my friend and teach me to be thine."

MR. HARGROVE: In view of the generous things said about the older members, it would be well for one of the older members to speak for the others. All of us would deeply regret any misunderstanding or wrong impression. We all know that really there are no teachers in this

Society. We are fellow students; and if some of us have had more experience, owing to having survived, by hook or by crook, the pressure of things somewhat longer than others, we are necessarily anxious to share that experience with those of you who have not been equally privileged. What I want to tell you is this: I wish that you could have an idea of the gratitude of the older members when there is a sign, here, there or elsewhere, of response. Several of you have come a thousand miles to this Convention. I tell you that an older member would walk ten thousand miles to help someone—anyone—who really meant business. Now if that be true of those who are merely older members, what must be the truth about Masters? Yet we need not go so far as that. I want to limit the subject to our feeling of gratitude to-day to those of you who have spoken, who have responded, who, throughout the year, show signs of trying. Think of it as if it were a tug of war. No matter who is pulling against us, no matter what is pulling against The Theosophical Society as such—here is a body of people trying to pull on the side of Masters—and some of them gasping for breath once in a while. Then you come, or somebody else comes, and lends a hand. Do you know what we feel about it? Can you not *believe* that we are grateful? And so it is that while you speak of your gratitude—and I know speak from your hearts—I think it is only fair that we should be privileged to speak of ours.

MR. PERKINS: This morning, Professor Mitchell spoke of the atom and the nucleus, and this afternoon, as Mr. Hargrove was speaking, showing us so plainly what it is the privilege of each one of us to do, and telling us so plainly that it is going to cost us something to do it,—my mind ran back to the atom and the nucleus. We have all known for a long time that The Theosophical Society is intended to be the nucleus of a great future brotherhood of humanity. As I understand it, the Society is not to be the brotherhood, but is intended to become the nucleus of that brotherhood. We have all read in the papers recently what our scientists have been telling us of their discoveries about the atom—the electrons that fly around on the outside of it in their various orbits. But most interesting of all is what they have told us about the nucleus—that infinitesimal point at the centre which is the whole thing. Nothing else counts but that tiny nucleus, controlling the form, the motion, the action, the life, the chemical affinities—everything—of that atom. Scientists tell us that if one of those tiny atoms were enlarged until it was some forty inches in diameter, the nucleus at the centre would be about the size of a needle point. And still it contains all the power of the atom. I think the reason is that the stamp of the Eternal is imprinted at the heart of each one of those atoms, just as it is imprinted at the heart of each universe. The nucleus bears that stamp; it is not a static thing—surely we could not think of an impression from the Lodge, from the Eternal ones above us, as being a static and fixed thing. My own feeling is that the stamp that marks the nucleus of the great brotherhood of the humanity of the future—that which The Theosophical Society must be, that which each one of us in turn must decide to take our individual share in being—that stamp from above, is a living thing. It is a stamp in consciousness. It is simply the lower end of a ray of light from the Supreme—not static but changing, changing with speed and adaptability, at every response which the Society is able to make to it. As the result of this Convention, I hope that each one of us may make up his mind to take his part in that nucleus. Infinitesimal in size, as compared with this great world about us, the potency of that nucleus must be infinite because it is so powerfully drawn toward a centre which is the dynamic centre of the universe itself. Back must go the response of the nucleus, straight up through the hierarchical line, to the Masters. It is they who have given us an inestimable privilege, if we are willing to be nothing of ourselves,—the privilege of being their servants, of bearing their mark, and of living, here and now, the life which endures.

THE CHAIRMAN: The time has come when, if we have finished the business of the Convention, we should adjourn. We have heard from visiting members, and we are going to have the opportunity of hearing from our New York members to-night, at the regular meeting of the New York Branch, which is to be held here in this room, at 8:30 this evening. Though it is a meeting of the Branch rather than a formal meeting of the Convention, it does, in a certain sense, pick up the overflow from the Convention, and sometimes the overflow is well worth catching. As this Convention ends, I think we must all feel that we should seek to go forth

from it carrying with us what has been given us here, and striving during the coming year to put it into action—so that we may bring it back here again, with interest.

MR. MITCHELL: Before we adjourn, may I say that I should regret to have the Convention close without having an opportunity to give expression to my gratitude for The Theosophical Society, for the continuance of the Theosophical Movement, for the wonderful ideals which are presented to us here,—gratitude to those who have brought those ideals within our reach, maintained them, and made it possible for us to try to act on them. I would suggest that those who wish to give expression to their gratitude, be given an opportunity to rise as an indication of it.

All present rose for a moment, in silence. The Convention then was duly adjourned.

ISABEL E. PERKINS,  
*Secretary of Convention.*

JULIA CHICKERING,  
*Assistant Secretary of Convention.*

## LETTERS OF GREETING

KRISTIANIA, NORWAY.

*To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:* At the period of transition from winter to spring, from the time when the qualities of darkness, "foulness," and inertia are predominant, to the time when nature—pregnant with energy and fertility—wakes up and makes its never failing attempt to take the reins, the opposing forces in nature are waging war against each other, and the combat is furious especially at the equinoctial point.

This is the state of the world to-day. Man experiences it in nature at every recurring year—the Masters experience it in the world at every recurring century,—and the gods in the universe at every recurring greater cycle.

Looking at the conditions on our globe at the present day from this point of view, there is nothing strange going on, nothing to worry over. We know the issue beforehand. Failure is shut out. "Remember the armies of Heaven marching across the sky, and the great St. Michael leading" (Cavé). But remember also that we are the skirmishers in this world of the armies of Heaven, and that St. Michael has trusted us with a most important and hard part of the great battle;—and remembering this, let everyone faithfully fill his place according to his strength, face life and death alike, and be unconcerned as to the results.

Comrades, the small band of skirmishers in Norway are sending you their heartfelt greetings, asking you to compass also them in your thoughts and silent prayers to-day.

Fraternally yours,

T. H. KNOFF,  
[Chairman, Karma Branch.]

ARVIKA, SWEDEN.

*To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:* Even this time we will, as has been practised the last years, keep the day for Convention as a sort of holy day. It is this day we have our annual meeting, the only meeting in the year that is open only for members, not for outsiders.

This our meeting takes place at the same hour as the Convention, and we send then in thought to the members assembled in New York and to all co-workers in the world, our best wishes and humble greetings.

Fraternally, for the Arvika Branch,

HJALMAR JULIN,  
[President.]

AUSSIG-SCHRECKENSTEIN III, CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.

*To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:* Although we have not yet the privilege to partake of a Convention of The Theosophical Society, I believe we feel a certain intimacy

with you, especially at Convention time; not an intimacy from any outer intercourse, but caused by an inner communion which grows deeper more and more from year to year. So we hope to share your common feeling and spirit in a certain degree, and would Heaven give us the power to thank the Masters adequately for the effects of such a sharing.

Without an increase of any member, but likewise without a loss of any one, we have remained the little band of workers for the Cause of the Masters. Therefore our efforts were directed on spiritual, individual attainment.

As suggested by Mr. Hargrove, we were subjected to "another real test" of our ability to recognize the theosophical principles underlying a situation somewhat similar to the situation which existed in August, 1914, by the occupation of the Ruhr basin by the French. I hope we have passed that trial more successfully than the first trial in 1914. We have learned meanwhile to penetrate in some degree a false psychic glamour and to hate the evil. Another such situation which involved a certain test for us, was the depreciation of the French money at the beginning of this year, caused by great financial, assault manœuvres. Envy, jealousy and a crafty malignity were the motives thereto. The intention of the German and German-minded financiers was, to evoke a precipitate "déroute" of the franc, whereby the Germans manifested their old creed in the efficacy of terror. But a man or a nation who believes in terror must be persuaded from the idea that there is nothing in the others to vanquish fear and horror. Such a man is unable to measure the spiritual powers of the soul, which meet the fear and overcome it. Terror has nothing to do with the power which the righteous man uses to help the White Powers. By his decision to sacrifice himself as an instrument in the hands of them, he makes it possible that tremendous spiritual powers are focussed in himself, and it is by their own impetuosity and irresistibility that they operate and so break down the resistance of the momentum of the evil powers. The righteous man believes in the efficacy of the force of his heart or of his soul or of his Master, whether he is conscious of that fact or not, but the Germans believe in the efficacy of terror and the devilish methods of terror. Therefore that event was especially a test of our trust in the moral strength and ability of defence of "La France éternelle." We had to prove whether we have extirpated every element of defeatism, and whether we hold a strong conviction of triumph for the cause of the French in all departments and in each activity of life. We saw the deep-seated mendacity, cunning and hypocrisy of Germany, as she was appealing to the mercy of the world by her mendacious propaganda as to her children who would starve with hunger and with cold. She was sending her children abroad (also to some parts of Bohemia, and they were the best and living evidence of her mendacity); and German-minded people here made collections of money, a donation to Germany. So we had often opportunities to prove our discrimination and to practise a rejection with passionate abhorrence. Further we see the extensive spread of adoration and cultivation of a popular and national originality, which means truly licence in the development of the individuality.

We know that our trials and tests are repeated infinitely every day in all possible variations, and that we have so rich opportunities to perfect ourselves in the capacity to discriminate, to select and to reject, to practise the real cursing of all evil things, whether we meet them in ourselves or in others.

Thus we hope at the centre of our hearts that we will become worthier members, from year to year, and create thereby a real return-current for the help we receive now from you and the heart of the Society.

In conclusion let me convey to you our very best wishes for the success of the Convention and receive you all our heartiest greetings.

I remain, sincerely and fraternally yours,

OTHMAR KÖHLER,  
*Secretary, Aussig Branch.*

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OCUMARE DEL FUY, MIRANDA, VENEZUELA.

*To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:* In the name of the members of the "Altagracia de Orituco," Branch, I send to you our cordial greeting. Though at times under

adverse circumstances, we have continued our theosophical labour unbroken. We go forward with our method of working: study, meditation and to live the Doctrine.

United to you in spirit, and in that solemn hour of your meeting, we wish the greater success, and the Masters' blessings inspire your deliberations.

Sincerely I remain, fraternally yours,

ACISCLO VALEDON.

[Secretary.]

SANFERNANDO DE APURE, VENEZUELA.

*To the T. S. in Convention Assembled:* The "Jehoshua" Branch sends its unanimous and very friendly greetings to the members of the T. S. at the time of the annual Convention, with the assurance that the comrades of this Branch will be with their fellow members in spirit on that day.

With best wishes and heartiest greetings,

Yours very sincerely,

D. SALAS BAÍZ,  
President.

CARACAS, VENEZUELA.

*To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:* The "Rama Venezuela," with fraternal love, sends its cordial greetings to the brothers in solemn Convention assembled, and expresses its fervid wishes that on this occasion, as always, the blessing of Masters be made incarnate in practical deeds, this assembly to constitute a new opportunity to snatch another portion of fire from Heaven.

We do not think it is statistical information, number of members, and details of the *modus operandi*, etc. our Convention is primarily interested to know about, since in our Society the workers are not counted by the number but by the tools each one is able to handle, by the use he can give, through the different circumstances of life, to the Art of Theosophy learned in the workshop of the Theosophical Society, our Alma Mater.

If it were possible for us to give a faithful summary of our work as a Branch, we would say that during the year elapsed we have dwelt collectively on the matter of Discipleship and the direct action of Masters in the Theosophical Movement.

By a gracious blessing of Fate ours has been a "Devotional" Branch, and it has always fallen to our notice that the elements of a purely intellectual nature or of psychical tendencies, deserted, *motu proprio*, our ranks. And when we say "purely," it is because we did not lack those other elements which, preserving the devotional and intellectual qualities alike, evidenced there was no divorce between Heaven and earth. In this connection our memory is filled with the lasting remembrance of our brother F. Dominguez Acosta.

Thus, the Branch, as a whole, begins to discriminate between the Real and the Unreal. Several of its members—almost the majority—projected a private meeting which is held fortnightly on Mondays to go over a special study about Discipleship, and have selected as themes, the Three Fundamental Propositions of the *Secret Doctrine*, *Shankaracharya's Catechism*, and *The Tattwas*, which study will be followed by *Letters that Have Helped Me*, *Light on the Path*, *The Voice of the Silence*, and other works and writings dealing with the subject, the purpose being to render ourselves of practical assistance in the Theosophical Movement by living Theosophy, thereby each one testing himself before making any appeal to the Law.

These meetings, as well as the regular ones attended on Saturdays, are full of fraternal spirit, energy and will, pointing to a definite end: the training of positive virtues.

In the meetings held on Saturdays, the themes are derived from the reading of spiritual works, the QUARTERLY, the reports of the N. Y. Branch, and the consideration of modern world affairs. This is generally done in the form of "enquêtes," which have proved to be exceedingly interesting because, besides the training each one undergoes, we are benefited through the

individual co-operation of the whole, and because it is a fact known to the members of the Branch that this has a Soul, of which every one can become the expositor in so far as putting aside his "personality," he throws open the gates of the channel of his "individuality."

In regard to the outer, we can resume it thus: absolute regularity in the attendance of meetings; more attention given to the observance of Regulations and duties; continuance of the translation of our English works.

With our eager desire that this new Convention of ours be another fulcrum for the Lever of the Lodge, and united with you in soul and heart as our meeting will be held here at the same time you assemble there. we are,

Fraternally yours,

JUAN J. BENZO,  
*Corresponding Secretary.*

WHITLEY BAY, ENGLAND.

*To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:* The Whitley Bay members send fraternal and sincere greetings, coupled with their united thoughts of goodwill, and the desire to help at the deliberations of the meeting.

Reviewing the past year, the keynote of the Branch has been that of Service, and the value of the motive appears very vivid and bright, against the sombre background of selfishness and self-interest which at present masquerades in this country under the cloak of Socialism,—where many believe that everyone will receive more, and give less, and where Justice and Freedom will be bartered and destroyed by the negation of individual effort and merit.

Our united thoughts are with you so that our earnestness of purpose may combine with yours to bring to those searching after truth, that knowledge which would help so much at the present time. May the session be full to overflowing with understanding and unanimity of purpose for the welfare of all.

Faithfully yours,

FREDERICK A. ROSS,  
*President Blavatsky Lodge.*

GATESHEAD-ON-TYNE, ENGLAND.

The members of the Gateshead Branch send greetings to all members in Convention assembled, and send their best wishes for a pleasant and profitable meeting. Our thoughts will be with you; and may your effort bear the fruit it deserves and be a great success.

Fraternally yours,

PERCY W. WARD,  
*Secretary.*

SOUTH SHIELDS, ENGLAND.

The members of "Krishna Branch," South Shields, England, send hearty greetings, and sincere good wishes for the success of the present Convention.

HANNAH MAUGHAN, *Secretary.*  
JOSEPH WILKINSON, *President.*

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, ENGLAND.

*To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:* On behalf of the members of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Branch, I beg to send you their heartiest greetings and best wishes for a successful Convention. It seems to us, that as time goes on, it is more and more evident that the test of success is the life and spirit manifested in the Work. Does our interest extend to the point of making the things we believe to be true, a living power in our lives? It strikes home to us in no uncertain manner that we must be the truth we would give out, if we would be of real service. Such individual effort seems to be our work at the present time, and



consequently as a Branch, we make no appeal that has not for its basis the keynote of discipleship. We believe that the *definite* aim to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity should be the true drawing power, and that our work should be to that end alone.

Yours fraternally,

E. HOWARD LINCOLN,  
*President.*

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AYLSHAM, NORFOLK, ENGLAND.

The Norfolk Branch of The Theosophical Society sends its greetings to the Convention, with all best wishes for a very good meeting, and helpful discussions. I have not very much to report on the year's work. As in former years, our Branch is small, and the members live widely separated from one another. Some of us have never met personally; but each year I think we are more conscious of the tie that unites us, through our theosophical study and correspondence. Following our usual plan, we have been studying a set portion of the Patanjali *Yoga Sutras* with Mr. Johnston's comments. We write down each month the thoughts that the study has led to, with questions and comments, and these papers are circulated among the members of our Branch. We are much indebted to our friends in New York for the excellent reports of the proceedings at the meetings of their Branch. These are sent round to each of our members, and we find them most interesting and helpful. It is a curious fact that our study and correspondence coincide very often with some of the ideas which are expressed in your discussions, showing, I think, that the tie which binds members of the T. S. together is a very real one. We make a point of taking one month in the year for study of the Convention Report, as soon as we receive this, when it appears in the *QUARTERLY*.

We have gained no new members this year, and our Branch has lost one member through resignation. I think we are meant to learn that numbers do not matter so much as the sincere devotion and individual effort of the members, and I am reminded of the beautiful story in *Fragments*, in which we are shown that a whole world can be illuminated from the lamp lighted by the faith and love and prayer of one single soul. So that we realize that there is no need for discouragement, provided that we each of us make sure that we are doing the best that we can, neglecting no opportunity, and persevering on the path that we have been shown to be the right one, in the service of the Master and of his work.

I enclose a list of members of our Branch, and with every good wish from us all for a very successful Convention, I am,

Yours sincerely,

ALICE GRAVES,  
*Secretary, The Norfolk Branch T.S.*

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[Cablegram]

AYLSHAM, NORFOLK, ENGLAND.

Greetings and best wishes for Convention from ALICE GRAVES, THEODORA DODGE, ESPOIR AND HOPE BAGNELL.

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[Cablegram]

OBBERHOFENTHURERSEE, SWITZERLAND.

*To Members of Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled*, Greetings and most sincere good wishes. We are with you in thought and heart. EMMA ACHELIS MILLER, HOPE MILLER, GARDINER MILLER, JUNIOR, MARTA STEARNS.

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CINCINNATI, OHIO.

*Dear Fellow T. S. Members:* To all Fellow Members in T. S. Convention Assembled, "Greeting!" Just a line of cheer and well wishes for a successful session, and the good health and joy of all present, is the sincere wish of all Cincinnati members.

Fraternally,

GUY MANNING, *President.*

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.

*To the Officers and Members, Theosophical Society, in Annual Convention Assembled:* The members of Pacific Branch extend to you a most cordial greeting, with their pledge of fraternal co-operation in continuous activity.

The thought comes to us at this time that during an epoch in the world's history, when the ancient truths had been debased by priestcraft, a Western Master appeared in the Western world to check the reaction toward materialism, and to restore the pristine truth. His ministry was of short duration, and his disciples but few, very few, and toward the end of his ministry, seemingly feeling the hopelessness of his mission, he gave voice to that pathetic appeal, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" He made the great sacrifice for humanity, as all Masters do—must do.

Two thousand years later when the teachings of the Western Master had become perverted by priestcraft, and the reaction again was toward materialism, Eastern Masters again brought to the Western world the pristine truth, and the seed fell into the minds of a vast number, but lodged in the hearts of but a few, very few, and these few became the disciples of these Eastern Masters, forming the outward link for the preservation of pristine truth in the Western world from its divine source, the Lodge of the Masters, keeping the connection therewith for the first time in many centuries.

As students of Theosophy attached to The Theosophical Society, which has been connectedly carried forward without an inner rupture by these few disciples, have we, as such students, risen to the opportunity that lies so plainly before us, in an attempt to ally ourselves with these few disciples in the making of an unbroken chain from the Lodge to the outer world as a continuity? There are numbers of persons who say that they are Theosophists, enrolled in organizations carrying that name, who in public places cry loud and long, "Lord! Lord!" and whose hearts are knotted against him, the seed having only found lodgment in their minds.

The sunlight falls on all places alike, but only bright surfaces can reflect it; the divine light falls equally and impartially on all hearts, but only clean and pure hearts can reflect it, and he alone is the real man who is illumined by the light of true knowledge.

Sincerely and fraternally,

ALFRED L. LEONARD,  
*Secretary, Pacific Branch.*

DENVER, COLORADO.

*To the Secretary T. S.:* The Virya Branch of The Theosophical Society submits the following annual report for the year 1923-1924: Meetings have been held fortnightly since the last Saturday in October, with the exception of one meeting in December, when, because of the absence of the President and the many duties connected with Christmas, it was omitted. Meetings are held from two-thirty to four P.M., at the residence of Mrs. Edwin Hughes Roberts, 1835 Williams Street. We have neither gained nor lost any members during the year, nor have we had visitors except for one person who is perfectly regular in attendance although she has not formally joined the Society. The meetings have consequently been conducted as a study class, the members doing a good deal of outside reading, bringing the results of their research, and the questions which have arisen, to the branch for discussion. We have devoted several meetings to the doctrines of Karma, the Seven Principles, Rounds and Races, and to the explanation of various theosophical terms; our reading has been largely from articles in the *QUARTERLY*, principally the current numbers, but with occasional references to the earlier copies of the magazine. Questions of the day have been discussed and certain sermons and lectures which have absorbed the thought of the city have been analysed theosophically. The greatest amount of our time has been given to the basic principles of action and conduct, the more theoretical subjects having been studied purely with the idea of clarifying and elucidating the problems confronting us all.

The attendance has been very regular, and though we have not increased in numbers, we feel that we have in solidarity. The meetings, we feel, are a very great joy and benefit to us all. We sincerely regret that we cannot be present at the Convention, and we all join in our deep appreciation of the wonderful work which is being carried on by the Society. We shall eagerly await the reports and the printed addresses.

ANNE EVANS,  
*President Virya Branch.*

[Telegram]

BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS.

May Masters' blessings continue upon Society, its work and members, including those who have gone ahead, and give to each one of us added determination to keep the link unbroken. The world needs the single truth of Theosophy more than ever in these days of attractive half truths, pseudo brotherhood, gentle condonation of evil in oneself and in others, and confusion between friends and foes, if civilization is to survive in any phase. Can it survive apart from Theosophy? Do not world, church and peoples alike cry for leadership from the Lords of the Law, which our obedience, humility, and effective chelaship through Theosophy alone may make possible?

Fraternally,

GEORGE WOODBRIDGE.

LAWRENCE, KANSAS.

I do not think that a day passes but that I am in N. Y., in the Studio. You may be sure I will be with you all Saturday and Sunday, with all the love there is in me, and may Master help me not to disturb in the least wise. And may we all become more and more deserving of the great love and peace which is Masters'.

Of charity everlasting,  
Give them all my love.

Fraternally,

FLORA FRIEDLEIN.

BUDAPEST, HUNGARY.

*To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:* Again, as in the past two years, we send from here as isolated members, our sincere wishes for a successful Convention with full blessing of the Master.

We hope that the progress which this Convention represents, will be of the utmost importance for the whole of mankind.

We will try, during the time of the Convention, to be in our thinking and feeling with our comrades.

Heartiest greetings.

Yours sincerely,

FRANZ WILLKOMM,  
MARIE WILLKOMM.

BERLIN, GERMANY.

*To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:* We ask you on behalf of our small circle to accept our heartiest greetings and sincerest wishes for a successful Convention.

Our whole work during the last year was pervaded, as in previous ones, by our firm determination to again erect in Germany the banner of Theosophy.

The study of the *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali, with the inspiring comments of Mr. Johnston, as well as the study of the Convention report of last year, deepened and intensified our consciousness and our responsibility, and filled our hearts with new fervour.

We pray to the Master for sustenance, that we may succeed in achieving that degree of humiliation and repentance necessary to enable us to help efficaciously even here in Germany. We shall be with the Convention with heart and soul.

Fraternally yours,

OSKAR STOLL,  
ALFRED FRIEDEWALD.

SCHRECKENSTEIN, AUSSIG, CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.

Dear Comrades! You are assembled in unity to express your thanks to Him for all His help that is coming to us always. Dear friends, I will take part in that thanks, and hope to find the great heart, the heart in which we are united in reality. The door is not shut,—should our heart break open widely.

With kindest thanks and regards I am very sincerely, your great debtor,

HERMANN ZERNDT.

BERLIN, GERMANY.

*To the Convention of The Theosophical Society:* We send our best greetings and sincere good wishes for the deliberations and efforts of the Convention assembled, and may we be allowed to do our duty to relate about our labours during the last year.

The situation in Germany from all sides viewed, is dark and difficult. We are of opinion that things would be getting better, if a spark of knowledge could be won; the absence of insight is believed by us all as the cause of the great catastrophe. Therefore we concentrated our efforts as well as possible to gain a glimpse into truth. We are seven members: H. Walzer, F. Weber, O. Weber, M. Hanff, B. Hanff, C. Ihrke, O. Ihrke. Our meetings took place three times a week. The subject of study was Patanjali, translated by Mr. Johnston; the *QUARTERLY* further serves for our instruction, also old numbers as far as we can get at them. We have learned therefrom things about the inner life in France and understand the high esteem expressed in so many articles of the *QUARTERLY*. We had about France the superficial meaning of public opinion and hear now, that France is the sword and wedge of the Master Christ.

We believe also that our opportunity is great now, if we are able to see the will of the Master and to work it out. The reincarnated Clovis has lived in Germany, as we heard it. Is it not possible that the empire of Charlemagne may again evolve?

We read in the *QUARTERLY* about the empire of Christ; a series of articles from Mr. Griscom on Alsace-Lorraine declares in several places that Germany never was christianized. We have perhaps caught a glimpse into the truth of this very serious judgment, and would make all efforts for the realization that the King and Master of Germany in the future may be our Lord, Jesus Christ.

We say our best thanks for all help given us in all the years.

Sincerely yours,

O. IHRKE.

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA.

*Miss Perkins:* I shall be thinking of all of you when the Convention is on. It is your great privilege to be so near. I shall think of you all.

With good will and best wishes to all,

Yours fraternally,

F. W. BRINKER,  
[Secretary, Indianapolis Branch.]

TRIESTE, ITALY.

*To The Theosophical Society Assembled in Annual Convention:* Again a year is over since last Convention and again you can praise the Lord who gave you opportunity to meet in that spiritual centre and get your Light. We can only follow from afar with our thoughts and with the desire that a reflection of the Divine Ray which illumines you, may join us in these dark days and help us to follow courageously the Old Path.

Fraternally yours,

THERESE AND ALBERTO PLISNIER.

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*He who has no vision of eternity will never get a true hold of time.*—CARLYLE.



*The Scale of Perfection*, by Walter Hilton, newly edited with an Introduction by Evelyn Underhill; published by John M. Watkins, London; price 7s. 6d.

*Some Minor Works of Richard Rolle, with The Privy of the Passion* by S. Bonaventura, translated and edited by Geraldine E. Hodgson; published by John M. Watkins, London; price 5s.

Books published by John M. Watkins, carry their recommendation with them. It is to him we owe such books as *The Path of the Eternal Wisdom*, by John Cordelier, and *The Cloud of Unknowing* with an Introduction by Evelyn Underhill.

The works of Hilton and of Rolle are too well known to most of our readers to need extensive review. They are full of practical wisdom. How could it be otherwise, seeing that Hilton and Rolle were among the greatest of English mystics. The prayer of both of them was that of Crashaw to Saint Teresa:

"O thou undaunted daughter of desires!  
By all thy dower of lights and fires,  
By all the eagle in thee, all the dove,  
By all thy lives and deaths of love,  
By thy large draughts of intellectual day,  
And by thy thirsts of love more large than they;  
By all thy brim-fill'd bowls of fierce desire;  
By thy last morning's draught of liquid fire;  
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.  
Leave nothing of myself in me!"

Living with that sole end in view, they did the works of the Master whom they served,—from which follows *mukti*, whether in the East or in the West. For *Bhakti Yoga* was their path, and, as the *Nārada Sūtra* says,—“Love cannot be made to fulfil desires, for its nature is renunciation,” yet, he who obtains Love, “becomes perfect, becomes immortal . . . intoxicated with joy, rejoicing in the Self. . . . Having obtained Love, he sees that alone, hears that alone, speaks that alone, and thinks that alone. . . . Love is its own reward” (Translated by E. T. Sturdy and published by John M. Watkins).

It is divinely simple; and yet, it is necessary to do the works of Love; not the works of self-love. The works of self-love—physical, mental, and imaginative—positively must be abandoned, must be seen as wholly evil, in little and in big—as Hilton and Rolle, in their different ways, make clear.

E. T. H.

*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett, from the Mahatmas M. and K. H.*, transcribed, compiled, and with an Introduction by A. T. Barker; published by T. Fisher Unwin, Ltd., London, and by Frederick A. Stokes Company, New York, 1924; price \$7.50.

These letters should not have been published. They were not written for publication, and in one of them the writer states explicitly that neither he nor his “Brother” would allow their

publication at any time. Both morally and legally, letters are the property of their authors, not of the recipients, and it is dishonourable in the extreme to override this basic principle of conduct. The compiler pleads in his Introduction that their publication to-day may be excused because of "the present *impasse* in the affairs" of the Adyar Society. In plain language this means that he wants to open the eyes of those who believe in the infallibility of Mrs. Besant and of Mr. Leadbeater; which is no excuse. People who are capable of such a belief are better off with their eyes closed in any case. The compiler's error, probably well meant, is part of the Karma of Mrs. Besant's publication, years ago, of documents she had pledged herself to keep secret.

The letters themselves, written between 1880 and 1884, are a weird but fascinating jumble. Many of those attributed to Master M. and signed with his initial, were not from him, but were the work of one of his chelas, himself a high adept, authorized, of course, to use the great Master's name. This was part of the plan of campaign,—the protection of Madame Blavatsky, the woman. Colonel Olcott never understood this, although his *Old Diary Leaves* prove that he might have understood it if he had wished, and that he was given every opportunity to do so. He was too preoccupied trying to prove himself the equal of Madame Blavatsky, his "chum" and "co-founder,"—a pitiable exhibition, after the tireless enthusiasm he put into his work as "showman" in the very early days. The trouble was that he came to look upon himself as Exhibit A.

Mrs. Besant also has failed to understand the authorship of these letters, for reasons which ought to be obvious. In her collection—*Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*—she accepts all the letters signed "M." as from Master M., declaring in a note that she has been unable "to find the least trace, in the Letters of the Master M., of the personal idiosyncrasies of thought of either H. P. B. or H. S. O." Colonel Olcott, however, in spite of himself, left clues for those who care to follow them. Thus, in his *Old Diary Leaves*, First Series, in a footnote on page 256, he says: "A very curious fact . . . that the 'Mahatma M.'s' handwriting, which was so carefully scrutinised by the S. P. R., their experts and agents, and said to resemble that of H. P. B., was a coarse, rough script, something like a collection of chopped roots and brush-wood, while the handwriting of the same personage [?] in the *Isis* MS. and in the notes he wrote me was totally different. It was a small, fine script, such as a lady might have written, and while generally resembling H. P. B.'s own handwriting, yet differing from it so as to present an appearance of distinct individuality, which enabled me to recognize it as that personage's MS. whenever I saw it. I do not pretend to account for this fact, I only state it as something which must be recorded."

The question mark in square brackets in the foregoing extract, was inserted by the present reviewer.

In the same volume of *Old Diary Leaves*, page 293, Colonel Olcott writes: "One quite long letter that I received [from a member of the Lodge] in 1879, while in Rajputana, most strangely alters her [Madame Blavatsky's] sex, speaks of her in the male gender, and *confounds her with Mahatma M.*—known as our Guru. It says—about a first draft of the letter itself which had been written but not sent me: 'Owing to certain expressions therein, the letter was stopped on its way by order of our Brother H. P. B. As you are not under my direct guidance but his (hers), we have naught to say, either of us; etc.'"

Master M. and "our Brother H. P. B." (*not* Madame Blavatsky) were and are as different in their idiosyncrasies of thought, manner and expression, as two members of the Lodge can be, while "our Brother H. P. B." and Madame Blavatsky, though totally different persons, were very much alike in some ways.

Apart from that question, however, many of these letters, both those signed "K. H." and those signed "M.", were written by chelas on the slim basis of "Tell him he's an idiot, and prove it"! The fortunate chela would then have to discover as best he could what his Master really wanted him to write, the result occasionally being a letter which now fills ten or more pages of solid type. Further, some of these letters were dictated interiorly to chelas who did not know a word of English. Words and whole sentences were omitted, and the punctuation is positively wild. Here, for instance, is an opportunity for an especially lively intuition. What

does it mean? What was in its author's mind? *How* was this extraordinary nonsense produced? It is the opening sentence of a letter signed "M." (Letter No. XCVII): "Common people, are the masses as different from these who are distinguished." The confusion is all the more tantalizing because the words, re-arranged, have the makings of a very healthy dogma!

One gratifying result of the jumble will be that even the most superstitious, even the laziest—those who will not think for themselves—could not turn these letters into a new infallibility. Of all things, the Masters would deplore that most, and that, in any case, they will be spared.

On the other hand these letters are simply invaluable. Genuine? Of course they are genuine! The great heart of the Lodge beats through all of them. They contain instruction for which every student should be grateful. We have marked innumerable passages. In the "Screen of Time" some of these will be discussed in later issues of the *QUARTERLY*. Nothing new, nothing startling, but—the bread of life. Here is one, from the section headed "Probation, and Chelaship": "Fasting, meditation, chastity of thought, word, and deed; silence for certain periods of time to enable nature herself to speak to him who comes to her for information; government of the animal passions and impulses; utter unselfishness of intention. . . . Such is in fact part of his course of discipline, and his Guru or initiator can but assist him with his experience and will-power but can do no more *until the last and supreme initiation*. I am also of opinion that few candidates imagine the degree of inconvenience—nay, suffering and harm to himself—the said initiator submits to for the sake of his pupil. The peculiar physical, moral, and intellectual conditions of neophytes and adepts alike, vary much, as anyone will easily understand; thus, in each case, the instructor has to adapt his conditions to those of the pupil, and the strain is terrible, for, to achieve success, we have to bring ourselves into a *full* rapport with the subject under training. And as the greater the powers of the adept, the less he is in sympathy with the natures of the profane who often come to him saturated with the emanations of the outside world—those animal emanations of the selfish, brutal crowd that we so dread—the longer he was separated from that world and the purer he has become,—the more difficult the self-imposed task."

One more, also signed "K. H." (from Letter No. LXII): "My poor, blind friend—you are entirely unfit for practical occultism! . . . You were told, however, that the path to Occult Sciences has to be trodden laboriously and crossed at the danger of life; that every new step in it leading to the final goal, is surrounded by pit-falls and cruel thorns; that the pilgrim who ventures upon it is made first to confront and *conquer* the thousand and one furies who keep watch over its adamantine gates and entrance—furies called Doubt, Skepticism, Scorn, Ridicule, Envy, and finally Temptation—especially the latter; and that he who would see beyond, had to first destroy this living wall; that he must be possessed of a heart and soul clad in steel, and of an iron, never failing determination, and yet be meek and gentle, humble, and have shut out from his heart every human passion that leads to evil. Are you all this? Have you ever begun a course of training which would lead to it?"

Finally, while we have always revered Madame Blavatsky, the reading of these letters has renewed in us and, if possible, has increased, the realization of her heroism, of her selfless devotion, of her unconquerable zeal. What she endured at the hands of Olcott, Sinnett, Hume and others, we can only dimly imagine; and yet this must have been as nothing in comparison with the attacks of those who were *consciously* arrayed against her Master and her Cause. Whatever her defects—and it is impossible to sympathize with *all* the works of a tornado—she was superb. That so many despised and condemned her was due in large measure to the fact that she was too honest, too humble, and too big, for the world in which she lived.

T.

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*Books reviewed in these columns may be obtained from The Quarterly Book Department, P. O. Box 64, Station O., New York, N. Y.*



# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION No. 293.—*We are told that after death the principles are separated, the lower wearing away their earth attachment in Kama Loka, after which the higher go for their rest and reward to Devachan. Does not the Law demand that the person remain in Kama Loka until the earth bonds are worn away? If so, can our prayers help him?*

ANSWER.—Very little has been given out about the states of consciousness after death (of course "Kama Loka" and "Devachan" are states of consciousness and not places). We do, however, know certain facts and can perhaps gain light by analogy. Real prayer is a force. When accompanied by sacrifice—the "wings of prayer"—it is one of the most potent of forces. We are all familiar with the way in which we are affected by the atmosphere we may be in. When the level around us is low, we tend to sink to that level ourselves; when we are with the high and spiritually minded, it is far easier for us to be our best selves, to be free from the bonds of our lower natures. It is not hard to believe that heart-felt prayers for those who have gone on, may surround them in the same way and help to dissolve, as it were, the bonds that bind their consciousness to earthly things. We may be sure of one thing. Selfless prayer with sacrifice is a contribution to the spiritual capital of the Lodge. When done "with intention" to help a given person, it will be used to help him. The Masters are faithful trustees.

J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—The personal consciousness presumably remains attached to some condition of Kama Loka, so long as it cherishes any gross image of earth life. But, perhaps, the soul may become conscious of the lower reaches of Devachan, before it has gained complete emancipation from Kama Loka. Conditions of time and space must differ for the after-death states from the conditions with which we are most familiar here, and yet even now we may be conscious of both hell and heaven simultaneously. Prayer must be equally effective in life and in death. It is not necessary for a man to have a body, in order that our prayers for him may be effective. The real man is not his body.

S. L.

QUESTION No. 294.—*Every man realizes that he is centred in himself and wants his own way; how can he get the centre out of self?*

ANSWER.—We have been told to strive to lift the centre of consciousness; if we can transfer it to the Higher Self we shall no longer "want our own way" in the lower sense. We can discipline ourselves by remembering that the self-centred individual is a bore and a nuisance,—this may not be a high beginning but at least it will be in the direction of charity to others. We can also remind ourselves that the self is a very mean and contemptible object, and a most unhealthy resting place for the man who would grow spiritually. We can take Madame Blavatsky's advice and make a bundle of the lower four, pinning it to the higher three; but that is only repeating what we said at the beginning.

S.

ANSWER.—To "realize that he is centred in himself and wants his own way," is in itself quite an achievement and represents a long step forward. The next step is to realize that he is not "centred in himself" at all, and has not the slightest idea of what his true way is, the lower

nature where he has been centred and the self-will he has mistaken for his desire being rank usurpers and at the farthest remove from his real self and his true desires. With the realization of this begins the battle for "right self-identification."

As the question says, most of us, whether we have attained the point of realizing it or not, have spent our lives brooding on ourselves and the desires of our lower natures which we call "our" desires. Desires grow by brooding on themselves. To conquer self-centredness, we must change the centre of our brooding, of our "meditation," conscious or unconscious. There are many practices that help to loosen the grip of self. For instance:

Never use your imagination to serve your vanity, imagining conversations, situations, etc., in which you appear to advantage.

Never permit the least self-pity. Insist on feeling gratitude instead—gratitude that you are not in a Russian prison, if you can think of nothing better!

Never complain inwardly or outwardly of anything or anybody.

These are only samples. Spiritual books are full of helpful suggestions, but, helpful as they are, we shall not get far with the effort to rid ourselves of the false desires of our lower selves until we supplant them with the infinitely more potent and true desires of the soul, the love of the Master at the head of the ray on which the soul stands, and the desire to serve him. Good desires, as well as bad, grow by brooding on themselves.

J. F. B. M.

QUESTION NO. 295.—*Does a belief in Reincarnation and Karma tend to lessen the idea of family responsibility?*

ANSWER.—A belief in Karma certainly lessens the tendency to hold one's family and heredity responsible for one's own shortcomings, and helps us to put the blame where it belongs, on ourselves. Karma teaches that we reap the fruit of what we do, or omit to do, good or bad, in this life or another. Such a belief can hardly fail to increase one's sense of responsibility toward all of one's duties, family or otherwise. Sooner or later all duties must be performed, all tangled relations straightened out, just as, to use a simple illustration, all pieces in a picture-puzzle must be fitted into place to complete the picture. We are not born into our particular families by accident. Some of our family duties may come to us from past lives, opportunities to make reparation for wrongs done, or some return for benefits received. From wherever they come they are always opportunities, and our path forward lies always through the performance of our duties, never around or away from them.

It has been said, moreover, that each member of a family has a peculiar opportunity to help all of the others. Each family has its Karma, its weaknesses and "sins" of various sorts. The conquest of such a tendency within himself by any one member, weakens the grip of that fault on all, and makes the battle easier for every member of the family that has suffered from it. Obviously this fact greatly increases the responsibility of each one toward all the others.

J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—Karma is, in one meaning, the universal law of adjustment, whereby all things are held in line with the divine plan of evolution. Reincarnation is one of the manifestations of Karma. How, then, can a belief in these possibly lessen one's sense of any responsibility? Whenever we shirk a responsibility, we create a situation which needs adjustment, for it is, in a very real way, a situation contrary to Nature. Ethical laws are as inexorable as the laws of physics. Family duties are a responsibility imposed upon us by the Good Law. Why should we except them from the general principle, that we cannot act against the Law with impunity at any point?

S. L.

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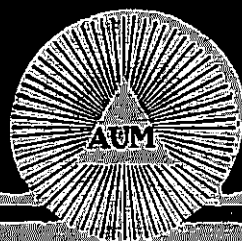
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The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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DRAMAS OF THE MYSTERIES

*Let the king resolve to change the face of his court and forcibly evict the animal from the chair of state, restoring the god to the place of divinity.—THROUGH THE GATES OF GOLD.*

THROUGHOUT all ages, there has been the tradition of a glorious possibility for mankind, an illumination that makes man immortal and divine. The oldest mythologies of the remotest peoples, the great scriptures of all ages, ring with this high inspiration; there is, indeed, no other theme in all religions.

Our own age, with its skepticism and fever, has heard the great tidings. The word has been clear, insistent; clearer, perhaps, than in any period for millenniums, in part because of the greater need created by our darkness, in part because our age has rid itself of some of the shackles and cruelties of superstition.

Man has worked his way up through innumerable ages, the unconscious Spirit co-operating with the animal nature in his development; through endless struggle and striving, in satisfaction and in suffering, man comes to clear individuality, the intense realization of his personal existence. The light drawn from many realms has been brought to a sharp focus.

When this full individuality is reached, the glorious possibility arises: taking firm hold of his individual nature, man may surrender it to gain a greater. Ceasing to be man, he may become divine, entering into the infinite being and power and wisdom of Divinity; but on condition that he shall at all points, the least as the greatest, surrender his own will to the Divine Will, emptying mind and heart of every lingering shadow of self-seeking, so that there shall be room only for selfless wisdom and beneficence. It is the perfect offering that all ritual sacrifices foreshadow, the attainment of a divinity forecast by all that has been told of the gods.

In the path to this divine event there are tremendous difficulties, all of man's own making, even though he did not create them of deliberate purpose. Just because, from the beginning, unawakened Spirit has been working in man, together with animal perception and desire, there have been immense possibilities of harm: the distortion of spiritual force in the perversion of animal powers; the exaggeration of individuality into egotism, envy, hatred, malice, ambition.

Therefore, when man catches a glimpse of his possible divinity, when the universal message of the glorious future that may be his, awakens his heart, he does not find himself free, unshackled, a light-hearted spirit, ready to speed forth toward the Light; on the contrary, with the vision of the goal, he becomes aware of the impediments, the tremendous drag of the personal self which he has built up, and of the kindred impulses in mankind all about him. He realizes that it is not a question only of enthroning a king; there is first a usurper to be driven out, who will fight every inch of the way, and who has innumerable allies in the man himself, in the human nature about him, and in those older powers of darkness, carried forward from remote spiritual failures in the past.

The Eternal is there, one in essence with his Spirit, drawing him toward divine union; inimical powers, into which he has put so much of his own life, are there also, entwined with the sloth and cowardice and allurements of mankind; the perception of the Eternal is the signal for the battle.

The Eternal is the very essence of humanity, it is Divine Humanity itself, that which mankind shall be when man has become immortal. Therefore, if in the battle the warrior be able to make complete surrender of self, the surrender of cowardice as well as of desire, so that he wins the victory and loses himself in the Eternal, he thereby becomes one with Divine Humanity. Thereafter, through the very essence of his being, he is bound and compelled to toil for the redemption and liberation of all mankind, knowing that the heavy task will not end until all human beings, with hearts and spirits cleansed, have sought for and attained the Light. He accepts that age-long sacrifice with eager love. A part of the true Nirvana is the renouncing of Nirvana.

Since the oneness of man's essence with the Divine Essence is the central fact of all life, and the attainment of that unity is the one true goal of all effort; it is but natural that human records should be full of that great adventure, innumerable writings tell something of the Light and the way thither; some few have undertaken to reveal, so far as may be, the whole of the battle, to chart to the end the pathway to Divinity. The best books have this one theme; the worst books cannot escape from the battlefield, since they depict the mire from which we must rise, the bonds we have created to hold us back.

Because the Eternal is Divine Humanity, because he who gains the Eternal, thereby enters into Divine Humanity, so that the redemption of every human being becomes his concern, his most ardent longing,—therefore those who have won the victory, who have become Masters of life, are impelled by their very nature, the new, divine nature into which they have entered, to stretch out a



helping hand to us, to put on record for our better guidance, the incidents and dangers of the way they have passed, the perils of the battle, which are behind them, but still before us. So it comes that we have, among the best books, many Dramas of the Mysteries, or of the one great Mystery of man's redemption.

That the dramatic form is natural, almost inevitable, is suggested by such a sentence as this, toward the end of *The Crest Jewel of Wisdom*:

"Thus, through this dialogue of Master and disciple, the revelation of the supreme Self has been made, to awake to joy the souls of those who seek liberation."

Dialogue is the first step toward drama, and when the disciple says: "I was wandering in the great dream forest of birth, decay and death created by delusion, day by day afflicted by many pains, stalked by the tiger, egotism; through infinite compassion awakening me from my dream, thou, Master, hast become my saviour!"—the picture which he has evoked almost demands dramatic treatment

Take another expression of the same conflict, this time from the letter of a living Aryan Master, written forty years ago:

"The path has to be trodden laboriously and crossed at the danger of life; every new step in it leading to the final goal, is surrounded by pit-falls and cruel thorns; the pilgrim who ventures upon it is made first to confront and conquer the thousand and one furies who keep watch over its adamant gates and entrance—furies called Doubt, Skepticism, Scorn, Ridicule, Envy and finally Temptation—especially the latter; and he who would see beyond has first to destroy this living wall; he must be possessed of a heart and soul clad in steel, and of an iron, never-failing determination, and yet be meek and gentle, humble, and have shut out from his heart every human passion that leads to evil."

These enemies are all of our making; they are the substance of unregenerate human life; therefore, he who fights toward regeneration is inevitably in conflict with them; the conquest of Doubt and Envy and Temptation is that regeneration which carries him forward toward the Eternal.

Just because these enemies are of the essence of human life not yet redeemed, the stuff that human beings are made of, it is easy to find human types that embody them, and thus to turn the contest into drama. As it stands, the Aryan Master's sentence is the argument of a mystery play.

*The Crest Jewel of Wisdom* is cast in dialogue form, which is the first stage of drama; the Master and the disciple embody the Divine Being, and the human being straining toward the Divine, the Universal Soul and the individual soul, Divine Humanity and one of its fragments seeking union with the whole. The Master and the disciple are not merely personifications of these; they are the realities themselves; unless the Master be one with the Universal Soul, he is no true Master; and in the disciple is every strand of human nature, the evil with the good. It follows that his fight is a fight for humanity; his victory is a victory for all mankind, and in that degree enriches and heals mankind.

The *Katha Upanishad* is also a revelation in dialogue form; the effort has been made, through translation and commentary, to show that it is a true Drama of the Mysteries. Much more in the great Upanishads is of the same texture.

The *Bhagavad Gita* represents a further development. It is, as regards its central theme, a dialogue between Master and disciple. But, while the *Crest Jewel* does not set the stage of the dialogue, nor even name the speakers, the *Bhagavad Gita* does both. The setting is a battlefield; the Master Krishna and Arjuna his disciple are the central persons; the enemies are not so much personified as embodied in the leaders of the opposing host.

*Through the Gates of Gold* suggests, in the sentence quoted at the outset, that the problem is not only the enthroning of a king, it includes also the eviction of a usurper; and this is the motive of many Dramas of the Mysteries, including the *Bhagavad Gita*. The names, as so often in the Orient, are symbolic: Dhritarashtra, "he who has seized the kingdom," is the father of the usurping Kurus; Duryodhana, "the foul fighter," is the leader of the usurpers; of the two counsellors of the Kuru brothers, Bhishma is "fear," while Drona is the "dark cloud" of delusion, the name meaning also "raven" and "scorpion," both of evil omen. It is as though the enemies in the passage quoted from the Aryan Master had taken form and come to life. So, on the side of the Pandus, Dhrishtadyumna means "he who has seen the splendour," the gleaming of the Gates of Gold, called in the *Gita* "the door of heaven." Arjuna's son, Abhimanyu, means the kind of "self-consciousness" which is akin to self-conceit. Fitly, he is slain in the great battle. Finally, though Arjuna is fighting for the kingdom, the throne is not for himself, but for his elder brother. Not the individual self, but the Higher Self, attains the throne; not the man but the god, whom the man thereafter reverently serves.

As compared with the *Crest Jewel*, the *Bhagavad Gita* is not only more dramatic, richer in action and in colour; it has also a fuller content. The *Crest Jewel* limits its purpose to two things: the lucid revelation of the Eternal as the real Self, not of one man but of mankind; and the undermining of the unreal "me," which is the root of all evil. The supersession of the false self by the Eternal, is the motive of the dialogue. The *Bhagavad Gita* adds more of human feeling, more of religious passion also; it appeals to spiritual valour as well as spiritual wisdom. But both have this in common: they record real experience, the experience of a Master who has fought the battle and attained the victory, and who can, therefore, speak of that high and immortal consciousness which comes with the entry into the Eternal, so far as words can compass it at all. Lacking that immediate experience, the realized consciousness of one who has attained, who has been initiated into the Most High, we cannot have a genuine revelation, an authentic Drama of the Mysteries. The revealer must have made the journey, before he can tell authentically of the way. He must be in the full mystical sense an Initiate.

There is, therefore, a special significance for students of Theosophy, in the declaration of *The Secret Doctrine*, that "old Aeschylus was an Initiate, and knew well what he was giving out," when we come to consider certain of his

plays as Dramas of the Mysteries. Aeschylus was born at Eleusis, 525 years before our era, and a formal accusation of revealing the Eleusinian mysteries was brought against him before the Areopagus. But *The Secret Doctrine* suggests that the revelation made by Aeschylus was concerned, not with Demeter or Ceres, the central personage of the mysteries at Eleusis, but with the sacred allegory of Prometheus. Aeschylus wrote three dramas with this theme: *Prometheus Bound*, *Prometheus Unbound* and *Prometheus the Fire-bringer*, of which only the first has come down to us; of the second, we have a bare outline, while of the third we know practically nothing.

*The Secret Doctrine* makes a profound study of *Prometheus Bound*:

"The crucified Titan is the personified symbol of the collective Logos, the 'Host,' and of the 'Lords of Wisdom' or the Heavenly Man, who incarnated in Humanity. . . . Zeus represented in the Mysteries no higher a principle than the lower aspect of human physical intelligence—Manas wedded to Kama; whereas Prometheus—the divine aspect of Manas merging into and aspiring to Buddhi—was the divine Soul. Zeus, whenever shown as yielding to his lower passions, is the Human Soul and nothing more—the *jealous* God, revengeful and cruel in its egotism or 'I-am-ness,' . . . 'The lower Host, whose work the Titan spoiled and thus defeated the plans of Zeus,' was on this Earth in its own sphere and plane of action; whereas the superior Host was an exile from Heaven, who had got entangled in the meshes of Matter. . . . This drama of the struggle of Prometheus with the Olympic tyrant and despot, sensual Zeus, one sees enacted daily within our actual mankind; the lower passions chain the higher aspirations to the rock of Matter, to generate in many a case the vulture of sorrow, pain and repentance."

The whole study should be read and pondered over, and the drama of Aeschylus with it. Of the three parts, we have only the first, wherein is depicted the spirit of man chained and bound by the Enemies already enumerated, the Enemies which spring from unregenerate man himself; the spirit of man straining toward liberation. Aeschylus has given, in majestic symbolism, the history of the binding of that spirit, and has foreshadowed the redemption. When Prometheus says of himself:

"Behold me  
Fettered, the god ill-fated,  
The foeman of Zeus, the detested  
Of all who enter his courts,  
And only because of my love,  
My too-great love for mankind . . ."

he reveals the oneness of the immortal Self with Divine Humanity; he records something of the toil of the Masters in the work of Humanity's liberation.

Plato was one of those, we are told, who had passed through the Gates of Gold. Plato's books are full of the Mysteries, and contain many explicit references to the Mysteries. Yet there appears to be no one of Plato's dia-

logues that is in form a Drama of the Mysteries. The Trial and Death of Socrates describes the Via Dolorosa, but without the Resurrection. When we come to the history of the Master Christ, which our last reference suggests, we have not so much a Drama of the Mysteries, as the enactment of the supreme Mystery, with the precedent Temptations, and the hard trials of the three years' mission; not the symbolic record, but the Reality. The Apocalypse is rather a Drama of the Mysteries, a symbolic record of spiritual experience.

Whether or not the sixth book of the Aeneid is a true Drama of the Mysteries has been debated for generations. It would appear to introduce us to a phase of the subject upon which we have not yet touched. The accusation brought against Aeschylus, that he had revealed the Eleusinian Mysteries, may remind us that the word is used in two senses: first, the actual divine experience, the great Initiation, through which the Spirit of man becomes one, in consciousness and power and love, with the Eternal; in that Initiation, the Spirit of man is the Eternal. This is the true Mystery.

But, before this profound experience, and as a preparation for it, there are symbolic representations of this experience, such as the ceremonies at Eleusis; and, as a third step, we may have a graphic description of these symbolic ceremonies. Such a description, the sixth book of Virgil's Aeneid would appear to be; not, therefore, a record of spiritual experience; probably not the work of an Initiate at all.

The mention of Virgil in connection with the Mysteries brings us almost inevitably to Dante, and the *Divina Commedia*. The first thing to be noted is that Virgil does not complete the threefold journey; he does not ascend to the Celestial World. It would seem, then, that Dante thought of Virgil as one who had a human knowledge of the Mysteries, not a divine knowledge; that he had not passed through that supreme spiritual experience, that complete entry into the being of the Eternal, which we think of as the great Initiation.

To speak with confidence of these tremendous realities would be presumption; but Dante reveals the Divine with a sureness of touch, that indicates direct experience. Only true spiritual vision could have created these lines:

"'Tis the essence of this blessed being to hold ourselves within the Divine Will, whereby our own wills are themselves made one. So that our being thus, from threshold unto threshold throughout the realm, is a joy to all the realm as to the King, who draweth our wills to what He willeth; and His will is our peace; it is that sea to which all moves that it createth and that nature maketh."

So of all that Dante says of the Divine World, the realm of the Eternal; it has the ring of authenticity, the stamp of immediate experience, that Virgil seems to lack. We should be inclined, then, to think that Dante is an Initiate, while Virgil is not.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> N. B. *Initiate* does not necessarily mean *Master*.

It may seem strange that, in the *Divina Commedia*, there is no dominating representation of the Master Christ, as Krishna, for example, dominates the *Bhagavad Gita*. There is one fugitive reference, among others, in the eighth Circle of the Inferno: "Our Lord demanded nought but 'Follow me!'" There is the symbolic figure in the Pageant of the Earthly Paradise. There is the Light in the supreme realm of the Paradiso.

This reticence is in all likelihood due to profound reverence; but it is also true that the Master Christ may be thought of as permeating the whole poem, because Dante sees human life as we may conceive that Master sees it.

There is, in the Inferno, the life of the unregenerate will, obdurate in sensuality and disobedience; that side of human life which Zeus typifies in the story of Prometheus; those qualities and powers that can never enter Heaven. Then, in the Purgatorio, the painful task of transmutation and redemption begun by that complete reversal of the obdurate will, which brings the escape from Hell. Finally, the will redeemed, become one with the Divine Will, the individual losing himself to find himself in the Eternal. It would be difficult in all literature to match Dante's living revelation of the ascending spiritual realms.

In *The Secret Doctrine*, Shakespeare is bracketed with "old Aeschylus the Initiate" as a Sphinx of the ages. He is cited with Plato, as one who passed through the Gates of Gold. There has for centuries been a haunting sense of mystery about him, which has been the impelling force of the myth-making that has centred round him. A good many years ago, a student of Theosophy put forth the theory that *Hamlet* was a true Drama of the Mysteries, and there was this to support the theory, that it repeated the age-old theme of the lawful king and the usurper, with the passionate struggle to overthrow and cast out the usurper.

The parallelism was worked out in detail. The murdered king, representing the Higher Self driven from the throne by egotism, appeared only when the usurping king was asleep or drunk. Polonius was the lower human reason, Ophelia, the personal emotional nature, both meeting death in the fierce conflict. Hamlet, the Soul straining toward liberation, wages an agonizing battle against Doubt, and, though he slays the usurper, perishes himself in the inconclusive contest. That there is more than a tinge of mysticism in Hamlet, is universally admitted; his soliloquies have been accepted as the supreme expression of the struggling mind.

More recently, a thoughtful and valuable effort has been made to sustain the same thesis with regard to *The Tempest*, by Colin Still, in *Shakespeare's Mystery Play*, published in London in 1921. Summing up his case, the author says:

"Broadly considered, the meaning I have ascribed to *The Tempest* is certainly not one which is in the smallest degree peculiar in itself and inconsistent with the history of the drama up to Shakespeare's time, nor is it one which makes the Play utterly unlike any other masterpiece of art or literature. There is nothing odd or fantastic, nothing that the trained intelligence im-

mediately and instinctively resists, in the essential idea I have sought to establish—namely, that Shakespeare wrote a dramatic version of the one theme which has appealed unfailingly to the imagination of mankind through all ages. There is nothing contrary to reasonable expectation in the argument that such a work must inevitably be found to contain points of resemblance (whether intended by the Poet or not) to those parts of the Bible, of the pagan mythology and ritual, of the writings of Dante and Virgil and others, which demonstrably deal with the same great theme. Nor can it be denied that there is a singular fitness in the suggestion that the zenith of the drama, as represented by the climax of Shakespeare's power, was marked by a Mystery Play corresponding very closely to the ancient religious ceremonies with which the early art of the theatre was allied."

There are two main elements in the author's argument. First, there is a gathering together of many fragments concerning the ceremonies called the Mysteries, which have come down to us in the Greek and Latin classics, and which were brought together in Warburton's eighteenth century effort to prove the same thesis for the sixth book of the *Aeneid*. A consistent, interesting and, on the whole, very convincing attempt is then made to show that, in *The Tempest*, all these signs and passwords of the Mysteries, so to speak, are used correctly, in their right places, and with their true mystical meaning. Second, there is a philosophical study of the spiritual essence of the Mysteries, avowedly based on the theosophical teaching of the Seven Principles, including the "four bodies," as set forth in the *Mandukya Upanishad*, though that most mystical text is not named. The author seeks to show that *The Tempest* conforms not only to the verbal passwords of the Mysteries, but to the spiritual tests also; that it does, in fact, describe the way of liberation, the entrance of the individual Soul into the Oversoul.

There is also, to sustain the mystical view of *The Tempest*, the consistent portrait of Prospero as the Magician, almost the Adept, and, to crown all, the superb expression of the Oriental doctrine of Maya:

These our actors,  
As I foretold you, were all spirits and  
Are melted into air, into thin air;  
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,  
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,  
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,  
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve  
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,  
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff  
As dreams are made on, and our little life  
Is rounded with a sleep.

Are we, then, to say, on the basis of *Hamlet* and *The Tempest*, both of which can be consistently interpreted in terms of the Mysteries, that Shakespeare is

an Initiate, as we may say that Dante, or Aeschylus is an Initiate, that Shankaracharya is an Initiate, that the revealer of the *Bhagavad Gita* is an Initiate; and that *The Tempest* is a Drama of the Mysteries in the same sense, and to the same degree, that the *Katha Upanishad* is a Drama of the Mysteries?

Let us consider first what we have called the signs and passwords of the Mysteries. Regarding these, we may quote Conington's analysis of the famous attempt of Warburton to prove that the sixth book of the *Aeneid* was a record of initiation:

"The circumstances connected with initiation were one thing, and the grand secret itself another: and while the latter has been so successfully preserved as to have perished with its depositaries, the former meet us openly in ancient literature, in allusion or in detail, so that we may be sure that they were perfectly at the service of any uninitiated poet who chose to avail himself of them to garnish and authenticate his narrative."

To what Conington says regarding the "grand secret" we shall presently return. In the meantime, we wish simply to make the point that what Conington says of Virgil, may be equally true of Shakespeare: "the circumstances connected with initiation" were largely available for his use. Shakespeare may not have been a skilled classical scholar, but he had an immense knowledge of the substance of classical literature; beginning with the Renaissance, it was in the air, and Shakespeare's works are saturated with it. The author of the very thoughtful study of *The Tempest* does not undertake to show in detail the ways in which Shakespeare may have gathered the fragments of technical knowledge regarding the ceremonies of the Mysteries, which are to be found in the poem; but there is no great difficulty here. Shakespeare was familiar with Plutarch's *Lives*, in the English version of Sir Thomas North, who translated the French of Amyot; it is not difficult to believe that Shakespeare may also have had access to some version of Plutarch's treatise on *The Mysteries of Isis and Osiris*. Or, to put it more generally, the research into the traditions of the Mysteries which was possible for Warburton in the eighteenth century, was equally possible for Shakespeare, or for some scholar among his many friends, perhaps even Bacon himself, in the early seventeenth, though the ferocious spirit of persecution may have made it expedient to preserve greater reticence.

Going somewhat deeper than the catchwords and phrases of the ceremonies, to the spiritual content of the Mysteries, there is much evidence, which is being constantly added to, that no period, either before, during, or since classical times, has been without knowledge of the Mysteries, both as ceremonies and as spiritual realities. There are, for example, the traditions of the Freemasons; there are schools like the Rosicrucians, of whom the Aryan Master already quoted writes: "These expound our Eastern doctrines from the teachings of Rosenkreuz, who, upon his return from Asia dressed them up in a semi-Christian garb intended as a shield for his pupils, against clerical revenge." Traditionally, this was about a century before Shakespeare's birth. During the reigns of James the First and Charles the First, the doctrines of the

Rosicrucians, avowedly based on the Mysteries, attracted much public attention and excited keen controversy. Robert Fludd published his well-known *Apologia Compendiaria Fraternitatem de Rosea Cruce* in 1616. In Elizabeth's time, although discussion of the subject was not carried on quite so publicly, Europe was honeycombed with small "secret societies" of scholars, avid of knowledge, who studied everything they could lay their hands on, exchanging information widely, and particularly anxious to explore the secrets of Greek, Roman, Arabic and Jewish authors who referred in any way to the Mysteries, or to the correlated subjects of the Philosopher's Stone and the Elixir Vitae. It is certain that there were branches of these societies or "schools" in Shakespeare's England, and it is entirely possible that Shakespeare may have belonged to one or more of them. His powerful, many-sided intellect, open to all impressions, gathering materials from all possible sources, and at the same time free from dogmatic bias, makes that quite credible.

It is easy to believe, therefore, that Shakespeare may have written a drama conforming to the plan of the Mysteries, and embodying the signs and passwords of the Mysteries, and that he may have done this of deliberate purpose.

Is Shakespeare, therefore, an Initiate? To begin with, how are we to understand the declaration, already quoted, that Shakespeare had passed through the Gates of Gold? We may understand it best, perhaps, in terms of the definition given in that wonderful treatise itself:

"The Gates of Gold do not admit to any special place; what they do is to open for egress from a special place. Man passes through them when he casts off his limitation."

It is truer, perhaps, of Shakespeare than of anyone in all literature, that he has cast off his limitation. He transcends his own personality so completely that it is in fact a subject of debate among scholars, whether the personality of Shakespeare had any existence. He has taken into his vast, sensitive intellect, all the men and women of all the ages, from the dawn of Hellenic civilization in the days of Theseus and the Heroes, through Homer's Troy, later Athens, the Egypt of the Ptolemies, Rome of the Kings, of the Republic, of the Empire, many European lands through many centuries; all these men and women are equally near to him; neither race, creed, caste, colour nor sex is a barrier; neither space nor time. He has cast off his limitations. In that sense, he has passed through the Gates of Gold. Perhaps this is the reading of his riddle, as "intellectual Sphinx."

To come back to what Conington says about the "grand secret" of the Mysteries. We do not agree with him that it has perished, or that it can ever perish, if we are right in thinking that the supreme secret is the unity of the Soul with the Oversoul, of the Spirit of man with the Eternal, not as a doctrine formally conveyed, but as a profound experience, to be gained only through the intermediation of Masters, in the great Initiation of the Lodge. On that basis, to have passed through this experience will mean a spiritual illumination, a transformation of consciousness, which will reveal itself in such a spirit, let us say, as that of Dante, and, on a much greater scale, in the spirit



of Shankaracharya, of the Buddha,—a spirit of wisdom and fervour and love and power, a spirit of Divinity revealed in humanity.

Certain qualities of this spirit, it seems to us, Shakespeare conspicuously lacks. Where is the religious passion in him that inspires Dante? Where is the living intuition of Divine Humanity? From one sonnet, we may quote:

Then, Soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss,  
And let that pine to aggravate thy store;  
Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross;  
Within be fed, without be rich no more:—  
So shalt thou feed on death, that feeds on men,  
And death once dead, there's no more dying then.

This, it may be said, if pushed far enough, will lead us to the *Elixir of Life*; but did he push it far enough? Is there more here than the understanding of a luminous intellect, which understood to that degree all human life? Is there the transformed, divine consciousness, which is the "grand secret" of the true Initiate?

The answer is, No. For all his transcendent genius, he lacks that fine spiritual quality which is the hall-mark of the Initiate of any degree. His emotional and intellectual powers are beyond question. His inner knowledge is second-hand.

It is not necessary to make a plea for the spiritual content of the *Divina Commedia* or the *Upanishads*; the impossible task would be, to prove them anything else. But it can hardly be maintained that *The Tempest* reveals the consciousness become divine, though it may follow a consistent plan that symbolizes it. But the ultimate Real is not there, though the symbol may be: at least so it seems to us.

There is, then, this high hope, this divine Reality, announced by the supreme Scriptures, the spiritual lining of our human life. Now, as always, living Masters of wisdom and power and love are ready to help the pilgrim, making their life the bridge for him to pass over; now, as always, there is the invitation, insistent, perhaps, as never before.

# FRAGMENTS

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**I**F we live in overcrowded hours, why complain of lack of time?

We could as well live in God's ample leisure.

If we live in overheated dwellings, why complain of lack of air?

We could as well pace the high tablelands of noble thought.

If we live in fetid cities and the lairs of men, why complain of lack of angels and beatitudes?

There are the Snows, the Everlasting Heights, the Solitudes where Masters find their home!

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You say to me: I cannot wander forth. I am bound and chained by duty and by circumstance. I long for freedom, but it cannot be.

I say: Not so. No duty is a chain, it is a wing; and when a man is free in heart and mind, lord of himself and of his inmost soul, circumstance is his servant, and all bonds turn into scaling ladders for his feet. Even the outer semblance passes away. The only thing that binds is wrong desire; that conquered, man is free.

It has been said, we pay in minutes for Eternity. God gives the coin. So we pay for greatness with our smallness, and, the price paid, we are slaves no more.

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You say to me: Then I leave men behind, seek my own will and way, let them perish that I may gain my own advantage?

I say: Not so. You cannot do it. Leave one duty unfulfilled and it will bind you through a crore of years, tripping your feet at every untrue step. But be not bound to your duties, bind them to yourself, master of them through perfect obedience to what they represent. You cannot circumvent the Law; but making your will at one with it, you conquer. It is not men that you must leave, it is yourself. When you have left self behind, you will have left all men, left all that belongs to self. You will dwell apart, as Masters dwell. Then, for the first time, you will be able to minister to men, for the first time to serve them—perhaps even, if your self-surrender be complete, prove fit to save them.

CAVÉ.

# PLOTINUS

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## II

*Remember that the Soul is the Creator of all living things, that it breathes the breath of life into every being of earth and sea. But do not forget that the Soul remains apart from that to which it gives order and movement and life; for the existence of the creature has a beginning and an end; but the Soul is immortal and cannot suffer change.*

ENNEADS, 5. I. 2.

*Since the nature of the Soul is divine, be assured that you will attain the Divine through the Soul; by self-identification with the Soul, you will ascend to the Eternal World. You need not seek for the One Self far from your self, nor is there in reality any barrier between yourself and That. To reach the Self, take as your guide the higher principle of the Soul, which is in essence one with Divine Wisdom.*

IBID., 5. I. 3.

THE doctrine of Plotinus implies a constant correspondence and an uninterrupted interchange of force between macrocosm and microcosm, between the One Self and the Soul of man. "Every part of the Universe is in sympathy with every other part: touch one chord of a lyre and the other chords will resound,—much more must the Universe resound to every action of any of its parts, since the Universe embraces all things, even opposites, reconciled in perfect harmony" (4.4.41).<sup>1</sup>

No creature is really a separate and isolated entity. Individuality is not a division of the One Self, but a form of its Self-consciousness, and the whole of the Self is present—whether latent or expressed—in every individual form. Individual action is an emanation of universal force. To express the same idea in modern terms, human evolution is an aspect of universal evolution. If the essence of the Universe be divine, so also must be the essence of man. The goal of man, the purpose of his evolution, is to come to full consciousness of the Divinity in which he participates, as does every being.

Man is in his inmost nature one with the First Principle of the Universe, which is the undivided Self of all creatures. To the three manifested principles of the Universe—Wisdom (*Nous*), World-Soul (*Psyche*), and Nature (*Physis*)—correspond the Monad or Spirit (*Nous*), Soul (*Psyche*) and Body (*Soma*) of each individual human being. By virtue of his individuality, every man is destined to express some unique aspect of Being, which no other creature could possibly reveal. That uniqueness gives its mysterious value to individ-

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<sup>1</sup> The quotations given are from the *Enneads*.

uality, distinguishing but not separating the Monads from one another. There are countless stages or phases of individual being, the human phase being that which, for obvious reasons, now concerns us most.

The object of evolution is that the Monad may become personally conscious of its identity and reality as the Self. For that purpose, the Monad produces an emanation of itself, the Soul or Ego, which in turn emanates a series of bodies or vestures, through the mediation of which it comes into relation with Nature. Nature is the field of polarized forces, and the first rudiments of personal consciousness are born in the sensations of the physical organism, which is compelled to readjust itself at every instant to a constantly changing environment. As this simple physical consciousness becomes more intense and sustained, it awakens by induction corresponding psychic faculties and powers. Finally the Monad, the divine individuality, comes to conscious birth, in response to the growth of personal consciousness in the higher principle of the Soul. The perfect man is a trinity of Spirit, Soul and Body, and not until he is conscious in all three of his principles, can he transcend the limitations of physical and psychic existence and share the divine consciousness of the One Self. The goal of all action (*praxis*) is contemplation (*theoria*), leading to union (3.8.5.).

The goal is positive. Man is to enter into living possession of his true nature. But his task has also its negative side. He must withdraw his personal consciousness from the false psychic nature, which he has formed by brooding over the images of physical life. The ethical philosophy of Plotinus is an effort to face the terms—positive and negative—of the problem of man. It is the translation of his conception of the Universe into a rule of discernment between good and evil.

Doubtless the enigma of good and evil cannot be solved by the intellect in final terms, for it proceeds from the primordial mystery of free-will. The gods have free-will, but are above evil. The lower kingdoms are below the plane where free-will becomes active; therefore they are outside the operations of moral evil. Between the god and the animal is man, as free as a god to follow his destiny or to reject it, but encompassed by the evil which he has created.

Although Plotinus does not deny the fact of evil (*kakon*) in human life, he refuses to admit that evil possesses any reality in its own right. He is not a dualist, representing Light and Darkness as rival powers, like Ormuzd and Ahriman, sharing and contesting the governance of the world. Darkness derives from Light whatever potency it has. There is a saying of St. Thomas Aquinas, that the Devil, in so far as he is powerful, is divine. Plotinus describes evil as "necessarily bound round with bonds of beauty, like some captive in fetters of gold, so that men, even in the presence of evil, may still not be wholly deprived of the reminiscence of the Beautiful and the Good" (1.8.2.).

Darkness is the limitation or diminution of Light, and, if there were no Light, could not have even contingent or potential existence. In a very general sense one might say, with certain Buddhists and Gnostics, that all manifestation is evil, since manifestation seems to differentiate the One Sub-

stance and thus infuses into consciousness the awareness of separateness and pain. Plotinus himself shows some sympathy with this view, when he associates evil with matter (1.8.5.). But more often he asserts that Cosmic manifestation cannot be anything but good, since it is the necessary unfolding of Being, which is moved by its own power to emanate individuality and life as perfect images of Itself. "The purpose of the appearance of the Universal Soul in the world and, similarly, of each individual soul, is to achieve the perfection of the world, since it is necessary for the world to contain living creatures equal in species and number to the monads of the Divine Host" (4.8.1.).

Evil—at least in its concrete meaning—is a limitation of Being, in so far as it is a perversion of Being, and there is no absolute necessity for its manifestation. At a certain stage of the evolution of self-consciousness, the Soul receives from its parent principle an influx of free-will, which is the key to its personal immortality. Free-will gives the Soul the right to choose for itself whether it will attach itself to animal life or will become consciously divine. In exercising this responsibility, it may make mistakes. The self-will or wrong desire, which causes the Soul to blunder, is evil, because it is a denial of the unity of the Self. The penalty and correction of this fundamental sin is un wisdom, suffering, and death (3.1.4.9). But how could personal immortality be possible in this Universe, if there were not also the possibility of death?

"We must admit the existence of unmixed Good as the basis of reality. But we must also acknowledge the existence (within ourselves) of a nature containing goodness mixed with something alien or evil. What is evil for the Soul? It is evil for the Soul to identify itself and to be in contact with that which is below itself. It is because of that contact that the Soul experiences appetite, pain and fear. Indeed, fear is felt by us neither for the Soul nor for the body, but only for the composite nature (*suntheton*), which results from the descent of the Soul into the body. A false view of the world arises within the Soul, when the Soul exiles itself from the Truth, which is its proper home, and thus ceases to be purely itself" (1.8.15.). Evil comes into existence when the Soul adopts as its own the appetites of the body and directs them to ends for which they were never intended; nor can these appetites be called evil, unless they are shared by the Soul. Or, as one might say, evil is wrong self-identification. The composite nature, which is born of wrong self-identification, is the material soul (*enulos psuche*) or false personality, the vehicle of evil desires and also the medium whereby the fallen part of the Soul becomes aware of the effects of evil. "Pleasure and pain are felt by the composite nature of Soul and body; they are known, but not felt by the higher part of the Soul (which remains detached from the body)" (6.4.18.).

"What is man? Is he the body? No, man is not the body. Before the generation of the body, he existed on high as a pure spirit, a Seer in union with Universal Being. Formerly, we formed parts of the Divine Host, parts which were neither circumscribed nor limited, belonging to the undivided whole of Being. Even now, we are not really separated from the Divine Host: but the

spiritual man in us is joined by a lower (psychic) man, who desires to be independent of the spiritual man. Because this psychic man encompasses our consciousness, we are now dual beings. We are no longer only conscious of our spirituality. Often, when the real nature slumbers in us, we identify ourselves wholly with the psychic" (6.4.14.).

"The higher principle of the Soul does not approach matter nor lower its vision; it remains pure and is in accord with Wisdom. The lower principle emanates from the higher, but is no more than its reflection. Because the lower Soul identifies itself with matter, it lacks the perfection of the higher, and its actions are not guided by Wisdom. We say that the lower Soul contains matter, because it contemplates darkness (*skotos*). . . . By virtue of its union with the body, the lower Soul participates in the discord and confusion (*ametria*) of matter. It loses its reasoning power and is blinded by the passions of the body" (1.8.4.). The passions, thus shared by the Soul, are perversions alike of the divine consciousness of the Soul and of the healthy activities of animal life.

"What led our Souls to forget their Father and, though united with Him, wholly His, to cease to know both themselves and Him? Their misfortune was caused by the spirit of rebellion (*tolma*),<sup>2</sup> by the creative power (*genesis*) and the primal differentiation (*prote heterotes*) of the Universe, and by the thirst for separate existence (*to boulethenai de heautoñ einai*). They sought pleasure in self-expression and self-assertion; therefore they went far astray. And now they have wandered to so great a distance (*apostasis*) from the Father, that they are even ignorant that they derive their life from Him. They have attached themselves to external objects and have disdained their divine birthright. To souls in this state, two appeals must be made. The Soul must be shown the shame of the things which attract it, and it must be taught and reminded of its noble race and rank" (5.1.1.; also cf. 4.8.5.).

Liberation is possible for the Soul, because the body is really separable (*choriston*) from it, and because the Soul does not wholly descend into the body. "The divine part of the Soul never leaves the Divine Host" (6.7.5.). "The souls of men fell into generation, because they had gazed at their images in matter, as in the mirror of Dionysus.<sup>3</sup> But the noëtic part of the Soul does not descend with the psychic part, so that, even though their feet touch the earth, their heads rise above the sky. And their father, Zeus, pitying their afflictions, made their bonds mortal" (4.3.12.). The problem for the lower part of the Soul is, therefore, to detach itself from the false personality, the image of the body, which it falsely regards as itself, and to attach itself to the noëtic principle. In other words, the noëtic principle must assume the personal self-consciousness, which is now wrongly attributed to the image of the body.

<sup>2</sup> *Tolma* is a term "used by the Pythagoreans to designate the *dyad*, the first being which dared to separate itself from Unity" (Bouillet: *Les Ennéades de Plotin*, III, 3).

<sup>3</sup> This is, doubtless, a reference to some rite of the Mysteries. "It is said that Dionysus, establishing his image in a mirror, pursued it, and thus became distributed into the universe." (Olympiodorus, quoted by Thomas Taylor, *Dissertation on the Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries*, p. 148.)

Once this transfer has been made, evil ceases to be, for evil arises from the sense of separateness, and the awakened Seer is above the sense of separateness. Though still individual, he turns towards the One Self, the Eternal, with an ever-increasing knowledge that he is That. All the powers of the Universe support him, work with and through him, for he is in essence a universal being. He coöperates with Nature, instead of resisting her, this coöperation being true freedom, as the gods alone are said to be truly free. (Cf. 6, 8, 21).

The ethical doctrine of Plotinus is thus based upon the double necessity of purification (*katharsis*) and of training in contemplation (*theoria*). The two processes proceed simultaneously, but it is more logical to consider purification first, since it is upon this that most emphasis is laid at the beginning of the way.

There are two stages of purification, the unconscious and the conscious. It is the Divine Law that every vice brings its corrective punishment, and human laws and conventions come to the support of Nature, since they reflect, however imperfectly, man's age-long experience of the causes of pleasure and pain. These social laws are the basis of the practical or civil virtues (*politikai aretai*).<sup>4</sup> Until these can be practised with some force and discretion, it is useless to attempt *môre*, for they are the standards of common decency and honesty. Practical morality serves the ends of the Logos, for it wears away the grosser desires of the psychic man. Incidentally, the virtuous are rewarded by escaping Hell and by a more favourable incarnation next time. It may be noted that Plotinus believed in Karma and Reincarnation.<sup>5</sup> "Each Soul proceeds into the bodily image, which has become the object of its ruling passion" (4.3.13). The Soul "goes where it longs to be," and receives—even in Hell—only the fruition of its desires. Hell is not only an after-death state, but is the cycle of rebirth in the body (1.8.13). "So long as the Soul is bound to matter, it passes from sleep to sleep. The true awakening of the Soul is from all bodily life" (3.6.6.).

The ardent seeker after Truth cannot rest content with worldly goodness, which consists in a relatively blind and unthinking obedience to human conventions. He will not, indeed, scorn the civil virtues, but, even while practising them, will seek their interior meaning and will try to read their correspondences with Divine Laws, for "the virtues in the Soul run in a sequence corresponding to a sequence in the Divine World, where exist the archetypes of all virtues. . . . Thus, the paradigm of temperance is the Self-concentration of the spiritual man; his power of right action is the model of the art of 'minding one's own business' (*oikoiopragia*); his pure aspiration and unflinching detachment from matter correspond to our ideal of courage. Doubtless, the philosopher will practise the homely virtues common to all men, but he

<sup>4</sup> The word, *arete*, in no way signifies the negative goodness, too often suggested by the English word, "virtue." *Arete* is moral force, the "active excellence," which makes one a useful, as well as a "good" citizen.

<sup>5</sup> One passage (3.4.2.) is often quoted as proof of his belief that the human soul may transmigrate into a lower animal body. But the passage in question is certainly more easily interpreted as symbolical and humorous.

will test them by standards revealed by meditation upon the spiritual prototypes of all virtues. He will strive to give a concrete form to those prototypes, which are still only abstractions for most men. For instance, he will not be content with the temperance which is only moderation, but will seek to separate himself from all attachment to the image of the body. Seeking the reality, of which virtue is the image, he will model his conduct upon that of the gods rather than upon that of good men" (1.2.7.).

Because the philosopher sees more clearly what he ought to do, his standards must be more rigorous. He bravely faces suffering, privation and death, even when apparently undeserved, for he is thereby tested in the detachment which he professes, and he knows the instructive value of suffering. He will never blame the gods for his misfortunes. "In this world, as in a drama, it is not the Soul within, but the outer phantom of the man, which gives itself up to lamentations and groans. How many human creatures think only of externals and do not realize that their preoccupations are no more serious than those of children! If we cannot help joining to some extent in this child's play, it is well to remember that it is child's play, and that the real man is not concerned with the results thereof" (3.2.15.). It is not by chance that one man is born a master and another a slave. If there be much injustice in human relations, the innocent sufferer is often less the victim of his oppressor's brutality than of his own supineness and effeminacy.

It is easy to object that the philosopher carries his detachment too far; that, by his own admission, it does matter greatly how we act at every moment. There is some intrusion here of the fatigue and pessimism incident to his century. But he is speaking especially of detachment from the objects of ordinary hopes and fears,—such as are engendered by the desire for riches or the dread of illness. The philosopher cannot remain an ordinary man; he seeks liberation from the very things to which the ordinary man is attached. It cannot matter to him, so far as his real life is concerned, whether he is a slave like Epictetus or an Emperor like Marcus Aurelius.

There is danger, of course, that detachment from his own cares may make the philosopher equally indifferent to the troubles of others. It may be urged, with much justice, that the serenity of the Neoplatonist is too self-centred, too negative. By wrong self-identification, man has moulded a false personality, which must be dissolved; and the practice of virtue is a sovereign remedy for purging the Soul of its evil humours. But right action has also a positive, creative function. It brings an increase of personal knowledge and power to the Soul, since it is an affirmation of the Soul's being, foreshadowing and corresponding to a phase of Divine Being. Because of the unity and interdependence of all souls, right action cannot illumine one soul, without at the same time shedding its radiance upon all. We have been told of the force which is released and given form by the least act of an adept.

The rationale of right action is outlined in the *Enneads*, but Plotinus does not make clear its positive, practical application. At this point, he is too abstract, too much the professional metaphysician. As Dean Inge says sug-



gestively: "The notion that the dignity of work is determined by the subjects with which it is concerned, and not by the manner in which it is executed, is a mischievous error which Greek thought never outgrew."<sup>6</sup>

Evil is only an episode of the Great Cycle, a back-eddy in the stream of evolution from the mineral to the Divine. All beings in a state of nature seek the Good, and all growth of form and power and personality, is the outer expression of their inner quest (3.8.8.). It is the nature of the Universe to emanate a manifestation of itself, and it is the nature of the manifested to return to the Unmanifested from which it emerged. Through the operation of this dual movement the consciousness of the Universe becomes personal and individualized, without ceasing to be eternally one. As personality becomes more intense, the vestures, through which it is manifested, become more definite and are endowed with a greater and more varied capacity for action. This evolution of form reacts in turn upon consciousness, which is awakened, increased and made more personal, as it comes to know the forms which it creates.

The Good is the same for man as for all creatures, since it is the One Self, by which all things are endowed with individuality, life and form, and with which all things seek some phase of conscious union. Man must seek the Good, whether he will or not, but it is most important to realize that he must seek it as a man, not as an animal or a vegetable. This injunction is not as foolish as it sounds, for the lower kingdoms of Nature have not disappeared in human nature. The body of man is part animal, part vegetable, part mineral. The human element is provided by the Soul, which descends towards the body; but the Soul should remain distinct and separate from the body, for the body is only a medium through which knowledge may be gained by the Soul. As has already been said, evil arises when the Soul adopts as its own the desires of the animal body, and magnifies and distorts them psychically.

The animal seeks the Good and earns its reward by instinctively performing its natural functions. But it does not know what it is doing. That is one great difference between man and the animal. Man is destined to seek the Good self-consciously, although, to that end, he must still use the functions of the animal body. He must first conceive abstractly and then realize personally, his union with the Most High.

Plotinus uses the word, *theoria*, to express the universal procession of all beings towards the Good, the return of the manifested to the unmanifested. It is usually translated as "contemplation," which is not an ideal word for the purpose, since it suggests something static and passive, whereas *theoria* is revealed as the compelling force in evolution, as the immanence of the Highest Power in its creation. Perhaps the nearest English equivalent is "aspiration." All things *aspire*, more or less consciously, towards the One, and in man there enters into aspiration every faculty of the Soul, including will, desire, intellection and action. Man should rank as a conscious "aspirant." It is signifi-

<sup>6</sup> *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, II., 189.

cant that the term, *theoria*, was borrowed from the Greek Mysteries, "where it was applied to a dramatic or sacramental spectacle. . . . Pythagoras is said to have been the first to give it a real meaning, as the contemplation not of the sacrament, but of the underlying truths which sacraments symbolize."<sup>7</sup>

Plotinus devotes the last books of the *Enneads* to an exposition of the quest of the human Soul, and it is fitting that his concluding words should point towards the ultimate stage of the quest, when the last barrier of separateness is worn away, when it becomes impossible to say whether the individual has become the All, or the All has become individualized. It is probable, even if we discount Porphyry's testimony, that Plotinus speaks from a personal experience, which was the fruit of long meditation and which involved the training of certain faculties, "which all men possess, but few use." It has been urged that his whole attitude is so impersonal and abstract that he may only be repeating the teaching of Ammonius Saccas. But some men tend always to give an abstract expression to their experiences, however concrete these may be. In any event, Plotinus only professes to offer a general outline or scheme of the mystic way. Whosoever desires, he says, may test the truth for himself. Furthermore, Porphyry asserts that Plotinus and two other students pledged themselves not to make public certain details of the instruction which they received in the School of Ammonius Saccas (*Life of Plotinus*, 3).

The Eastern influence in Plotinus is clearly indicated in his method of preparing the Soul for the interior vision. The first of the quotations which follow, might almost be taken from a Vedantist. "He who seeks to know the Divine Self, must look deeply into the nature of his Soul, into the divine part of his consciousness. He must separate from himself, first, the body and the power of the (lower) Soul, which moulds the body; then he must cease to identify himself with his faculties of sensation, appetite, and anger, and, in general, detach himself from all those passions which incline the Soul towards mortality. What is then left is that part of the Soul, which we call the likeness of the Divine Mind, and which emanates from Wisdom, although it remains attached to that from which it emanates" (5.3.9.). "The ancient sages, seeking to procure the presence of the gods by erecting temples and statues, seem to have possessed deep insight into the nature of the Universe; they knew the All-Soul to be a principle ever at our call. It is proper to prepare a place in which some phase of it may be received, and for that purpose the nature should be brought to the condition of an untarnished mirror" (4.3.11). "We must invoke the Divinity not by the utterance of words, but by raising our souls to him in prayer. The true way to pray is for the Soul in solitude to advance towards the Self in its solitude. To contemplate the One, we must retire into our inner sanctuary and there remain in quietude" (5.1.6.). "Imagine a transparent sphere, within which one sees the sun, the stars, the earth and all living creatures. And now keep the form of the sphere, but suppress the ideas of mass and extension and banish from your meditation all ideas

<sup>7</sup> Inge, *op. cit.*, II., 178-179.

derived from matter. Then invoke the God who made the world of which you have formed an image and implore him to enter into it. . . . Indeed, this sphere of the world extends to infinity and is infinite in its powers, and so great is the One Substance that its parts also are infinite" (5.8.9.).

In proportion as the neophyte gains some measure of detachment from his lower vestures, he acquires without effort the power of advancing in true knowledge. For he is drawn forward by the compelling force of love, the same force which creates the worlds. He seeks union with the "First God," though not for the conscious bliss which union brings, for he has lost all desire for personal reward and, in place of that old desire, has come the burning love of Truth for its own sake. He has only one concern,—to identify his personal will and mind with the Divine Will and Mind. Eternal life, wisdom, power and bliss will come to him, but he never seeks these for himself.

The object of such devotion may seem abstract, but the devotion itself is the most concrete experience attainable by man. Some writers on mysticism have spoken of the mystic's experience as "union with the Absolute." But how can anything in manifestation be in union with the Absolute? Doubtless, in one sense, every existent thing is the Absolute already and cannot possibly be anything else, but how will it ever—even in the Eternity of Eternities—become personally conscious of the whole of Absoluteness? As *Light on the Path* says: "You will enter the light, but you will never touch the flame." Plotinus is within reason, since he only implies that man can unite himself personally with the One Self, so far as is possible during this cosmic period and upon this planet. The student of Theosophy may attribute a definite form to the One Self, by identifying it, for the present cycle, with the divine Hierarchy of the Lodge, the One Self of Humanity.

It must be repeated that the life of the Seer becomes more intense as he becomes more self-consciously divine. He does not concentrate upon the fruits of action, but his power of effective action, even upon lower planes, becomes greater. The measure of his conscious union is the measure of his power, for his "creative force (*logos*) remains in its own place, apart from that which it creates. . . . The force which is associated with action and oversees it, cannot exhaust itself in action" (3.8.3.). Even at the beginning of the contemplative life, there is a constant exercise of powers far transcending any of which the mortal can conceive; but there is no strain. It is the "spirit in love" (*nous eron*) which moves the Seer and which makes all things easy. The action of the mortal is feeble, because it proceeds from a "feeble contemplation."

The bliss of the Seer is not abstract and cold. Even mortal love brings its measure of happiness, fixed in a brief apparition of beauty. But mortal love is embittered by satiety, whereas immortal love is the source of an ever-increasing delight. The beauty of the Divine does not pass away, for its glory is not limited by space and time, nor is it perceived confusedly and intermittently, as if it were a quality of matter.

"Only he who has seen the Good knows how beautiful it is. We must ap-

proach its presence, leaving behind all earthly vestures, as the initiate enters the sanctuary. He who has not yet seen Truth, desires it as the Good; he who has seen it, desires it as the Beautiful. If we behold That which gives all creatures their perfection, if we rest in the contemplation of That and become like That, what other beauty can we need? Being the supreme Beauty, the First God makes those who love Him beautiful and lovable. That is the great end, the supreme aim of the Soul; it is the lack of that vision which makes man unhappy. He who would see that vision must shut his eyes to terrestrial things, not allowing himself to pursue corporal beauties, lest he share the fate of Narcissus and immerse his soul in deep and muddy pools. And yet we may gain instruction by contemplating noble things here on earth, and we should especially meditate upon noble deeds, which derive their beauty from the Divinity. Thus, we shall press on continually, remembering that the Soul can only see the Beautiful, by becoming itself beautiful" (1.6.6-9.).

All knowledge below the noëtic plane is fragmentary and confused. At worst it is mere opinion (*doxa*), based on unassimilated sense-experience; at best, it is the fruit of discursive thought or reason (*diancia*), which tests, selects and arranges the data of experience, but which can never be certain and final, because, even in the most impressive logical constructions, we can never be sure that our premises include all the facts which are needed to determine the truth.

But the Seer knows Reality by direct contact. He sees the Real, because his personal consciousness is in union with the Real. "When the Soul turns away from visible things, it manifests its beauty and becomes a true image of the Divine. Then the One Self appears in the Soul, for there is nothing between them, nor are they two but one. . . . Then is the vision blended with the object seen, and that which was before objective becomes for him the state of seeing, and he forgets all else" (6.7.34-35.).

This is the Unitive Way, the Life of the Kingdom of Heaven. To enter upon it, the Seer must paralyze the false self and become conscious as the Real. He is rapt in ecstasy, "standing outside" his body, but his trance does not bring loss of control over the body. He may continue to live as a man of earth, although his centre of consciousness is no longer in the body, but above it. He moves his vehicle, instead of being moved by it. Perfect Samadhi is perfect Self-possession.

Plotinus admits his inability to describe the bliss of union. Words too often give an image, not of that bliss, but of its psychic counterfeit. If the mystics try to describe the ineffable, it is only to awaken the Soul and to inspire its devotion (6.9.4.). Really to know the Unitive Way, each man must tread it for himself.<sup>8</sup>

"The One Self does not dwell in any one place; it is present everywhere to him who can touch it. But we cannot touch it, if we be distracted by any image. As matter must have no qualities of its own, to receive the forms of

<sup>8</sup> The concluding quotation is an abbreviation and paraphrase of 6.9.7-11, the last chapters of the *Enneads*.

things, so must the Soul be formless, to receive the plenitude and illumination of the Self. The Divine, as Plato said, is not far from anyone. It is present with all, though they know it not. But he who has learned to know himself, will know also whence he is.

"Bodies cannot be closely associated with one another, but incorporeal things are not separated by bodies; they are held apart not by distance, but by unlikeness. Where there is no unlikeness, they are united. The Self, which knows no unlikeness, is always present everywhere; we are conscious as the Self, only when we, too, know no unlikeness. We always move around the One; if we did not, we should be instantly dissolved; but we do not always contemplate the One. Like a chorus, we stand round the leader, though our attention is often diverted by external objects and we sing out of tune; but when we turn toward him, we sing in harmony.

"Thus encircling the One, as in a choral dance, the Soul contemplates the fountain of life and wisdom, the source of being, the cause of perfection, the root of consciousness. But wisdom, being, and consciousness do not flow out of the Self in such a way as to diminish it, for we are not dealing with physical quantities. These things, which proceed from the Self, are co-eternal with the Self, because the Self is not divided among them, but is present everywhere equally. We are not separated from the Self, though the bodily nature intervenes and draws us towards itself, for we maintain our being in the Self, which never withdraws. But we are more truly alive, when we turn towards it, and in this lies our well-being. Then we rest in it, beyond the glamour of evil and absorbed in the Divine Vision. Our life in this world is but a falling away, an exile, and it is natural for the Soul to love its true Father, from Whom it descended, and to desire union with Him. Therefore we must hasten to depart hence, to detach ourselves as much as possible from the body, to endeavour to embrace the Self with all our being. Then we can see God and our real selves, as far as is permitted; we see ourselves glorified, pure, subtile, ethereal, full of light. We become divine or, rather, we know ourselves to be divine. That is the kindling of the flame of Life.

"Why, then, does not the Soul remain in Heaven, when it has been lifted there in ecstasy? Because it has not yet wholly left its earthly dwelling. But the time will come, when it will enjoy the vision without the hindrance of the body. The part of the Soul which is now hindered, is not the part which sees God. We ought not even to say that it sees God, since the Seer is himself that which he sees, if, indeed, in that state we may distinguish at all between the Seer and the Seen. The Seer does not see himself and another. He becomes another and ceases to belong to himself, for he is possessed by the One Self. Therefore is this vision so hard to describe. How can one describe as other than oneself, that which in the vision appeared as one with the Seer? In that union the Seer retains no consciousness of separateness. Nothing stirs in him, neither anger nor desire nor reason nor even personality. Caught up in ecstasy, tranquil and alone with the Self, he enjoys an imperturbable calm.

"The Seer knows that he sees the Self, because he and the Self are one.

Possessing in himself the radiance of the First Principle, he knows the First Principle of the Universe. When the Seer moves towards the Good, he comes not to something separate from himself, but enters into himself, finding in himself the presence of the One Self (of all beings). He ceases to be conscious as a thing apart; he ascends above existence, in communion with the One. If a man perceive himself in the Self, he has in himself the perfect likeness of the Self, but, if he pass out of himself, he will ascend from likeness to union, and will have reached his journey's end.

"When he descends from that vision, he can again awaken his power, and, adorning himself with virtue, can reascend to the place of Wisdom and, yet above Wisdom, to the Father. Such is the life of the gods and of god-like men,—a liberation from earthly bonds, a life that takes no pleasure in material things, a flight of the alone to the Alone."

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There exists a feeling among modern scholars, that the *Enneads* are so obscure that it is a waste of time to read them. It is to be hoped that the above quotations will have proved that this feeling has nothing to rest upon. Plotinus was a powerful and lucid thinker, who set himself the task of demonstrating the unity of all consciousness. As a prudent experimenter he began with the only *datum* of which he could feel absolutely certain—the reality of his own Soul—and then, passing deeper into his being, he proved for himself the indissoluble union between the individual Soul and the Oversoul, the Self of all that is. He tried to reveal the way to the knowledge which he had gained, for he had discovered that the knowledge of union is bliss, and he desired others to share that bliss. There was no question of forcing his vision upon others by emotional magnetism, or by the dogmatic assertion of facts which are unknown to most men. He proceeded in the spirit of intellectual integrity, to induce men to experiment for themselves, as he had experimented.

It has been suggested that Plotinus, born in a Western body, had an Eastern mind, and that he used the existing terms and formulæ of Greek philosophy to illustrate the introspective methods of the Indian mystics. In his own place and time, he strove to reconcile science and theology, reason and intuition. If we truly seek union with the Self as the goal of our being, we shall not think of reason and intuition as faculties which contradict each other. They will appear as instruments ready to our purpose,—the one as necessary as the other. Intuition without reason is senseless, like the instincts of the brutes. Reason without intuition is reduced to the mechanical repetition of syllogisms, from which the life has departed. Both alike are subject to illusion, unless they be tried and confirmed, at each stage, by action, by disinterested work, as an expression and service of the One Self in all beings.

S. L.

# THE LANGUAGE OF PARADISE

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*Then he hears the language of Paradise and perceives what is passing in the mind of the ant.*

LANGUAGE, as we ordinarily think of it, is a very unsatisfactory affair. We have a thought that we want to express, and we grope around in our minds for a set of words by means of which we can build, like an elaborate and most clumsy mosaic, a picture that to our eye looks more or less like our idea. How it appears to the listener is, of course, often a totally different matter; a fact of which we may be entirely unconscious. Yet one of the commonest of complaints against High Heaven is, that Omnipotence, when it has occasion to communicate with us, or when we think it ought to have, does not use the clumsy and inadequate words of our everyday speech.

Not long ago I was talking to a friend who thought that he had lost his faith. He said that on two occasions in his life he had urgently needed help. He had felt that without it he could not go on, and he had prayed with all his heart, pouring himself out in a passionate appeal for strength to go through with what he had to do.

"Surely," he said, "if there had been a God, he would have heard and answered me."

"But," I said, "you went on?"

"Yes," he answered, "I got the strength somehow."

Heaven must have smiled, though he did not.

We may be certain of one thing. When Omnipotence wishes to convey an idea, it does not have to resort to our roundabout and uncertain methods. If we had the power to implant an idea directly in the minds of our hearers instead of through the medium of word-symbols, surely we would do so. Yet one and all of us long to have our prayers answered by an audible voice, speaking our native tongue. Everyone probably has wondered why prayers are not answered that way. Among other reasons, we feel that if we once received such an answer our faith would be surely established. That was what Dives felt, from the flames of hell: if he could only speak to his brothers, surely they would repent. The answer to Dives was that they had Moses and the prophets. If they would not hear them, they would not hear though one spoke from the dead. We all have our "Moses and the prophets." If our lives and surroundings, the beauty of flowers and birds and sunlight, the majestic order of the stars, do not speak to us with the voice of God, would we hear this voice though words came from the air to our ears in answer to our prayers? Man himself can make words come from the air, and though the mind clamours loudly for "material proof," it has no difficulty in doubting the evidence, however clear, of the senses. It is only the evidence of the soul

that has the power to silence this clamour of doubt, only the soul that can say *I know*.

It is the soul that knows, and it is to the soul that the Masters speak. Our task is to clear the channels from our everyday consciousness to the consciousness of the soul, and to find there the knowledge and the strength we seek and for which we pray. The guidance and power are truly given in answer to our prayer, but given to the soul; and it is through the soul that we must seek it. If we heard voices, or if a Master himself came and stood before us visibly, should we ever learn to turn within for the light that must guide us? Or should we not for ever after turn our backs on the only path to the spiritual world, the path through the depths of our own hearts and souls, looking and hoping always for another outer appearance, another outer voice?

To the extent to which the channels from the soul to the personal consciousness have been cleared, do we share in the knowledge of the soul, knowing our true desires as they exist in the depths of our real selves, conscious of our immortality and of what it is that is befitting an immortal; conscious, at last, of the Great Ones above us and of their call to us to serve. That which is "right," right thought and right action, tends to clear these channels. That which is wrong, "sin," obstructs them. It is in this fact that the rationale of ethics lies, and this is the fundamental reason for the insistence of all religious systems on purification. It is also the reason for the statement that our beliefs are the results of our conduct, materialistic conduct leading to materialistic beliefs, and selfless action to knowledge and faith. Until the channel is cleared it is impossible to tell the source of the many conflicting voices, the many contradictory desires that clamour in our minds, each claiming to be "our" real desire. We all want to be sweet-tempered, and we all say ill-tempered things; presumably because we think we want to do so, for certainly we do not have to do so for any other reason. But we are getting away from our point.

When we pray for light and the prayer is answered—as all prayers are answered,—we may think of the soul as receiving light and strength, and as striving to pass them on to the personal consciousness. These often reach us, distorted more or less as the case may be; but, reaching us as they do from a part of ourselves far deeper than our ordinary consciousness, it seems to us that it is only from within ourselves that the light and strength have come. Hence the clamour against High Heaven for not answering our prayers. We may be sure that the Masters, who have themselves turned back from the threshold of infinite bliss in order to help mankind, are constantly trying to aid and teach us in every way that would be permanently helpful. We do not yet know the language in which they speak directly to their disciples, those whose inner senses are sufficiently developed for them to hear and understand. The soul of man can express through music and art what it cannot say in words, and yet the finest music and the most beautiful of paintings are only the reflections, the coverings, of spiritual things. In fact, they are beautiful to just the extent to which the light of the spiritual world shines through



them. There is no beauty where there is no spirit. The Masters are masters of all of life, of music and art as of all else, and what they do, they must do perfectly. There are hints here and there that lead one to think that at times they speak to their chelas in pictures. If so, the pictures surely would be beautiful beyond our conception, and their voices the most wonderful music. Some day we may see and hear; but one does not ask babies to understand Rembrandt or Beethoven. That, however, does not mean that one cannot talk to babies. It merely means that one uses a different method.

Heaven, no doubt, uses many methods with us. It may, perhaps, implant in our souls the essence of that which it wishes us to grasp directly, leaving it to our own minds to give it form,—that “veil without which it is so difficult for us to perceive reality.” This may be one reason why the saints and mystics so often give the form and colouring of their own religion to the great truths which they have received. The saints have to some extent at least cleared the channels from the soul to the mind. Where this has not been done, the thousand and one desires of the personality which clog the passage, may twist and distort the message out of all semblance of truth in the process of transmission. Then, for truth to reach our personal consciousness, it becomes necessary for the “Lords of Compassion” to use another language in speaking to us. “The universe exists for the purposes of the soul,” and all that comes to us of whatever sort must contain Heaven’s message to us. Why else should it come, or be in the world at all? It is a platitude that we can only learn through our own experience. There are some who learn through the mistakes of others, but there are not many; and even those few rarely learn as completely as when they have lived through a mistake of their own. Certain things must be worked into the fibre of our being, and the only way to obtain that result is by living them with all our being, not simply hearing them with our ears. St. Teresa speaks of the fact that the most learned philosophers could not understand sweet taste if they had never tasted anything sweet, whereas the most ignorant peasant who has eaten sweet things knows the taste exactly. Surely, therefore, if High Heaven wished to explain sweet taste to us, it would not talk about it, but would so adjust the outer circumstances of our lives as to make us eat something sweet. Then we should really grasp what was meant. The same principle must apply to more important knowledge. It takes longer, to be sure, to live through an experience than to listen to an explanation of it, but the results are obviously more thorough; and, so far as we can see, Providence is not pressed for time.

The circumstances of our lives seem so hard and rigid that it is difficult for us to grasp how easily they can be manipulated so as to give us just the lessons we need to learn. It is easy to forget that the world was designed for that very purpose, the development of character, of the soul. There is a machine used for setting type, known as a “linotype,” equipped with a key-board like a typewriter, on which the operator can write whatever he wills to say. As he strikes the various keys, the machine casts corresponding letters on metal slugs, which emerge at the other end of the machine ready for the printing

press. The slugs are hard, rigid and as unchangeable as iron. A materialistic gnat, contemplating them, would scoff at a suggestion that the human will could alter letters, or have any effect on them at all short of their destruction. Yet the operator, writing, let us say, a school book, could have written a different lesson as easily as the one he wrote. The machine was designed for that very purpose, and is as flexible as language itself. If the operator of a man-made linotype finds no difficulty in making it express what he wills to say, it does not seem likely, to say the least, that the Creator of the universe finds it any more difficult to express His will on the machine that He has created for that purpose.

Our gnat, if a philosophical, scientific gnat, might draw many conclusions from his study of the linotype, besides his deduction that the words on those metal slugs could not be changed by the human will or, let us say, by human prayer. He would, no doubt, in his inquiry into their causes, postulate a "First Cause" as "unknowable," and, setting that aside, would investigate the immediate causes of the phenomena he saw in his universe, to wit—an orderly, intelligent result proceeding from mechanical causes. What caused the letters? Investigation would show that a wheel, moved by a wire, caused the letter "A,"—a purely natural phenomenon. Did will or intelligence move the wire? Not at all. Further investigation would show that the first wire was moved by another wire, and it in turn by another wheel. As far back as gnat science could go, it was all the result of purely natural causes. "There is no sense in praying for rain. It comes or does not come from purely natural causes."

When a linotype operator wishes to write something—whatever it may be—he does not *interfere* with the operation of his machine to do it. He uses the methods designed to accomplish that particular purpose. So—we may safely assume—the Creator, in order to answer a prayer, does not interfere with the orderly processes of nature, nor set aside natural laws—which, after all, can only be His will in action—but uses them as the linotype operator does. The result of the action of intelligence and will appears as "natural" in the one case as in the other, the only difference being that in the lesser instance it never occurs to us to deny the intelligence.

The analogy of the linotype helps to make clearer another point that is very difficult for our minds to grasp. It has often been said that the great things are accomplished by those who work unknown and unseen; that the intelligent, faithful performance of the smallest duties, with intention of serving, may be of more value to the cause of the Masters than many army corps; that in this way moulds are formed that can be used to influence the whole course of the world. If we could once really believe this, it would give an incentive to our efforts and an interest to our duties that ought to carry us far. Yet we know that when a great idea has once been set in its mould of type, millions of copies can be struck from it with the utmost ease. There is no reason to assume that moulds of psychic type are any less potent than physical moulds. But again we are digressing.

The events that come to us come charged with meaning. We have only to look for this to see that it is there, long as it may take us to grasp more than a fraction of its significance. Unfortunately we get so absorbed in noting whether these events are what we want or not, whether they contribute to or detract from our pleasure, our comfort or our vanity, that we have no eyes for anything else. Therefore it happens that our lessons have for the most part to be repeated over and over and over again, until at last some inkling of their meaning begins to dawn through the fog of our misplaced attention. Whether these needed lessons happen to bring pleasure or pain, is, from one point of view, as unimportant and beside the point as whether a boy likes or dislikes learning his multiplication table. It is there to be learned, not liked. When, for instance, a man has grown self-centred and callous to the sufferings of others, the only way in which he can gain the greater sympathy and understanding he needs may be for him to suffer acutely himself. Once gained, the power to sympathize may be his throughout eternity. A painful illness lasting a month, a year or a life-time, is, when we stop to think of it, little enough to pay for the possession of a great power for all time. So, sooner or later, in this incarnation or another, the illness comes and life teaches its lesson.

If it be true that God speaks to us through the events of our lives, there surely is nothing of greater importance for us than to try to understand what is said. Yet how often do we try to see lessons in each day's happening, or look at them from any other point of view than that of our own pleasure or annoyance? Obviously the reason is that, for the most part, we do not believe there are any lessons there. There is one way to find out. Try and see. For a week, or a day, test each event that comes, and discover if it contain instruction—in character building, for instance.

It has been said that all beauty, of mountains and rivers, of flowers and sunsets, is designed to be a door opening into the spiritual world. Just as a statue or a picture is a door through which, by sympathetic appreciation, we pass to the thought or feeling of the artist, so, in looking at natural beauty, one should seek to enter into the meaning of the Creator,—to understand and to feel His meaning, as we try to do with a work of art. That which has beauty is never meaningless, though the meaning may escape our formulation. The realization of this fact makes natural beauty infinitely richer. In the same way, the realization that the events of our lives have significance and purpose takes away much of the sting and pain from what is unpleasant, and adds immeasurably to the richness of experience. Most people complain bitterly of the dreary routine of their days. So may a child, who has not yet learned to read, grow weary of the monotony of arranging his twenty-six alphabet blocks in meaningless combinations. But a book-lover in a library does not find the combinations of those same twenty-six letters monotonous in the least. Those who have learned to read, even a little, of the language of Paradise, do not find life monotonous; nor do they find it unjust. Understanding brings trust, and with trust a growing gladness and peace.

J. F. B. M.

# MADAME BLAVATSKY

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EVERY period has its gentleman with a duster (unless it happens to be a lady), and the early Eighties in England were rather rich in this form of history-making,—Du Maurier furnishing an incomparable pictorial accompaniment. People had leisure in those days; it was essentially the era, not of pink teas, but of drawing-rooms—drawing-rooms that did not call themselves salons, but where people met and talked, and lions gently roared, and other clever kindly people, looking on, took notes and told us all about it. Among these clever kindly people there stands out quite delightfully the beautiful Australian writer, Mrs. Campbell Praed, known as Justin McCarthy's collaborator in *Our Book of Memories*, in which the letters are McCarthy's and the introduction and comments Mrs. Praed's; and as the author of that capital book *My Girlhood in Australia*; and less well known by her several novels, which seem to our latter-day taste a bit over-stippled and lacking in flexibility. After all, it is dialogue that dates a novel, and in an age when no one talks except to get a few words in edgewise because other people are out of breath, we are restive with speechifying in books. This may be why, when you ask, "Who is Mrs. Campbell Praed?"—you get a vague, "She was a writer, but I can't remember what she wrote"; and also why you might not have the patience to read *Affinities* all through, unless you had been warned that, under the name of Madame Tamvaco, Mrs. Praed gives a most interesting impression of our own Madame Blavatsky, and no less. The student of Theosophy to-day hears much of the later Madame Blavatsky—undefeated and undefeatable, but ill to the point of death, forsaken by all but a handful, discredited in the eyes of the world. We may know, but we forget, that she was not only seeress but *grande dame*, and that when she deliberately chose to enter the great world as part of her plan of campaign, she did so in both characters. Such a record as we have in this book of Mrs. Praed's—detached, impartial, unmalicious—makes this very clear to us.

*Affinities* was evidently written when Madame Blavatsky's vogue was at its height. The social world had adopted both her and the new vocabulary. Each season has its equivalent of Shakespeares and the musical glasses. In this day it was furnished by occultisms and esotericisms, and there was much easy mention of Mahatmas, of reincarnation, of odic force, and such small matters. And here, for a brief while, Madame Blavatsky passed on her way, foreign but friendly, remote but accessible, gracious but formidable. Perhaps it will be as well to let Mrs. Praed set her own stage:—

"It was June. Everyone was in London and Mrs. Borlase's Thursday evening receptions were in full swing. The quaint detached house in West Kensington was a long way off for the votaries of fashion, but they came nevertheless

in droves. There were Belgravian dowagers, fashionable beauties, a celebrated actress, men with decorations, society men, and men who never went anywhere else, *littérateurs*, scientists, and art patrons. Mrs. Borlase reconciled all nationalities and all diversities of interest. Noticeable among this crowd was a strange and striking-looking woman. This lady was certainly not English, but it would have been difficult to guess her nationality. Her appearance carried speculation beyond the bounds of Europe. She might have been either of Asiatic or American origin, for in her physiognomy there was a sort of combination of the Oriental type and that of the American Indian. She might have been sixty, but looked younger. Her features were decisively yet delicately cut, the sensitive lips giving a character of alertness to her face, which was contradicted by the full Eastern-looking eyes. These were extraordinarily large, luminous and dreamy. They seemed to draw the light into themselves, like a jewel of which the depths appear unfathomable. There was nothing shifting or unsteady in their gaze, though they were capable of a variety of expressions. They were almost too inscrutable, too determined, to be absolutely beautiful. They compelled awe rather than admiration, or indeed any human feeling. The whole countenance, if somewhat wanting in feminine sweetness, was noble and mysteriously attractive. Its strangeness was perhaps partly due to the vivid contrasts of colouring it presented. The eyes were so dark, the skin so rich an olive, the lips so red, and the eyebrows and lashes so black; while the hair, of which there seemed an immense quantity, was white and crisp like snow. She wore a kind of headdress of white lace carelessly knotted round her throat. But here beauty and stateliness ended."

It is understandable that Mrs. Praed could not make her description of Madame Blavatsky exact, either as to face or figure, and in what follows she permits herself the extreme of license. Any description of Madame Blavatsky's personal appearance betrays that the impression made by the noble head and face was contradicted by a shapeless and unwieldy figure. In order to veil her sketch in decent indirectness, Mrs. Praed has chosen to convey this discrepancy by an exact descriptive topsy-turvy, at the same time permitting her readers to feel her own recoil of distaste, a distaste shared by many of Madame Blavatsky's strongest admirers. But when those who have reason to bless her name learn that her unconventional *tournure* was her one concession to incurable illness, the recoil is all the other way. Furthermore, other times bring other manners, and one may be born too soon for comfort. In these days weirdly untrammelled ladies pass muster at social functions, but not so forty years ago, when to appear in a London drawing-room without a "figure" was to excite first consternation and then comment. In her own way Mrs. Praed rounds this dangerous corner:—

"The figure, covered by a robe of lustrous white satin, fitting loosely and veiled in lace, was shrunken and deformed, the shoulders rising almost to the level of the ears, while the pigmy stature was in painful disproportion to the

grandeur of the head. There was a singularly pathetic want of harmony between the misshapen body, and the soul which looked out of those wonderful eyes. A number of people pushed toward her and drew her into animated conversation. Her manner and gesticulations were distinctly foreign, and partly contradicted the impression of dignity which her face gave in repose. Her form swayed. She waved her thin flexible hands [Madame Blavatsky's hands were of distinguished and unusual beauty] and her eyes seemed to grow larger and to dart forth lightning as she talked, apparently upon a subject more than commonly interesting. A beautiful and sumptuously gowned, but worn and wasted young woman approached, and Madame Tamvaco motioned her to a seat beside her. She looked her through with her great witch-like eyes. 'I have not forgotten you,' she said in a deep, rather harsh voice, with a very un-English intonation. 'You used always to wear white, and now you dress in red and flame colour. It is I who am in white—I whom they call a witch; and you are in witches' garments. Why do you not keep to your white? Why did you marry that man?'

"'Madame,' said the girl calmly, though she was trembling, 'I married my husband because I loved him.'

"'Hear!' exclaimed Madame Tamvaco, in an accent more of pity than of irony. 'This fever which wastes the flesh and burns the soul is Love! You would not listen to me. You did once come to this misshapen woman for knowledge, and I said "Wait. Grope in the darkness till your eyes can bear the light. Never yield your will to another. Fly any influence which threatens to overpower it. Cling to your intuition as you would cling to your Saviour."' They were golden rules but you would not heed them. You would be another Eve. And see—you come to me again and I can do nothing for you.'

"'Madame Tamvaco,' was the reply, given with unexpected dignity, 'when I need your help I will not ask for it in a place like this.'

"This seemed partly to amuse, partly to please, the strange woman. 'That is good. I forget I am in a world where masks are necessary and where the nakedness of your minds must needs be covered. For me there are no masks. It is strange to see you all as you are and to see the thoughts which project themselves from you. I will tell you,' she added, looking round the group, and speaking no longer to the girl only, 'I will tell you something which perhaps you do not know, but which is true—as true as that you have each an astral body, though that is a fact these scientific gentlemen deny.'

"'I am not scientific?' cried Madame Tamvaco. 'Herr Klein will not admit me into his brotherhood of physiologists! Is that so? Well, listen to me. There are a great many mysteries which puzzle you scientists but which are no mysteries to me. They are facts, and I have been shown the natural laws which govern them. For example, can you physiologists tell me anything about the spleen?'

"'Its functions have not been clearly defined,' said a man who spoke with a German accent.

"'Then when you have learned to define the functions of the spleen, which

we consider the storehouse of vital energy, you shall tell me why the laws of nature will not permit me to have an astral body. And now, I will inform you that around each of you there is an aura—an emanation, in which your thoughts, the likeness of those upon whom your imagination dwells, and the influences which prompt your words and actions, take shape and are visible to the eyes of those who see. And I can assure you that if you believed what I said you would be sorry that I should see through the foul and mephitic atmosphere which encompasses some of you to whom I am speaking—the noxious things you have attracted to yourselves.’

“‘You are frank, Madame,’ said the German, ‘but will you submit to a test of your powers of thought-reading?’

“‘You call me a charlatan and a fraud because I will not ring astral bells and perform juggling tricks to please you,—if you desire it, Herr Klein, I will tell you what I see.’

“She bent and spoke to him rapidly in German. He looked visibly discomposed. ‘Cease, Madame. That is sufficient.’

“‘Well?’ she asked with triumphant irony. ‘Am I a clever thought-reader? But let me light my cigarette.’ She puffed reflectively for a moment, then threw the cigarette away. ‘Why did I not bring my own *tabac*,’ she cried. ‘Ah, my good Klein! it is possible to have an aura which will bear the scrutiny of clear eyes, but now you shall leave me. I will talk to you no more.’

“Two gentlemen then drew near. ‘Madame Tamvaco,’ said one, ‘may I have the pleasure of making you acquainted with Major Graysett. He is good material—a convert worth making.’

“‘I am not a propagandist, Mr. Margrave,’ said the Seeress coldly, ‘or you would have been converted, as you term it, ere this. Take care. No one ever yet escaped me who rashly plunged into the maelstrom of my psychic influence. However, for the present, I am not concerned with you. Come and see me Saturday when I receive. . . . I am charmed to know you, Major Graysett,’ she added with a very winning smile. ‘You will see that I have both my exoteric and my esoteric meanings.’ . . .

“Presently as the crowd around her thinned, the young woman who had talked with her early in the evening again drew near and sat beside her. ‘Tell me,’ she whispered passionately, ‘what is it that you see in me? What has changed me? Is it a crime to love? What have I done to be so tortured?’

“An expression of the tenderest compassion swept over Madame Tamvaco’s face, and she spoke in a dreamy tone, unlike the brusqueness of her former mode of speech.

“‘Do you not know that each life we live is but one step of the Infinite Ladder which we must all mount to reach Eternity—but one day in the ages through which each spirit must pass to gain the Perfect Rest! You Christians preach that whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap, and never was more sublime truth conveyed in simple words. But you fall into the error of taking an infinitesimal part as the Great Whole. The night of dreaming which follows day is not the harvest.’

“‘Tell me how I can learn from you. I have no faith. I am in chains. While I am with you light seems to come. You refused to teach me once. Will you refuse again?’

“‘My poor woman!’ said the Seeress, ‘I can teach you but I cannot deliver you. Salvation is within yourself, in the immortal spirit over which neither man nor elementary thing can gain complete mastery. While there is in your heart the faintest aspiration after good, the faintest loathing of evil, it will never forsake you. You came to me once, and I warned you. I could do no more. I knew the peculiarity of your organization exposed you to perils you were not capable of comprehending. To rise to the spiritual plane, meant for you an ordeal for which in this life you could never be prepared. Safety lay for you on the physical plane, and in the development of your human sympathies and heart love—a different thing to the mere magnetic attraction which could only reawaken in you a dormant sense, and which is the medium of approach to your worst enemies. How can I in a few words expound the most subtle of philosophical problems? Listen. Evil and good are the two opposing forces, which, acting and reacting upon each other, result in the life of the universe. The atmosphere around us is crowded with forces, currents, influences, intelligences—call them what you will—to which we are more or less sensitive, according to individual temperament and moral and physical conditions. In some the barrier which divides our souls from these invisibles, needs but the lightest touch to be thrown down. This may be done by the force of our own purified aspirations, or by the will of a strongly magnetic person dissimilarly electrified to ourselves, who has within himself the power of controlling those forces, and who, in proportion as he is pure or impure, attracts the malignant or the beneficent, not only to himself, but to the subject whom he has infected with his own magnetism.’

“‘You are one of those unfortunate beings unprotected by a physical barrier, or by the strength and inherent purity of your own soul. Had you listened to the voice of your intuition, you would have fled from the man who is your husband, as you would flee from a foul vapour. To you he is deadly. He has the potentialities of a god or a demon. Ages to come will determine which. It is more than probable that knowledge will direct his will; and his aspirations—for he has the capacity to aspire—becoming gradually purified, may force him to choose the good. But with this, *you* have nothing to do. Your love for him has been mere physical attraction. You have never inspired him with one holy impulse. In marrying you, he did violence to his better self. You have never stimulated his yearning after the ideal even in its lower forms. Therein lies *his* hope of salvation. It is not *you* who have any power to influence his highest destinies.’

“‘She ceased. All this had been poured forth very rapidly and in a low, penetrating voice which seemed to come from far away, and yet pierced the very soul of her listener. Her eyes were strangely large and luminous, with a shadow of trouble in their depths; they gazed into space, as though there this mystic drama of conflicts and affinities was unfolding before her inner vision.



By some strange spell, it seemed as though these two were abstracted from the noisy throng,—with the effect that the transcendental utterances of the sibyl and the frivolous scene around were as separated worlds. . . .

"It was Saturday afternoon and Madame Tamvaco was at home to her friends. In a double sitting-room where several people had already gathered, she was seated in a large cane arm-chair placed in the draught of two windows. She was reading a newspaper, and fanning herself in an agitated manner, every now and then delivering a volley of ejaculations in some foreign language. She looked tired and ill, and was evidently in a state of nervous exasperation. Gathered round her was a little knot of scientific-looking men. These she began to introduce with a comprehensive wave of her fan. 'Professor Dowsett, Professor Woakes, Professor Borrodaile.' But the Professors were far too intent upon their own business to wot of introductions. Professor Dowsett, small, alert, with a note-book open in his hand, rushed up to another and asked in an eager aside, 'Have you had any phenomena?' proceeding to make a note of the reply.

"Margrave paused by Graysett and said in his dry, neutral tone—'You will not imbibe any wisdom from the fountain head to-day, if that is what you have come for. The Sibyl was in good form the other day, and rang some astral bells greatly to the edification of Professor Dowsett, who has brought his brother professors of the "Psychological Investigation" department to make a report. But the old lady is in a singularly impracticable mood. She has an indigestion, and the papers have been making fun of her.'

"Madame Tamvaco had now thrown herself back in her chair, and was rolling cigarettes with nervous energy, while the three professors maintained their positions round her in spite of new comers. Professor Dowsett, the showman as it seemed, looked uneasy and conscious of responsibility, while in persuasive accents he urged his request. 'Madame, will you not do something for Dr. Borrodaile? Will you not give him a proof of the reality of occult phenomena?'

"'What do you take me for?' cried Madame Tamvaco. 'Am I a juggler? Did you expect that I would make cups and saucers, and give a manifestation of electric bells in all your pockets? I cannot do it. I am ill. I am worn-out and ill-used. It's time that I disintegrated. I can tell you the world is not a pleasant place to live in when people write lies about you. . . . Now listen; I have devoted my life to a search for Truth. I, weak woman, weighted by bodily infirmities, less worthy than many of you here to be an instrument for the service of Humanity, I frankly tell you that I have clamoured till the door has been opened to me. I come forth to do my people good. What then? What do they call me? The Champion Impostor of Christendom! Oh, you Christendom! you are worse than the wolves. They only eat one of themselves when he has been killed by the others. But you—you kill a man first and then you devour him. Upon my word I am very good to you gentlemen,' she went on fiercely. 'You come here to question me; and I answer your questions, while all the time you call me to yourselves a cheat and an impostor.'

I am not angry at that. But when you say my Masters are a fraud, my blood boils. I cannot bear it. Attack me if you will; but do not blaspheme against that which is sacred. Respect the faith of millions. Respect those mighty ones who tread in the fourth path of holiness; for *they* are holy.'

"As her enthusiasm intensified, her voice became sweet and bell-like, and the changes which took place in the countenance of this remarkable woman were astonishing in their rapidity and variety. They resembled the play of lightning upon a landscape which alternates between sullen gloom and dazzling splendour. She took a cigarette from the heap she had been accumulating, lighted it, and after a few whiffs, began to question Professor Woakes in a composed, candid manner, about certain experiments he had been conducting, on the effect of the electro-magnet upon the human body. Presently the American Professor broke in with repressed impatience—

"'And now, Madame Tamvaco, are we to have no phenomena? Not even a precipitation—a portrait produced without contact with the pencil? It is a promise.'

"'No,' exclaimed Madame Tamvaco. 'I have said before, I am not a conjurer. My Professor, I will keep my promise; but another time; not for these gentlemen who have brought their note-books, and who will go from me to Errington the medium, and say which is the greatest cheat. Errington is not a cheat; that I will tell you, though I do not like mediums. I have shown Professor Dowsett some phenomena; and that is not enough. Here is Professor—what is your name? Bor—Borrodaile. He is a sceptic. He is a disciple of your Huxley. He will not give to anyone but himself and his Huxley the right to think.' She addressed him fiercely, 'Well, what can I do to convince you? Would you believe if you had phenomena?'

"'I can't say,' replied Professor Borrodaile stolidly, 'it would depend upon the conditions.'

"'Would you believe if you saw me in my astral body?'

"'I must be satisfied first about what I had eaten for supper.'

"Madame Tamvaco glared at him tragically. 'Oh, Protoplasm! Protoplasm!' she cried; 'Huxley's Protoplasm! Why, you are the most sceptical sceptic I ever beheld. You are a worse doubter than Thomas Didymus. I assure you that you will go to the other extreme. That will be your fate. You will become credulous. You will turn spiritualist when you are a little older.'

"There was a general laugh, in which the Professor joined.

"'Well,' she said, returning to the attack, 'do you believe in Errington's slate writing?'

"'I cannot say.'

"'Do you believe he is a charlatan?'

"'I cannot say.'

"'What do you believe?'

"'I admit,' said Professor Borrodaile, 'that I am surprised. It is my impression that Errington is not a fraud, but at present there is no evidence

to convince me that the dead have the power of communicating with the living or that the spirit is capable of operating upon material bodies.'

"'It does not follow that because there are phenomena they are caused by dead people,' said Madame Tamvaco. 'There is an astral body, or there is not. If you admit the astral body which is invisible, you must admit that it can produce phenomena.' The Professor again stroked his beard and shook his head. 'You are sure that you have got a body?' sarcastically demanded Madame Tamvaco. 'I can make you invisible to Professor Dowsett if you please; for I will magnetize him so that he cannot see you. You will admit that you have a body, but you will not admit that you have a spirit.'

"'I have never experienced anything which could convince me that I have a spirit.'

"She held up her arms with a gesture of despair. 'Oh, you scientists!' cried she; 'I will have nothing to do with you. You have surrounded yourselves with an atmosphere so dense that you cannot see through it. You are caught in your own trap. You are behind the march of science, not in advance of it. Even if convinced you would not be honest enough to own it. You would be *chassé* from your society. Your fellow-scientists would shunt you. Ah! why not be honest? Why cling to the old prejudices? Why not rise and make a rush for knowledge and grasp it?'"

The voice dies into silence; the turned-back flash-light fades out. It lighted for us, for a moment, that mysterious figure—temperamental Russian and veiled prophetess; feeble woman and irresistible Fohatic Force; disregarded witness and unconquered Messenger of the Gods, whom we know as Madame Blavatsky.

L. S.

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*Genuine convictions do not show themselves; they prove themselves.*

LAMARTINE.

# THE CREST JEWEL OF WISDOM

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ATTRIBUTED TO SHANKARA ACHARYA

## VII

THE mighty sages who have cast away passion, who have cast away sensual feasts, who have gained quietude and control, knowing the Real in the supreme consummation, have reached the highest joy through union with the Self.

Therefore, discerning this supreme reality of the Self, in its own nature the sum of bliss, shake off the delusion built up by thine own thought, free thyself, attain, awake!

Through soul-vision which rests unwavering in the Self, behold the reality of the Self with the eye of clear illumination; when the truth revealed by the Scripture has been perfectly discerned beyond all question, doubt will not return again. (475)

In gaining the Self, which is truth, wisdom and the essence of joy, by freeing thyself from the bondage of the fetters of unwisdom, the Scripture, right reasoning and the word of the teacher are means of enlightenment, and the realization of the Self, inwardly attained, is a means of enlightenment.

Freedom from bondage, joy, wholeness of thought and happiness must be known by oneself; the knowledge of others is only inference.

As the Masters who stand on the further shore and the Scriptures reveal, let the wise man cross over through that wisdom which comes through the divine grace of the Lord, the Logos.

Through his own experience knowing his Self undivided, reaching the supreme attainment, let him stand in the Self, through the Self which is without separateness.

This is the meaning, this is the final word of the teaching of wisdom: the individual life is the Eternal, the whole world is the Eternal; to be established without sense of separateness in the secondless Eternal is liberation; this too the Scriptures declare. (480)

Attaining the supreme reality through the Master's words and the evidence of the Scriptures, and gaining union with the Self, with heart at rest, concentrated in the Self, his whole being unwavering, the disciple rested in the Self; then, intending his mind for a certain time on the supreme Eternal, rising, in perfect joy, he spoke these words:

Thought has ceased, activity of desire has fallen away, through the oneness of the Eternal and the Self, through illumination; I know not this; I know naught other than this; what is it? how great? It is shoreless joy!

Not by word can it be spoken, nor by mind can it be thought; the vast

expanse of the ocean of the supreme Eternal is filled full with the nectar of the bliss of the Self. Rejoicing like the rocky bed of a torrent suddenly flooded by the rains, drinking in each least drop, my heart rejoices now in the joy of the Self.

Whither has the world gone? By whom taken away? Into what has it dissolved? No longer do I behold it: a mighty marvel! (485)

What is to be put away? What is to be taken? What other is there, what distinction, in the mighty ocean of the Eternal, filled with the nectar of partless bliss?

Of the world, I no longer see or hear or know anything; I have become the Self, whose nature is being and bliss.

Honour, honour to thee, Master, mighty-souled, liberated from bondage, most excellent being, in thy nature the essence of eternal, secondless joy, mighty, a shoreless ocean of compassion.

As he who, wearied by the heat of day, is refreshed by the abundant beams of the rising moon, so in an instant have I gained the dwelling of the Self, the partless majesty and joy, the imperishable.

Rich am I, I have attained my end, I have gained liberation from the dragon of the world. (490)

I am without attachment, without members, without distinguishing mark, without partition; I have attained to peace, I am infinite, I am stainless, immemorial.

I am neither he who acts, nor he who experiences, I am beyond change, beyond ceremonial rites; I am in essence purified intelligence, I am unconditioned, ever blest.

I am other than he who sees, hears, speaks, acts, experiences; I am eternal, the innermost, beyond ritual acts, boundless, detached, the plenary awakened Self.

I am not this, I am not that, but the radiance in both, supreme, made pure; empty within and without, yet filled, the secondless Eternal, in truth am I.

The beginningless reality, like which there is naught else, far from the fictions of "thou" and "I" and "this" and "that," the fine essence of eternal bliss, the truth, the secondless Eternal, verily, am I. (495)

I am the divine Logos, who makes an end of hell, I am the Spirit, who takes the fortress, I am the Lord; I am partless intelligence, the supreme witness, for me there is no distinction of "Lord" and "I" and "mine."

I am established within all beings through the Self of wisdom, secure within and without; I am both he who experiences and what is experienced, whatever was seen as separate before, with the thought of "that."

Within me, partless ocean of joy, manifold world-waves arise and sink again, driven to and fro by the winds of Glamour.

As a mirage this bodily form and the finer vestures are built up, and the worlds are brought into momentary being, just as in Time, which is partless, continuous, the ages, the years and seasons are imagined.

The superstructure injures not the firm foundation, whatever deluded, sinful

men may build; nor does the mighty river of water in the mirage moisten even a span of the dry desert. (500)

Like the shining ether, I endure through ages, like the sun I am marked by radiance, like the mountain I stand ever firm, I am shoreless like the ocean.

As the clear sky is not bound by clouds, I am not bound by the body; how then can I be limited by its modes of waking, dreaming, dreamlessness?

The vesture comes, the vesture goes, it works works and meets experience; the vesture withers and dies, but I remain, set firm like a mighty mountain.

Not mine are manifesting and withdrawal, since I am ever of one form undivided; how could he, who is of the essence of the one Self, without crevice or division, full like the ether, be subject to pain?

How can I be involved in righteous or unrighteous deeds, I, who am other than the powers that act, other than thought, without change, without form, partless, conscious of bliss? Thus the Scripture says: the Spirit is followed neither by good nor evil. (505)

Whatever thing, hot or cold, fair or foul, may touch his shadow, does not in the least affect the man himself, who is other than it.

The properties of what he witnesses do not affect the witness, who is apart from them, disinterested; just as the properties of the house do not affect the lamp.

As the sun which witnesses the act, as the fire which leads the conflagration, as the rope which holds what is raised, so is this Self of mine, dwelling on the summit.

I am not he who acts nor he who causes acts, I am not he who experiences or causes experience, I am not he who sees nor he who causes seeing, the Self am I, self-shining, secondless.

The Self stands steadfast like the sun; seeing its reflection perturbed when the vesture is perturbed, men of deluded mind attribute the perturbation to the Self, saying: I act, I experience, I am slain. (510)

Whether this inert body traverse the water or the land, I am not touched by the properties of these, as the ether is not touched by the properties of the jar.

All conditions, of actor or enjoyer, of evil or deluded, of inert or bond or free, are built up through the mind, and are not lasting realities in the Self, the supreme Eternal, alone, without a second.

Let there be ten, a hundred, a thousand transformations of nature; what are these changes to me? The sky is not stained by the lowering cloud.

All that is perceived, from the unmanifest to the material world, is reflection only; like space, beginningless, endless, subtile is the secondless Eternal; that, verily, am I.

Upholding all, illumining all things, cause of every form, penetrating all, yet untouched by all, eternal, pure, steadfast, without separateness is the secondless Eternal; that, verily, am I. (515)

Wherein all differing appearances are merged without remainder, of concealed nature, not to be approached by thought, in essence truth, wisdom, bliss, formed of bliss is the secondless Eternal; that, verily, am I.

Without act am I, without change, without division, without form, without separateness, eternal, underived, secondless.

I am in essence the All, I am the All, I have transcended the All, I am secondless, perfect, partless illumination, I am bliss, I am the inmost.

This self-conquest, sovereignty, dominion, through my Master's compassion, grace, might and favour, has been gained by me; obeisance to my gracious Master of mighty soul, obeisance to thee, and again obeisance.

I was wandering in the great dream forest of birth, decay and death created by delusion, day by day afflicted by many pains, stalked by the tiger, egotism; through infinite compassion awakening me from my dream, thou, Master, hast become my saviour. (520)

Reverence to the One, whatever it be! Reverence to that Light which shines universal, and to thee, king of teachers!

Beholding that excellent disciple bowed in obeisance, who had attained to the joy of the vision of the Soul, who had gained illumination, the lord of instructors, mighty-souled, heartily rejoicing, again addressed to him this final word:

The world is the expression of the thought of the Eternal, therefore all Being, everywhere, is the Eternal; thus behold it in all modes of being with serene understanding, illumined by the Higher Self. That Being which is everywhere beheld apart from form by those possessing vision, what else can be the Soul's garden of delight for the righteous knower of the Eternal?

What wise man would rejoice in empty things, rejecting the experience of that essence of supreme bliss? When the great, joy-bringing moon is shining, who wishes to behold a pictured moon?

For there is no satisfaction in experiencing an unreal object, nor any escape from pain; do thou stand satisfied, rejoicing, resting ever in the supreme Self, through the experience of that essence of secondless delight. (525)

Ever beholding that supreme Self everywhere, resting thy thought in the secondless Self, let the time pass for thee, mighty-minded, in the experience of the bliss of the Self.

Conceiving separateness in that partless Self of illumination, which is without separateness, is like building dwellings in the air; therefore, gaining supreme serenity through the Self which is ever secondless joy, rejoice in silence.

The Soul's supreme tranquillity, brooding in silence, dissolves the insubstantial buildings of the mind; from this, through the supreme Self, which is the Eternal, straightway comes joy in undivided bliss.

There is no more excellent source of joy than silence free from all mind-images, for him who has discerned the true being of the Self, drinking in the essence of the joy of the Self.

Whether walking, standing, sitting, lying down, or in whatever state, let the saint, possessing wisdom, freely dwell, rejoicing in the supreme Self. (530)

Neither place nor time nor posture nor position, or any other rule, is the cause of release from bondage; for the sage of mighty soul, who has attained to the Real, the illumination of the supreme Self is the rule of life.

What rule will avail, to know even an earthen pot, unless it be perceived? When it is perceived, there is clear understanding.

The supreme Self shines forth ever perfect, when it is perceived; neither place nor time nor ritual purification is needed further.

The realization that I am Devadatta needs no certifying; so is it with the knowledge that I am the Eternal, for him who knows the Eternal.

What illumination does he need, for whom the world other than the Self, light as chaff, is revealed by the radiance of the Eternal, as the whole world is revealed by the sun? (535)

What can illumine that Light whence Vedas, scriptures, ancient histories, and even all beings derive their value?

This supreme Self, immeasurable, is self-luminous, of infinite power, the source of all experience. Knowing that supreme Self, and freed from bondage, the most excellent knower of the Eternal gains the victory.

Things of sense neither wound him nor delight him, he is no longer either allured or revolted by them; in the supreme Self he joys and rejoices ever, delighting in the essence of that unrivalled bliss.

As a child, free from hunger and bodily pain, rejoices in his play, so the sage delights, happy, free from "my" and "I."

His food comes to him freely, without anxiety or sorrow, he drinks from the clear stream, he moves unfettered everywhere, he rests light-hearted in the forest or the burying ground, his vesture needs neither washing nor drying, wide space is his dwelling, the earth is his couch, all roads and pathways are open for his feet, so the sage rejoices in the supreme Eternal. (540)

Dwelling in a body like the air-ships of the gods, he tastes boundless joys freely presented to him, the knower of the supreme Self is as a child obedient to a higher will; he is of form unmanifest, untouched by allurements.

Clothed in space, or wearing a vesture, clothed in skin or in pure thought, as a madman or a child or a ghost, he walks the earth.

Withdrawing desire from things of desire, the silent sage walks in solitude, ever contented in the supreme Self, through the supreme Self he stands firm.

Now as a madman, now a sage, now a glorious, great king, now a humble wanderer, now solitary as a serpent, now honoured, now lightly esteemed, now unknown, thus goes the sage, ever rejoicing in the highest bliss. (544)

Though without riches, yet ever content; though without a helper, yet of mighty power; though bereft, yet ever rejoicing; though afflicted, full of joy.

Acting, though not himself the actor; reaping the reward, though not seeking enjoyment; possessing a body, though beyond the body; though hemmed in, yet going everywhere.

Neither good nor evil, neither fair nor foul touch him, dwelling ever beyond the body, full of the vision of the Eternal.

Pleasure and pain, things fair and foul are for him who is in bondage to the natural or psychic body, falsely attributing selfhood to these; but for the silent seer, one with the supreme Self, whose bonds have fallen away, what fruit is any longer fair or foul?



Because the sun appears to be swallowed by the darkness of eclipse, folk say it is swallowed, misled, not knowing the truth.

So, though the knower of the Eternal be freed from the body and all bonds, those who are deluded see him as possessing a body, because they see the semblance of a body. (550)

As a snake puts off its slough, he stands freed from the body, moving hither and thither before the breath of life.

As the tree is borne by the river to low land or high, the body is borne by destiny to those whose time for bodily experience has come.

Because of the impulses engendered by former works which are being exhausted, he who has gained freedom from the body dwells as though possessing a body, among those who are reaping experience; having attained, he dwells as a witness, silent, like the centre of a wheel moving neither up nor down.

Neither does he engage his powers in objects of perception, nor does he turn away from them, but stands as an onlooker; nor does he desire at all the reward of any act, since his heart is filled with the nectar of the essence of pure bliss.

He who stands firm in the supreme Self, seeking neither the seen nor the unseen, like Divinity, self-revealed, he is the most excellent knower of the Eternal. (555)

Though living, yet ever free, his goal attained, that most excellent knower of the Eternal, when the vesture falls away, being the Eternal, enters the secondless Eternal.

Like a man wearing an actor's costumes of honour or dishonour, so, verily, that excellent knower of the Eternal is ever the Eternal and no other.

Even before the coming of death, the body of the sage who has become one with the Eternal is consumed by the fire of the knowledge of the Eternal, as a withered leaf is consumed.

For the silent sage who stands in the real Self which is the Eternal, through the Self which is formed of perfect, undivided bliss, there is no consideration of fit place or time or circumstance for sloughing off this vesture of skin and flesh and corruption.

To be rid of the body and the ascetic's water pot and staff is not the true deliverance; to be rid of the heart's knot of unwisdom, that is deliverance.

What joy or sorrow is it to the tree, whether its leaf fall in a rivulet or a river, in a favoured field or a sacrificial enclosure?

The destruction of the body, the sense-powers, the life-breath, the mind, is as the destruction of a leaf, a flower, a fruit; but the Self stands firm like the tree, the Self of true Being, formed of bliss.

The sages say that the destruction of the vesture of unwisdom is the revelation of the Real, the true Self, according to the Scripture, "the Self is a realm of pure illumination."

"Imperishable, verily, is the Self," the Scripture declares, concerning the Self, revealing the Self as indestructible among things that perish.

As stone and wood and grass and grain and straw are all burned and reduced to dust, so, verily, the body, the sense-powers, the life-breath, the mind, all that

is manifest, burned up by the fire of wisdom, return to the nature of the higher Self. (565)

As darkness, being of opposite nature, is dissolved in the radiance of the sun, so, verily, all that is manifest melts away in the Eternal.

As the space of ether remains clear space when the earthen jar is destroyed, so, verily, when the vesture is dissolved, the Eternal is the Eternal.

As milk poured into milk, oil into oil, water into water, blends in complete oneness, so, verily, the silent sage who knows the Self becomes one with the Self.

Thus gaining bodiless liberation, pure Being, undivided, the Being of the Eternal, the liberated sage returns no more.

Since the body of unwisdom is burned up by the illumination of oneness with the real Self, and he has become one with the Eternal, how should he again come forth from the Eternal? (570)

Both bondage and liberation from bondage are built up by Glamour, and have no true being in the Self; just as the appearance and disappearance of the fancied serpent have no real existence in the rope, which has remained unchanged.

There is no veiling or enwrapping of the Eternal; since there is naught other than the Eternal, it cannot be veiled. If there were aught else, the single being of the Eternal would be forfeited, but the Scripture admits no duality.

Vainly do the deluded attribute to the Real the bondage and liberation which belong only to the mind; just as the sun is hidden, when the observer is wrapped in cloud. But the Eternal remains secondless, detached Consciousness, one, everlasting.

The belief that the Real comes into being, or ceases to be, belongs to the mind, not to the eternal Reality. (574)

Therefore, these two, bondage and liberation, are built up by Glamour, they are not in the real Self, which is partless, actless, serene, faultless, stainless; what division can there be in the secondless, supreme Being, one like space?

There is neither surcease nor origin, neither bondage nor perfecting, neither seeker for liberation nor liberated; this is the transcendental truth.

Among the crest jewels of all the Scriptures, this is the ultimate mystery. This supreme mystery has been revealed to thee by me to-day; the sin of the Age of Darkness washed away, thy mind set free from desire, I have led thee, seeking liberation, as my own child, to thy goal.

Hearing thus the word of the Master, humbly, and with obedient heart, he went forth, with the Master's blessing, set free from bondage.

The Master also went forth straightway, his mind immersed in the ocean of being and bliss, bringing purity to the whole world.

Thus, through this dialogue of Master and disciple, the revelation of the supreme Self has been made, to awake to joy the souls of those who seek liberation. (580)

From those who reverently accept this benignant teaching, all the sins of the heart are cast out, one by one; they have discarded worldly pleasure, their

hearts have entered peace, self-ruled and seeking liberation, they rejoice in the nectar of the Scripture.

To those who are wandering in the desert of the world, athirst, on the path of circling birth and death, weary, oppressed and worn by sorrow as by the sun's fierce rays, may this teaching reveal the secondless Eternal, bringing joy, like an ocean of nectar near at hand; for this teaching of Shankara brings victory and leads to Nirvana.

C. J.

(The End)

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*We do not need more Material development, we need more Spiritual development; we do not need more Intellectual power, we need more Moral power; we do not need more Knowledge, we need more Character; we do not need more Government, we need more Culture; we do not need more Law, we need more Religion; we do not need more of the things that are Seen, we need more of the things that are Unseen.*

CALVIN COOLIDGE.

# EXPERIMENTS IN EDUCATION

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WITHIN the last fifty years there has been, among all classes of people, a constantly increasing interest in education. Once the principle of compulsory education for all had been accepted, there rose up a new generation determined to secure the benefits of free education for the mass of the people. One of the chief aims of the new democracy is for its citizens to "get education," and with it the innumerable blessings and benefits which education is supposed to confer. But it is not only in the field of elementary education that there has been a great expansion and development; the spirit of "progress" has influenced every branch of secondary education, and of higher, or University education. A new class of educationalists has come into being, whose sole business it is to study and criticize educational methods, to pull down antiquated systems, and to build up again, with all the delight and enthusiasm of children piling up castles of bricks, and with the same impermanence of construction. The outside observer is bound to admit that the whole of modern education is in a state of flux and change; he often fails to find that bed-rock of common sense which should be the only sure foundation of these changing systems. The theorists spend time in discussing details, but it would seem that they fail to achieve one essential thing,—a clearly-defined ideal towards which all efforts should tend. Indeed it seems difficult to find a common aim or purpose, on which they are all agreed. A class of students at a University were once asked to prepare a comprehensive definition of education; they hurriedly looked up ancient and modern records and prepared an imposing list of some fifty definitions, taken from many sources. It did not occur to many in that class to prepare a definition of their own; few cared to think the matter out to its conclusion, for if Aristotle's definition of education did not satisfy them, nor any of the other forty-nine definitions, they could always accept that of the professor—which, indeed, was the most profitable course to follow. What, then, is meant by education? The word *e-ducare* means, literally, to "draw out," to develop; most educators will agree that some form of development is implied in education. But what is it that they want to develop in the child? That is the critical question that every educator must face. Some consider that the physical growth and well-being of the child is the essential; others, aiming higher, value intellectual training and achievement; others think that moral character is the gravest consideration; a few define certain spiritual values as the ideal of all their efforts. In general, they all agree that education must prepare the child for life, but opinions vary widely as to what are the important things in life for which he must be fitted. Because of that variety of opinion, there have grown up many and varying systems of education, which have been a matter of experiment throughout the ages. Interest in education is as old as mankind; it is an outer expression of that

inner cry, uttered by every thinker who has been willing to look life in the face "What must I do to be saved?"

It is interesting to consider different systems of education that have influenced Western thought, and to enquire how far they have been successful, on their own lines. It is usual to look to Greece for the dawn of civilization in the West; historians forget that the Greek genius was of gradual development. It did not spring, like Athene, fully armed from the head of Zeus, but evolved from far older systems of thought, going back to remote antiquity; for the sources of Western thought can be traced back to Egypt, to India, to the land of the Chaldees. It is true, none the less, that there is a direct and intimate connection between European civilization and Greek thought.

The student of Greek education finds two contrasting and clearly-defined systems: that of the Spartans and that of the Athenians. Spartan discipline has become proverbial, and indeed it produced a race of soldiers that, for hardness and endurance, has rarely been surpassed. The more versatile Athenian despised such a narrowing of life and thought; he considered that education should be an all-round development, and should make for general excellence,—ἀρετή. Physical and intellectual development must proceed simultaneously, and the Greek boy went to school, quite young, to learn music and gymnastics,—“music” including the study of Homer and the memorizing of hymns to the gods. The aim of such training was to produce balance and harmony. Later, other subjects were added to his study, but there was always a great deal of time spent on physical exercise, resulting in a race that, for its physical excellence, has been the admiration and envy of later ages. As the boys grew to maturity, it was considered that their further education could best be provided through association with the older men who frequented the gymnasium. The Athenians had a great admiration for brilliant speaking and forensic display, and there arose a demand for trained speakers and orators to sway the law-courts and political meetings. A new class of teachers thus acquired fame in Greece, for they went about teaching the science of oratory, and exacted in return high fees. These teachers came to be known as Sophists; they included experts in all branches of science and learning, and contributed much to the subject-matter of education. It is probable that some of them were unprincipled, and were more intent on showing skill in argument than in seeking truth. Socrates saw the danger of such a system; his merciless logic pierced the shallow pretence of these “wise men”; by his clever dialectic he proved that the wisest of them knew, in fact, very little. Of course he incurred the odium of teachers and pupils, yet he attracted around him a band of promising men, some of whom were genuinely desirous for truth. He never sought to enforce his own opinions, but rather to train men, who were willing to undergo his severe cross-questioning, to think for themselves and to seek truth above all things. Knowledge, he held, came largely through recollection, and afterwards through a process of intuition; the knowledge of self was the highest branch of learning. He would not call himself a teacher; his function was rather, he declared, to bring souls to birth. In

that he was the forerunner of that other great apostle of the Greeks who, some five hundred years later, was to reveal to them a new and living Truth,—St. Paul, who laboured, as he testified, “until Christ be formed in you.” Socrates, like other great Teachers, was attacked by those who preferred darkness rather than the light; in defence of his principles, he faced death with high hope and unflinching courage. It was left to his pupil, Plato, to carry on and extend his work, in the school of philosophy which has influenced centuries of thought. Plato revealed to men a new ideal of Beauty, Goodness, Truth, and developed a rigorous system of intellectual training in the pursuit of Truth. The schools of philosophy that arose later contributed to the search for Truth, or, failing that, wandered in the mists of idle speculation; but, at the outset, these schools set before the Greeks a new and a higher ideal of education.

Rome came with her triumphant armies, to conquer the Greeks, and to be in turn conquered and ensnared by the brilliance of their intellect. It is generally considered that the Roman influence in Europe is most clearly discerned in matters of law and government, in their institutions and organization. On the side of education they made an important contribution; they insisted on the binding power of parental authority. Education of boys was, to a great extent, developed in the home, by both father and mother; it tended to train children to understand the meaning of duty and to respond to that call. The Roman martial discipline was akin to the Spartan system, and developed a fine type of courage and manliness. It was only when discipline relaxed, and luxury took its place, and mob-rule prevailed, that the name of Rome ceased to hold the world in its sway.

With the advent of Christianity came an entirely new ideal that found its inspiration in the law of love. It was a new conception of Truth, revealed in the person of the Founder, who came to bear witness to the Truth. Thereafter, when the Church became organized, and extended her influence, she gained a large measure of control in the matter of education. It is certain that the monastic Orders did much to save civilization in Europe from being overwhelmed in the midst of barbarian invasions, by keeping alive the torch of learning and the light of Truth. When times grew more peaceful, they were able to found schools and to teach children. Charlemagne realized the importance of such foundations, and called Alcuin from England to help him in the organization of schools in his empire. Christian education, in its highest ideal, sought to train children in the knowledge of God and in the service of Christ. There were two main ideals of service: that of the monk, who renounced the world, for a greater good; that of the knight, who sought to champion the cause of Truth and Justice in the world. The opportunity for the world was then magnificent; in the eleventh and twelfth centuries there was the possibility of combining the wisdom of the Greeks and the learning of the Arabs with the highest ideals of Christianity. It was, perhaps, intended that these converging streams of thought should meet and be fused into a wider conception of Truth, of Goodness, of Beauty; but the attempt which was made then did not come to fruition; perhaps the mediæval education had not prepared the minds

and souls of men to receive Truth in anything but a limited form. It has been left to a later century to reincarnate on earth that ideal of the Divine Wisdom.

At the time of the Renaissance, enthusiasm for classical learning revived, and inspired art and literature, but the inspiration failed to find its highest expression, and degenerated into admiration for mere physical beauty and intellectual brilliance. There came a new idea of the importance of the individual, an idea that finds its counterpart in modern education and in the present ideals of democracy. From the time of the Renaissance, new schools of education have grown up, with many varying systems; few of them have achieved the high ideal set by chivalry, the fine standards taught by the Religious Orders of the Middle Ages. In the conflict of religious strife and bitterness, there arose a new Order that was determined to fight the world with its own methods; the Jesuits realized the immense influence of education and learning, and set to work to found schools that should prepare men for that conflict, in the world. The Jesuit system of education has become famous; it remains, at its best, a fine ideal of training and discipline, for it recognizes the greater glory of God as the sole aim of life, and the chief object of education, insisting that education must include the highest possible development of intellect and of will.

In the education of the present day there is a type of school that is interesting because of the men it has produced, and that is the English public school for boys—schools such as Eton, Harrow, Charterhouse and others. Sometimes the system is criticized because it makes too much of athletic prowess and the social qualities, and too little of intellectual attainment; but it is certain that the great English public schools have produced men who have contributed their part to founding and holding the British Empire overseas,—and that is no mean achievement. A schoolmaster in one of those schools was once discussing their educational standards, and he placed the standard of values of his school as follows:—(1) Make everything contribute to the building of moral character; (2) Encourage scholarship by every possible means; (3) Let the games take care of themselves. It is, perhaps, unusual to find the games last in value, but that school has justified its existence in a remarkable degree, and it is beginning to be influential throughout the country.

Every nation in Europe has a different standard and system of education from that of its neighbour. In America, during the early part of the last century, the fine ideals and strict discipline maintained in the schools, contributed much to produce a splendid type of men. Now that ideals, in general, have degenerated throughout the country and have tended to be levelled down into a supreme desire for commercial advancement, the schools and education have suffered accordingly. There is still much talk of ideals, but the general trend of education is to equip men and women to meet the struggle for existence, and to emerge victorious, and materially prosperous. The value of each subject taught is being questioned; its sole merit is considered to be its immediate commercial or utilitarian interest. Judged by that standard, the study of the classics, of ancient history and philosophy, the mental training gained

in the study of higher mathematics, is each in turn weighed in the balance and set aside as worthless, in the face of modern demands. The new standards, suggest "citizenship," "the right use of leisure," and other vague definitions as the new and right ideals of education. In most of the schools controlled by democratic governments, the aim is to teach the children the rudiments of learning, but the higher side of education, the training of character, the teaching of the knowledge of God, is utterly neglected; in some countries it is even forbidden by law. The child, it is said, must find in himself his own standards and ideals; the result is the encouragement of an aggressive individualism, which bodes ill for the rising generation, for they are the first to suffer bitterly from such a system. They suffer in an enfeebled, restless, nervous physique; in their untrained, undisciplined intellect; in their uncontrolled, unstable emotional nature; in the fact that their spiritual growth has been dwarfed and stunted. They cry out against the educators, with that terrible inarticulate cry of children who have asked for bread and have been given a stone. The blame rests with those who will not recognize that no education is worthy of the name, unless it has as its foundation a firm and enlightened discipline. There can be no learning without discipline, no happiness in life without self-control. Students of a higher Wisdom recognize the intimate connection, in word and in fact, between "discipline" and "discipleship." Of that Wisdom, it is written, "she is an infinite treasure to men, which they that use become the friends of God, being commended for the gift of discipline." Those friends of God are willing to take on a share of the ignorance and darkness and misery of striving humanity, that thereby they may be enabled to guide souls towards the Light. They look to the example of one who himself "hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows . . . the chastisement of our peace (*disciplina pacis*) was upon him."

There is, in our days, a new school of psychology which is gravely concerned with the problem of how children learn anything. Psychology, indeed, is a misnomer, for its exponents take no account of spiritual values and scarcely admit that the child has a soul; they are concerned with all kinds of mechanical and artificial devices for measuring brain-knowledge, for discovering how the child begins to acquire knowledge. Sometimes these modern psychologists come across truths that are profoundly significant, but because they have no higher principles, no true standard to judge the "things of the spirit," these truths become distorted into mere absurdities, or idle speculations, to ensnare the minds of men.

What then is the remedy for all this confusion? It would seem that, in the first place, it is necessary to arrive at a definition of education that extends beyond the acquisition of mere brain-knowledge, and reaches down to the fundamental things of life. "Why did God make you?" asks a Christian catechism, and the answer is given in no uncertain terms: "To know God, to love Him, and to serve Him in this world." In another version, the duty to God is more fully explained: "To love Him with all my heart and with all my mind and with all my soul and with all my strength." If that definition were



more generally accepted, it would form an excellent basis for every educational system. Education, to be complete, must be on the lines of an all-round development,—physical, moral, intellectual, spiritual, that the child may be taught to utilize, to the full, every God-given power and faculty, in the service of the Highest. To neglect any of these aspects is to court failure; “a sound mind in a sound body” may be a fine achievement, but it is of little value unless the child has been taught to prize Truth above all things, and to seek first ‘the kingdom of God and His righteousness.’ That is where the function of the teacher is found to require a high degree of training and vocation. In the East this is understood, where teachers are held in reverence, and where there is some knowledge of the binding power of the Guru-parampara chain. In the West there is, unfortunately, no such understanding, and it is left to individual teachers to discover their own responsibility, and the greatness of their opportunity in the teaching of children. The realization brings with it a sense of their own limitations, and the need, on their part, to undergo severe training in the school of Wisdom; for they can only teach Truth in so far as they have themselves experienced it, at first-hand. It is written of the Master Christ, that he began “to do and to teach,” and the order of the words shows the significance of the doing, as preceding the teaching of others. Those who would follow in the Way he pointed out, can find no better training for teaching others, than in studying his teaching and his method, so vividly described in the Gospel narrative. It is a method that can be found in the books of Wisdom of all times, and in the example of all great Teachers. In *them* is the source of inspiration, and work done unreservedly for them cannot fail to bear fruit, perhaps in far-off ages to come. For the teacher, who realizes his vocation, works not for the present but for Eternity, and there is in his own heart an eternal Hope: “Thine eyes shall behold thy Teacher, and the land of far distances.”

S. C.

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*Educate, or govern, they are one and the same word. Education does not mean teaching people to know what they do not know. It means teaching them to behave as they do not behave. And the true “compulsory education” which the people now ask of you is not catechism, but drill. It is not teaching the youth of England the shapes of letters and the tricks of numbers; and then leaving them to turn their arithmetic to roguery, and their literature to lust. It is, on the contrary, training them into the perfect exercise and kingly continence of their bodies and souls. It is a painful, continual, and difficult work; to be done by kindness, by watching, by warning, by precept, and by praise,—but above all—by example.—RUSKIN.*

# ANCESTOR WORSHIP

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THE worship of departed parents and forbears was no doubt the earliest of the deflections from, or misunderstandings of, the teachings of the Adept Kings who were sent to show the Third Race man the way in which he should walk. The worship of the dead is as old as the worship of a Supreme Being, so far at least as we can learn from history and tradition, and we find it existent among some of the lowest of savage tribes, who have forgotten their gods, but are ever mindful of the dead who once dwelt amongst them. Not only savages but many of the most civilized nations of their time have honoured their dead by prayer and sacrifice, inspired thereto by either love or fear, or simply by the desire of gaining possessions and ensuring success in material undertakings, or to obtain recovery from illness.

The existence of this form of worship is noted in all parts of the world where travellers have penetrated. Captain Cook found it in the islands of the Pacific, and it is described as practised by the aborigines of Siberia: in Mysore and Annam, in darkest Africa and among the dwellers in Amazonian forests. In ancient times it was sometimes associated with terrible cruelties to the living, the wives and the slaves of the dead ruler being slain at his sepulture, so that they might still tend and serve him as in life. But in the family it was most often the simple continuation of the love and reverence of the children, for him who had nurtured them and protected them from harm. The Greeks and Romans, as well as the early Hindus, paid reverence to their ancestors, and offered them sacrifices of animals, fruits, milk, and wine, lest they should perish of hunger, or should be angered and visit their wrath upon their neglectful sons. The need of paying reverence to the dead was so compelling that among many nations a childless couple invariably adopted a son, to inherit their property and ensure their own sustenance in the life beyond.

There are vestiges of ancestor worship even to-day in Christian lands. The funeral baked meats of our fathers were perhaps a survival of the offerings originally made to the departed, and the copious libations of the "wake" were in earlier times poured out to the dead. In the two greatest branches of the Christian Church not only are the canonized saints invoked, but many an earnest prayer is sent up to the beloved dead, who, the survivors believe, have passed through the purgatorial fires and, while enjoying the beatific vision, are yet mindful of those left behind; and all the souls of the faithful departed are commemorated on the second of November, though now, on that day, the prayers of the living are offered for them rather than to them.

The two countries where ancestor worship has existed for thousands of years, and is still practised in public ceremonial and private devotion, are China and Japan.

Confucianism, the origin of which goes back beyond even the ancient records

of China, is still the ruling spiritual force of its millions of people. Though now called after his name, in reality it dates back, probably thousands of years before Confucius lived. In the twelfth century before Christ, seven hundred years before Confucius, the rites and ceremonies of the ancient religion were codified by Duke Cheu of the Imperial family. He made no innovations—but simply put in permanent form, for the use of future generations, the rites and ceremonies attending the worship of the dead, from which there could be no slightest deviation in word or gesture, at least in public worship.

No more than Cheu, was Confucius an innovator. He took no credit to himself for being anything more than a commentator. "I comment upon, I elucidate the ancient works. I compose no new ones," he said. He preached the doctrine of duty—duty of son to father, of wife to husband, of citizen to the magistrate, of all to the Emperor. The extension of this was the duty of the living to the dead—unless the duty to the living was a downgrowth of the primitive practice of duty to those who had gone before.

It has been suggested that Ancestor worship is a memory of the worship once paid to our celestial progenitors and to the Ray of which our souls are a part; that it is the promise of a recognition which men to-day have lost, but which they will recover when the Son once more reveals the Father in the hierarchy of divine life.

The essential fact in Ancestor Worship, says Hovelague in *La Chine*, is the belief in the survival of the shade after death. To nourish, pacify and conciliate this shade, one must render him a worship as immortal as he is himself. Should this worship fail, the famished and irritated shade becomes an evil power, to be feared by all, but especially by his impious descendants, if any still exist. Each one, therefore, has the duty, which coincides in all respects with his interest, to render this worship and to perpetuate it, that his wraith in turn may receive it and be not condemned to wander miserably through all eternity. All the generations of a given family are thus one, and equally interested in the eternal maintenance of this worship. The unit is not the perishable and passing individual, but the immortal and enduring family. The individual by himself exists not, nor has he rights, only duties; he is but a link in a chain stretching to infinity, back in the past and onward in the future.

In China, however, as among all other peoples, the motive which prompts religious observance necessarily varies as men vary in development. The educated Chinaman would repudiate Hovelague's idea that his beloved ancestor could become an "evil power," even though neglected. The ancestor would not feel that neglect as something affecting himself, but, instead, as something dishonouring to the living, and thus to the whole family, living and dead. The Chinaman of one class may honour his ancestors solely from fear, somewhat as a Christian may perform his "religious duties" in order to curry favour with God and to escape Hell; but the Chinaman of another class may honour his ancestors from a passionate sense of gratitude, from pure and unselfish love, and with the most intense feeling of reverence and worship. It is

not easy for Western writers to recognize these distinctions, their tendency being always to judge a religion by its lower levels of motive and practice. Yet, just as we might say that we owe it to ourselves to be honest, regardless of results, so a Chinaman might say that he owes it to his family to show honour to his ancestors. Self-respect and good manners would make any other course impossible.

Of the three forms of religion dominant in Japan to-day, Shintoism is pre-eminent, not by reason of the number of its avowed followers—though it may be affirmed that every Japanese is subconsciously a Shintoist—but because it is the national, the official religion, and not only that, but the expression of the innate, instinctive heart of every son of Nippon. He may be avowedly a Buddhist, a Confucianist, or, as so many now are, a “rationalist”; but if he is a patriot, if he has the love of country in his heart, he is *ipso facto*, willy nilly, a Shintoist.

Then what is Shintoism that one can be a follower of it, consciously or unconsciously, and whatever his religious belief or lack of it? It can hardly be called a creed, for it has none; at least it imposes none upon its followers, though there are certain views of creation and of the constitution and principles of man and nature which are taught by its priests and accepted by its more educated members, but are of obligation upon no one.

The earliest scripture of Shintoism, the Kojiki, dates back to the year 711 A.D., when the Empress Gemmyo gave orders for the compilation of a history of Japan. But just as the Pentateuch is both a history of the Jewish people and a cosmogony, so the first history of the Japanese people is a collection of the myths and symbolic legends of the creation of the world and of the foundation of Japan. In the beginning were five gods, the first immobile, undefinable, taking no part in creation—in short the Absolute. The second and third were the agents in creation, but going only so far as to produce chaos. The office of the fourth and fifth primeval gods is not explicitly defined. From these five emanated a septenary, three single and four dual divinities, of whom the last couple, Izanagi and Izanami, apparently the first of the divinities to have material form, were the active agents in creation. They created, or rather procreated the islands constituting the land of Japan, and gave birth to innumerable “kami” or devas who not only ensoul but actually are rocks and trees and soil, the mountains, rivers, and valleys, the sunshine, the light of the moon and stars, the winds and the rain, the dews and frosts, the clouds and earthquakes, and everything that is. Finally, Izanami died in giving birth to the god of fire, Hinohaya-yagiwono-kami. Izanagi was inconsolable and descended into hell to deliver his consort, but failed, and, on returning to earth, instituted the rite of purification to cleanse himself and his garments. From every part of him, thus purified, sprang a new kami or divinity—from his left eye the sun-goddess Amaterasu, from his right, Tsukiyomi the moon-god, and from his nose, Susanoo, the lord of the earth.

None of these creative deities appears to be worshiped, save Amaterasu, whose grandson, Ninigino-mikoto, was the first divine emperor of Japan, and

his grandson, Jimmu, the first earth-born emperor. Thus is shown the divine origin of the Mikado, a descendant in the direct line of the goddess Amaterasu, therefore himself divine and an object of adoration; and thus is explained the national or official character of Shintoism. Furthermore, as every object in nature is born of the gods, is a "kami," it is worthy of veneration. As Hovelague says, "In Japan, worship of the ancestors is confused with that of the forces of nature. For the Japanese, the ancestral gods and their descendants, and the Japanese land, are one. The substance of the earth is that of the gods. And so every Japanese soul comes from the divine earth, after death dwells in it and animates a part of it—mountain, rock, plain, tree, gravel, river, lake—and is identified with them." The local gods and the domestic gods, the Emperor and the soil of Japan, are all one in the divinity. Pantheism can go no further. But, as Nitobe says, "The tenets of Shintoism cover the two predominating features of the emotional life of our race—Patriotism and Loyalty. . . . Its nature worship endeared the country to our inmost souls, while its Ancestor worship, tracing from lineage to lineage, made the Imperial family the fountain-head of the whole nation. To us the country is more than land and soil from which to mine gold or to reap grain—it is the sacred abode of the gods, the spirits of our forefathers."

Shintoism, says Lowell, is the Japanese conception of the cosmos. "It is a combination of the worship of nature and of their own ancestors, but the character of the combination is ethnologically instructive. Both are aboriginal instincts. Next to the fear of natural phenomena in point of primitiveness, comes the fear of one's father, as children and savages show. But races, like individuals, tend to differentiate the two as they develop." The Japanese did not. "Filial respect lasted, and by virtue of not becoming less became more, till it filled not only the whole sphere of morals, but expanded into the sphere of cosmogony. To the Japanese eye, the universe itself took on the paternal look. Awe of their parents, which these people could comprehend, lent explanation to dread of nature, which they could not."

Shinto in its outward form is as devoid of any appeal to the sensuous as is Quakerism. Its temples are nothing but bare-walled meeting houses, and the sole object of note in the sanctuary is a mirror. "This," says Nitobe, "typifies the human heart, which, when perfectly placid and clear, reflects the very image of the Deity. When you stand, therefore, in front of the shrine to worship, you see your own image reflected on its shining surface, and the act of worship is tantamount to the old Delphic injunction, 'Know Thyself.' But self-knowledge does not imply, either in the Greek or Japanese teaching, knowledge of the physical part of man, not his anatomy or his psycho-physics; knowledge was to be of a moral kind, the introspection of our moral nature."

Besides this mirror, which is said to be a borrowing from Buddhism, there are in the shrine, but hidden from view, copies of the mirror, sword, and jewel which Amaterasu gave to her grandson when he ascended the throne of Japan as its first Mikado.

The Shinto code of morals is as simple as its shrines, or even more so, for it

scarcely exists. It may indeed be summed up in the single phrase, "Follow the inspiration of your heart and obey the emperor." Every man is assumed to be innately inclined to virtue and obedient to the dictates of his conscience. If he does wrong, the law will take him in hand, but Shinto has no remedy; it believes in existence beyond the grave, but proclaims no absolute system of reward or punishment, and karma and reincarnation are unknown in its theology. For the Shintoist, death is not annihilation nor even prolonged sleep—it is merely going from one room to another in the same house. A dead Japanese is still a Japanese; the nation comprises those who have disappeared from view as well as those in the visible world—there is but one eternal family, and the duties of the living to the dead differ in essence not at all from the duties of the child to the parent. There is no individual existence, for all are but links in one great chain.

The teachings of Shinto regarding the nature of man and all things else, material and immaterial, suggest an influx of the ancient wisdom; but whether they have been borrowed from some other religion, or are echoes of the universal wisdom religion taught their disciples by the Adepts on the shores of Mansarovara Lake, are questions which the present writer cannot answer. Percival Lowell gives the barest outline of a portion of esoteric teaching which was imparted to him by the head of a Shinto sect:—

In the cosmos (or is it Kosmos?) there are three principles—*gotai*, body; *shinki*, consciousness or spirit; and *tamashii*, soul. Minerals, vegetables and animals have but two principles—body and spirit; but most men have all three, though some are without soul. *Tamashii*, soul, is of like substance with *shinki*, spirit or mind, but is devoid of its attributes. Mind and soul co-exist in the body but as, with the practice of virtue, and use of the will, no doubt, mind becomes clarified or loses its attributes, it gradually approaches and finally becomes one with soul. What happens then is apparently left to conjecture, or perhaps there is no curiosity regarding it—indeed the majority of lay Shintoists know little of the science of their religion and are content with the belief that they will live for ever.

Though simple in faith as in habitation, Shintoism is rich in ritual, liturgies being prescribed to meet all occasions—prayers for a good harvest, for safe conduct during a journey, for protection from robbers, the dedication of shrines, prayers and offerings to ancestors, purification after contamination by material or psychic evil, marriage, burial, dedication of the infant to a patron kami, etc.

There has been much speculation as to the origin of Shintoism, and some refuse to regard it as autochthonous, the Japanese being such adepts at adoption and adaptation. It can scarcely be questioned, however that it is truly Japanese, as truly, that is, as Brahmanism is Indian. Neither was born on the soil of its present home, but both were brought in with the present owners of the land. As Mme. Blavatsky tells us, there was a time, when the great Gobi desert was a sea, when an unbroken continent stretched from the present India and Ceylon to Java and far-away Tasmania on the south, and to

Tibet, Mongolia, and Great Tartary on the north. All this was called India by the ancient nations of the west. "When we say therefore that India has civilized the world and was the alma-mater of the civilizations, arts, and sciences of all other nations, . . . we mean archaic, prehistoric India." The Japanese are believed to be a mixture of the aboriginal Ainos and two conquering races—one Malaysian from the south and the other Tartar from the west. These invaders doubtless brought their religion with them—the pre-Vedic tradition which produced Brahmanism in India, Confucianism in China, and Shintoism in Japan. The points of resemblance between these three national beliefs are striking,—dissimilar enough to discredit the borrowing of one from the other, but indicating the branching off from a common centre. To quote again from Mme. Blavatsky, "When we remember that the Vedas came—agreeably to all tradition—from the Mansarovara Lake in Tibet and the Brahmans themselves from the far north, we are justified in looking on the esoteric doctrines of every people who once had and still have them, as having proceeded from one and the same source, and to thus call it the Aryan-Chaldaeo-Tibetan doctrine, or Universal Wisdom Religion."

From the brief account above given of the essence of Shintoism, it is evident that it came originally from the same source as Brahmanism—making allowance for the discrepancies which must creep in during the gradual corruption of doctrine, as the memory of the original teaching of the Adepts slowly fades and superstition transforms its features.

It is said in support of the foreign origin of Shinto that its very name is Chinese. But that is due to the fact that the Japanese learned to write from the Chinese, and in using the Chinese ideographs sometimes retained their original sounds. Until the introduction of Buddhism into Japan in the sixth century, Shinto being the only religion in the country it had no need of a name. But when Buddhism and Confucianism came, some appellation was needed to distinguish it from its rivals. So it was called Kami-no-michi, the Way of the Gods, but when it came to be written in Chinese characters it was phrased in Chinese words and called Shin-to, the Way of Heaven.

T. L. S.

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*The measure to which we should love God is to love Him without measure. Greatly misled is that creature who puts the love of his heart elsewhere than in Him.*—SAINT LOUIS, KING OF FRANCE.

# THE FIRST OBJECT OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

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THE writer had been a member of the Society for a number of years without having any very definite idea of just what the first and principal object of the Society was about. He had a general feeling of some vague platitude involved, and subscribed to it more because he thought he glimpsed an underlying spiritual ideal, than because he felt any active outward sympathy or desire to work for the attainment of the object. In the last ten years the gradual breakdown of common sense, and the consequent increase of modern democratic "sloppy idealism," has brought the word Brotherhood into ever greater prominence, and the more he read about it, the less "use" he had for it. He was quite certain that he was not everybody's brother, and would have regarded any sudden increase in this type of relationship with extreme alarm. Perusal of the QUARTERLY made it apparent that certain members were beginning to feel that the world in general was coming around to their misconception of the point of view of The Theosophical Society, but the opposite feeling in our ranks was fortunately powerful and dominant, and entirely capable of stating its case clearly. About a year ago the writer decided that it was high time for him to crystallize his point of view about Universal Brotherhood and to find out what the Society meant by it. The present article is the outcome of the reflection and reading thus undertaken, and is devoid of any authority, save such conferred upon it by whatever common sense the reader may discover in the course of its perusal.

## I. WHAT IS UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD?

The dictionary defines brotherhood in its extended sense as an association, the members of which resemble each other in appearance, manners, or employment, or who are engaged in the same purpose or combination. It is obvious, therefore, that the correct use of the term involves a necessary unit or standard of special likeness. This raises almost infinite possibilities. In the whole universe anything you please is certain to resemble everything else in some way or another. The poets have sung of our kinship with the stars, while man and the sun are alike, in that carbon is an integral part of their respective compositions. Resemblances can outnumber the observable differences, or vice versa; and relationships are declared to be natural or artificial in consequence.

If we turn now to human brotherhoods, here too there are an almost infinite number of respects in which men can be found to be alike. They are alike in having similar organs, passions, capabilities, etc. There can be a brotherhood of thieves and a brotherhood of friars. In every case, however, where we speak of likenesses between several men or aggregations of men, any intelligent person can also think of differences.



The use of the term Universal Brotherhood would seem to imply the idea that there are one or more respects in which all human beings are alike, in spite of whatever differences may exist between individuals or groups of individuals. Here again the likeness may be natural or artificial. Thus the fact that all men have lungs, and five fingers on each hand, can scarcely be said to establish Universal Brotherhood; for this concept, when dignified with capital letters, has always been a philosophical ideal of humanity, which in moments of reflection revolts at strife, discord, rivalry, and their attendant ills. Consequently it requires an adequate philosophical endorsement to render it tenable.

The modern conception of the brotherhood of man, in my view, lacks entirely any such adequate philosophical endorsement. The Great War undoubtedly accentuated the evils of strife, discord, and rivalry in the mind of the present generation, which proclaims Universal Brotherhood as the principle which renders these evils unpardonable, and the future occurrence of war unnecessary. It is alleged that it is a disgrace for men to fight, when they are "all human beings and brothers together." This is really saying nothing more than that all men are men. For that matter, all horses are horses, and all mud is mud. These facts are very true, but there is nothing especially soul-thrilling in them, and they contain no endorsement whatever of an ideal.

Apart, however, from the entire absence of an adequate philosophical endorsement, the point of view of the modern generation about brotherhood, contains several fallacies. In the first place, the distinction between a fact and an ideal has been altogether overlooked, a theme to which I shall return later. What a fatuous hope that the pronouncement of an ideal will ever cure the evil perceived! The confusion of ideal with fact leads, secondly, to the virtual prostitution of the ideal. The formulation of an ideal never cures an evil; the ideal must be *attained*. Now the attainment of an ideal requires effort, and the more worth while it is, the more effort there must be. It is precisely this effort which people try to evade at every turn. If strife, discord and rivalry are evils, they can be overcome by effort only, and not by waving an ideal in the faces of erring humanity. Fortunately for progress, even a right belief, if held for insufficient or wrong reasons, and used for wrong ends, leads into a blind alley. We are no nearer Universal Brotherhood than before. It will dawn upon people in time that ideals cannot be legislated into existence, and that Hague Tribunals and Leagues of Nations can never be substitutes for character, nor bring peace on earth and good will to men.

Though the mere formulation of an ideal is rarely a sufficient incentive to effort, adequate philosophical endorsement of the ideal will at least influence a certain proportion of people. It seems to me that the ideal of the Universal Brotherhood of man rests fundamentally on the fact that, in a spiritual universe, he and his fellows are souls, undergoing the experiences of life to render them self-conscious masters of a destiny which transcends the loftiest flights of the imagination. Whether they know it or not, like it or not, they have this great bond in common, and all are engaged in the same adventure, backward and sullen, or eager and striving. I am aware that this "fact" is not

capable of scientific proof or demonstration, and that it is a statement of religious belief. This belief, however, can be endorsed by three important considerations. First, it is significant that it has been the instinctive faith of all advanced peoples and all great religions. Secondly, all those who have lived their lives on this basis have left us unanimous testimony of its efficacy. Thirdly, all those who have preferred an agnostic position have either been notoriously absorbed in one narrow line of interest to the exclusion of the major human problems, or they have signally failed to evolve a system which rendered their happiness superior to the accidents of fate or circumstance.

## II. UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND THEOSOPHY

As I understand it, this is one way of stating the theosophical view of Universal Brotherhood. If it is to mean anything at all, it should rest upon as high a philosophical, ethical, and religious basis, as is possible or reasonable. Belief in Universal Brotherhood, then, amounts to believing that in a spiritual universe Man is essentially a soul undergoing a course of spiritual development. If a man believe this, and if he be willing to try to live his life on this basis, he can conscientiously join The Theosophical Society.

But this is not all. The first object of the Society is "to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood." A nucleus is defined as a central mass or point, about which matter is gathered, or around which accretions can be made, both literally and figuratively. From this several things follow. There would be no point, for instance, in the existence of the Society, if Universal Brotherhood were a fact rather than an ideal to be attained. It would be a foolish waste of energy to found a society with the object of forming a nucleus of something which already existed. It certainly seems a fair deduction that such was the point of view, at least of the founders and sponsors of the Society. That the charge of cynicism cannot be laid to their door is proved by the conduct of men themselves, than which nothing could be more antithetical to the proper relationship between spiritual brothers. It is true that strife, discord and rivalry are evils, not, however, because all men are brothers, but because of faults of character which render the attainment of the ideal of brotherhood impossible, as long as they persist. The cure is not to believe that all men are brothers, but to eliminate the faults of character. To sum up, then: Universal Brotherhood is not a fact, all men are not brothers here and now, and a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood could only be said to exist, if a body of T. S. members, or like-minded people, were living up to the moral obligations of the ideal of Universal Brotherhood. I would suggest that readers examine in this connection the official Report of the thirteenth Convention of the Society, held in India in 1888, and published in the *Theosophist* as a special supplement to the issue of January, 1889. It will be found that the views expressed above are given official sanction there by the then officers of the Society, and have never since been revoked. The writer can only add that, for his part, if the ideal of Universal Brotherhood were a more superficial one, and were the deductions given above not valid, he would have no interest in being a member of the Society.

Something has been said about obligations. Leaving the discussion of Universal Brotherhood as an ideal, and coming down to the present moment, what are we to do about it, and on what basis shall we treat our fellowmen? We have seen that a fact may be spiritually true without being objectively true. It can be no part of the obligations of a Theosophist, therefore, to pretend that Universal Brotherhood is an objective fact, to live as if it were, or to treat people as if they were his spiritual brothers, striving to develop their souls, when nothing could be further from the intent of most of them. He would merely be making himself ridiculous; he would certainly be a bore, and would in all probability add to the superfluous stock of ill-will which has already accumulated.

There is one corollary here which may be worth a moment's profitable examination. One of the true purposes of religion is to provide a system of action or a rationale of life, which, if consistently followed, will lead to the attainment of the ideals postulated, whether philosophically, by act of faith, or by intuition. The success of the individual will be the best test of the validity of his religion; but note that the possession of spiritual ideals and a working religion to which intellectual assent has been given, does not and cannot release the individual from effort. It does just the reverse; it increases his responsibility if the effort be not forthcoming. Here too the modern tendency is to use religion as a means of escaping that dreaded bogey, effort. On all sides we see the pathetic spectacle of people scrambling around for some kind of religion. In an age of boasted efficiency, we are looking for short cuts to Heaven. Varied and extraordinary indeed are some of the proposed expedients. Some shake or spin themselves around into catalepsy, others believe in purple lights and esthetic dancing; some consult the spirits or entrust their fate to the caprice of the ouija board. A crowd of Yogis, Swamis, etc., all have their followers, and are able to earn a fair competence. This reminds us strongly of the Romans of the late Empire who, weary of their own gods, had crazes for those of the peoples they conquered. It is one of the well known signs of decadence.

In this respect Theosophy does not offer the slightest exception to the general rule, and joining the Society may well be a sign of decadence on the part of the individual member. What difference does it make if he exchange a belief in the Infallibility of the Pope for Reincarnation, or swap Invincible Ignorance for Karma? If he does nothing about it, he will be no nearer Heaven, he will have made no spiritual advance, his dues will have been paid in vain. If, indeed, his new set of beliefs are sounder than the old, or if he has some beliefs where formerly he had none, his second state is worse than the first. A belief in Universal Brotherhood, then, had best not be lightly subscribed to as a matter of sentiment, unless the proposed new member is prepared to make manifest his belief in action.

### III. DISTINCTIONS OF RACE, CREED, AND COLOUR

The foregoing discussion leads naturally to a consideration of the final words of the first object of The Theosophical Society, "without distinction of race,

creed or colour," as this raises the question of what constitutes true tolerance, and what intolerance. These distinctions are obvious facts, and somewhat baffle the thought of the day, with its superficial, rather than spiritual, explanation of brotherhood. The modern tendency is to ignore these distinctions. The argument is that if all men are brothers, these distinctions cannot really matter. The confusion which results when this type of illusion is put into practice, is excellently exemplified in parts of Latin America, where half-breeds and mongrels of various races, with a scattering of pure savages, combine in an *opéra bouffe* of a republic, or where Italians in Fiume are expected to be enthusiastic Jugo-Slavs. Such confusion is often the only cure of the illusion, and leads in time to a clearer perception of the spiritual truth, just as a sufficient number of fits will finally cure the dog of eating rotten bones.

There are, indeed, distinctions of race, creed, and colour, of morals, manners, and tastes; and they are natural and unavoidable. The result is an instinctive tendency to select or to reject, and men prefer those of their kind who are like them in some respects, and avoid those who are unlike. To the modern ear, selection and rejection have a harsh sound and an "unbrotherly" connotation. But just as the word "alike" implies the existence of unlikeness somewhere, so "selection" implies rejection to distinguish it from pure eclecticism, neutrality, or passive acquiescence in the sense of undifferentiated, inorganic receptivity. As long as differences exist, therefore, things alike will be selected, and the unlike will be rejected, and this is as true of human beings as of chemical elements. This principle, for it is a principle of nature, operating on the infinite variety of differences in living creatures, is what actuates evolution on a universal scale. If the best were not selected and the unfit rejected, if species did not have a closer affinity with similar individuals than with other groups, if all were not equally exposed to the acid test of ever-varying and changing environment, how would any progress have been made? And while the objector may charge the Divine Power back of evolutionary progress with cruelty, heartlessness, and "unbrotherliness," he cannot prove it, and even if it were true, what could he do about it? He had better accept the universe as it is.

So there is ample precedent for rejection, and our dislike of those that are unlike us. There is nothing wrong *per se* in this dislike. What makes it right or wrong is the reason or motive back of it, which may be good or bad. The Pharisees hated Christ and compassed his death, and their name has been a stigma of scorn for twenty centuries. But Christ drove the money-lenders out of the Temple with a whip, and has never been charged with unbrotherliness or intolerance by any sane individual. He was interested only in the spiritual brotherhood of man, and was the sworn enemy of all that militated against it. A member of the T. S. has exactly the same obligation, and there is nothing in the entire philosophy to allow him to escape it. Evil must be overcome, if good is to triumph, and there is nothing intolerant in him who lends a helping hand. But the motive must be pure and genuine. Above all, he can best begin with himself. Granted the identity of motive, he will leave the other man to follow the method which suits him best and which will yield him

the best results. To do otherwise would be intolerant. Indeed, the practice of common sense and the rules of good manners will give a clearer perception of what constitutes true tolerance than pages of philosophical disquisition.

There is one other point. I have said that the various differences between men are natural and unavoidable. It may be suggested:—If the spiritual definition of Universal Brotherhood be correct, these differences are not natural and unavoidable. This may well be true ideally. It is quite probable that wrong-doing and sin have brought about the babel of tongues, the clash of interests, and the struggle of irreconcilable ambitions. But we have it; it is a fact; and the remedy does not lie in the proclamation of Universal Brotherhood on superficial grounds, nor in treating the bad and unfit with as much consideration as the good and the fit.

The external differences observed are fundamentally due to moral causes and to the infinite series of differences in spiritual development and vision. The entire absence of spiritual development gives rise to the ruthless and furious Bolshevik, instinctively hating the good and the noble, and demonstrating the monstrous evil of Selfishness. Great ignorance and great lack of vision evolved a primitive people like the Polynesians, who, however, implicitly obeyed the moral rules they had. The Chinese, beginning their civilization with much spiritual effort, became absorbed in contemplating what they had achieved in art, literature and noble philosophy, lived passively in their isolation for centuries, and made no further advance. The present civilizations of the Occident have considerable spiritual knowledge and light, but are neglecting it in a preference for, and eager search after, purely material prosperity and intellectual pursuits. Pride and cruelty ruined the greatness of Spain. A selfish and unmoral search for power nullified the several admirable qualities of the Germans. Italy, on the verge of chaos and a Red régime after the Great War, is now showing distinct signs of regeneration, thanks to the power of unselfish love of country, of a sufficiently large percentage of the people, ably led.

None of the peoples cited, however, has ever, as a race or nation, consistently sought spiritual development as their dominant interest and the motive of all their acts. This will be an experiment of the future. They have all shared certain qualities, certain salient faults, vices or virtues, the particular expression of which time has stamped with the epithet, racial characteristics, recognizable by themselves and all other peoples. Assuredly they must be reckoned with to-day, even if overcome to-morrow. In all ages, however, and among all races, *individuals* have believed in and striven for the spiritual destiny of the soul; and in any one generation they may well form a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood, without regard to race, creed, or colour.

BIOLOGIST.

## ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

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THE Philanderer, as we call him, is not a member of the Society, but has known many of us for years, and has read as much about Theosophy and Occultism as the average "old student." We were glad to see him, because we needed rousing, and knew it; and the Philanderer has an eye for weak spots in our armour.

He beamed at us. "How are you getting along?" he asked. "Not exhausted I hope! I have always told you that you ought to move to the Himalayas or to the North Pole during the summer months. The strenuous life has no place in tropical New York. Your Mahatmas know better. They have to keep busy in order to keep warm. Think of being pledged to fight the world, the flesh, and the devil, all day and all night, in yourself and outside yourself, with the thermometer at 90° and the humidity at 100 per cent plus! A nice scrape you've got yourselves into, because you can't do it: nobody could."

"There is a distinction between trying and achieving," the Student suggested rashly.

"Not much," the Philanderer answered. "If you try with faith and hope, you achieve; and I deny that you possess either faith or hope, and in that I am on safe ground, because you cannot possibly prove the contrary! The facts speak for themselves. Many of you call yourselves Christians, I believe. Further, you are members of The Theosophical Society. As members of The Theosophical Society, you are obliged to take your Christianity seriously. You are caught both ways. The normal Christian, baptized and confirmed, is pledged, like you, to fight the world, the flesh, and the devil; but he is not expected to do anything about it, and you are. Worse than that, you expect it of yourselves. What does it mean? Harmless as a glittering generality, it is the deuce and all when you come down to dots. Christ's battles in the world, everywhere—or wherever you are—and every minute. Sundays as bad as any other day. No rest. It means that you must fight dirt, or 'matter in the wrong place,' wherever you see it, and that you must attack every imperfection, in manners, as in morals, in understanding as in motive, in yourselves and in the world around you, with the fell determination to put perfection in its place. It exhausts me even to think of it—yet, for once, I will make the sacrifice. You must be logical. You can't, for instance, limit yourself to moral dirt. The universe is one. If you see dust on a table you must dash at it with the same zeal you would put into the defence of a soul against pollution. If a messenger boy is mannerless or rude, you must vigorously instruct him and, if necessary, carry your protest to his ultimate employer. Crowned heads should tremble before you, and messenger boys weep. They would, if your indignation were real and deep. Then, because Life is universal, you must

feel concern for a plant almost as for a man. If thirsty, the plant must be watered; if lop-sided, it must be straightened. Trees, flowers, insects, birds, houses, chairs, tables, men, women and children,—all, all, potentially at least, are Duties. There is no peace anywhere, except in Parabrahm,—and Parabrahm, as you declare, is neither here nor there. . . . Give me some soda-water, please.”

The Philosopher never makes the mistake of acting on the defensive. “It is a disgrace,” he said promptly, “that anyone with your understanding of the ideal, and with your imagination, should stay outside the ranks of those to whom you attribute so magnificent a purpose, so tremendous a task. You know as well as we do that the range of your sense of responsibility is the test of your development as an individual. If, like Pilate, you wash your hands of everything that spells trouble, or of everything that does not immediately affect your comfort, you write yourself down, either an embryo, or a soul that is retrograding.”

“Embryo for mine!” said the Philanderer cheerfully.

“The trouble is you know too much,” the Philosopher retorted. “A philosophizing, jeering, objecting embryo, won’t do. You have seen the truth, or all you need to see of it, and it did not fit in with your personal desire. So, to ease your conscience, you called it names: you called it silly and unreasonable and fantastic, and you wound up by asserting to yourself that in any case it was not for you.”

“There you are,” expostulated the Philanderer; “at it again,—banging an imperfection! I’m full of them, of course; but surely by this time you might have discovered that I am impervious, impenetrable, immune,—and as self-satisfied as the messenger boy whose manners you try to coerce. Nothing, absolutely nothing, can persuade me that you are right and that I am wrong. There is but one thing that troubles me: your inability to learn from me, for I am a normal man, and you should realize, from your experience with me, the futility of your efforts to change anybody by one iota. I do not often preach, but you have reason to regard me as a living sermon, as the negation of all you assume.”

“Ha!” exclaimed the Historian; “so you too have a mission.”

“But see how modest: to bring the last touch of enlightenment to the unusually enlightened!” And he bowed with elaborate courtesy to each one of us.

“It’s time to be serious,” the Recorder protested. “I cannot fill the ‘Screen’ with your persiflage.”

“I should like to concede something to the Philanderer, before we leave the subject,” said the Philosopher. “I have a vague recollection that at the end of one of Herbert Spencer’s last essays he declares that the older we grow, the more clearly we see how infinitely little we can accomplish in this world, but that we also see, with compensating clarity, how infinitely worth while it is to accomplish that infinitely little. Ergo, the smallest dent in the Philanderer’s self-satisfaction (as he describes it), will be a colossal triumph. He

will never be aware of it in this life; but in his next life,—who knows!" It was his turn to bow to the Philanderer, and Louis XIV. would have approved the manner of it.

"My grandfather's favourite quotation might be introduced at this point," said our friend with the enviable memory: 'Duty is a power which rises with us in the morning and goes to rest with us at night. It is the shadow which clings to us, go where we will, and which only leaves us when we leave the light of life.'"

"My quarrel with the Philanderer is totally different," the Engineer remarked. "He underestimates the range of our accepted responsibility, while intending, perhaps, to exaggerate it. He made no mention of our mental and emotional reaction to the news of the day, or of our Karmic responsibility for the effects we thus produce, both on ourselves and others.

"What do I mean?"

"I mean that if I read about the trial of those two depraved youths in Chicago, for instance, the reaction of my mind and feeling will influence them, for good or ill; will influence the opinion of the world, and necessarily must affect my own character and my future Karma. By reading about a thing, I relate myself to it, and become responsible morally for the least of the after-effects of my participation. Further, the same thing is true if I read about some event in history: my reaction, of approval or disapproval, of admiration or disgust, of idle comment or of moral determination,—my reaction to what I read is a force which reaches to and modifies the Karma of those involved, as well as affecting my own Karma."

"Do you think that if I read about Queen Elizabeth, let us say, my thought of her can influence her soul, wherever it is to-day?" It was the Lawyer who interjected this question.

"Depending of course upon the intensity of our thought, and upon the extent to which our reading, and, above all, our meditation, has brought us into rapport with the subject of our study; depending also upon the plane of consciousness upon which we are functioning, whether spiritual or purely mental,—I think we bring into play the tremendous power of *suggestion*—our thought, in nearly all cases, insinuating itself as one of the subject's own. But however that may be, the thinking about or feeling about Queen Elizabeth, as the result of reading about her, means that we are drawn into the stream of her Karma, for good or ill, to her and to ourselves, depending upon the nature of our reaction."

"Suppose we read about someone who was really a saint, though represented as a devil; and suppose we damn them unjustly?"

"My answer to that would be that our thoughts cannot reach an unreal and fictitious objective. We are responsible, doubtless, for hasty or ill-founded conclusions, and the author who misleads us must also bear the consequences of his perversion of the truth. My point is, however, that we relate ourselves Karmically with whatever attracts and holds our attention, and that the Philanderer greatly underestimated the range of our sense of responsibility."



"For pity's sake!" the Philanderer ejaculated. Then, as to himself: "Poor, hounded, misguided creatures!"

"Opportunity, opportunity," the Philosopher retorted. "And that reminds me: I have been reading *Le Retour de Barrès à sa terre et à ses morts*, by Henry Bordeaux. It is interesting, though not as great a tribute as I think might well have been paid to one who did so much toward winning the War. It serves to emphasize, however, the inspiration Barrès found in *nos seigneurs les morts*,—in the realization that he was, as it were, only a moment, a link, in an endless chain of ancestry.

"In his youth an intense individualist, he extended his understanding of individualism until it included the individuality of all the soil and soul of France, with the cemetery of his fathers in Lorraine as the thread on which his own life was strung. 'We are not,' he said, 'the masters of our own thoughts. Our reason—a queen in chains—compels us to follow in the footsteps of our predecessors. We are the increment and continuation of our parents. All the long line of descendants constitutes a single being. It is a marvellous pathway through time, wherein the individual forsakes himself to recover himself again in his family, in his race, in his nation, in the thousands of years which the tomb itself does not annul.' In this way, as Henry Bordeaux comments, 'our short life associates us with the things of eternity.'"

"What you have been quoting is Ancestor Worship, pure and simple," interjected the Orientalist.

"That is interesting," the Philosopher replied; "but Barrès re-discovered the principles for himself: he was not an echo. His convictions, whatever they were, came to him as the fruit of his own inner conflict. I do not mean that his ideas were peculiar to himself. He re-discovered a truth that has inspired all the great souls of France,—a truth supremely enunciated by Joan of Arc, though she would have regarded herself not so much as a link in a chain of national ancestry, as a thread in the string upon which the line of her Kings was strung. In any case, this *self-identification with the dead*—because that is what it comes to—this sense of responsibility to the dead (who made the present) for the future of the land they loved, is an enormous reinforcement, a most enviable incentive. I doubt if anyone can truly know it who does not live in the home of his ancestors, surrounded by evidences of their toil, of their prevision—and of their respect for chairs and tables, trees and hedges, which grandfathers and grandmothers had cherished before them. Joan was a peasant, but her family for centuries had lived where she lived."

"Even so," remarked the Student, "I think the feeling of which you speak, though often met with among the Latins, is foreign to the Anglo-Saxon temperament. Their patriotism is a personal matter, rather than an ancestral obligation. Our dead are stone dead,—not living influences. We hear a great deal in America, on the fourth of July, about 'the fathers of the country'; but I doubt if a single American who fought in the Great War, thought of Washington as a witness, still less as a judge of his deeds, or found the slightest reinforcement in the sense of carrying on a tradition. If any of them thought

of Grant or Lee, or of a grandfather who fought in the Civil War, it would have been with a sense of separateness, and of superiority, as if to say, "This would have taught them a thing or two!"

"A witty Frenchman falsely attributed to a German prisoner the remark that the Americans were not fighting for their country, but for souvenirs: he had been marched through their ranks, and he hadn't a button left on him anywhere!" This was from the Student.

"Don't be frivolous!" the Englishman expostulated, laughing. "You know as well as I do that Americans fought for their country, and with superb bravery, even if they did think of it as 'my' rather than as 'our' in the very wide sense given to 'our' by Barrès." Then, turning to the Philosopher, he added: "If you favour Nationalism in France, do you also favour it in Germany?"

"I do not," the Philosopher answered emphatically. "We have to remember that Nationalism, or Ancestor Worship (and I do not mean really to make the terms synonymous) tends to accentuate existing characteristics, by reverence for similar traits in the past. Thus, no one will deny that Barrès preached admiration for nobility, courage, sacrifice, unselfishness, simplicity, and for all the virtues of old-time family life in France. His instincts, his desires, were those of France herself, and were in no way *predatory*. The Nationalism of Germany, on the other hand, is predatory from start to finish. 'We preach *hardness*,' as Nietzsche expressed it: 'be hard.' Why do the German Nationalists make so much of their Frederick the Great? It is not only because he was successful; it is because he was unscrupulous, predatory, and utterly contemptuous of his own people. It is one of the most marked traits in German national life that one half the people bitterly despise the other half—the 'hard' despising the 'sentimental,' and of course failing to see that 'hardness' and 'sentimentality' are simply different manifestations of one and the same thing: self-admiration. William, now of Doorn, was apoplectic with self-esteem. He ought to be thankful for the war because, though it could not reduce him to sanity, it did save him from bursting."

"We've switched you from the Moral of your tale," the Student now remarked, addressing the Philosopher. "Barrès was a peg, was he not?"

"He was," the Philosopher admitted; "though, to have been as transparent as all that" (gazing blandly at the Student), "is really appalling! However, —to jump now to my Moral: granting that Americans are too young as a race, or too Anglo-Saxon, or too anything you choose, to identify themselves with their dead, as was easy for Barrès (though I do not agree that this is a Latin prerogative, the old Scotch clans still being inspired by it), it is none the less true that we should stand on much more solid ground, both intellectually and morally, if the facts permitted us this sense of continuity. Further—and this is my Moral—it is of the utmost importance that students of Theosophy should recognize the advantage of that sort of background, which is also an objective, and should deliberately supplement their present efforts by studying the history of the age-long Theosophical Movement, and by seeing themselves

as links in the chain of its progression. To think of ourselves as members of The Theosophical Society, founded in New York in 1875, is not enough. We should then, by analogy, be like the man who thinks of himself simply as 'John Jones,' without ancestry, without past lives or a Karma, and without liability for the future. As individuals, not many of us can remember our own past lives, though, as students of Theosophy, we find ourselves compelled to believe in them, if only to explain an experience otherwise inexplicable; but the past incarnations, or manifestations, of the Theosophical Movement, are in many cases historical events, easily recognized; and with these we ought to make ourselves familiar, so that we may 'identify ourselves with our dead,' and work in eternity as well as in time."

"I agree with you absolutely," said the Historian, when the Philosopher had finished; "but I think we do not begin to use the inspiration of our immediate past as we might and should use it,—I mean the past of 'John Jones,' of The Theosophical Society founded in New York in 1875. We deprive ourselves, in that way, of half our strength. Take Madame Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge: neither of them perfect of course; but if the Society as a whole had one tenth part of their zeal, of their devotion, our ranks to-day would be packed with chelas! I am afraid that if we think of H. P. B. at all, it is with mild wonder, and perhaps also with a gentle gratitude which would have driven that extraordinary woman to desperation."

"She certainly was extraordinary, and in more senses than one," the Student commented, smiling at the Historian's picture. "I shall never forget the description of her by that unspeakable cad, Solovyoff, the Russian journalist, who admitted that he posed as a devoted friend in the hope of proving her a charlatan, and who certainly did his utmost to injure her, but who, without pity, honour, or understanding, unintentionally revealed her heroism. It was after her last return from India. She was at Wurzburg, writing the *Secret Doctrine*. Solovyoff was there to 'spy out the land.' H. P. B.'s servant informed him one day that 'Madame' was very ill. Solovyoff hurried to her house and found a doctor in the sitting-room. 'To my inquiry' (Solovyoff wrote) 'about his patient, he replied: "I never saw anything like it in the whole course of my many years of practice. She has several mortal diseases—an ordinary person would have been dead long ago from any one of them. But hers is a phenomenal nature; and if she has lived so long, she may, for all we can tell, live on yet."

" 'For the moment then her life is not in danger?'

" "Her life has been in danger for years, but you see she is alive. A wonderful, wonderful phenomenon."

" 'He had all the appearance of a man who was deeply interested.

" 'I again found Helena Petrovna all swollen up and almost without movement. But a day passed, and *she managed to crawl out of her bed to her writing-table, and wrote for several hours, gnashing her teeth with anguish . . .* pages and sheets were pouring from her pen at an astonishing rate.'

"Then, for another side of her," continued the Student, "do you remember

her editorial excuse, in an early number of the magazine she was editing? It was in India, in 1882. She had been gravely reproached by an F. T. S. for lack of charity and of brotherliness when berating a certain Mr. Cook, who had been specially imported from America by the missionaries, she said, to attack the Theosophical Society. It was true, in any case, that she had filled pages of her magazine with replies to his attacks. Publishing the reproach in full, H. P. B. excused herself as follows. 'Let it be conceded that we gave too much notice to Mr. Cook—that we admitted to our columns, letters and articles that we had better have suppressed. Well, he was aggravating, and we were angry—he made faces at us and we boxed his ears. . . . We can truly say that having let off the steam, we do not bear the poor deluded man any grudge.' She went on to say that of course the perfect Buddha would not have done it, but then she was not the perfect Buddha, neither, so far as she was aware, was her present accuser! How the high gods must have laughed! But that was the H. P. B. of earlier years, with the vitality of a Titan,—not yet weary."

"You will find an interesting sketch of her in the October issue of the *QUARTERLY*," remarked the Engineer. "It is taken from *Affinities*, a novel of the early eighties, by Mrs. Campbell Praed."

"How about the new volume of *Mahatma Letters*?" the Student suggested. "You were rash enough to promise a discussion of them in the 'Screen,' and you'll have to make good! From my standpoint, they give rise to so many questions that I should not know where to begin. For one thing, I should not blame the average reader if he inferred that their authors were Atheists, and also bitterly anti-Christian."

"The letters certainly need a commentary," said the Ancient. "Think of any letters of that period—say the letters of Gladstone—being read without knowledge of what provoked them, or of the political, scientific and theological problems of his contemporaries! For one thing, the Mahatma letters must remain incomprehensible unless recognized as combative, and unless we know what it was they were combatting. The European world of 1880 was viciously narrow-minded. It was divided into three parts, each part rivalling the others in bigotry. There were the hide-bound theologians, followed by all the respectable, unthinking multitude; the materialists who called themselves scientific, with their multitude of unthinking followers; the spiritualists, particularly active in America, who were as 'set' as either of the other groups and whose practices were perhaps the most dangerous, morally, of any. In India, the situation was different. The young men of India, at that time, were saturating themselves with the jargon of western science, and were beginning to treat their own literature with disdain. There were plenty of Brahmins who knew their sacred books in a dead-letter, meaningless way, which the younger men knew to be nonsensical, but there was no one to give them the true and mystical interpretation. In other words, both in Europe and in India, materialism was rampant, theology and spiritualism being just as materialistic as the 'science' of Clifford and Lange and Weismann.

"Even that, however, is too general a statement to supply the necessary

background. The writers of those letters were not only trying to break 'the moulds of mind,' and to induce a state of genuine receptivity; they were hitting, as hard as they were able, at certain definite illusions which they knew to be stultifying, and which, until removed, would act as an insuperable barrier to progress. One of these illusions was the belief in a personal God, *as that belief was then interpreted*. The common understanding was that God did everything and was responsible for everything. There were laws of nature, truly; but, having made these laws, God could set them aside at will, so that if it rained too much or too little, if plagues devastated or earthquakes destroyed,—this Person could interfere if he felt like doing so, quite regardless of human conduct and of the order of nature. Above all, and most important of all, this personal God could forgive sins, not only as a father can forgive his child, but in the sense of obliterating the consequences of sin. Read the Church Prayer Book to-day, in its dead-letter, and you will find, that Christ having made a complete and sufficient atonement for all our sins, if we believe in that atonement, we shall be saved, that is, we shall go to heaven. The esoteric meaning of the atonement, of the 'propitiation'—that Christ established and maintains an infinite fund of 'merit' for us to draw upon if we *will*—is understood by very few, even now; but in 1880 it was practically unknown, with the result that Christianity, as perverted by man to disarm his own conscience, had become a terrible spiritual danger. In that sense and for that reason, the Masters hated it,—none of them more so than the Master Christ himself.

"To imagine that you can spiritualize an established, exoteric religion by enlightening the multitude, is a folly of which the Masters certainly are not capable. They know that the only way to do it is to instruct the few, whose influence will extend to many, with the hope that among the few there may develop an inner group of chelas. Their problem in 1880, was to instruct the few. It has often been said by regular Army officers that it is easier to train a raw recruit whose mind is a blank and whose movements are haphazard, than a militiaman whose mind and movements have been trained wrongly. For the same reasons, the Masters were compelled, when they came to deal with 'Christians,' to break all their mental moulds as a preliminary to esoteric instruction. Their intention is proved by the result: a number of people, under their influence, who for years never thought in Christian terms, and whose minds were saturated with the principles of Theosophy, finally were turned to the study of the religion in which they were born. Their approach was fresh, unbiassed, delighted. Nothing was stale, nothing was predetermined. The interpretation of Councils and Bishops and theologians, had a certain historical interest, but had no practical or personal influence whatsoever. I doubt if anything like it had been done before in the history of Christianity,—that is, I doubt if any group of people had been so completely liberated from theological preconception, while increasing ultimately their devotion to Christ as a living Master, infinitely more worthy of love and reverence because an Elder Brother instead of an extra-Cosmic God. I know whereof I speak, because, thanks to this method of treatment, I literally never

gave Christianity a thought for years, until, following the same guidance, I suddenly bought a Bible and read, as if for the first time, parts of the Sermon on the Mount, to find it overwhelmingly beautiful, and to find Theosophy re-stated on every page."

"But how about the assertion, somewhere in the Letters, that the laws of nature, being immutable, must be blind, and require no guiding hand?"

"That question was answered years ago, in 1884. The writer meant that the *inherent* impulse acts blindly, in the sense that no extraneous or extra-natural power pushes it, this way or that. Electricity, for instance, follows the laws of its own being; its action is not dependent upon the caprice of a God outside the universe."

"In addition to what you have suggested," the Historian volunteered, "don't you think we should keep very clearly in mind the peculiarities of the two men to whom the Letters were addressed, remembering also that, as a rule, the letters addressed to one were shown by him to the other? Certainly the writers of those letters were not 'firing into the brown,' so to speak, but were addressing individuals whose limitations they understood, painfully well. Hume, one of the recipients, was constantly telling the Masters that they did not know their business, and that he did, and that, incidentally, if they did not believe in his personal God, he knew better. Sinnett, on the other hand, frankly admitted that he would not bother about them except for his affectionate admiration for Master K. H., and that his motives, at least to that extent, were personal. I speak of this because it is so evident, from the letters, that every effort was made by the writers to belittle themselves. I know that 'belittle' is not the right word, but I cannot think of a better one. They wanted these men to work for a Cause, for the greatest of all Causes; and they were not satisfied to have their Cause confused with themselves. The fact is that Masters look like gods—magnificent, majestic, with a radiance of spiritual splendour that lays men prostrate. People already were speaking of them in a way that presaged the 'Their Blessed Feet' of twenty years later; and the Masters had no desire to be added to the galaxy of celestial Preservers. On the contrary, they wanted to emphasize their humanity, so that men might not think it impossible to become what they had become. Even to-day, in spite of the Masters' efforts, there are many good people who feel it would be presumptuous and almost blasphemous, deliberately to set out to become Adepts. Yet that was exactly what the Masters insisted should be done, and that is why the writers of the Letters—fearing to appear too remote—leaned down so far toward the level of men like Hume and Sinnett, almost as we might go on all-fours and make childish jokes in a nursery of infants. The trouble was, of course, that the infants in this case thought themselves to be conferring, instead of receiving favours. Chela means a child; but the hearts of children they did not have. Heaven grant that we do not fail as they did!"

"Have you ever tried to imagine yourself in the place of Masters in 1875, and at the time these Letters were written?" the Student asked. "I have, and my belief is that they were horribly 'up against it,' if I may be pardoned

expressive slang. Lay out for yourself a different programme, and see its impossibility. Imagine, for instance, the advent of a St. Germain, at the court of Queen Victoria, or at the Elysée, with Thiers or Grévy as President, or in Berlin, with the first William on the throne and Bismarck in command! Imagine anything you choose, and see the insuperable obstacles. What has happened is little short of miraculous,—the very subject of our conversation, and its publication in the *QUARTERLY*, being evidence enough of the wedge which the Masters have driven into the iron-clad skull of the world.

T.

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*A child should be made to learn tact: frankness is a revolver which must not be discharged under the nose of the passerby.—LACORDAIRE.*

# LETTERS TO STUDENTS

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March 13th, 1913.

DEAR——

I have not forgotten that you are to have a talk with ——. Why not ask for it yourself? You will get more if *you* make the demand.

As I have said before, your mind is your great barrier. You want to understand everything,—yourself among other things; and one of the limitations which you should accept is your lack of understanding of yourself; your lack of ability to explain yourself by your mind. I have been told to tell you this, it is not merely my opinion.

If you would spend the same amount of time and energy in trying to acquire some virtue, which you spend in trying to work out in your mind how you ought to try to acquire it, you would accomplish much. If you prayed, instead of trying to understand the nature, and method, and rationale of prayer, you would accomplish more.

Most of your record is a constant “I wonder why—!” “I do not understand.” And both are unnecessary. The “why” of a thing, at this stage, is not necessary for you, nor the understanding of things.

You need simplicity,—simple acceptance, simple faith and obedience, followed by action. Do things, even if they seem foolish to your mind. Pray to the Master, even if your mind does not know how, or what to say, or why you should. *You* know, the real you, which lies below the barriers which your education and practical work-a-day life have superimposed.

You say you do not know what the ideal woman ought to be, and so do not know what to work at and for. But the truth is that you are a very real and fine *woman*, down deep. Be that. Let it come to the surface, and break through mental and other crusts.

If you were going to marry someone in five years, whom you loved devotedly, with your whole nature, and you wanted to make yourself an ideal mate for him, what would you do? No man cares for intellect in a woman, but he wants and needs inspiration, sympathy, love, obedience, sweetness, good temper, *purity*, a sure instinct for what is right, firmness where firmness is called for, self-sacrifice, unselfishness; and then he wants lesser, but still important things;—he wants perfect manners, good looks, good clothes, graciousness, ease, *savoir faire*, and many other qualities you know as well as I do. Save good looks, which will come in time, and are of the least importance, there is no single one of all these things you cannot deliberately cultivate and acquire.

The Master wants them all, and as a disciple you must have them all; and not much else is necessary (at your point of development), save the conscious and incessant desire to be a disciple.

One thing more; the true woman must know when to give and when to with-



hold, and must have the strength and courage, and it takes much of both, to be able to withhold when that is best. Many women have learned to give, and it is their nature; but only the very finest learn the next step, and that is to refuse something to those they love. You should practise this in all relations in life. It is one of the things you need to learn.

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The plain fact is that there is no reason why the members of —— should agree. They are not expected to agree. But they *are* expected to disagree with good temper and without *personal* heat. You are all different notes, or different instruments in an orchestra. You play, and you should play, different notes, and it would be silly to try and play the same. The law of harmony is not that you should all play the same note, but that you should play your different notes without discord. It is the sentimental side of you which desires that you should all play the same note. Sentimentality is a false unity or harmony, or a desire for these where they do not and cannot exist.

But it is late. Please excuse such a very long letter.

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

March 17th, 1913.

DEAR——

In response to the specific questions in your last report:—

At the next meeting of ——, please bring the problem up and put it before them just as you have before me; *i.e.* that your experience has been that no one ever correctly reports another; that in consequence you are not prepared to accept dicta as transmitted through one of them; that this places you in the position of not giving credence to one of your fellows—and what are you going to do about it?

Your reports are not at all a record of your “life, attitude, and effort.” They are a report of what you think your life, attitude, and effort are, which, fortunately for you, is a very different thing.

Your attitude is made up of an infinitude of trifling actions, mostly instinctive and unconscious, which represent the real “you.” The moment you become conscious of any one of them, your mind begins to influence your actions,—all sorts of prejudices, sentimentalities, wrong ideas, etc., become operative, and you become more or less artificial. But I know of no way to record the real “you” until you are it more fully. You might try to watch (after the event) your unconscious and undeliberate acts.

With best wishes,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

April 16, 1913.

DEAR——

The reason why you do not ask questions is shyness—you are very shy. Shyness is a form of vanity. We are afraid of the effect we shall create if we do anything,—whether talk or action, it does not matter what.

One very good way for you to overcome it, and other troubles of a similar kind, is to think less of yourself, your feelings, your thoughts,—and more of what would be useful for the sake of your fellows. Instead of thinking how much you get or can get out of a meeting—think how much you can get out of it for the others, and try to get more.

There are many reasons why we feel strain in doing our daily work. The real reason is because we have to learn to work properly under conditions that create strain, for by so doing we remove the defects that create the strain. You have hit on one of them. Lack of proportion is another. We fail to realize the utter unimportance of most of the things we do. It really does not matter to anyone, living or dead, whether we do them or not. What matters is how we do them, the spirit we put into the doing, and *why* we do them. Is it for ourselves, or for the Master, etc., etc?

I think you would be wise to make a definite effort to have a talk with ——.

With kindest regards,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

Monday, June 1st, 1913.

DEAR——

I have your note expressing surprise at the advice, or lack of it, in my letter of Saturday. It may be well to clear up the point.

I have no right to advise you about your personal duty. If you come to me for advice about such a thing, all I can do, or should attempt to do, is: (a) Speak of such fundamental principles as seem to me to throw light on the point. Very often such light is so clear and decided that there does not seem to be much of an alternative left, and it seems, therefore, as if I told you very definitely what to do. At other times, the issue is clouded and the underlying principle is anything but clear, at any rate to you; and you feel that you were not helped at all. (b) I can give you the result of my own experience. As for instance, if you asked my advice about investing money, I could refuse to give advice, which would be the wisest thing to do; or I could be foolhardy, and give you the benefit of such knowledge as I had on that particular point.

In either event, it is *your* duty to make up *your* mind about it.

\* \* \* \* \*

Even if I had very decided opinions, I should have had no right to voice them and to take the responsibility of a decision. Only a Master can do that

after he takes over the Karma of an individual, and only an accepted Chela is entitled to such help.

I wrote this last Monday when I received your letter, and have been holding it deliberately until the whole matter was settled and it could not upset you.

Yours sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

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June 24th, 1913.

DEAR——

I have your very kind note. Please do not hesitate to "ask for more." In so far as any of us are faithful in reflecting, in the remotest degree, some of the Master's virtues, our greatest reward is to have people ask for more.

So far as a vacation is concerned, I agree with *you*. A quiet time at home, doing work you love, would, I think, do you much more good than an enforced vacation. Can you not stay at home for a week or two, get all your home work into shape, help ——, take things easy, and later on, during the summer, get off for a change if you feel like it then?

As always,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

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August 4th, 1913.

DEAR——

I return your last record.

Every barrier which separates us from the Master is some form of self-will. Often this takes a very subtle form.

We can be and are given hints as to its form, but to cure a fault, we must recognize it as one, for ourselves. It is already half cured when we recognize it. You have been told some of yours. If that does not help you much, and apparently it does not, it means that you do not yet see that those things are faults, and why and how they are faults. Time is often necessary, and further experience.

*Light on the Path* says "Grow as the flower grows, unconsciously, yet eagerly anxious," etc. It seems to me that you analyse every movement of every little shoot you put forth. Cannot you do it all more simply and naturally? And stop fussing about what you do not understand, both in yourself and in the universe? Both would get along better. It is the effort we make to fulfil our rule which counts, not the results we see. It is the faithfulness, the earnestness, the devotion,—not what we accomplish, or what we understand. Understanding is valuable in order to make renewed and intelligent effort, but do not forget that we always understand all we need for our next and immediate step. The soul is never left bewildered, unless, as sometimes happens, bewilderment is the particular lesson to be learnt by that soul. That, I think, is not the case

with you. Just the contrary. You *think* you are bewildered, but really are not;—really know all you need to know to take your next steps.

It is really all so simple, and we make it so complicated!

I am sorry we have not had talks, but, at present, I do not think you need them, or that anything would be gained by them.

With kind regards,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

September 12th, 1913.

DEAR—

I return your records. I am sorry for the delay in going over them. I have made some comments on the backs of the opposite pages. I am also directed to send you the enclosed comment on a report. . . .

*Comment:* In reply to your question about meditation, I am directed to say that the best method for you to follow at present is to read some spiritual book, such as certain parts of Faber's *All for Jesus*, or *The Imitation*, or any other book that appeals to you, and to read slowly, brooding over the import and meaning of what you read,—breaking into brief prayer of adoration or of petition or of thanksgiving, when your heart opens in that way, making some definite resolution—such as to repeat certain words during the day, with a certain intention, or whatever your reading may have suggested.

The purpose of this is to bring you to converse naturally and simply with the Master, as your heart dictates. You should also make it a rule to listen quietly after each prayer, not so much with the idea of "hearing," as to receive from Him whatever it may be His wish to bestow—perhaps His silent blessing.

To read of some incident in the New Testament; to imagine it; to think about it; to imagine yourself an actor,—as blind and asking to be given sight: this also may serve to bring the heart to brief but deep and overflowing prayer, which is, in truth, only another way of saying that it brings you directly into *rapport* with the heart of the Master.

This is meditation. Contemplation is a result, which will come in time but which cannot and should not be sought directly.

With kind regards,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

*The only good way of acting in the world, is to be with it but not to belong to it.*  
MME. SWETCHINE.



## THE "ELIXIR OF LIFE" \*

From a Chela's<sup>1</sup> Diary

*And Enoch walked with the Elohim, and the Elohim took him.—GENESIS.*

### Introduction

[The curious information—for whatsoever else the world may think of it, it will doubtless be acknowledged to be that—contained in the article that follows, merits a few words of introduction. The details given in it on the subject of what has always been considered as one of the darkest and most strictly guarded of the mysteries of initiation into Occultism—from the days of the Rishis until those of the Theosophical Society—came to the knowledge of the author in a way that would seem to the ordinary run of Europeans strange and supernatural. He, himself, however, we may assure the reader, is a most thorough disbeliever in the *supernatural*, though he has learned too much to limit the capabilities of the *natural* as some do. Further, he has to make the following confession of his own belief. It will be apparent, from a careful perusal of the facts, that if the matter be really as stated herein, the author cannot himself be an adept of high grade, as the article in such a case *would never have been written*. Nor does he pretend to be one. He is, or rather was, for a few years a humble Chela. Hence, the converse must consequently be also true, that as regards the higher stages of the mystery he can have no personal experience, but speaks of it only as a close observer left to his own surmises—and no more. He may, therefore, boldly state that during, and notwithstanding, his unfortunately rather too short stay with some adepts, he has by actual experiment and observation verified some of the less transcendental or incipient parts of the "course." And, though it will be impossible for him to give positive testimony as to what lies beyond, he may yet mention that all his own course of study, training and experience, long, severe and dangerous as it has often been, leads him to the conviction that everything is really as stated, save some details *purposely veiled*. For causes which cannot be explained to the public, he himself may be unable or unwilling to use the secret he has gained access to. Still he is permitted by one to whom all his reverential affection and gratitude are due—his last Guru—to divulge for the benefit of science and man, and especially for the good of those who are courageous enough to personally make the experiment, the following astounding particulars of the occult methods for prolonging life to a period far beyond the common.—G. M.]

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\* Reprinted from *Five Years of Theosophy*. All the footnotes are those of the original article. The signature Ed. refers to the editor of the magazine in which the article was first published (Madame Blavatsky).—EDITORS OF THE QUARTERLY.

<sup>1</sup> A Chela is the pupil and disciple of an initiated Guru or Master.—Ed.

PROBABLY one of the first considerations which move the worldly-minded at present to solicit initiation into Theosophy is the belief, or hope, that, immediately on joining, some extraordinary advantage over the rest of mankind will be conferred upon the candidate. Some even think that the ultimate result of their initiation will perhaps be exemption from that dissolution which is called the common lot of mankind. The traditions of the "Elixir of Life," said to be in the possession of Kabalists and Alchemists, are still cherished by students of Mediæval Occultism—in Europe. The allegory of the Ab-é Hyat or Water of Life, is still credited as a fact by the degraded remnants of the Asiatic esoteric sects ignorant of the *real* Great Secret. The "pungent and fiery essence," by which Zanonî renewed his existence, still fires the imagination of modern visionaries as a possible scientific discovery of the future.

Theosophically, though the fact is distinctly declared to be true, the above-named conceptions of the mode of procedure leading to the realization of the fact, are *known* to be false. The reader may or may not believe it; but as a matter of fact, Theosophical Occultists claim to have communication with (living) Intelligences possessing an infinitely wider range of observation than is contemplated even by the loftiest aspirations of modern science, all the present "Adepts" of Europe and America—dabblers in the Kabalah—notwithstanding. But far even as those superior Intelligences have investigated (or, if preferred, are alleged to have investigated), and remotely as they may have searched by the help of inference and analogy, even They have failed to discover in the Infinity anything permanent but—Space. *All is subject to change.* Reflection, therefore, will easily suggest to the reader the further logical inference that in a universe which is essentially impermanent in its conditions, nothing can confer permanency. Therefore, no possible substance, even if drawn from the depths of Infinity; no imaginable combination of drugs, whether of our earth or any other, though compounded by even the Highest Intelligence; no system of life or discipline though directed by the sternest determination and skill, could possibly produce Immutability. For in the universe of solar systems, wherever and however investigated, Immutability necessitates "Non-Being" in the physical sense given it by the Theists—Non-Being which is *nothing* in the narrow conceptions of *Western* Religionists—a *reductio ad absurdum*. This is a gratuitous insult even when applied to the Pseudo-Christian or ecclesiastical Jehovite idea of God.

Consequently, it will be seen that the common ideal conception of "Immortality" is not only essentially wrong, but a physical and metaphysical impossibility. The idea, whether cherished by Theosophists or Non-Theosophists, by Christians or Spiritualists, by Materialists or Idealists, is a chimerical illusion. But the actual prolongation of human life is possible for a time so long as to appear miraculous and incredible to those who regard our span of existence as necessarily limited to at most a couple of hundred years. We may break, as it were, the shock of death, and instead of dying, change a sudden plunge into darkness to a transition into a brighter light. And this may be made so gradual that the passage from one state of existence to another shall have its friction minimized so as to be practically imperceptible. This is a very different matter, and quite within the reach of Occult Science. In this, as in all other cases, means properly directed will gain their ends, and causes produce effects. Of course, the only question is, what are these causes, and how, in their turn, are they to be produced. To lift, as far as may be allowed, the veil from this aspect of Occultism, is the object of the present paper.

We must premise by reminding the reader of two Theosophic doctrines, constantly inculcated in *Isis Unveiled* and in other mystic works; namely, (a) that ultimately the Kosmos is *one*—one under infinite variations and manifestations, and (b) that the so-called *man* is a "compound being"—composite not only in the exoteric scientific sense of being a congeries of living so-called material units, but also in the esoteric sense of being a succession of seven forms or parts of itself, inter-blended with each other. To put it more clearly we might say that the more ethereal forms are but duplicates of the same aspect—each finer one lying within the inter-atomic spaces of the next grosser. We would have the reader understand that these are no subtleties, no "spiritualities" at all in the Christo-spiritualistic sense. In the actual man reflected in your mirror are really several men, or several parts of one composite man; each the

exact counterpart of the other, but the "atomic conditions" (for want of a better word) of each of which are so arranged that its atoms interpenetrate those of the next "grosser" form. It does not, for our present purpose, matter how the Theosophists, Spiritualists, Buddhists, Kabalists, or Vedantists, count, separate, classify, arrange or name these, as that war of terms may be postponed to another occasion. Neither does it matter what relation each of these men has to the various "elements" of the Kosmos of which he forms a part. This knowledge, though of vital importance in other respects, need not be explained or discussed now. Nor does it much more concern us that the scientists deny the existence of such an arrangement, because their instruments are inadequate to make their senses perceive it. We will simply reply, "Get better instruments and keener senses, and *eventually* you will."

All we have to say is that if you are anxious to drink of the "Elixir of Life," and live a thousand years or so, you must take our word for the matter at present, and proceed on the assumption. For esoteric science does not give the faintest possible hope that the desired end will ever be attained by any other way; while modern, or so-called exact science—laughs at it.

So, then, we have arrived at the point where we have determined—literally, *not* metaphorically—to crack the outer shell known as the mortal coil or body, and hatch out of it, clothed in our next. This "next" is not spiritual, but only a more ethereal form. Having by a long training and preparation adapted it for a life in this atmosphere, during which time we have gradually made the outward shell to die off through a certain process (hints of which will be found further on) we have to prepare for this physiological transformation.

How are we to do it? In the first place we have the actual, visible, material body—man, so called; though, in fact, but his outer shell—to deal with. Let us bear in mind that science teaches us that in about every seven years we *change skin* as effectually as any serpent; and this so gradually and imperceptibly that, had not science after years of unremitting study and observation assured us of it, no one would have had the slightest suspicion of the fact.

We see, moreover, that in process of time any cut or lesion upon the body, however deep, has a tendency to repair the loss and reunite; a piece of lost skin is very soon replaced by another. Hence, if a man, partially flayed alive, may sometimes survive and be covered with a new skin, so our astral, vital body—the fourth of the seven (having attracted and assimilated to itself the second) which is so much more ethereal than the physical one—may be made to harden its particles to the atmospheric changes. The whole secret is to succeed in evolving it out, and separating it from the visible; and while its generally invisible atoms proceed to concrete themselves into a compact mass, to gradually get rid of the old particles of our visible frame so as to make them die and disappear before the new set has had time to evolve and replace them. . . . We can say no more. The Magdalene is not the only one who could be accused of having "seven spirits" in her, though men who have a lesser number of spirits (what a misnomer that word!) in them, are not few or exceptional; they are the frequent failures of nature—the incomplete men and women.<sup>2</sup> Each of these has in turn to survive the preceding and more dense one, and then *die*. The exception is the sixth when absorbed into and blended with the *seventh*. The Dnatu<sup>3</sup> of the old Hindu physiologist had a dual meaning, the esoteric side of which corresponds with the Tibetan Zung (seven principles of the body).

We Asiatics have a proverb, probably handed down to us, and by the Hindus repeated ignorantly as to its esoteric meaning. It has been known ever since the old Rishis mingled familiarly with the simple and noble people they taught and led on. The Devas had whispered into every man's ear, *Thou only*—if thou wilt—art "immortal." Combine with this the saying of a Western author that if any man could just realize for an instant, that he had to die some day, he would die that instant. The Illuminated will perceive that between these two

<sup>2</sup> This is not to be taken as meaning that such persons are thoroughly destitute of some one or several of the seven principles: a man born without an arm has still its ethereal counterpart; but that they are so latent that they cannot be developed, and consequently are to be considered as non-existing.—Ed. *Theos*.

<sup>3</sup> Dhatu, the seven principal substances of the human body—chyle, flesh, blood, fat, bones, marrow, semen.

sayings, rightly understood, stands revealed the whole secret of longevity. We only die when our will ceases to be strong enough to make us live. In the majority of cases, death comes when the torture and vital exhaustion accompanying a rapid change in our physical conditions becomes so intense as to weaken, for one single instant, our "clutch on life," or the tenacity of the will to exist. Till then, however severe may be the disease, however sharp the pang, we are only sick or wounded, as the case may be. This explains the cases of sudden deaths from joy, fright, pain, grief, or such other causes. The sense of a life-task consummated, of the worthlessness of one's existence, *if strongly realized*, produces death as surely as poison or a rifle-bullet. On the other hand, a stern determination to continue to live, has, in fact, carried many through the crises of the most severe diseases, in perfect safety.

First, then, must be the determination—the *will*—the conviction of certainty, to survive and continue.<sup>4</sup> Without that, all else is useless. And to be efficient for the purpose, it must be, not only a passing resolution of the moment, a single fierce desire of short duration, but a *settled and continued strain, as nearly as can be continued and concentrated without one single moment's relaxation*. In a word, the would-be "Immortal" must be on his watch night and day, guarding self against—himself. To live—to live—to live—must be his unswerving resolve. He must as little as possible allow himself to be turned aside from it. It may be said that this is the most concentrated form of selfishness; that it is utterly opposed to our Theosophic professions of benevolence, and disinterestedness, and regard for the good of humanity. Well, viewed in a short-sighted way, it is so. But to do good, as in everything else, a man *must have* time and materials to work with, and this is a necessary means to the acquirement of powers by which infinitely more good can be done than without them. When these are once mastered, the opportunities to use them will arrive, for there comes a moment when further watch and exertion are no longer needed—the moment when the turning-point is safely passed. For the present as we deal with aspirants and not with advanced Chelas, in the first stage a determined, dogged resolution, and an enlightened concentration of self on self, are all that is absolutely necessary. It must not, however, be considered that the candidate is required to be unhuman or brutal in his negligence of others. Such recklessly selfish course would be as injurious to him as the contrary one of expending his vital energy on the gratification of his physical desires. All that is required from him is a purely negative attitude. Until the turning-point is reached, he must not "lay out" his energy in lavish or fiery devotion to any cause, however noble, however "good," however elevated.<sup>5</sup> Such, we can solemnly assure the reader, would bring its reward in many ways—perhaps in another life, perhaps in this world, but it would tend to shorten the existence it is desired to preserve, as surely as self-indulgence and profligacy. That is why very few of the truly great men of the world (of course, the unprincipled adventurers

<sup>4</sup> Colonel Olcott has epigrammatically explained the creative or rather the re-creative power of the will, in his *Buddhist Catechism*. He there shows—of course, speaking on behalf of the Southern Buddhists—that this *will to live*, if not extinguished in the present life, leaps over the chasm of bodily death, and re-combines the Skandhas, or groups of qualities that made up the individual into a new personality. Man is, therefore, reborn as the result of his own unsatisfied yearning for objective existence. Colonel Olcott puts it in this way:

Q. 123. . . . *What is that, in man, which gives him the impression of having a permanent individuality?*

A. Tanha, or the unsatisfied desire for existence. The being having done that for which he must be rewarded or punished in future, and having Tanha, will have a rebirth through the influence of Karma.

Q. 124. *What is it that is reborn?*

A. A new aggregation of Skandhas, or individuality, caused by the last yearning of the dying person.

Q. 128. *To what cause must we attribute the differences in the combination of the Five Skandhas which makes every individual differ from every other individual?*

A. To the Karma of the individual in the next preceding birth.

Q. 129. *What is the force or energy that is at work, under the guidance of Karma, to produce the new being?*

A. Tanha—the "will to live."

<sup>5</sup> On page 151 of Mr. Sinnett's *Occult World*, the author's much abused, and still more doubted correspondent assures him that none yet of his "degree are like the stern hero of Bulwer's *Zanoni* . . . the heartless morally dried up mummies some would fancy us to be": . . . and adds that few of them "would care to play the part in life of a desiccated pansy between the leaves of a volume of solemn poetry." But our Adept omits saying that *one or two degrees higher*, and he will have to submit for a period of years to such a mummifying process, unless, indeed, he would voluntarily give up a life-long labour and—die.—ED.



who have applied great powers to bad uses are out of the question)—the martyrs, the heroes, the founders of religions, the liberators of nations, the leaders of reforms—ever became members of the long-lived "Brotherhood of Adepts" who were by some and for long years accused of *selfishness*. (And that is also why the Yogis, and the Fakirs of modern India—most of whom are acting now but on the *dead-letter* tradition, are required if they would be considered living up to the principles of their profession—to appear *entirely dead* to every inward feeling or emotion.) Notwithstanding the purity of their hearts, the greatness of their aspirations, the disinterestedness of their self-sacrifice, *they could not live for they had missed the hour*. They may at times have exercised powers which the world called miraculous; they may have electrified man and subdued nature by fiery and self-devoted will; they may have been possessed of a so-called superhuman intelligence; they may have even had knowledge of, and communion with, members of our own Occult Brotherhood, but, having deliberately resolved to devote their vital energy to the welfare of others, rather than to themselves, they have surrendered life; and, when perishing on the cross or the scaffold, or falling, sword in hand, upon the battlefield, or sinking exhausted after a successful consummation of the life-object, on death-beds in their chambers, they have all alike had to cry out at last: "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani!"

So far, so good. But, given the will to live, however powerful, we have seen that, in the ordinary course of mundane life, the throes of dissolution cannot be checked. The desperate, and again and again renewed struggle of the cosmic elements to proceed with a career of change despite the will that is checking them, like a pair of run-away horses struggling against the determined driver holding them in, are so cumulatively powerful, that the utmost efforts of the *untrained* human will acting within an *unprepared* body become ultimately useless. The highest intrepidity of the bravest soldier; the intensest desire of the yearning lover; the hungry greed of the unsatisfied miser; the most undoubting faith of the sternest fanatic; the practised insensibility to pain of the hardest red Indian brave or half-trained Hindu Yogi; the most deliberate philosophy of the calmest thinker—all alike fail at last. Indeed, sceptics will allege in opposition to the verities of this article that, as a matter of experience, it is often observed that the mildest and most irresolute of minds and the weakest of physical frames are often seen to resist "death" longer than the powerful will of the high-spirited and obstinately-egotistic man, and the iron frame of the labourer, the warrior and the athlete. In reality, however, the key to the secret of these apparently contradictory phenomena is the true conception of the very thing we have already said. If the physical development of the gross "outer shell" proceeds on parallel lines and at an equal rate with that of the will, it stands to reason that no advantage *for the purpose of overcoming it*, is attained by the latter. The acquisition of improved breech-loaders by one modern army confers no absolute superiority if the enemy also becomes possessed of them. Consequently it will be at once apparent, to those who think on the subject, that much of the training by which what is known as "a powerful and determined nature," perfects itself for its own purpose on the stage of the visible world, necessitating and *being useless* without a parallel development of the "gross" and so-called animal frame, is, in short, neutralized, for the purpose at present treated of, by the fact that its own action has armed the enemy with weapons equal to its own. The *force* of the impulse to dissolution is rendered equal to the will to oppose it; and being cumulative, subdues the will-power and triumphs at last. On the other hand, it may happen that an apparently weak and vacillating will-power residing in a weak and undeveloped physical frame, may be so *reinforced* by some unsatisfied desire—the Ichchha (wish), as it is called by the Indian Occultists (for instance, a mother's heart-yearning to remain and support her fatherless children)—as to keep down and vanquish, for a short time, the physical throes of a body to which it has become temporarily superior.

The whole *rationale*, then, of the first condition of continued existence in this world, is (a) the development of a will so powerful as to overcome the hereditary (in a Darwinian sense) tendencies of the atoms composing the "gross" and palpable animal frame, to hurry on at a particular period in a certain course of cosmic change; and (b) to so weaken the concrete action of that animal frame as to make it more amenable to the power of the will. To defeat an army, *you must demoralize and throw it into disorder*.

To do this then, is the real object of all the rites, ceremonies, fasts, "prayers," meditations initiations and procedures of self-discipline enjoined by various esoteric Eastern sects, from that course of pure and elevated aspiration which leads to the higher phases of Real Adeptism, down to the fearful and disgusting ordeals which the adherent of the "Left-hand Road" has to pass through, all the time maintaining his equilibrium. The procedures have their merits and their demerits, their separate uses and abuses, their essential and non-essential parts, their various veils, mummeries, and labyrinths. But in all, the result aimed at is reached, if by different processes. The will is strengthened, encouraged, and directed, and the elements opposing its action are *demoralized*. Now, to any one who has thought out and connected the various evolution theories, as taken, not from any occult source, but from the ordinary scientific manual accessible to all—from the hypothesis of the latest variation in the habits of species; say the acquisition of carnivorous habits by the New Zealand parrot, for instance—to the farthest glimpses backwards into Space and Eternity afforded by the "fire mist" doctrine, it will be apparent that they all rest on one basis. That basis is, that the impulse once given to a hypothetical unit has a tendency to continue; and consequently, that anything "done" by some thing at a certain time and certain place tends to repeat itself at other times and places.

Such is the admitted *rationale* of heredity and atavism. That the same things apply to our ordinary conduct is apparent from the notorious ease with which "habits"—bad or good, as the case may be—are acquired, and it will not be questioned that this applies, as a rule, as much to the moral and intellectual, as to the physical world.

Furthermore, history and science teach us plainly that certain physical habits conduce to certain moral and intellectual results. There never yet was a conquering nation of vegetarians. Even in the old Aryan times, we do not learn that the very Rishis, from whose lore and practice we gain the knowledge of Occultism, ever interdicted the Kshatriya (military) caste from hunting or a carnivorous diet. Filling, as they did, a certain place in the body politic in the actual condition of the world, the Rishis as little thought of interfering with them, as of restraining the tigers of the jungle from their habits. That did not affect what the Rishis did themselves.

The aspirant to longevity then must be on his guard against *two dangers*. He must beware especially of impure and animal<sup>6</sup> thoughts. For science shows that thought is dynamic, and the thought-force evolved by nervous action expanding outwardly, must affect the molecular relations of the physical man. The *inner men*,<sup>7</sup> however sublimated their organism may be, are still composed of actual, *not hypothetical*, particles, and are still subject to the law that an "action" has a tendency to repeat itself; a tendency to set up analogous action in the grosser "shell" they are in contact with, and concealed within.

And, on the other hand, certain actions have a tendency to produce actual physical conditions unfavourable to pure thought, hence to the state required for developing the supremacy of the inner man.

To return to the practical process. A normally healthy mind, in a normally healthy body, is a good starting point. Though exceptionally powerful and self-devoted natures may sometimes recover the ground lost by mental degradation or physical misuse, by employing proper means, under the direction of unswerving resolution, yet often things may have gone so far that there is no longer stamina enough to sustain the conflict sufficiently long to perpetuate this life; though what in Eastern parlance is called the "merit" of the effort will help to ameliorate conditions and improve matters in another.

However this may be, the prescribed course of self-discipline commences here. It may be stated briefly that its essence is a course of moral, mental, and physical development, carried on in parallel lines—one being useless without the other. The physical man must be rendered

<sup>6</sup> In other words, the thought tends to provoke the deed.—G. M.

<sup>7</sup> We use the word in the plural, reminding the reader that, according to our doctrine, man is septenary.—G. M.

more ethereal and sensitive; the mental man more penetrating and profound; the moral man more self-denying and philosophical. And it may be mentioned that all sense of restraint—even if self-imposed—is useless. Not only is all "goodness" that results from the compulsion of physical force, threats, or bribes (whether of a physical or so-called "spiritual" nature) absolutely useless to the person who exhibits it, its hypocrisy tending to poison the moral atmosphere of the world, but the desire to be "good" or "pure," to be efficacious must be spontaneous. It must be a self-impulse from within, a real preference for something higher, not an abstention from vice because of fear of the law; not a chastity enforced by the dread of "public opinion"; not a benevolence exercised through love of praise or dread of consequences in a hypothetical "future life."<sup>8</sup>

It will be seen now in connection with the doctrine of the tendency to the renewal of action, before discussed, that the course of self-discipline recommended as the only road to longevity by Occultism is *not* a "visionary" theory dealing with vague "ideas," but actually a scientifically devised system of drill. It is a system by which each particle of the several "men" composing the septenary individual receives an impulse, and a habit of doing what is necessary for certain purposes of its own free-will and with "pleasure." Every one must be practised and perfect in a thing to do it with pleasure. This rule especially applies to the case of the development of *man*. "Virtue" may be very good in its way—it may lead to the grandest results. But to become efficacious it has to be practised cheerfully, not with reluctance or pain. As a consequence of the above consideration the candidate for longevity at the commencement of his career must begin to eschew his physical desires, not from any sentimental theory of right or wrong, but for the following good reason. As, according to a well-known and now established scientific theory, his visible material frame is always renewing its particles; he will, while abstaining from the gratification of his desires, reach the end of a certain *period* during which those particles which composed the man of vice, and which were given a bad predisposition, will have departed. At the same time, the disuse of such functions will tend to obstruct the entry, in place of the old particles, of new particles having a tendency to repeat the said acts. And while this is the *particular* result as regards certain "vices," the general result of an abstention from "gross" acts will be (by a modification of the well-known Darwinian law of atrophy by non-usage) to diminish what we may call the "relative" density and coherence of the outer shell (as a result of its less-used molecules); while the diminution in the quantity of its actual constituents will be "made up" (if tried by scales and weights) by the increased admission of more ethereal particles.

What physical desires are to be abandoned and in what order? First and foremost, he must give up alcohol in all forms; for while it supplies no nourishment, nor any direct pleasure (beyond such sweetness or fragrance as may be gained in the taste of wine, etc., to which alcohol, in itself is non-essential), to even the grossest elements of the "physical" frame, it induces a violence of action, a rush so to speak, of life, the stress of which can only be sustained by very dull, gross, and dense elements, and which, by the operation of the well-known law of reaction (in commercial phrase, "supply and demand") tends to summon them from the surrounding universe, and therefore directly counteracts the object we have in view.

Next comes meat-eating, and for the very same reason, in a minor degree. It increases the rapidity of life, the energy of action, the violence of passions. It may be good for a hero who has to fight and die, but not for a would-be sage who has to exist and . . .

Next in order come the sexual desires; for these, in addition to the great diversion of energy (vital force) into other channels, in many different ways, beyond the primary one (as, for instance, the waste of energy in expectation, jealousy, etc.), are direct attractions to a certain gross quality of the original matter of the universe, simply because the most pleasurable physical sensations are only possible at that stage of density. Alongside with and extending beyond all these and other gratifications of the senses (which include not only those things usually known as "vicious," but all those which, though ordinarily regarded as "innocent," have yet

<sup>8</sup> Colonel Olcott clearly and succinctly explains the Buddhist doctrine of Merit or Karma, in his *Buddhist Catechism* (Question 83).—G. M.

the disqualification of ministering to the pleasures of the body—the most harmless to others and the least “gross” being the criterion for those to be last abandoned in each case)—must be carried on the moral purification.

Nor must it be imagined that “austerities” as commonly understood can, in the majority of cases, avail much to hasten the “etherealizing” process. That is the rock on which many of the Eastern esoteric sects have foundered, and the reason why they have degenerated into degrading superstitions. The Western monks and the Eastern Yogis, who think they will reach the apex of powers by concentrating their thought on their navel, or by standing on one leg, are practising exercises which serve no other purpose than to strengthen the will-power, which is sometimes applied to the basest purposes. These are examples of this one-sided and dwarf development. It is no use to fast *as long as you require* food. The ceasing of desire for food without impairment of health is the sign which indicates that it should be taken in lesser and ever decreasing quantities until the extreme limit compatible with life is reached. A stage will be finally attained where only water will be required.

Nor is it of any use for this particular purpose of longevity to abstain from immorality so long as you are craving for it in your heart; and so on with all other unsatisfied inward cravings. To get rid of the inward desire is the essential thing, and to mimic the real thing without it is barefaced hypocrisy and useless slavery.

So it must be with the moral purification of the heart. The “basest” inclinations must go first—then the others. First avarice, then fear, then envy, worldly pride, uncharitableness, hatred; last of all ambition and curiosity must be abandoned successively. The strengthening of the more ethereal and so-called “spiritual” parts of the man must go on at the same time. Reasoning from the known to the unknown, meditation must be practised and encouraged. Meditation is the inexpressible yearning of the inner *man* to “*go out towards the infinite*,” which in the olden time was the real meaning of adoration, but which has now no synonym in the European languages, because the thing no longer exists in the West, and its name has been vulgarized to the make-believe shams known as prayer, glorification, and repentance. Through all stages of training the equilibrium of the consciousness—the assurance that all *must* be right in the Kosmos, and therefore with *you*, a portion of it—must be retained. The process of life must not be hurried but retarded, if possible; to do otherwise may do good to others—perhaps even to yourself in other spheres, but it will hasten your dissolution in this.

Nor must the externals be neglected in this first stage. Remember that an Adept, though “existing” so as to convey to ordinary minds the idea of his being immortal, is not also invulnerable to agencies from without. The training to prolong life does not, in itself, secure one from accidents. As far as any physical preparation goes, the sword may still cut, the disease enter, the poison disarrange. This case is very clearly and beautifully put in *Zanoni*, and it is correctly put and must be so, unless all “adeptism” is a baseless lie. The Adept may be more secure from ordinary dangers than the common mortal, but he is so by virtue of the superior knowledge, calmness, coolness and penetration which his lengthened existence and its necessary concomitants have enabled him to acquire; not by virtue of any preservative power in the process itself. He is secure as a man armed with a rifle is more secure than a naked baboon; not secure in the sense in which the Deva (god) was supposed to be securer than a man.

If this is so in the case of the high Adept, how much more necessary is it that the neophyte should be not only protected but that he himself should use all possible means to ensure for himself the necessary duration of life to complete the process of mastering the phenomena we call death! It may be said, why do not the higher Adepts protect him? Perhaps they *do* to some extent, but the child must learn to walk alone; to make him independent of his own efforts in respect to safety, would be destroying one element necessary to his development—the sense of responsibility. What courage or conduct would be called for in a man sent to fight when armed with irresistible weapons and clothed in impenetrable armour? Hence the neophyte should endeavour, as far as possible, to fulfil every true canon of sanitary law as laid down by modern scientists. Pure air, pure water, pure food, gentle exercise, regular hours, pleasant occupations and surroundings, are all, if not indispensable, at least serviceable to his progress. It is to secure these, at least as much as silence and solitude, that the Gods, Sages, Occultists

of all ages have retired as much as possible to the quiet of the country, the cool cave, the depths of the forest, the expanse of the desert, or the heights of the mountains. Is it not suggestive that the Gods have always loved the "high places"; and that in the present day the highest section of the Occult Brotherhood on earth inhabits the highest mountain plateaux of the earth?<sup>9</sup>

Nor must the beginner disdain the assistance of medicine and good medical regimen. He is still an ordinary mortal, and he requires the aid of an ordinary mortal.

"Suppose, however, all the conditions required, or which will be understood as required (for the details and varieties of treatment requisite are too numerous to be detailed here), are fulfilled, what is the next step?"—the reader will ask. Well, if there have been no backslidings or remissness in the procedure indicated, the following physical results will follow:—

First the neophyte will take more pleasure in things spiritual and pure. Gradually gross and material occupations will become not only uncraved for or forbidden, but simply and literally repulsive to him. He will take more pleasure in the simple sensations of Nature—the sort of feeling one can remember to have experienced as a child. He will feel more light-hearted, confident, happy. Let him take care the sensation of renewed youth does not mislead, or he will yet risk a fall into his old baser life and even lower depths. "Action and reaction are equal."

Now the desire for food will begin to cease. Let it be left off gradually—no fasting is required. Take what you feel you require. The food craved for will be the most innocent and simple. Fruit and milk will usually be the best. Then, as till now you have been simplifying the quality of your food, gradually—very gradually—as you feel capable of it, diminish the quantity. You will ask: "Can a man exist without food?" No, but before you mock, consider the character of the process alluded to. It is a notorious fact that many of the lowest and simplest organisms have no excretions. The common guinea-worm is a very good instance. It has rather a complicated organism, but it has no ejaculatory duct. All it consumes—the poorest essences of the human body—is applied to its growth and propagation. Living as it does in human tissue, it passes no digested food away. The human neophyte, at a certain stage of his development, is in a somewhat analogous condition, with this difference or differences, that he *does* excrete, but it is through the pores of his skin, and by those too enter other etherealized particles of matter to contribute towards his support.<sup>10</sup> Otherwise, all the food and drink is sufficient only to keep in equilibrium those "gross" parts of his physical body which still remain to repair their cuticle-waste through the medium of the blood. Later on, the process of cell-development in his frame will undergo a change; a change for the better, the opposite of that in disease for the worse—he will become *all* living and sensitive, and will derive nourishment from the Ether (Akasha). But that epoch for our neophyte is yet far distant.

Probably, long before that period has arrived, other results, no less surprising than incredible to the uninitiated, will have ensued to give our neophyte courage and consolation in his difficult task. It would be but a truism to repeat what has been alleged (in ignorance of its *rationale*) by hundreds and hundreds of writers as to the happiness and content conferred by a life of innocence and purity. But often at the very commencement of the process some real physical result, unexpected and unthought of by the neophyte, occurs. Some lingering disease, hitherto deemed hopeless, may take a favourable turn; or he may develop healing mesmeric powers himself, or some hitherto unknown sharpening of his senses may delight him. The *rationale* of these things is, as we have said, neither miraculous nor difficult of comprehension. In the first place, the sudden change in the direction of the vital energy (which, whatever view we take

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<sup>9</sup> The stern prohibition to the Jews to serve "their gods upon the high mountains and upon the hills" is traced back to the unwillingness of their ancient elders to allow people in most cases unfit for adeptship to choose a life of celibacy and asceticism, or in other words, to pursue adeptship. This prohibition had an esoteric meaning before it became the prohibition, incomprehensible in its dead-letter sense: for it is not India alone whose sons accorded divine honours to the *Wise Ones*, but all nations regarded their Adepts and Initiates as divine.—G. M.

<sup>10</sup> He is in a state similar to the physical state of a foetus before birth into the world.—G. M.

of it and its origin, is acknowledged by all schools of philosophy as most recondite, and as the motive power) must produce results of some kind. In the second, Theosophy shows, as we said before, that a man consists of several "men" pervading each other, and on this view (although it is very difficult to express the idea in language) it is but natural that the progressive etherealization of the densest and most gross of all should leave the others literally more at liberty. A troop of horses may be blocked by a mob and have much difficulty in fighting its way through; but if every one of the mob could be changed suddenly into a ghost, there would be little to retard it. And as each interior entity is more rare, active, and volatile than the outer, and as each has relation with different elements, spaces, and properties of the Kosmos which are treated of in other articles on Occultism, the mind of the reader may conceive—though the pen of the writer could not express it in a dozen volumes—the magnificent possibilities gradually unfolded to the neophyte.

Many of the opportunities thus suggested may be taken advantage of by the neophyte for his own safety, amusement, and the good of those around him; *but the way in which* he does this is one adapted to his fitness—a part of the ordeal he has to pass through, and misuse of these powers will certainly entail the loss of them as a natural result. The Ichchha (or desire) evoked anew by the vistas they open up will retard or throw back his progress.

But there is another portion of the Great Secret to which we must allude, and which is *now* for the first, in a long series of ages, allowed to be given out to the world, as the hour for it is come.

The educated reader need not be again reminded that one of the great discoveries which has immortalized the name of Darwin is the law that an organism has always the tendency to repeat, at an analogous period in its life, the action of its progenitors, the more surely and completely in proportion to their proximity in the scale of life. One result of this is, that, in general, organized beings usually die at a period (on an average) the same as that of their progenitors. It is true that there is a great difference between the *actual* ages at which individuals of any species die. Disease, accidents and famine are the main agents in causing this. But there is, in each species, a well-known limit within which the race-life lies, and none are known to survive beyond it. This applies to the human species as well as any other. Now, supposing that every possible sanitary condition had been complied with, and every accident and disease avoided by a man of ordinary frame, in some particular case there would still, as is known to medical men, come a time when the particles of the body would feel the hereditary tendency to do that which leads inevitably to dissolution, *and would obey it*. It must be obvious to any reflecting man that, if by *any* procedure this critical climacteric could be once thoroughly passed over, the subsequent danger of "death" would be proportionally less as the years progressed. Now this, which no ordinary and unprepared mind and body can do, is possible sometimes for the will and the frame of one who has been specially prepared. There are fewer of the grosser particles present to feel the hereditary bias—there is the assistance of the reinforced "interior men" (whose normal duration is always greater even in natural death) to the visible outer shell, and there is the drilled and indomitable will to direct and wield the whole.<sup>11</sup>

From that time forward the course of the aspirant is clearer. He has conquered the "Dweller of the Threshold"—the hereditary enemy of his race, and, though still exposed to ever-new dangers in his progress towards Nirvana, he is flushed with victory, and with new confidence and new powers to second it, can press onwards to perfection.

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<sup>11</sup> In this connection we may as well show what modern science, and especially physiology, has to say as to the power of the human will. "The force of will is a potent element in determining longevity. This single point must be granted without argument, that of two men every way alike and similarly circumstanced, the one who has the greater courage and grit will be longer-lived. One does not need to practise medicine long to learn that men die who might just as well live if they resolved to live, and that myriads who are invalids could become strong if they had the native or acquired will to vow they would do so. Those who have no other quality favourable to life, whose bodily organs are nearly all diseased, to whom each day is a day of pain, who are beset by life-shortening influences, yet do live by will alone."—Dr. GEORGE M. BEARD.

For, it must be remembered, that nature everywhere acts by law, and that the process of purification we have been describing in the visible material body, also takes place in those which are interior, and not visible to the scientist by modifications of the same process. All is on the change, and the metamorphoses of the more ethereal bodies imitate, though in successively multiplied duration, the career of the grosser, gaining an increasing wider range of relations with the surrounding Kosmos, till in Nirvana the most rarefied Individuality is merged at last into the Infinite Totality.

From the above description of the process, it will be inferred why it is that Adepts are so seldom seen in ordinary life; for *pari passu* with the etherealization of their bodies and the development of their power grows an increasing distaste, and a so-to-speak "contempt" for the things of our ordinary mundane existence. Like the fugitive who successively casts away in his flight those articles which incommode his progress, beginning with the heaviest, so the aspirant eluding "death" abandons all on which the latter can take hold. In the progress of Negation everything got rid of is a help. As we said before, the Adept does not become "immortal" as the word is ordinarily understood. By or about the time when the death-limit of his race is passed he is *actually dead*, in the ordinary sense, that is to say, he has relieved himself of all or nearly all such material particles as would have necessitated in disruption the agony of dying. He has been dying gradually during the whole period of his Initiation. The catastrophe cannot happen twice over. He has only spread over a number of years the mild process of dissolution which others endure from a brief moment to a few hours. The highest Adept is, in fact, dead to, and absolutely unconscious of, the world; he is oblivious of its pleasures, careless of its miseries, in so far as sentimentalism goes, for the stern sense of Duty never leaves him blind to its very existence. For the new ethereal senses opening to wider spheres are to ours much in the relation of ours to the Infinitely Little. New desires and enjoyments, new dangers and hindrances arise, with new sensations and new perceptions; and far away down in the mist—both literally and metaphorically—is our dirty little earth left below by those who have virtually "gone to join the gods."

And from this account, too, it will be perceptible how foolish it is for people to ask the Theosophist to "procure for them communication with the highest Adepts." It is with the utmost difficulty that one or two can be induced, even by the throes of a world, to injure their own progress by meddling with mundane affairs. The ordinary reader will say: "This is not god-like. This is the acme of selfishness." . . . But let him realize that a very high Adept, undertaking to reform the world, would necessarily have to once more submit to incarnation. And is the result of all that have gone before in that line sufficiently encouraging to prompt a renewal of the attempt?

A deep consideration of all that we have written will also give the Theosophists an idea of what they demand when they ask to be put in the way of gaining *practically* "higher powers." Well, there, as plainly as words can put it, is the Path. . . . Can they tread it?

Nor must it be disguised that what to the ordinary mortal are unexpected dangers, temptations and enemies, also beset the way of the neophyte. And that for no fanciful cause, but for the simple reason that he is, in fact, acquiring new senses, has yet no practice in their use, and has never before seen the things he sees. A man born blind suddenly endowed with vision would not at once master the meaning of perspective, but would, like a baby, imagine in one case, the moon to be within his reach, and, in the other, grasp a live coal with the most reckless confidence.

And what, it may be asked, is to recompense this abnegation of all the pleasures of life, this cold surrender of all mundane interests, this stretching forward to an unknown goal which seems ever more unattainable? For, unlike some of the anthropomorphic creeds, Occultism offers to its votaries no eternally permanent heaven of material pleasure, to be gained at once by one quick dash through the grave. As has, in fact, often been the case, many would be prepared willingly to die *now* for the sake of the paradise hereafter. But Occultism gives no such prospect of cheaply and immediately gained infinitude of pleasure, wisdom, and existence. It only promises extensions of these, stretching in successive arches obscured by successive veils, in an unbroken series up the long vista which leads to Nirvana. And this, too, qualified by the

necessity that new powers entail new responsibilities, and that the capacity of increased pleasure entails the capacity of increased sensibility to pain. To this, the only answer that can be given is twofold: (firstly) the consciousness of power is itself the most exquisite of pleasures, and is unceasingly gratified in the progress onwards with new means for its exercise; and (secondly), as has been already said, *this* is the only road by which there is the faintest scientific likelihood that "death" can be avoided, perpetual memory secured, infinite wisdom attained, and hence an immense helping of mankind made possible, once that the Adept has safely crossed the turning-point. Physical as well as metaphysical logic requires and endorses the fact that only by gradual absorption into infinity can the Part become acquainted with the Whole, and that that which is *now something* can only feel, know, and enjoy *everything* when lost in Absolute Totality in the vortex of that Unalterable Circle wherein our Knowledge becomes Ignorance, and the Everything itself is identified with the Nothing.

G. M.





## REVIEWS

*The Problem of Atlantis*, by Lewis Spence; William Rider & Son, London, 1924; price, 10s. 6d.

Everyone whose intuition or imagination has in any way been kindled by Madame Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*, should by all means read this book, worthy of a consideration which can hardly be granted to the lucubrations of Donnelly. Mr. Spence has long been known as a student of primitive folk-lore and archæology, more particularly of the Aztecs, Mayas and Egyptians. The evidence which he has amassed in this field is indisputable, and will interest the general reader, who is certain to learn many things, which he will regard as astonishing coincidences, even if he is not "converted" to a belief in Atlantis, when his perusal of the book is completed.

At the outset let me hasten to do the author the justice to state that his object is not to prove the former existence of an Atlantic continent, nor does he believe that he has proved it. In the words of the preface, his object was to "place the study of the whole problem on a more accurate basis than has been attempted in recent times." In this the present reviewer believes him to have been eminently successful.

Two opening chapters deal with Plato's well-known account of Atlantis, a very specific one, which he claimed to have received from Egyptian priests. Mr. Spence's main thesis is to adduce known archæological facts from the early or ancient peoples on both sides of the Atlantic, showing that elements in their civilization, religion, or in general anthropology, corroborate to a surprising extent the account of Plato, when stripped of fanciful embellishments. The general theory is propounded that the civilizations of the Egyptians, the Aztecs, Mayas and Incas, the Guanches of the Canaries, and the extinct Crô-Magnons, all have many points in common, that their origins are unknown, that they were Atlantean, and that consequently, there must have been an Atlantis, where the root civilization developed. The chief premise of our author is that generations of study have shown that folk-lore and myths, especially when recurrent in different peoples, have time and again been shown to have a basis of historical fact, and that people with similar customs, religions or traditions have in some way in the past been connected. This premise is, I think, sound, as witness the discovery of ancient Troy in our own generation, the existence of which was supposed to be a pure myth, and the still more recent discovery that the legend of King Arthur has an historical foundation. Thirteen chapters are devoted to this archæological and anthropological evidence. Here the author is for the most part on the sure grounds of his own field, and these chapters include much proved fact that no living person could gainsay. Illustrations are the pyramids of the Toltecs and the Egyptians, the numerous traditions of a deluge and cataclysm, the tradition of the Aztecs that they came in boats from the east, the resemblances between the Guanches and the Crô-Magnons, the similarity in burial customs of all these peoples, etc., etc. Just what inferences, however, should be drawn from these facts is another matter, and here the author is certain to encounter disagreement from leading experts.

Two preliminary chapters deal with the geological and biological evidence. As is to be expected, these are the poorest in the book, not in any sense to the disparagement of the author, but because he is an archæologist, not a geologist or a biologist, and consequently could not have written on these sciences with equal competence. There are several geologists of repute who believe in an Atlantic continent or at least in land masses, where now is the great submerged tableland in mid-ocean, of which the Azores and the Canaries are culminating points.

It is equally true that certain similarities of outline of parts of both the American and European coasts can be best explained by the subsidence of land formerly existing between them. But the main difficulty which prevents Science to-day from regarding Atlantis as a justifiable postulate, is the depth of this submarine tableland below the surface of the ocean, which averages some seventeen hundred fathoms. There is, unfortunately, no definite evidence that any land mass of any size ever has undergone so considerable an emergence or subsidence as two miles. Science does not say that such a change has never taken place, or that it cannot have taken place; but it cannot postulate something for which there is no definite evidence.

The biological evidence is even weaker, and, curiously enough, has been growing weaker for forty years. Briefly, biological evidence for the existence of a former land mass takes the general form that numerous closely related animals and plants are found separated by an ocean, of sufficient width so that they could not have flown or been blown across, and they could not live under oceanic conditions. There are many cases where the definitely known existence of a former land mass fully explains such discontinuous distribution. It is true that there are many cases of close resemblance between animals and plants of the Atlantic littoral of both America and the Old World, particularly Newfoundland and Great Britain, Brazil and West Africa, also Ireland and the Azores. There have been and still are irresponsible biologists who do not hesitate to "conjure up" a continent to explain any anomaly of geographical distribution, without worrying their heads about geological evidence. Forty years ago there was a strong body of opinion favouring a land bridge between Africa and the New World. But palæontological evidence has gradually been accumulating to explain away many of these cases, and it has been proved, by incontrovertible evidence, that the New World type, closely resembling the Old World type, reached its new home via Asia and the Behring Strait. How then is Science to handle the balance of the cases whose origin is not known? In the first place, all depends upon the haphazard of palæontological discovery. In the second place, it is surely more justifiable to believe that the derivation of some animal in Brazil was probably like that of others, where it is known, than to erect a continent for it to pass over. When confronted with two evils, Science must choose the lesser miracle of the two, as a working hypothesis!

The present reviewer is not competent to examine critically the archæological evidence adduced by Mr. Spence. But he can say something about the logic and the psychology of the book, both of which are interesting studies in themselves. While the author states in his preface that he does not prove the existence of Atlantis, it is obvious that he believes in it intensely himself, and the rest of the book is written as if he were proving it. As a result, he frequently violates every law as to what constitutes proof. Thus, the remarkable resemblances between the Guanches of the Canaries and the Crô-Magnons, are apparently regarded as proof of their common Atlantean origin, and consequently of the existence of Atlantis. This does not constitute proof nor come anywhere near it. Granted the resemblances, the fact that there is no evidence of either people knowing anything about boats, and our total ignorance of where the Crô-Magnons came from, or where their culture originated,—all this does not prove for a minute "that the Crô-Magnon race was indigenous to the Canary Islands, the remnants of Atlantis, and did not drift there from Europe." Unfortunately, the laws of logic limit scientific hypothesis far more severely. Granting the same evidence as before, if there were an Atlantis to-day, it would be justifiable to postulate the Atlantean origin of the Crô-Magnon, provided that the difficulty of the boats is explained plausibly. To postulate a former land connection in default of definite geological evidence, would *not* be a justifiable method of overcoming this difficulty. Even then the Crô-Magnon might have originated in Spain, and it might have been the Guanches who left the ancestral home and got to Atlantis, instead of the other way about.

In other places the logic of the author "backfires" in a curious way. Thus the account of Plato describes an Atlantean type of fortification, consisting of a palace on a hill surrounded by concentric zones of water and wall. This and other features of his account are supposed to have corroborative evidence. Towards the end of the book we learn, for instance, that the Mayas, Aztecs and Incas built fortifications on some such plan. At this stage the author is trying to prove the Atlantean origin of these peoples, and the reader is asked to "recollect that

Atlantis was encircled by several zones of land and water." In another connection the author, as proof of the Atlantean origin of some custom, states that "we already know" that this was the case in Atlantis, citing Plato as authority. Plato's account of Atlantis can perhaps be rendered more plausible by archæological testimony. But the archæological testimony cannot be rendered Atlantean in origin because it is similar to Plato's account. Rendered into logical terms, the thing to be proved cannot be used to prove the validity of the premises upon which the thing to be proved must be based!

I have gone into some detail in my unfavourable criticism, as these points are subtle, and would escape all but the careful reader. The first impression would be one of irresistible testimony of the existence of Atlantis, an impression which would not have a logical basis to stand upon. The concluding chapter, as far as this feature is concerned, is the best in the book, as the author endeavours to overcome this impression, stating that "enthusiasm has doubtless frequently outstripped caution and even probability." I can do no better than quote further expressions which every Theosophist will heartily endorse. "But I would plead that the case I have so weakly endeavoured to set forth should not be judged by the shortcomings of its advocate. Many more worthy causes have found protagonists who were moved to plead on their behalf by a feeling of inward certainty to justify which they could bring only inadequate proof and expression, and among these I may be numbered. But however poor my testimony, the intuition which inspired it remains powerful and irrefragable, indestructible, indeed, as the world-memory of that ancient and original culture I have attempted to unveil." To these sentiments the reviewer can only respond with a hearty amen. The problem of Atlantis is still worthy of consideration, defying the inadequacy of logic and scientific proof, thanks to the intuition of Mr. Spence. To the same high gift of intuition we owe the survival of the great religious truths, which are equally incapable of exact scientific demonstration. So, while the reader must not believe that the existence of Atlantis has been established, he may believe that it might be established in the future. Unselfish, passionate belief and intuition are splendid positive forces, which are not aroused over trifles, nor allowed to dissipate, having yielded a barren harvest.

BIOLOGIST.

*The Ideals of Asceticism*, by the Reverend O. Hardman; The Macmillan Company, 1924; price, \$2.00.

"The world of to-day stands in sore need of true ascetics in every land, men and women of a generous enthusiasm, eager loyalty, and disciplined strength." This timely volume, by its survey of the universal and instinctive demand for asceticism in all climates, among all peoples, within all religions, even the most primitive, should serve to arouse a new respect for the time-honoured methods of self-discipline. Rightly understood, asceticism is a means to an end,—and, human nature being what it is, a necessary means. The first steps of the Path require "the surgeon's knife," says *Light on the Path*, and "He only can demand assistance of a Master when this is accomplished, or at all events, partially so." "Ascetic practice is very far from being merely the due performance of an artificially contrived set of exercises. Every situation in which men are required to endure hardship and to suffer may be made an occasion of asceticism: but it can be so treated only by whole-hearted adoption; that is to say, by a willing response which appropriates the compulsory and the inevitable and transmutes it into a voluntary activity" (p. 9).

The author, by the comparative study of religions, seeking with an instinctive but theosophic intellectual attitude for the best in what he finds, has recognized the primary place of asceticism in all true ascents of the spirit; and he concludes with a plea for a virile religious life, for that ability to "endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ" of a Paul.

A thoughtful, readable, stimulating study, suggestive and useful to all who have set themselves upon the higher way.

MARION HALE.

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*Books reviewed in these columns may be obtained from The Quarterly Book Department, P. O. Box 64, Station O., New York, N. Y.*

# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION NO. 296.—*Do Theosophists in general advocate vegetarianism, and, if so, is it because the eating of meat is supposed to coarsen the nature, or because the killing of animals is accounted wrong?*

ANSWER.—Some students of Theosophy disapprove of the eating of meat for both reasons suggested, but regard strict vegetarianism as an end to be attained rather than as a present duty. It would seem to be unwise to try to change too suddenly the meat-eating habits of centuries, which we inherit with our physical bodies. It is improbable that the average person could suddenly forego the eating of any meat, without suffering a decrease of physical or nervous force, which would seriously hamper him in the performance of his duties and which he would be unable to restore by the direct assimilation of any vegetable food, because his organs of assimilation are not easily adapted to an exclusively vegetarian diet. It is interesting to note that the Laws of Manu in ancient India provided that the warrior caste, the *Kshatriya*, should eat meat.

S. V.

ANSWER.—So far as my observation goes, students of Theosophy do not advocate universal vegetarianism at present. Like everything else, it depends on the individual. What is right at one stage of development and under one set of circumstances, may be wrong at another. Eating meat undoubtedly coarsens some natures, blunts certain perceptions. Others may need it. It is conceivable that those of a given degree of development may have to blunt some perceptions in order to live at all in the world to-day. Most of us need to develop ours to the fullest extent we can. A good general rule is to eat as little meat as is consistent with the maintenance of health. There are many things that coarsen the nature more than meat eating, self-pity, for instance.

J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—There is no general observance of vegetarianism by students of Theosophy, although many advocate its practice. The approval or otherwise of meat-eating seems to depend largely upon the individual's taste. If he personally likes meat, he is apt to remind himself that we are in Kali Yuga, and therefore need strong food to resist the adverse influences of this age. If for reasons of health or by preference he eats little or no meat, he persuades himself that such food is bad for the spiritual as well as the physical health. Students of Theosophy, at least in the Western world, do not appear to regard the killing of animals as wrong *per se*, provided the killing is done for a purpose, such as the providing of food or raiment for mankind, and is not wanton.

S.

ANSWER.—If anyone eats meat with enjoyment, it suggests that his psychic nature is meaty. Meat can, however, be eaten from a sense of duty. Personally I do not believe that anyone needs it more than once a day, and then only in small quantity. Once grant that you should kill a mosquito to prevent malaria—and only the Jains, I believe, would refuse to do so—it follows logically that you should kill a sheep to prevent anæmia, a wolf to avoid being devoured, or a German soldier, in wartime, to prevent the defilement of everything you love. On the other hand, to kill anything for any purpose, no matter how righteous, is at best a disgusting necessity. That most of us need meat, or think we do, merely proves that our stomachs and intestines are carnivorous in comparison with the insides of some Asiatics, among whom are men of immense physical strength who do not touch meat at any stage of their existence.

The only real argument I know against vegetarianism in western lands is that the man who abstains from meat "on principle" is likely to think himself superior, and is more than likely to make his diet and himself an everlasting nuisance to his friends. Q. E. D.

QUESTION NO. 297.—*Is not evolution inevitable, even without our effort; then why struggle?*

ANSWER.—Some sort of evolution would seem inevitable, in the fact of "the survival of the fittest," in "the struggle for life." The working out of the forces of life demonstrates this in the animal kingdom, and the most successful in survival are those who can adapt themselves most readily to their circumstances. But such animals are compelled to make efforts, and by these they acquire the power to survive in their struggle to deal with the circumstances of life. Why then should man be exempt? But there is this difference. Man is aware of the need for effort and he asks himself "why?" In man there is a triple evolution taking place as is stated in Madame Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*. That is distinctively man's province, and it is here that man becomes subject to an evolutionary need which is different from the physical though similar, and, as stated by Professor Ladd, "obedient to a nature and laws of its own." A. K.

ANSWER.—Perhaps if the world were happily evolving there would be no need to struggle, but one sees pain and misery on all sides—the deepest agony, often, among those who are thought to have the easiest berths. The point as I see it, is, by struggle, to force oneself to evolve more quickly, acquiring strength and knowledge with which to try to help lift the world out of its self-made Hell.

"The world behind you is praying for helpers none the less fervently because its prayers are dumb. Labour unremittingly, therefore, that you may attain the power to aid them: lifting them,—and so carrying part of that common weight of care and responsibility which your Master serenely bears, and which it is your privilege to share." *Fragments*, Vol. II. page 120.

M. A. J. H.

ANSWER.—There is a certain difference between the evolution of beings in the kingdoms below man and the evolution of man himself. This difference may be free-will. Evolution in the lower kingdoms is more of a mass evolution, whereas, although the evolution of man takes place as a race, it takes place more through the evolution of the individual soul. In animal evolution, all animals slowly move up together. But one man can attain a point far ahead of his race. The species which retrogrades dies out. In the human kingdom one man may.

Our present aim is the development of a permanent individuality and we must effect this ourselves. The whole movement of the human race will assist us, but it will not do it for us. If we decide not to evolve, the momentum of evolution will cut us off. That which we expect to assist us will eliminate us. Sr. C. B.

ANSWER.—Evolution is inevitable, even without my effort; but if I don't move with it, I move backward, and if I move backward far enough, even an oyster will refuse to harbour my *skandhas* (*anglice*, remains). Still, there are other motives for the "struggle." We may want to help others, and we may discover what idiots we are and how necessary it is to gain some sense before stepping in where angels fear to tread. The acquisition of sense involves a terrific struggle. Try it, and see. D. E. Q.

QUESTION NO. 298.—*We are told repeatedly and with emphasis that one must live the life to know the doctrine. If this means anything else than simply to be good, I wish some one would explain it.*

ANSWER.—Perhaps among other things it may mean that if we would see the view we must climb the mountain. There is no other way. First, however, it is necessary to realize that there is a view to be seen and a mountain to be climbed. "Remember, O disciple, that great though the gulf may be between the good man and the sinner, it is greater between the good man and the man who has attained knowledge; it is immeasurable between the good man and the one on the threshold of divinity" (*Light on the Path*, page 22). Knowledge, first-hand knowledge of the Divine, exists and is attainable. To this knowledge the theosophical doctrine points the way. Chelaship is revealed by it as a present-day possibility and fact. "Good-

ness" is essential for it, but it is only one step. "First a man, then a gentleman, then a chela." Many statements are made of what occurs at different points along this Path, statements of matters quite beyond the experience of even very good men, and which can only be understood by living them. "At the heart of pain lies joy," is, for instance, quite meaningless to most of us and will remain so until we find the joy there for ourselves. Spiritual growth is growth into higher and higher states of consciousness. These higher states can only be understood as they are experienced. They can no more be described in words to one who has not yet attained to them, than the perfume of a rose could be described to one utterly destitute of the sense of smell. Knowledge and understanding are given us as our actions prove that we can be trusted with them, that we desire them above all else, and as we need them for further advance. Rules appropriate to each stage of development must be followed before further advance becomes possible. These rules are not arbitrary, but are the laws of life itself. As we live in accordance with them, we attain to greater and greater knowledge of the doctrine. "He who is perfected in devotion finds spiritual wisdom springing up within himself."

J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—What do we mean by simple goodness? There is another excellent axiom: "Be good and you will be happy." But there are many people, who consider themselves very good indeed, although they give every outward indication of unhappiness. The real point seems to be, that goodness is a much more positive thing than mere passive obedience to civil laws, and abstention from the grosser forms of self-indulgence. According to an older and more generous definition, the Good is only another name for the proper goal of man. We are good in so far as we move towards that goal, and, as we move nearer to it, we see it more distinctly. Thus, we have been told of the "spiritual identity of all souls with the Oversoul," and that it is the destiny of every soul to become fully conscious of this identity. By living out the details of daily life with the purpose of making manifest our oneness with the Oversoul, we enter into a deeper and more luminous self-consciousness, which carries within itself a more definite and more personal vision of spiritual realities, which had formerly seemed only remote abstractions.

S. L.

ANSWER.—If the doctrine to which you refer is the doctrine, "Be good," then all you need is to be good in order to know the truth of that doctrine; but if the doctrine were to include more than this—if it were the doctrine, "Be good with good taste," or "Be good wisely"—then, really to understand the more inclusive doctrine, you would have to aim at more than mere goodness. The point is that *every* doctrine must be lived before it can be known. Thus, many people *believe* that the Master Christ is a living Master; comparatively few *know* that doctrine to be true. To know the doctrine, with its ever-widening implications, it is necessary to live it. This means, among other things, that we must learn to keep the desire of our hearts as firmly fixed on him, as the desire of his heart is fixed on "the Father,"—so far as it lies in our power to do so. We must live the life which the doctrine logically demands, if we wish to *know* the doctrine: that is to say, we must turn belief into action, not only on the physical plane, but on the planes of thought and feeling and imagination.

O. X.



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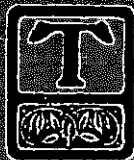
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Founded by H. P. Blavatsky at New York in 1875



THE Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the finer forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

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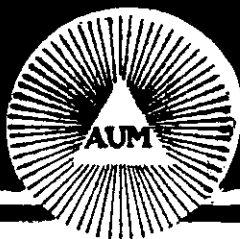
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The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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#### THE PROBLEM OF THE PERSONALITY

IN a study of the Dramas of the Mysteries, it was said that, when the aspirant catches a glimpse of his possible divinity, when the universal message of the glorious future that may be his, awakens his heart, he does not find himself free, unshackled, a light-hearted spirit ready to speed forth toward the Light; on the contrary, with the vision of the goal, he becomes aware of the impediments, the tremendous drag of the personal self which he has built up, and of the kindred impulses in mankind all about him.

Perhaps we may come closer to the problem of the personality by using a simpler term, suggested in one of Mr. Judge's *Letters*, where he says that the personal question is the most difficult one, and adds: "I mean the purely personal, that relating to 'me.'"

Facing exactly the same problem, Pascal says: "The 'me' is detestable. I detest it because it is unjust and makes itself the centre of everything. The 'me' has two qualities: it is unjust, because it makes itself the centre of everything; it is hostile to others, because it desires to enslave them. For every 'me' is the enemy of all others, and wishes to be their tyrant."

Add this sentence, attributed to the great Shankara: "There is no cause of thy bondage to birth and death except the domination of the 'me.'"

We may gain a good deal of insight into the "me" by considering it as a dynamic mind-image moulded of plastic, etheric substance, and in that sense an elemental; the central elemental, about which the elementals of the lower nature cluster.

These elementals of the mind, like other forms of growth on the lower planes, have two dominant characteristics: assimilation of outside material, and expansion. Consider a plot of ground, cleaned and prepared for sowing, in which a few seeds of the burdock are dropped. They germinate, grow, and in due time bear seed; in no long time the whole area is covered with a thicket of burdock.

If there be a ton of these weeds, this will mean that the expansive energy in the first few seeds has gathered a ton of material from the air, the water and the earth, and has assimilated it to the nature of these tyrannous weeds with their clinging burs. The energy in the weeds is expansive; it tends to spread in every direction where it can find a footing. Unchecked, it would in time cover the earth.

The "me" has exactly the same characteristics: it tends to assimilate all available material, and to expand indefinitely. Given a free field, it will fill the world. Or, as Pascal says, it is unjust because it makes itself the centre of everything, and seeks to become the tyrant over all others.

As the burdock draws material from earth, water and air, and assimilates it to its own nature, so the "me" reaches out after material to assimilate, from above, from without, from all sides. Possessions, houses, lands, kingdoms may be sought solely to aggrandize and enhance the "me." Like the jackdaw in the fable, it loves to appropriate the peacock's more decorative plumes. It is the primeval soap-box orator. It delights in praise and sternly rejects all blame.

At this point, those of us who are desirous of self-knowledge may test its influence on ourselves. Do we love praise and hate blame? So far as we do, the "me" is still strong within us.

Looking at the matter reasonably, it is clear that we can learn little from praise, but much from blame. If our motive in a certain task has been that the purpose of the Masters should be accomplished, if we be praised, this may reassure us, but will not greatly increase our self-knowledge, or aid us in the performance of our next task. But if, instead of praise, we receive wise and discerning criticism, this at once reveals ways in which the task in hand might be better done, and therefore shows us how we may accomplish the next task more effectively. A really disinterested motive will, therefore, prefer criticism to praise, because criticism can at once be turned to practical uses. But the motives of the "me" are not disinterested; they never go beyond itself and its own aggrandizement. So it praises itself and enjoys praise from others, always trying to ward off blame and criticism.

Therefore, *The Voice of the Silence* says: "Shun praise, O devotee. Praise leads to self-delusion. Thy body is not self, thy Self is in itself without a body, and either praise or blame affects it not."

Because the "me" is nothing more than a self-centred, self-absorbed mind-image, it is inherently and inevitably weak. In comparison with the great universe, the "me" is small to the vanishing point, and all the forces which spring from it are weak. Conscious of this weakness, it is perpetually on the defensive.

Though weak, the "me" is a continual source of danger to our spiritual life. We may suppose that, if they had to face the Masters alone, the Dark Powers would be swiftly swept into annihilation. But the Dark Powers are hard to assail because they strike their roots into mankind, so that they could not be annihilated without annihilating mankind. It is the parable of the wheat and

the tares. The "me" is the part of us in which the Dark Powers strike root, feeding and fattening the "me" in us in all possible ways by whispered flatteries and suggestions of evil.

Because the "me" is self-centred, it isolates itself from the well-springs of life that flow to us from the Logos through the Masters and their disciples. Isolated from great Life, it is of necessity weak. Conscious of weakness, it seeks to bolster itself up with self-praise and the supposed good opinion of others, and is keenly sensitive to anything like dispraise, reproach or censure. Censure arouses resentment, which may reverberate in the "me" for years, with ever renewed special pleadings of self-justification, as balm for the hurt of criticism, to reassure and fortify the sensitive weakness that has been shaken and assailed, self-praise being supplemented by continued mental attacks against the censor. This is what Saint Augustine has called "the lust of self-vindication."

Yet this prolific source of evil and danger has no genuine reality. The personal "me" is the result of a mirage, through the mistaken attribution of selfhood to what is not really Self at all. Let us see whether we can bring to bear certain practical considerations, that will undermine its hold upon our thought.

Begin with the simple matter of "name and form," which is a common Oriental expression for personal existence. Without deeply considering the matter, each of us tends to think of his present name and form as real and permanent, as genuine parts of the personal "me." Yet a very little consideration will convince us that name and form are neither inherent nor permanent.

In the case of each one of us, the personal form has been changing continually through the successive stages of bodily growth; it will continue to change until it is finally effaced. Yet at every stage we have mentally identified ourselves with the form of that stage, and, with a persistence that is truly marvellous, have generally been able to derive some satisfaction from the process.

So with our personal names: so far as any deliberate choice of ours goes, they are purely accidental. They did not exist for us before the present birth; they will not adhere to us after death.

As before, we can use these things, as we used praise and blame, to measure the degree to which we are subject to the illusion of the "me." Do we think of these forms and names as being genuinely ourselves, cherishing the vanity of portraits, or of seeing our names in print? If these two vestures suddenly disappeared, how much sense of identity should we retain?

Yet we well know, as soon as we take the trouble to think about it, that both name and form are transitory, and in that sense unreal. Before the present birth, neither existed for us, nor will they have any reality after death. They will find the same complete oblivion as have the names and forms of countless former births: "unnumbered tens of millions of births," as Shankara puts it. What has become of the names and forms we then so confidently wore, completely identifying ourselves with them? And why should the present incumbent have any better luck?

And in general, when seeking to unravel the tangles and wrappings of the

"me," we shall find it no bad practice to look forward quite definitely to death, to the death of the present personality, with the realization that all that is real within us has passed through innumerable deaths, each dissipating a personality that, for the span of a life-time, had been all-important to us. And to-day we have not the faintest remembrance of names that once meant everything for us.

Wise meditation on death, which fills a large place in many methods of practical mysticism, in both East and West, is an effective weapon against the tyranny of the "me."

Sleep, the sister of death, may also teach us a valuable lesson. Much has been said, beginning with the great Upanishads, regarding spiritual truths to be learned "on the other side of sleep," and the experiences that may be registered on the mind at the moment of waking, as we return from the realm "at the back of the heavens."

The chief barrier in the way of bringing through this spiritual knowledge is the personal "me," with the fretfulness and restless preoccupations which start into sudden activity at the moment of waking, and drive the better consciousness back again across the threshold.

We can all observe this sudden return of the personal mind to its activity each morning. There is a corresponding stage every evening, just before going to sleep, from which we may learn something regarding the personal "me." In the few moments before sinking to sleep, if we observe attentively, we can watch the personality temporarily going to pieces. First we notice that our thoughts are no longer connected or logical; we are not yet dreaming, but they are disjointed and grotesque as in dreams; we are thinking palpable nonsense so far as the personal mind goes; the mind is running without control, like a clock without a pendulum or balance wheel. Then the sense of the personal "me" begins to fall to pieces; we can watch it break up and dissolve, so that, for a moment, we are conscious of being, but also conscious of not being that "me." It has melted away for the time, like a coloured cloud blown to shreds by the wind.

This commonplace experience, so habitual that we hardly notice it, may help us to understand two things: first, what is likely to happen to the cherished personality at the moment of death; second, what may happen now, if we will only see through the glamour and mirage of the personal "me," and drop from our shoulders its intolerable burden.

Here, perhaps, a word of caution may be necessary. The "me" is an illusion, but it is something more than an illusion of our thinking only. We must beware of thinking that we have rid ourselves of the false personality when we have merely analyzed it in the mind. It is a problem not for the mind only, but also for the heart and will, though the mind must do its indispensable part in its solution.

Perhaps we may make this clearer by coming back to *Light on the Path*. We are bidden to seek in the heart and to uproot the giant weed; but this injunction comes only after the commands to kill out ambition, the desire of life, the

desire of comfort. These things are the life-currents of the "me," and, so long as they are flowing through it and sustaining it, mere mental analysis will not accomplish much, though it may indicate the starting-point for accomplishment. Ambition, the desire of life, the desire of comfort, which are the outlying strongholds of the "me," must be first attacked; only then will it be possible to make war against the central citadel. It is useless to persuade ourselves that we have uprooted the giant weed, if we have done this only by mental analysis, while the self-indulgent will continues to rule. Genuine and continued sacrifice is the indispensable condition of victory.

But, it may be asked, if we see through and dethrone the personal "me," with its fleeting name and form, its mirage of unreal self-hood, what shall we find in its place?

The most practical answer, perhaps, we shall find in *Light on the Path*: "Hunger for such possessions as can be held by the pure soul, that you may accumulate wealth for that united spirit of life which is your only true self." On the one hand is the personal "me," which is a mirage, the man imagined in the past; on the other, the true self, the united spirit of life, the spirit which is in the Masters of the Lodge, the spirit which they express, in which they live and move and have their being. The "me" is the bar which keeps the door of life closed until we are willing to lift the bar and open the door.

When the "me" is seen through, for the mirage that it is, when it is then set aside in every act, by wringing out the last drop of self-indulgence, when the united spirit of life is recognized as the only true self, then all effort is directed to the service of that holy spirit which Masters strive to evoke and kindle in all human hearts and souls.

Let us consider how we may give ourselves to their purpose, and strengthen it in our hearts. Two powers will help us. First, the spontaneous divine energy of the united spirit of life, ever seeking to express itself in devoted work and service, as inevitably as the trees put forth green leaves in spring; second, our ceaseless effort to obey and strengthen this innate tendency, guided by the wisdom that Masters and their disciples so generously put within our reach.

How are we to strengthen this spirit of life in our hearts? First, perhaps, by realizing and loving what this divine spirit is accomplishing all around us. The Theosophical Movement is full of its work; by studying that and seeking to work with it, we can enkindle and increase love in our own hearts. But its work is everywhere through the world; the beauty of a flower should speak to us immediately of the beauty of that inner spirit, from which all visible beauty flows; an act of sacrifice, a mother's care of her child, is the manifestation of that spirit. So we should look for it and love it; and, since our minds are the pliable things they are, we should take advantage of this, and of set purpose mould them in this direction, affirming and impressing on them what we can learn from the Masters and the holy records concerning the spirit of life, so that our minds, so prone to saturate themselves with mirages, may instead be infused with divine wisdom.

But in the last analysis the surest of all ways to arouse real and enduring



love for that spirit, is to sacrifice for it, to render service that costs. The love which Masters bear for us, the love they infuse into all work for that spirit, was engendered and nourished by sacrifice. It must be so with us also, if we would follow in their steps.

To come back to the question: If we see through and dethrone the personal "me," with its fleeting name and form, its mirage of unreal self-hood, what shall we find in its place?

We can find a constructive answer, by one who has made the journey, in the letters of a living Aryan Master, not long ago most indiscreetly given to the public, but from which we may, perhaps, discreetly quote. The central event belongs to the last three months of the year 1881.

We may lead up to that event, by quoting first from a letter written in the spring of that year: "It is from the depths of an unknown valley, amid the steep crags and glaciers of Terich-mir—a vale never trodden by European foot since the day its parent mount was itself breathed out from within our Mother Earth's bosom—that your friend sends you these lines. For it is there he intends passing his 'summer vacations.' A letter from the abodes of eternal snow and purity. . . . The world—meaning that of individual existences—is full of those latent meanings and deep purposes which underlie all the phenomena of the Universe, and Occult Sciences—reason elevated to supersensuous wisdom—can alone furnish the key wherewith to unlock them to the intellect. Believe me, there comes a moment in the life of an adept, when the hardships he has passed through are a thousandfold rewarded. In order to acquire further knowledge, he has no more to go through a minute and slow process of investigation and comparison of various objects, but is accorded an instantaneous, implicit insight into every first truth . . . the adept sees and feels and lives in the very essence of all fundamental truths—the Universal Spiritual Essence of Nature. . . . I have laboured for more than a quarter of a century night and day to keep my place within the ranks of that invisible but ever busy army which labours and prepares for a task which can bring no reward but the consciousness that we are doing our duty to humanity. . . ."

Then, in the autumn of the same year: "We are at the end of September. . . . My chiefs desire me particularly to be present at our New Year's Festivals, February next, and in order to be prepared for it I have to avail myself of the three intervening months. I will, therefore, bid you now good-bye my good friend, thanking you warmly for all you have done and tried to do for me. . . . And now I must close. I have but a few hours before me, to prepare for my long, very long journey. . . ."

The intervening months may be bridged by two quotations from the letters of another Master, to the same correspondent: "Two days later, when his 'retreat' was decided upon, in parting he asked me: 'Will you watch over my work, will you see it falls not into ruins?' I promised. What is there I would not have promised him at that hour! At a certain spot not to be mentioned to outsiders, there is a chasm spanned by a frail bridge of woven grasses and with a raging torrent beneath. The bravest member of your Alpine Club would



scarcely dare to venture the passage, for it hangs like a spider's web and seems to be rotten and impassable, yet it is not; and he who dares the trial and succeeds—as he will if it is right that he should be permitted—comes into a gorge of surpassing beauty of scenery—to one of our places and to some of our people, of which and whom there is no note or minute among European geographers. At a stone's throw from the old Lamasery stands the old tower, within whose bosom have gestated generations of Bodhisatwas. It is there, where now rests your lifeless friend—my brother, the light of my soul, to whom I made a faithful promise to watch during his absence over his work. . . .” And again, about the same time: “Not having the right to follow K. H. I feel very lonely without my boy. . . .”

Then in January, 1882, a high disciple writes: “The Master has awaked and bids me write. To his great regret for certain reasons He will not be able until a fixed period has passed to expose Himself to the thought currents in-flowing so strongly from beyond the Himavat. I am, therefore, commanded to be the hand to indite His message. I am to tell you that He is ‘quite as friendly to you as heretofore and well satisfied both with your good intentions and even their execution so far as it lay in your power. You have proved your affection and sincerity by your zeal. The impulse you have personally given to the Cause we love, will not be checked. . . . In unselfishly and at personal risk labouring for your neighbour, you have most effectively worked for yourself. The man of 1880 would scarcely recognize the man of 1881 were they confronted. Compare them, then, good friend and Brother, that you may fully realize what time has done, or rather what you have done with time. To do this, meditate—alone with the magic mirror of memory to gaze into. Then shall you not only see the lights and shadows of the Past, but the possible brightness of the Future, as well. Thus, in time, will you come to see the Ego of aforesaid time in its naked reality. And thus also you shall hear from me direct at the earliest practical opportunity, for we are not ungrateful and even Nirvana cannot obliterate good.’”

Early in February, the same Master who wrote concerning the “retreat” and his own loneliness, transmits this message: “The task *is* difficult and K. H. in remembrance of old times, when he loved to quote poetry, asks me to close my letter with the following to your address:

“‘Does the road wind uphill all the way?’

‘Yes to the very end.’

‘Will the day's journey take the whole long day?’

‘From morn to night, my friend.’”

Then, toward the end of February, the Master himself writes: “My Brother—I have been on a long journey after supreme knowledge, I took a long time to rest. Then, upon coming back, I had to give all my time to duty, and all my thoughts to the Great Problem. It is all over now: the New Year's festivities are at an end and I am ‘Self’ once more. But what is *Self*? Only a passing guest, whose concerns are all like a mirage of the great desert. . . .”

# FRAGMENTS

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THERE are many who seek discipleship, but there are very few who attain it; for most of those who are seeking, seek themselves; they are not seeking Me. So long as the object of a man's search be himself, so long shall he wander in darkness, and miss every turning of the Way.

Lose no opportunity, therefore, to deny thyself, from the least even to the greatest, since self is the shadow on thy path, the arch-deluder, the only barrier to accomplishment. Crush it beneath an iron will, that it may serve as stone to make thy road.

If thine eyes be filled with seeing, how canst thou see? And if thine ears be filled with hearing, how canst thou hear? And if thy heart be filled with feeling and thy mind with thinking, how canst thou feel and think?

Thou art a creature of two worlds. If thou be fully occupied with the world about thee, what canst thou perceive or know of the world beyond the horizon of thy consciousness? If thy vessel be filled to the brim, it cannot contain one drop more, even of the finest nectar.

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Having left self-seeking, take one further step: do not seek my gifts, seek Me. Disciples are not venial servants looking for their fee, no matter how spiritual the coin.

He who would find Me must endure both heat and cold, indifferent,—so great the fire burning in his heart.

He who would find Me must be possessed by the ardour of his search, using all things else, as indeed they should be used, merely as instruments for that one end.

CAVÉ.

# PYTHAGORAS

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## I

*Practise discernment in all thy acts; let reason be thy guide. So, having laid aside the mortal self, thou shalt become a God, whom death cannot destroy.*

GOLDEN VERSES OF THE PYTHAGOREANS.

ACCORDING to tradition, Pythagoras was one of the Messengers sent by the Lodge "in the last quarter of every century to enlighten a small portion of the Western nations in occult lore."<sup>1</sup> He seems to have sounded the keynote of the Theosophical Movement for the whole cycle of the modern West. The Greeks, among whom he worked, belonged to our era and to our race, and the terms in which Pythagoras addressed them, differ little from those in which the Lodge addresses us, the inheritors of Greece, to-day.

The Greeks absorbed the older Mediterranean and Oriental civilizations, but they also revealed qualities which appeared dimly, or not at all, in the archaic nations. They consummated one cycle and inaugurated another. To get a clearer view of what such a change signified, one should, in particular, study the work of the great occultist, whose life marks the dawn of modern history. It is natural that the Masters, the guardians of human destiny, should have made a special effort to reach men at that time, to prepare channels for the new forces and to guard against pollution and over-pressure at any point. Pythagoras, as their agent, must have been entrusted with a two-fold mission,—to manifest, in thought and action, the unique quality of the new cycle which was beginning, and, at the same time, to preserve the experience harvested during the old cycle which was closing, for without the discipline of this experience, it would be impossible to control the exuberance of the creative forces, or to make them intelligible and effective. It is not marvellous that the figure of Pythagoras, though misunderstood and even travestied by historians, should tower above the centuries.

When we consider the nature of the subject, the incompleteness and the confusion of the historical record is easy to understand. Modern methods of scholarly research, however excellent, too often uncover only the superficial strata of events. The life of an occultist is poor provender for the average scholar, especially when, as in the present instance, the sources do not conform to the accepted standard of what sources ought to be. It is a fact that almost all of our information about Pythagoras comes from writers of the Decadence, seven or eight centuries after his death. The statements are fragmentary, often contradictory, with no authority save that of earlier documents which

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<sup>1</sup> *Theosophical Glossary*, p. 198 (art. Mesmer).

have been lost. Generally, they reveal little except the personalities of the authors. Even if the words signify historical facts, these are deflected by the consciousness of a time which tended to degrade Pythagoras into a mere wonder-worker, and his doctrine into superstition.<sup>2</sup>

But the student of Theosophy has no prejudice against using *The Secret Doctrine* for the purpose of comparing the ideas there set forth, with the debris of thought still discernible in the Pythagorean sources. It is fair to say that, without the help of *The Secret Doctrine*, there is no way of bringing order into this chaos. The reason is not far to seek. There was a pledge of secrecy in the Pythagorean School, and there are many stories telling how first one disciple and then another broke the pledge. The doctrines were scattered far and wide, but they were not understood, probably not even by those who divulged them. From time to time, some initiate of the Mysteries, like Iamblichus, might understand better than others, but he would not dare speak openly what he knew. This condition no longer prevails to the same degree, for *The Secret Doctrine* is an interpretation, as well as an exposition, of the Wisdom Religion, of which Pythagoras is said to have revealed so many phases of paramount importance to our race and cycle. One may suggest a reason why the keys, so long preserved in the sanctuary, now rest in our hands. Modern science, though groping in the dark, had actually uncovered more than one truth of the Mysteries, and it was necessary—as it appears—to counteract the certainty of the misapplication of that knowledge by some publication of its basic meaning.

Using *The Secret Doctrine*, the student may hope to read a little between the lines of half-forgotten Pythagorean sentences, and to weld the fragments into something resembling an ordered whole. The task is comparable to that of deciphering the Christian Gospels. In both cases, there is a record of Mysteries imperfectly understood by the transcribers. In both cases, also, we must take certain facts for granted, even when incapable of demonstration according to some of the canons of modern scholarship. The historical reality of the Master Christ is sufficiently proved by the undeniable impression which he has left upon subsequent generations. No fiction could possibly have worked such wonders. Similarly, though of course not to the same degree, we may observe the potent results which have proceeded from the body of special doctrines known as Pythagorean; and those doctrines must, by the very nature of things, have first found expression through the mind and heart of a very extraordinary man.

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The contradictions of the sources begin with the accounts of the time and place of Pythagoras' birth. Fortunately, neither point is of vast importance. It is certain that his life covered the greater part of the Sixth Century B.C. He

<sup>2</sup> The chief sources are Book VIII of the *Lives of the Philosophers* by Diogenes Laertius (c. 225 A.D.) the *Life of Pythagoras* by Porphyry (233-304 A.D.) and the *Life of Pythagoras* by Iamblichus (c. 330 A.D.). There are important references by Plato, Aristotle, Philolaus, Cicero, Plutarch, and Clement of Alexandria. The *Golden Verses* were a late compilation, but probably contain many stanzas dating from the time of Pythagoras. Pythagoras himself left no exoteric writings.

was probably born on the isle of Samos, in the Ægean Sea, near the coast of Asia Minor.

His father, Mnesarchus, a rich merchant of Samos, seems not to have been an Ionian Greek, but an Etruscan or Pelasgian, of the old race which, centuries earlier, had created the Ægean and Cretan civilizations. According to an illustrious author in *Five Years of Theosophy* (pp. 170, 209), the Pelasgians were a very ancient stock, having affinities with the Atlantean survivors who left Cyclopean monuments in many parts of Europe. If Pythagoras were half Pelasgian by race, he came prepared, even by physical heredity, for the task of blending in his personality two streams of consciousness, Pelasgian and Hellenic, Atlantean and Aryan.

One of the Pythagorean birth stories concerns a pronouncement of the Delphic oracle, in which Apollo assumed the paternity of the child and endowed him with glory and wisdom. Iamblichus, giving the oracle, does not conclude that Pythagoras was the physical son of Apollo, God of Harmony and Regent of the Sun. After hearing the words of the God, Mnesarchus changed the name of his wife from Parthenis (*parthenos*, a virgin) to Pythais, the beloved of the Pythian Apollo, slayer of the Dragon. The association of Pythagoras with the doctrine of the Virgin Birth indicates the spiritual rank attributed to him by those who were versed in the Mysteries. The whole account reads like a parable of initiation, especially when one recollects the symbolical correlation between the Dragon and Adeptship (*Secret Doctrine*, II, 501, ed. 1888). Because of his spiritual union with Apollo, Pythagoras was sometimes identified with Apollo himself, in that God's aspect as the Hyperborean. In Greek mythology, the Hyperborean land was the far-off northern country, beyond winter and storm, where dwelt the Gods under the rule of the Sun (*Secret Doctrine*, II, 7). Many reminiscences entered into this geographical reverie, but, among them, one may detect a reference to the Lodge.

When Pythagoras came to the Greek town of Croton in Italy, to begin his public mission, he was at least forty years old. Fame had preceded him, telling of his majestic stature and divine beauty, his travels throughout the known world, his trials and initiations, his magical powers and occult knowledge. The emotional and erratic life of the Greek city was stilled for a moment by contact with the austere and serene consciousness of the occultist. The Senators received him in honour as a sage (*sophos*), though he disclaimed this proud title for that of *philosophos*, a lover of wisdom. To the people he appeared in the form of a physician of souls, cooling the flame of wrong desire and converting its hidden fire into aspiration. It is said that two thousand citizens were converted by his first exhortation.

Who was this august being, moving among men like a God, and turning multitudes from frivolity by the force and nobility and charm of his presence? We know little enough,—though, perhaps, we know as much as most of the Greeks who saw and heard him. This at least is certain, that he appeared in the arena of active work after years of the most rigorous trial and preparation. That early period of his life is reflected in the itinerary of his wanderings through

many lands. One may well believe that he travelled far and wide, in literal truth; but his journeys also have a symbolic meaning, signifying stages of initiation, whereby the wisdom of the archaic nations was made an integral part of his consciousness, so that he might in turn transmit it as a trust and heritage to his race.

For his purposes, physical travel must have been a necessity. It was a time of intense and widespread spiritual activity. Within Greece itself, there was a revival of the ancient movement of Orphism. In China, Confucius and Lao-Tse were making their two-fold appeal to reason and intuition. Above all, in India, the Buddha was founding a World-Religion. There was only one way of assimilating this new and vigorous life,—to go to its sources, far and near. It was impossible to gather information by any other process, for there did not yet exist in the West a capital of learning, like the later Athens and Alexandria.

Wisdom does not fail to use opportunity. Pythagoras seems to have begun his travels as the commercial representative of his father and, in this way, to have visited the centres of Greek life—Delos, Miletus, Delphi, Crete. He absorbed what they had to give him, especially seeking initiation into the phases and degrees of the Orphic Mysteries. Orphism, which is said to have been brought to the West by the Rajput Arjuna, was associated with the Ægean and Minoan civilizations. Its three great *foci* were Samothrace, Phrygia and Crete, where its ritual was preserved in the cults of the Kabeiri and of the Idæan Dactyls. In general, we may think of Orphism as teaching the release of the Soul from the prison of the body by purification and transmutation leading to Self-knowledge. This process was symbolized by many myths,—the descent of Orpheus to Hades, the death and re-birth of Dionysius, the war of the Gods with the Titans or Nature-Forces. But it appears that Orphism had become decadent long before the time of Pythagoras, and that its devotees had lost the keys which might unlock their secrets. Even though Orphism contained in essence all the truths which Pythagoras was to seek in Egypt and the East, they remained hidden, because their custodians had forgotten the way to them. When Pythagoras returned to Greece years later, he came as one who had rediscovered the way. He seems to have regarded himself as the appointed renovator of Orphism, and sometimes assumed the Mystery-name of Orpheus, probably when he addressed his disciples with the authority of a hierophant.

Before he left Greece, he studied natural science and metaphysics in the School of Thales at Miletus. Thales and his successor, Anaximander, had given public expression to certain doctrines which Thales had probably brought from Egypt, but which he interpreted in scientific rather than in religious terms. Paramount among these was the teaching that Nature is a process governed by laws of universal scope, which may be comprehended, to some degree, by the human mind. Pythagoras owed much to the Milesian School,—just how much it is impossible to say, because we have no way of knowing exactly what he himself brought back from Egypt. But the science of Thales and Anaximander foreshadows the science of Pythagoras. Their impersonal

view of Nature as intelligible Law, anticipates his use of the term, *kosmos* or order, to designate the principle of the world.

Among those from whom he sought instruction, we can discern no special teacher, unless it be Pherecydes of Syros,—according to Cicero, the first of the Greeks who taught the reincarnations and immortality of the human Soul. Little more is known of him, but he must have been a remarkable person to have earned the devotion of Pythagoras. It is said that Pythagoras laid aside temporarily his work at Croton and went to Delos to comfort the last days of his old instructor.

We are told that Pythagoras visited Egypt, Judæa, Phœnicia, Chaldæa, India; but the biographers give few details, and most of these bear signs of exoteric manipulation. Porphyry explains that Pythagoras was the first foreigner to enter the higher degrees of the Egyptian *arcana*, and that he attained this end only after every obstacle had been set in his path by the priests of Memphis, Heliopolis and Thebes. When the Persian King, Cambyses, invaded Egypt, Pythagoras was made a prisoner of war. This apparent misfortune turned to his advantage, for he was given passage to Chaldæa in the train of the King's army, and was released from custody through the influence of a Greek physician at Babylon. He then placed himself under the tutelage of the Chaldæans and the Magi, and probably at this time visited India,<sup>3</sup> though few details are given as to this journey. Finally, about 532 B.C., he appeared again in the Greek world, at the gates of Croton.

These scraps of information can hardly form the basis of a "travelogue." Some scholars have not hesitated to describe the journeys of Pythagoras as almost wholly mythical. But there may be significance in the very absence of detail, in the very silence of the biographers. Pythagoras would not have travelled like an ordinary person, for gain or amusement or excitement. It is at least a probable hypothesis that he was seeking the centres of occult learning, where it was still possible for a few Adepts to dwell. If such were his object, he would have passed without noise from one place to another. One must read between the lines of the scanty fragments, or not at all. Let us ask the question boldly, though the answers be obscure and halting: what may the Adepts of these many lands have taught him?

From the Phœnicians, says Porphyry, Pythagoras learned the nature of numbers and the significance of their proportions, and, for that purpose, entered a college of prophets established by Moschus (Moses?). Byblos, Tyre and Mount Carmel were celebrated in antiquity for their Mysteries, where the Syrian initiates may have laid emphasis upon some form of the Kabbala. The Kabbala was, in part, a system of occult arithmetic, wherein the hidden powers of Nature were traced through their numerical correspondences. Little more can be said, for the excellent reason that the tentative knowledge of the present writer ends with that statement. Yet, even this little may indicate one of the sources of the Pythagorean numeral symbolism.

<sup>3</sup> Philostratus: *Life of Apollonius*, VIII, 7.

In Egypt, it is asserted, he studied geometry. That term means "measurement of the Earth," but the student will reflect that what is true of the Earth, as macrocosm, is, by analogy, true of man as the microcosm of the Earth; and that the "measurement of man," or Self-knowledge, may have been a most important function of the geometry which was taught in the sanctuaries of Egypt. In any event, occult geometry must be concerned with dynamic realities, not with their illusory, static reflections. As a matter of fact, the *applications* of mathematics, even by physical science, are dynamic enough, to mention only such simple acts as sailing a vessel or firing a cannon.

In Egypt, likewise, he learned the symbolic method of teaching, whereby a sentence, commanding some physical action or abstinence from action, conveys a concealed purport, revealed to him who executes the command faithfully, with an ardent desire for Truth in his heart.

The Chaldæans instructed Pythagoras in astronomy. Here, again, there are meanings within meanings. There is an astronomy which studies the physical appearance of the stars, and their positions as points, fixed or moving, within the cosmic sphere. There is another astronomy, which conceives each visible light of space as an integration of the Universe, specially manifesting a unique principle, which is present, however, to a lesser degree, latent or active, throughout the height and depth of Nature, in every atom and conglomeration of atoms. We shall return to this question in connection with the Pythagorean doctrine of the "harmony of the spheres."

By the Magi he was instructed in the significance of purifications and of ritual, and in the "right conduct of life." This simple statement may well refer to the "Great Work" of the Magi,—the conversion of human nature into its divine prototype. To that end were instituted all disciplines and all sacred ceremonials, and the right conduct of life, which is symbolized in the rites of the Mysteries, is the adjustment of personal consciousness to the laws of the divine Unity, which are the laws of life itself.<sup>4</sup>

In India, Pythagoras was known as Yavanacharya, the Greek sage. In *Five Years of Theosophy* (pp. 171, 193) occur some references to this stage of his travels. Here, he seems to have added to the astronomical knowledge by which an initiate is said to direct his course. The relations between astronomy and history may be closer than is supposed. The cycles of planetary movements in space are correlated with the successive emergence and disappearance of the states and principles of human consciousness. In this sense, the destiny of a civilization is written in the stars, and the Adept, who co-operates with Nature, must put in practice a science of divine husbandry, marking and calculating the procession of centuries and of seasons within the Great Year.<sup>5</sup>

The scene of Pythagoras' active work was Magna Græcia, the group of Greek

<sup>4</sup> The name of the Magian initiate who instructed Pythagoras, is given as Zabratius or Nazaratus (cf. the Hebrew *nazar*, to dedicate or consecrate).

<sup>5</sup> There is evidence that he visited the Druids. But, in view of his recorded relations with the priests of the Hyperborean Apollo in Scythia, it is likely that these were the Druids referred to. The country north and west of the Black Sea was inhabited by the Getæ and other "Celtic" tribes, probably related to the military and priestly caste which Julius Cæsar found in Gaul and Britain.



city-states in southern Italy. Many of the towns were very old, dating from Pelasgian times, so that one must modify the usual view that Magna Græcia was of late colonial origin. The Italian Greeks were not provincials, isolated from the main stream of Hellenic life; they were wealthy, aggressive and enterprising, and, during the period of Greek ascendancy, rose to a high level of individual achievement, especially in experimental science and metaphysical speculation.

Possibly Pythagoras chose Magna Græcia as his field for reasons analogous to those which prompted the Lodge in its choice of America as the birthplace of the present Theosophical Society. In spite of its antiquity, the culture of Magna Græcia seems to have been less rich in memories and traditions than was that of Greece proper. A relative poverty of tradition may, for creative purposes, be quite necessary, since tradition is a mould confining the forces of a people, and the transmutation of old things into new, which constitutes true progress, becomes difficult, if not impossible, after a certain stage in the hardening of tradition has been passed. Like our physical bodies, civilizations grow old and die by a process of ankylosis.

Pythagoras was received in Italy with acclamation and honour, though he refused official rank. Unofficially, he became an arbiter, to whom states and individuals brought their disputes. He made peace between the cities and raised everywhere the tone of public and private morals. In particular he urged the governing caste to remember their responsibility towards the governed, who were confided to their care by the Gods. During this first period of his work, Pythagoras took an active part in the life of the city, addressing the people in temple and gymnasium and market-place.

But Pythagoras was not primarily a reformer striving to convert temporarily vast groups of men and women. The public phase of his teaching was preliminary,—a preparing of the ground. His deeper purpose was soon revealed, nor did it differ from the object of every Lodge Messenger of whom we have record. He gathered together a few individuals to be trained as disciples, and to form a "nucleus of universal brotherhood."

Such was the beginning of the Pythagorean School or Order, established at Croton, and later represented by branches in other cities of Magna Græcia. It was to be a "living book of discipleship," reproducing in human nature the hierarchy and the harmony of Cosmic Nature. It was a revival of the Order of Orpheus, conducted by an Orphic initiate; but, above all, it was the collective manifestation of the genius of a new race, the treasury guarding the gifts of a new cycle.

The Order expanded rapidly, especially among the nobles. It was not a political organization, as may be demonstrated by reference to its rules. But, as individuals holding a definite set of values, the Pythagoreans actually influenced the political life of the cities,—and this for two reasons. They were Greeks, for whom political activity was almost obligatory, and most of them belonged to the ruling class. Of course, the teaching of Pythagoras might be interpreted as favouring aristocratic government and a hierarchical order of

society. The whole trend of his thought was politically conservative, affirming respect for existing laws and caution against all sudden changes of polity.

The power and influence of the Order soon conflicted with the revolutionary spirit, which had spread from the Ægean lands to Italy. The rising race of demagogues found their path effectively blocked by a united group of souls dedicated to the service of truth and honour. Naturally, they selected the Order as the object of their particular enmity, insinuating that it was a secret society of aristocrats, leagued together for the exploitation of the masses. We may believe their attacks would have failed, if the Order itself had stood firm. There are dark hints of failures and treasons within the School. Eventually the most dangerous foes of the Pythagoreans, the strategists of the revolution, were not plebeians, but nobles, who had been expelled from the School and who sought vengeance at any cost.

The first serious trouble broke out at Sybaris, 511 B.C., when the democrats set up a "committee of public safety" and began a systematic slaughter of the nobles. Among those who sought sanctuary in Croton, were some Pythagoreans. The Sybarite *soviet* demanded the surrender of the refugees and offered the alternative of war. Croton accepted war as an honourable necessity, entrusting command of the army to a Pythagorean, Milo, the famous athlete. The Sybarites were defeated and their city reduced to ruins.

Thereupon, the *Jacobins* of Croton raised the outcry that the aristocrats, more specifically the Pythagoreans, had appropriated all the spoils. They called a mass meeting under the presidency of a renegade noble, Cylon, and drafted a platform of "reforms." That platform provides an argument for reincarnation, at least for the reincarnation of some of our own "advanced" thinkers: for example, it demanded that the Constitution be changed to make the magistrates responsible to the popular assembly. Cylon, however, had not called the meeting merely to pass resolutions,—as events soon proved.

The leaders of the Pythagoreans had met at the house of Milo for shelter and counsel. Here they were soon besieged by a mob, which set fire to the building. Only Pythagoras and two disciples escaped, the others perishing in the flames, or meeting a more brutal death at the hands of the populace.

Pythagoras found refuge at Metapontum, where he died in seclusion and obscurity. Cicero, visiting Metapontum nearly five centuries later, was shown the house where the sage passed his last days, and the chair which he used.

His death, like his birth and, indeed, his life, is wrapped in mystery. It is likely that he lived to witness the complete outer collapse of his work. The Pythagorean Order was destroyed, not only in Croton but throughout Magna Græcia, for everywhere the revolution extirpated it. In the next century there were mathematicians, philosophers, even saints, calling themselves Pythagoreans, but they were not members of the original Pythagorean Order, since the Order as a living unit had ceased to exist.

One can hardly over-estimate the dire effects of this initial failure of the Greeks. It must have contributed to the "bad Karma" which misdirected the Platonists. It may have forced upon the Lodge a radical change of plan,

involving the whole destiny of the Greeks. It has been suggested that Greece, however glorious its beginnings, failed shamefully in the end to realize its promise.

His disciples failed, at least as a body; but who will say that Pythagoras himself died a broken and defeated man? To speak thus would reveal a complete misunderstanding. The occultist enters into battle, discounting in advance all outward appearances of victory and defeat, for his real work is not in time, but in Eternity, where failure cannot be. Therefore, the whole expression of his life remains in the world, as a record which no hand can erase from human consciousness, and which future generations may read even if his contemporaries refused to open their eyes. That is why it is profitable for us to-day to study the constitution of the Order which embodied his purpose.

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The Pythagorean School was planned as a likeness of the Order of the Universe, and was to reflect that image downwards to the eyes of mankind. Without directly interfering in human affairs, it would stand as an example and model always present to the consciousness of those within its sphere of influence. It was to be the paradigm of Western civilization.

The Universe, as conceived by Pythagoras, is harmony, being the concordance of the non-eternal with the Eternal; and this is true both of the world as a whole and of all that it contains. By such attunement the Immortal is endowed with Self-consciousness, and the mortal is immortalized. It was this process, in its human phase, which Pythagoras sought to explain and to forward in the sacred doctrine (*hieros logos*) and arcana (*aporrheta*)<sup>6</sup> of his Order.

The symbol which he chose as best reflecting the divine harmony, was friendship (*philotes*). The School was—in a very real sense—a society of friends. Many of the axioms of friendship seem to have been passwords of the Order: "All is equal among friends"; "A friend is another self"; "Friendship should make one Soul of many." A beautiful phrase of Iamblichus reproduces the spirit, if not the actual words, of a vow of the disciples. "They exhorted one another not to divide the God within themselves" (*Life of Pythagoras*, c. xxxiii.). There are many stories—like that of Damon and Pythias—which illustrate the devotion uniting these men while their Master was still in their midst.

Obviously our term, friendship, does scant justice to the union of disciples. Such a relation is not an easy objective for the men of our cycle. It is attained only by long and hard labour, by continuous self-sacrifice; therefore Pythagoras instituted a discipline which would lead men by stages to the perfection of divine life. In close connection with the discipline, he gave instruction in the science of Nature,—first, the discipline; then the knowledge which was necessary to make the discipline effective, to provide for the disciple a field of action. The postulant who presented himself for admission, was given no

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<sup>6</sup> *Aporrheta*: "secret instructions upon esoteric subjects given during the Egyptian and Grecian Mysteries." *Theosophical Glossary*, p. 26.

promise of personal wisdom and power. It was assumed that he had received an intimation of Truth, and that he desired to devote his life to the service of this Truth which he had glimpsed; for which purpose he would be willing to submit to a Rule designed for all who desired to become lovers of wisdom (*philosophoi*).

The keynote of the disciple's effort was voluntary obedience. The greatest care was taken to make this elementary principle clear, and to prevent those who were obviously unfitted, from needlessly complicating their existence by pledging themselves to an undertaking which they could not carry out. Thus, before a postulant was accepted, he was led before Pythagoras, who examined thoroughly his mental and especially his moral endowments.

Once admitted to the first degree, the novices were subjected to a probation lasting from two to five years. Their courage was tested by physical and moral trials; and they were given opportunities to prove and to strengthen their fidelity to Pythagoras and to one another, for the probationary period was designed as an apprenticeship in all virtues and, most of all, in friendship. In particular, there was the trial of silence, which probably only implied that they were to demand no explanation of the teachings given, and were to make no written comments thereon. The teacher remained unknown, concealed by a curtain from their sight. They were not admitted to the sanctuary, where were the sacred symbols revealing the secret doctrine of the Order. Therefore the novices were sometimes called the exoterics (*hoi exo*),—those who remained outside.

The second degree, as we may term it, was open to those who had completed their novitiate and who were then known as scientists or mathematicians (*hoi mathematikoi*, those who are disposed to learn). The mathematicians were freed from the obligation of silence as regarded their intercourse with one another. They were expected to act as instructors of the novices. There is naturally much obscurity as to the relations of the various degrees. According to the most probable account, the mathematicians were not admitted to the full confidence of Pythagoras, for their eyes were still veiled, though their minds were illumined. Like the *Mystai* of Eleusis, they seem to correspond to probationary chelas, disciples of the disciples of a Master.

If this view be correct, the references to a limited group of personal disciples of Pythagoras will become clear.<sup>7</sup> These constituted the third degree and were the true Esoterics (*hoi eso*) or Seers (*epoptai*).

The rules of the Order have come down to us in fragmentary descriptions or in aphorisms. Some of the contradictions which we find, obviously are not contradictions at all, being merely changes of the Rule for the different degrees. In general, the stricter regulations presumably related to the higher degrees. It appears that a cloistered life was not required of the members. They were to lead a life of devotion and self-control in the world or out of it—the outward

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<sup>7</sup> An anonymous writer (Photius, *cod.* CCLIX) describes three classes, "the Pythagorics or friends of Pythagoras, the Pythagoreans or disciples of these, and the Pythagorists or exoterics."

condition was of secondary importance. Some members formally gave their personal property to the School, and dwelt together in monastic seclusion, but others—including some of high rank, like Milo—participated in public life. It is significant, that, when a member was expelled, all his donations to the Order were returned to him with interest.

There was provision both for the active and for the contemplative life. Women were admitted to the School, apparently to its highest degrees. One of them, Theano, was long remembered as a saint.

The first act of the Pythagorean, after awakening, was to meditate on the duties of the day, to seek their meaning as revelations of the Divine Will, and to gain courage and strength for their performance. Then, in solitude and recollection, he strolled through some sacred grove towards a temple. Afterwards, in order to attune the body to the disposition of the Soul, he engaged in certain prescribed gymnastic exercises, accompanied by the music of the lyre.

In the evening, after the day's work was done, he once more retired to a sacred grove, this time in company with two or three companions. There followed the mystic banquet, modelled on the Orphic supper of bread and wine, in which we cannot but discern a prototype of the Eucharist and of the Christian love-feast (*agape*). At this repast in common, the companions were grouped at tables of ten. Before the disciples separated for the night, the youngest read aloud some scripture, or verses of Homer and Hesiod, which were interpreted by an older student. Thereafter, the disciples took leave of one another, retiring to their chambers or rejoining their families. Before sleep, the student passed over in memory the events of the day, endeavouring to discern what he had done aright and what amiss, and preparing himself by honest search for a more courageous and intelligent effort during the following day.

The rules of the Order laid great emphasis on the sanctity of a pledged word. The disciple was not to take a special oath, when he intended to keep a promise; for he should never make a promise which he did not intend to keep. By the practice of such fidelity, he not only developed within himself the integrity necessary to true friendship, but he imitated the Logos, by whose oath the world is maintained in existence,—since, without the pledge of the Immortal to the mortal, what could sustain the Universe?

Chastity was recommended for the higher degrees, and probably was enforced for the highest. The same may be said of the dietary regulations, of which there are so many conflicting records. Some meats were certainly forbidden for all students, and there are many references, often humorous, in ancient and modern literature, to the Pythagorean interdiction of beans. The reasons given for these restrictions and abstinences often remind the student of the arguments advanced for the vegetarian régime of the Buddhist monks. Thus, meat-eating was deemed wrong because it involved the destruction of bodies animated by a life akin to our own; also it was said to convey to the nature the peculiar qualities of the animal which was eaten.

The asceticism advocated by Pythagoras was tempered by gentleness, common-sense and the recognition of beauty. Simple pleasures were not for-

bidden, though they should not be allowed to interfere with the smallest duty. As Pythagoras said, "No man ever yields to desire, without feeling inferior to himself."

According to the Pythagorean teaching, the sin of selfishness does not differ in essence from the sin of suicide. When one who had served the Order, broke his vows and became a deserter, his companions erected a cenotaph to him and thenceforward regarded him as dead.

All that the disciples possessed belonged, as was asserted, not to their personal selves, but to that God whose priests they were and whose consciousness they shared. The Pythagoreans had a password or mantram: "The Master has spoken (*autos epha, ipse dixit*)."

This was not the blind affirmation of some statement of fact attributed to Pythagoras. It is far more likely to have been a sentence to be repeated in a moment of moral danger, to remind the disciple that the God, whose will Pythagoras had interpreted for him, would stand beside him as an inseparable ally, the Warrior, in the forthcoming struggle.

S.L.

(To be continued)

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*Rightness expresses of actions what straightness does of lines; there can no more be two kinds of right action than there can be two kinds of straight lines.*—SPENCER.

# PREPARATION FOR T. S. WORK

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ROBBIE, aged three, had been in the country for the whole summer. Every Sunday morning he had been taken to Sunday School, and when the circus came to town he had been taken there also. A cynical uncle asked him which he preferred, and Robbie, with much seriousness, gave his reasons for preferring the circus: "In Sunday School they say, 'You mus' be good; you mus' be good'—but they no say so at the circus." It is not fair to blame Robbie for his faulty comparison, his experience of public gatherings being limited to two, yet many of his elders make, in the privacy of their own minds, comparisons equally invalid and then act from them. To the small boy, those hundreds of people in the circus did one startling or amusing thing after another, just because they were delightful people who liked to conduct their lives in that way, instead of in the usual prosaic manner. He did not dream that the circus had its code, making rigorous demands on the imagination, the energy, and the will of its performers, and definitely restricting their liberty of action. He delighted in the appearance of ease and pleasure with which each "act" was surrounded, never suspecting that the circus required the complete concealment of any anxiety, fatigue, or pain. Surely, even the tan-bark has its "You mus' be good," but it directs this admonition to its performers, not to its audience. Is this not true of every calling in life, high or low? Which one can be worthily followed without loyal adherence to its particular "You mus' be good," as expressed in the ideals or traditions of that art, craft, or profession?

Some people have looked to the T. S. as a safe refuge from the exhortations of the religion in which they were born. It may so serve as long as they are content to be merely spectators, but when they are aroused with a desire to participate in the conflict which is being waged by the Movement,—they must discover that it, too, has its code. At least this was the conclusion reached by a group of T. S. members who had gravitated together at the Convention Tea. They had discussed, with much earnestness, the immediate and practical applications of what had been said at the morning session of the Convention, about the Society as a vehicle for the ideal of chelaship and of service of the Masters. They wanted to do more for the T. S.—how were they to do it? As they were struggling with this question, they managed to corral a member of the Executive Committee, and put their question to him, saying that they were seeking ways of giving more definite expression to the new enthusiasm for service that had been kindled in their hearts. How were they to do it? Self-conquest had been stressed as the greatest contribution; they saw the need for that, but they also longed to be of more help in the outer work of the Society. Was there no spot at which willing hands could grip the rope, and, by pulling steadily, release others from some of the routine work?

"My thought would not turn first to routine work at headquarters," was the reply. "Our supreme need would appear to me to be elsewhere,—in self-conquest, to use your term. However, as the Movement has always been able to use every talent really devoted to it, let us see what is now offered. How many would volunteer to do accurate, rapid, and well arranged typing—there is occasional need for that?"

Everybody looked regretfully at his neighbour.

"Several of you send contributions to the *QUARTERLY*. Perhaps you have studied the preparation of manuscripts, and so would be willing to give the finishing touches to articles that sometimes need a little sandpapering."

At this suggestion, a number looked hopeful. One said that he might do certain things, but that punctuation was a mystery to him; he never even attempted it. Another had no notion about what constituted a sentence or a paragraph—someone else would have to look out for those, in any work he might be asked to do. A third liked to work over manuscripts, but admitted that he found it necessary to re-write nearly every sentence, when he was asked to do a bit of polishing. Another had no patience with the demand for consistency in the use of capital letters, italics, etc., even within the limits of a single article. It was becoming clear that none of the volunteers was competent to undertake this piece of routine work. Nothing daunted, however, one of them said: "Perhaps it might be better if we were to suggest what we think we could do to help. No task is too humble for me—I should be delighted to help address the envelopes for the mailing of the magazine."

"And what would be the result if you did?" quickly rejoined another member of the group. "I should want to protest against that offer, for I might never get my copy of the magazine if the post office were called upon to decipher your truly distinguished but rarely legible handwriting."

"True," admitted the first speaker, "I never cared to learn to write a readable hand."

At this point the older member was called away, by the beckoning of a sympathetic friend, and the younger members had a heart to heart talk about the situation. They considered in what respects they could qualify for excellent performance in such routine work as they had requested the chance to do. They were not lacking in natural gifts, but they discovered that they had been foolishly content to exercise their gifts, casually, without the effort to cultivate and perfect them which would have transformed the original gifts into powers for service. One man advanced the theory that Karma had been busily attempting to fit him for the niche in his Branch which his fellows clearly desired him to occupy. They felt that they needed a ready, convincing speaker, to sum up the points made by others at their public meetings. He might be able, he said, to write out such a résumé, but to speak on call before a room full of people, was impossible. Yet he could see now that in his professional life, demand after demand had been made upon him for similar work. Had he accepted this training from Karma's kind hand, he would now be of more use to the Work.



Once launched on these frank confessions of lack of preparedness, the participants were rather enjoying their conference, until one of the younger headquarters' workers shattered the calm by this question: "Is it fair that the T. S. should for ever have to teach its workers how to write, how to spell, how to add, how to be courteous? For me, it has had to do that and more; but are all the rest of you going to be sponges, too—and call that 'helping' in the Work? Take my post, it is not directly concerned with accounts, but the simple fact is that several hours a month would be saved, for me and for others, if I could do the simplest addition and subtraction quickly and correctly, instead of making mistakes for others to rectify. Still, for years I have been content to harbour my inability to add, for lack of the slight effort that would be required to turn my certainty of error into reliability."

"Come now," was the appreciative response, "do not stop there. Tell us what you intend to do about it. You have convinced us, at least, that you just must learn simple addition. Do you want us to appoint a drillmaster?"

"By all means appoint one," was the unexpected reply. "Or how about a competitive game? It might be that each one would like to select some simple accomplishment, like my adding, which he feels ought to be a part of his equipment, and train himself to do that one thing well. My experience would suggest that the bit of capacity thus acquired might well prove useful someday in the T. S. At least, our effort would, we know, constitute a real contribution, an addition to the working capital of the Society."

"There is no escape for me, I see," sighed the most energetic member present. "It was my desire, when we began talking, to do something that would really help. The very notion of more for the T. S. gave me a pleasant sensation; I saw myself confronting mountains of work which I was to accomplish by the output of great energy. Our talk has changed the picture entirely. Now I see before me an uninteresting little patch of ground, all covered with 'pucker-brush,' before which I have paused all my life. Instead of charging delightedly up hill, I have to pick my way through that. My 'pucker-brush' is *manners*. The rest of you are doubtless quite at home there, but I have pretended to myself that I could go through life being just a 'plain, blunt fellow,' and meeting situations in my own way. Now I see that I have persistently shirked the necessity of learning the right way to do things, even the tiny things of friendly intercourse. I shall just have to set myself to observe and to learn the small but important conventions of well-ordered life—how to stand, how to sit, how to speak, when to appear and when to disappear, and that host of trifles that enable the man who knows what to do with himself under all circumstances, to put others at their ease, and to bring out the best that is in them. For the T. S., that is not too much to attempt, even at my clumsy age. It may prove that certain small difficulties which, in our Branch, we have come to regard as necessary afflictions, will prove to be, not obstacles put in the path of our work, but obstacles created by the bad manners of myself, its president and oldest member. As to that, I will tell you further, when we continue this talk at the 1925 Convention Tea."—A. B. C.

# NICHOLAS FLAMEL

## ALCHEMIST

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TO spring from the twentieth century into a world of romance and mystery, encountering things and people we cannot reduce to a formula, is said to be good for our souls, because most of us tread a beaten track, and to be jarred from our track should be as beneficial as a change from town to country, from sea-coast to mountain air. The history of Nicholas Flamel, as it has come down to us through the centuries, gives us this refreshing opportunity.

On no possible hypothesis can Flamel be treated as a myth. He was as well known in France as Roger Bacon in England. But we hear of him in two entirely different ways. His exoteric history, marvellous enough, reaches us through many sources, collected, and synthesized in translation in 1815, by Francis Barrett in his *Lives of Alchemystical Philosophers*. Most of the material in Part I of this article has been drawn from that book, which has been out of print for years.

The esoteric history of Flamel, even more marvellous, is derived from one source only; and we must leave it to the reader to determine its credibility.

### PART I

Nicholas Flamel lived in France toward the end of the fourteenth century. In contrast to some alchemical students who travelled the length and breadth of Europe in their search for knowledge, he spent most of his life in Paris, living very simply in the little house where he was brought up, and earning his living as a copyist or scrivener. The date of his birth is not given, other than that he was born "in the time of Philip whose reign commenced in 1328." This was Philip VI, the Valois prince whose accession to the throne was the primary cause of the Hundred Years War, and of the distracted state of France which culminated in the life and death of Jeanne d'Arc, under Charles VII. Apparently, Flamel lived through the greater part of this unsettled time. He was not a learned man, and had only a limited education which included, however, a knowledge of Latin, and some proficiency in poetry and painting.

In the course of his work he picked up for a small sum a book which he recognized to be very old and rare, though its contents were unintelligible to him. As he himself describes it:<sup>1</sup>

"It was not made of paper or parchment, as other books are, but of admirable rinds (as it seemed to me) of young trees. The cover of it was brass; it

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<sup>1</sup> See *The Lives of Alchemystical Philosophers*, by Francis Barrett; London, 1815.

was well bound, and graven all over with a strange kind of letters, which I take to be Greek characters, or some such like.

"This I know, that I could not read them, nor were they either Latin or French letters or words, of which I understand something.

"But as to the matter which was written within, it was engraven (as I suppose) with an iron pencil or graver upon the said bark leaves, done admirably well, and in fair and neat Latin letters, and curiously coloured."

The book contained, as he expresses it, thrice seven leaves, the first of each group of seven containing no lettering but having instead, painted symbols or symbolic figures. Thus the symbol heading the first seven was a virgin and serpent swallowing her up; for the second, a serpent crucified; for the third a wilderness "in midst whereof was seen many fair fountains, from whence issued out a number of serpents here and there."

From an opening line of greeting in letters of gold, from Abraham the Jew "to the nation of Jews, dispersed by the wrath of God in France," Flamel concluded that the book had been one of the treasures of Jewish literature. As the life of the Jews in France had been an eventful one in which both persecution and banishment had played a part, the loss or theft of such a work was easily explainable. Flamel's conviction that he had acquired a part of the Cabalistic writings was further strengthened by the discovery that the volume was a treatise on the transmutation of metals. He describes in detail the arrangement of the material and the various figures given—though concerning the actual instruction, he discreetly maintains silence, recognizing it as secret teaching, and obviously respecting from the beginning the obligation to secrecy which was, in a sense, implicit in the ownership of such a work—a fact which might be regarded as some indication of Flamel's own integrity of character.

Apparently the bookseller had had no idea of its value, and there is nothing to indicate how or why Flamel was immediately fired with enthusiasm by his discovery. Its contents were a complete mystery to him. He says of it, "though it was singularly well, and materially or intelligibly figured and painted, yet by that could no man ever have been able to understand it, without having been well skilled in their Cabala, which is a series of old traditions, and also to have been well studied in their books." However, alchemical students were sufficiently numerous at that time for the subject to be a part of the undercurrent of everyday thought, and in his trade as scrivener, he may well have learned something of the "Great Work." Whatever the reason, Flamel recognized at once the value of his "delicate and precious book," and immediately applied himself to its study, doing little else day and night. He says he understood the directions it gave, but could not get the necessary key to the whole—namely, could not discover what element was to be employed, the *prima materia* on which all these instructions were to be carried out.

As an experiment, he now had painted on the walls of his house the symbolic figures from two of the leaves of the book, and showed them (thus avoiding the necessity of showing the original) to all the scholars and learned men of Paris, explaining that he had found them in a book dealing with the philoso-

phers' stone. But while many ridiculed him, none could shed any light—except one man, a physician, possessed of no misgivings regarding the “teaching perch,” and filled with an eager curiosity to see the precious volume. He, it seems, had dabbled to his own satisfaction in occult science, and having an inventive mind, proffered interpretations of all that Flamel disclosed to him. A part of his inventions, Flamel accepted as at least a working hypothesis, but he called a halt when it was intimated that “the pure blood of young infants” was to be regarded literally as one of the necessary concomitants to the process. Here again, Flamel’s own character is apparent—his tenacity and determination—for he continued his efforts unremittingly for twenty-one years, evidently thrown off the track by the doctor’s advice, and wandering, as a quaint translation expresses it, in a perfect meander from the verity. Finally he concluded that to solve the problem by his own unaided efforts was hopeless, and he “made a vow to God to demand their interpretation of some Jewish priest, belonging to some synagogue in Spain.”

The Spanish Jews of that period were possessed of a very high degree of culture. (It will be recalled that Maimonides, the greatest Jew of his time, was a Spaniard.) In France, as in most of the other countries of Europe, they had been excluded from much of the life of the day, admitted only to certain occupations, and subjected at intervals to persecution and exile. In Spain, they enjoyed freedom, apparently in every particular, held high office in the service of the government, entered fully into the general life of the country, and developed their literature, science, statecraft, poetry and medicine to a marked degree. In the latter pursuits, they were of course immeasurably aided by their contact with the Moors, and it will be remembered that by way of North Africa and the Moorish influx, all the culture drawn from so many sources and centring in Alexandria was brought into Spain, and thence through the Jews to western Europe as a whole. It was doubtless because of their reputed learning that Flamel hoped to find among the Spanish Jews the solution of his mystery.

Accordingly (in 1378) he set out on pilgrimage to the shrine of St. James Compostela,—that famous place of pilgrimage in the Middle Ages about which centred the legends of the Spanish mission of St. James, the Apostle, after the Crucifixion. Completing his pilgrimage, Flamel sought the Jews in Leon with a copy of the symbolic figures—the original being kept safely at home in Paris. A converted Jew named Canches, living in Leon, not only understood the figures, but was “ravished with great astonishment and joy” to have news of the book which he said was believed to be utterly lost. Flamel, in whom caution and discretion apparently were well developed, told him guardedly that he did not doubt it would be possible to obtain sight of the book, provided he could find anyone who could explain it. Canches thereupon explained the earlier figures, and soon it was agreed that they should return to Paris together, during which journey Flamel received considerable instruction. He says of his teacher, “he most truly interpreted unto me the greatest part of my figures, in which, even to the points and pricks, he could decipher great mysteries which

were admirable to me." But the voyage—for it was thought best to go by sea from Sanson near Oviedo, in Spain, to Bordeaux in France—was either a rough one, or Canches was a poor sailor, for he died as a result of it, and was buried at Orleans, without seeing the book, the prospect of which had so transported him with joy.

Flamel returned to Paris, where he and his wife applied themselves anew to study. Shortly before his original purchase, he had married a widow, well along in years, a woman devout like himself, blessed with a sympathetic understanding, much discretion, and interests akin to his own. He had early shared with her his new discovery, "shewing her the very book, which, when she saw, she became as well pleased with it as myself, and with great delight beheld the admirable cover, the engraving, the images, and exquisite figures thereof, but understood as little of them as I. Yet it was a matter of consolation to me to discourse, and entertain myself with her, and to think what we should do, to find out the interpretation and meaning thereof." She, then, had shared his twenty-one years of labour, and she now shared in the new knowledge gained from his Jewish instructor. And again they began their labours. Flamel says that he now knew the *prima materia* or first principle—the key to the mystery—"yet not their first preparation, which is a thing most difficult, above all other things in the world." For that, three years more of effort were necessary, "during which time I did nothing but study and search, and labour . . . praying also continually unto God, and reading attentively in my book, pondering the words of the philosophers, and then trying and proving the various operations, which I thought to myself they might mean by their words.

"At length I found that which I desired, which I also soon knew by the scent and odour thereof. Having this, I easily accomplished the magistry. For knowing the preparations of the prime agents, and then literally following the directions in my book, I could not then miss the work if I would. Having attained this, I come now to projection."

We have frequently been told in theosophical writings that the higher alchemy is the transmutation of the base lower nature into the fine gold of the spiritual; and Flamel's operations, where stress is laid on each aspect—the inner and the outer—in its right proportion, make this point exceedingly clear. Flamel's own valuation of the inner aspect of the subject is shown at one point where he refers to his labours as "the lineary work of the philosophers' stone which, being perfected by anyone, takes away from him the root of all sin and evil, which is covetousness, changing his evil into good, and making him liberal, courteous, religious, devout, and fearing God, however wicked he was before. For from thenceforward he is continually ravished with the goodness of God, and with his grace and mercy, which he has obtained from the fountain of Eternal Goodness, with the profoundness of his divine and adorable power, and with the consideration of his admirable works." This does not mean, however, that he did not transmute metals, for he goes on to relate that silver was the first metal he produced—the projection being made from a pound and a half of mercury; and then, again using mercury, he produced gold, "much bet-

ter indeed than common gold, more soft also and more pliable." Satisfied with this first operation, he nevertheless repeated it, in all three times, and his comment is significant of his frugal and temperate nature. "I had truly enough when I had once done it; but I found exceeding great pleasure and delight in seeing and contemplating the admirable works of nature within the vessels." According to Nicholas Lenglet du Fresnoy, the first projection was made on the 17th of January, 1382; the second on April 25th of the same year.

Desiring little for themselves and having now much wealth, the two devoted their riches to charity, helping many needy individuals, and giving large endowments to hospitals and churches. So great was their generosity that stories of their wealth and rumours of its source came to the ears of the King—Charles VI. Such a secret, during the Middle Ages, was anything but a comfortable possession. To conceal or withhold it from the monarch, if the fact became known, was a political offence. Its possessor at once became, in a way, a dangerous character, since, in time of war, he might go over to the enemy and throw the scales preponderatingly on the wrong side. Charles VI, therefore, sent an agent to investigate the case. According to one biographer, Flamel and his wife were found living with the utmost frugality, and the king's agent, impressed by their humble home, their simple meal of boiled greens, and the lack of anything to bear out the rumours of wealth, reported that Flamel was really needy. The biographer adds, "He then remained in peace and proceeded without further interruption in his munificent works of charity." That these were very extensive is witnessed by various facts. Flamel himself tells of founding and endowing fourteen hospitals, three chapels, and seven churches in the City of Paris, with as many more in Boulogne, together with large benefactions to individuals in need,—refraining from detailed reference to the latter "as my reward would then be only in this world, so neither could it be pleasing to the persons to whom we did it." In various places, as on the doors of a church or the face of an arch, there were carved—following that quaint Mediæval custom so familiar in Renaissance art—the figures of the donors, Flamel and his wife, usually kneeling before the figure of a saint, and with the first initial of their respective names cut in the wall beneath. Some of his benefactions were still in evidence in the early eighteenth century, when Lenglet du Fresnoy wrote his *Histoire de la Philosophie Hermétique*, in which he includes a biography of Flamel.

In the course of building churches and hospitals, Flamel ordered carved in several places some of the hieroglyphics from his book. As he himself says, he caused to be depicted "the most true and essential marks or signs of this art, yet under veils, types, and hieroglyphic covertures, in imitation of those things which are contained in the gilded book of Abraham the Jew: Demonstrating to the wise, and men of understanding, the direct and perfect way of operation and lineary work of the philosophers' stone." This passage again bears witness to his discretion. The figures were in imitation of the original—in such form that, while the wise might read, the profane should remain in ignorance.

From the dates of certain of Flamel's writings and from the last will and

testament which each left behind, biographers have concluded that his wife died between 1397 and 1413, and that his own death occurred in 1419, after he had selected his burial place, making a contract regarding it with the wardens of the church, and then disposing of his possessions to the church and to the poor. However, no more definite date than this is suggested,—and we now come to a very different version of his story.

## PART II

At the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries, the King of France, Louis XIV, as a part of his patronage of the arts and sciences, but perhaps also for military reasons, sent travellers into far countries, at the royal expense, for the purpose of gaining new light both on the present and on the past,—the confirmation of ancient traditions, the verification of current maps and the collection of medals, rare manuscripts and inscriptions, and other "useful curiosities." One of these travellers was a Sieur Paul Lucas who, early in life, had travelled to the near East in connection with his father's business, which had to do with precious stones. He was evidently very much a man of the world, keen, observant, sagacious, and with a ready adaptability to circumstances. Suffice it to say that in those days, when travelling was both difficult and dangerous, he continued it for thirty-five years, and, in the service of the King, visited Greece, Asia Minor, Persia, Syria, Egypt and Africa.

With the born collector's feeling for the rare and curious, he accumulated, in addition to his manuscripts and medals, a store of experiences much less tangible, but, as he says, equally precious. These he wrote down in several small volumes, two of which bear the imprint of 1712, and are dedicated to the King.<sup>2</sup> The writer of the Preface, a M. F \*\*, adduces this dedication as proof positive of the authenticity of the contents and the veracity of the writer (since no one would attempt deception, in view of the sovereign's recognized qualities). He evidently fears that some of the more unusual anecdotes will meet with scant credence, however, for he makes a strong plea for a fair and open-minded hearing, and then remarks that of course there are everywhere the kind of people who, having seen nothing themselves, impudently judge of the entire world by the four villages they are familiar with.

Says Sieur Lucas<sup>3</sup> (translating from his quaint French):

"On the 9th I walked to Bournous-Bachy. There I joined a person of distinction of that country, who had given me an appointment, and we met in a little mosque where one of their most famous dervishes is buried. A dervish is always in charge, and places like this are intended for walking and recreation. We were admitted into a little kiosk where we found four dervishes. They showed us every possible courtesy and even invited us to eat with them. We

<sup>2</sup> *Voyage du Sieur Paul Lucas, fait par ordre du roy dans la Grèce, l'Asie Mineure, la Macedoine et l'Afrique*, published in Paris, 1712, "avec approbation et privilege du roy."

<sup>3</sup> Vol. I., Chapter xii., p. 98.

had been assured—and we immediately knew it by their conversation—that they were illustrious dervishes and true scholars. One of them was said to be from the country of the Usbecs. He seemed to be more learned than the others. I believe he was familiar with every known language. As he did not know that I am French, after having spoken Turkish for a time, he asked if I knew Latin, Spanish or Italian. I told him he might speak to me in Italian. He noticed immediately that it was not my native tongue. So, concluding that I was not from Italy, he begged me to tell him from what country I came. When he knew, he spoke to me in French like a man who had been reared in Paris.

“‘What!’ said I to him, ‘have you lived in France?’”

“He replied that he had never been there, but that he was strongly inclined to undertake the journey. I urged him to do so; and in order to persuade him I told him that there was not a kingdom on earth where people were more polite; that strangers, above all, were welcomed everywhere, and that he could expect from such a visit only the utmost satisfaction.

“‘No, no,’ he replied, ‘I will do nothing of the sort. I should be mad to entertain such expectations. I am a scholar, so I know that I should not be let alone there. That is enough to prevent my giving the matter any further thought.’”

“I assured him that he was mistaken, that someone had, without doubt, spoken ill of my country, and that France, on the contrary, was a nursery of scholars; that the king whose subject I had the honour to be had always loved them. I assured him that although I was not of these scholars by profession, his majesty, none the less, had me make at his expense the journeys in which he saw me engaged, and this in order to discover facts which still remained to be known in order to perfect the sciences—such as the herbs which could be useful in medicine; ancient monuments which might throw light on the facts of antiquity, and consequently render historical knowledge more complete; the countries also, the sight of which would serve to verify the maps. In short, I adduced proofs of the love that is felt in France for the sciences and for scholars. He attributed it all to the climate, and did not appear to agree to what I told him—except out of courtesy. He was, nevertheless, charmed to hear me speak so highly of it. He told me that he would some day betake himself thither.

“The conversation ended, the dervishes took us to their house. It is at the foot of the mountain and close to Bournous-Bachy. There we drank coffee. I took leave of them and promised to return to see them. From there I went to a nearby place, where I found three inscriptions which I have placed at the end—numbers 14, 15, and 16.

“After that I went to visit the prison, where there were accommodations for a large number of prisoners. In the middle is a well over a hundred and fifty feet deep. There they place the most criminal. There was there at that time, a man accused of abducting the wife of another, and of several other weighty crimes. From the top of the wall, bread was thrown to him, and by a cord a little pitcher full of water was lowered to him.

“That day I also went around the citadel. It is fortified by a double wall,



but the latter is in ruins. In places where there is none, the rock is cut very precipitously and there are few walls so difficult to scale.

"The 10th. The dervish of the Usbecs returned my call. I received him in the best manner that I could, and as he had seemed to me to be an antiquary, I showed him some manuscripts that I had bought. He pronounced them rare and by good authors. I will say in praise of this dervish that he was a man whose appearance even, seemed truly extraordinary. He taught me some very fine things about medicine, and promised me, subsequently, many others. 'But,' said he, 'some preparation is necessary on your part, and I hope that you will some day be in a state to profit by the light which I am able to throw upon your understanding.'

"To look at him, one would not have thought him more than thirty years old, but from his conversation he seemed already to have lived more than a century, and this one would have felt still more inclined to believe after the account which he gave of several lengthy travels he said he had made. He told me that there were seven friends who thus travelled about the world, all seven with the purpose of becoming more perfect; that when separating, they agreed upon a place of meeting, in some city, twenty years later, and that the first arrivals there never failed to await the others. This led me to believe that this time Brusa had been chosen for the meeting by the seven scholars. There were already four there, and they were so united that it was obvious no chance had brought them together but a long knowledge of each other.

"In a lengthy conversation with a learned man, one has occasion to speak of many things out of the ordinary. Religion and nature were, one after the other, the subject of our conversation. Finally we came down to chemistry, alchemy and the Cabala. I told him that all these, and above all the idea of the philosophers' stone were regarded among the most learned peoples as very chimerical sciences.

"'This should not surprise you,' he replied. 'In the first place, nothing should surprise us in this life. The true sage listens to all things without dismay, but if he possess enough moderation not to treat too bluntly the common herd, must he restrict and debase his intellect because others are incapable of comprehending that which he sees? And must he submit to the judgment of an ignorant rabble because it is unable to endure the light by which the eyes of the true sage cannot be dazzled?'

"'The word sage,' he continued, 'means a man to whom alone it belongs to be a philosopher. He has no attachment for anyone. He sees all dying and being reborn, without his experiencing the least anxiety or concern. He can obtain more riches than have the greatest monarchs, but he places all beneath his feet, and this lofty contempt renders him, even in his poverty, superior to all exigencies.'

"I interrupted him at this point. 'For all these beautiful maxims,' I said, 'the sage dies like other people. What does it matter if I have been a wise man or a fool all my life, if wisdom has no privilege over folly, and if the one prevents a man from dying no more than the other?'

“‘Ah,’ he added, ‘I see clearly that you have never known a true philosopher. Know then that a philosopher such as I am describing, dies, in truth (for death is inherent in nature, and for exemption from it there is no warrant), but that he extends his life to its full term, that is, to the time appointed by the Creator. It has been observed that this time is a thousand years, and that it is only to that point that the sage lives. He attains it through his knowledge of the true medicine. By this means he knows how to do away with everything that hinders the functions and destroys the balance of his nature. By this means, he learns everything the knowledge of which God gave to the first man. The first man knew them through reason. But it was this same reason which deprived him of them, because, having attained to this natural knowledge, he mingled with it his own fancies and conceits. By this confusion which engendered an excessive curiosity, he made imperfect the very work of the Creator. This it is which the sage endeavours to make straight again. The animals, acting only in accordance with instinct, have preserved themselves in their original state, and live no less a time now than in the beginning of the world. Man is much more perfect, but has he made use of that distinction? And has he not, through his own fault, lost the wonderful privilege of living a thousand years, which he should have guarded with all possible care?’

“‘It is this that the true sages have rediscovered, and, that you may no longer be mistaken about it, it is this that is called the philosophers’ stone—which is not a chimerical science as the would-be scholars think, but a very real one. Furthermore, it is known to the few that avarice or dissoluteness kill, and that desire for life brings death.’

“‘Surprised by all that I had heard, I exclaimed, ‘Do you mean to say that all who have found the philosophers’ stone live a thousand years?’

“‘Without doubt,’ he replied, in a very serious tone. ‘When God favours some mortal with this wonderful knowledge, he has it in his power to live a thousand years, as the first man did.’

“‘I told him that in our country there were some of these happy mortals who were said to have had the life-giving knowledge, but certainly they had not lingered to such a decrepit age before repairing to the other world. But he continued, ‘Do you not know that the name of philosopher is lightly given? They were not philosophers, or they must have lived the length of time I have indicated to you.’

“‘Finally I spoke to him of the illustrious Flamel, and I told him that in spite of the philosophers’ stone, he was dead in every respect. At this name, he began to laugh at my simplicity. As I had almost begun to believe what he had already said, I was greatly astonished to see that he doubted what I asserted. Perceiving my surprise, he asked again, in the same tone, if I was foolish enough to believe that Flamel was dead.

“‘No, no,’ he said, ‘you are mistaken. Flamel is living. Neither he nor his wife have yet known death. It is not three years since I left them both in the Indies, and he is one of my most faithful friends. He was about to tell me the time when they had made each other’s acquaintance, but he checked him-

self and said he wanted to tell me Flamel's story which doubtless was not known in my country.

"Our sages," he continued, "although rare in the world, are found equally in all sects, and in this respect are little superior one to the other. In the time of Flamel, there was one belonging to the Jewish faith. In the early part of his life he had bound himself not to lose sight of his brothers' descendants, and knowing that the majority of them had gone to live in France, his desire to see them impelled him to leave us in order to make the journey. We did all that we could to dissuade him, and several times he changed his plans because of our advice, but finally his extreme desire led him to go, with the promise, however, of rejoining us as soon as possible. He arrived in Paris which was, then as now, the capital of the kingdom. There he found that his father's descendants were held in high esteem among the Jews. Among others, he met a Rabbi who appeared to desire to become a scholar—that is to say, who sought the true philosophy and occupied himself with the Great Work. Our friend entered into a close friendship with him, and gave him much enlightenment. But as the *prima materia* requires a long time, he contented himself with putting down in writing the whole science, and to prove to the Rabbi that these instructions could be relied upon, he made projection in his presence of thirty ocques [an ocque weighs three pounds] of metal which he turned into the most pure gold.

"The Rabbi, filled with admiration for our brother, made every effort to keep him there. This was useless, for he would not break the promise he had given us. Finally the Jew, unable to obtain anything further from him, changed his friendship to mortal hatred, and the avarice which was already overcoming him led him to conceive the base design of extinguishing one of the lights of the Universe. But first dissimulating, he begged the sage to do him the honour of spending some days with him, and during this time, with unheard of treachery, he killed him and took all his medicine. His dreadful deeds could not remain long unpunished. The Jew was exposed, put in prison, and for other crimes of which he was convicted, he was burned alive. The persecution of the Jews of Paris commenced shortly after, and as you know, they were all expelled.

"Flamel, more tolerant than the majority of the Parisians, had no objection to associating with certain Jews. He was regarded among them as a man of recognized honesty and integrity. For this reason a Jewish merchant decided to entrust to him his records and all his papers, persuaded that he would not make bad use of them and that he would be entirely willing to save them from the general conflagration. Among the papers were those of the Rabbi who had been burned, and the books of our Sage. The merchant, without doubt occupied with his trading, had paid little attention to them. But Flamel, who examined them more closely, noted representations of furnaces, of alembics or chemist's retorts, and of other vessels, and rightly judging that this might be the secret of the Great Work, he believed he ought not to let the matter rest there. As the books were in Hebrew, he had the first page translated. Con-

firmed in his belief by this brief fragment, he adopted the following course, desiring to be prudent and to avoid discovery. He went to Spain, and as there were Jews nearly everywhere, in each place he went he would beg one of them to translate one page of his book. Having translated the entire book by this means, he set out for Paris again. On his way he made a faithful friend whom he took with him to engage in the Great Work, and to whom he planned eventually to disclose his secret. But the friend was carried off before his time by an illness, so Flamel returned home, determined to work with his wife. They attained their goal, and having in the process gained great riches, they caused to be erected several large public edifices and enriched several private individuals.

"'Fame is sometimes a very troublesome thing, but a sage knows by means of his wisdom how to rid himself of embarrassment. Flamel realized that he would be arrested if he were supposed to have the philosophers' stone, and after the publicity which his liberality had aroused, it was not likely to be long before this science was attributed to him. So, like a true philosopher, caring little to live in the minds of his fellowmen, he devised a means of escape, causing an announcement to be made both of his own death and that of his wife. By his advice, she feigned illness which took its course, and at the time she was pronounced dead, she was in reality on her way to Switzerland, where she had been told to await her husband. In her stead were buried a piece of wood and some clothing, and that all due ceremony might be observed, this was done in one of the churches which she had had built. At length, Flamel adopted the same artifice himself. As practically anything may be had for money, he met with no difficulty in prevailing upon the physicians and ecclesiastics. He left a will in which he took pains to request that he be buried with his wife and that a pyramid be erected over their burial place. Then a second piece of wood was interred, and the sage himself went to rejoin his wife. From that time, they have both led a philosophic life, now in one country and now in another. This is the true story of Flamel, and not that which you believe it to be nor that which was foolishly supposed at Paris where few people have knowledge of the true wisdom.'

"This account seemed to me, and in truth is, very extraordinary. I was the more surprised by it, since it was told me by a Turk, who, I believed, had never set foot in France. However, I relate it merely as a historian, and I omit several other things still less credible, which he told me nevertheless very positively. I will content myself with remarking that ordinarily we have a very poor opinion of the science of the Turks, and that the man of whom I am speaking possesses a rarely gifted nature."

J. C.

# THE AWAKENING TO THE SPIRIT ATMA BODHA

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ATTRIBUTED TO SHANKARA ACHARYA

**F**OR the sake of those whose darkness has been worn away by purifications, who have attained to peace, whose passions have been conquered, who long for liberation, this Awakening to the Spirit is set forth.

For, compared with other means, spiritual awakening is manifestly the one instrument of liberation; as there is no cooking without fire, so without wisdom, liberation is not attained.

Since they are not contraries, the works of the law cannot make an end of un wisdom; wisdom drives away un wisdom, as light the host of darkness.

Hemmed in and beset, as it were, by un wisdom, when that is destroyed, the Spirit shines forth absolute and free, as the rayed sun when the clouds depart.

For when the individual life, which has been besmeared by un wisdom, is made clean by the assiduous pursuit of wisdom, un wisdom falls away of itself, as when water is cleared by astringent powder. (5)

For the cycle of birth and death, crowded with passions and hates, is like a dream; while it endures, it appears real, but on waking, it becomes unreal.

This world, like the silver in the pearl shell, appears real only until the Eternal is known, the secondless foundation of all.

All manifold existences are built up in the eternal, all-pervading, all-penetrating Spirit, which is being and bliss, as bracelets and ornaments are formed from a single mass of gold.

Like the ether of space enclosed in many vessels, the Logos, the all-pervading Lord, entering many vestures, appears to be divided because they are divided, and shines forth absolute and pure when they fall away.

Through the power of differing vestures, family and name and state of life are overlaid on the one Spirit, as flavours and colours may be given to pure water. (10)

The physical body is formed of the five elements compounded, and is built up by deeds done in the past; it is called the dwelling in which pleasure and pain are experienced.

The subtle form is made of the five elements not compounded, and is endowed with the five vital breaths, the emotional mind, the intelligence and the ten powers of perception and action; it is the instrument through which experience is gained.

The causal vesture is said to rest on the primal, indefinable illusion of sepa-

rate existence. Let the disciple apprehend the Spirit as other than this triad of vestures.

Through union with the five coverings, the pure Spirit takes on their nature, like a clear crystal laid on a blue cloth.

As rice is separated from husk and chaff by pounding it in a mortar, so, by working vigorously for union, let the disciple separate the inner Spirit from its coverings. (15)

Though everywhere present, the shining of the Spirit is not everywhere perceived; let it be perceived in the pure intelligence, like an image in a polished mirror.

The Spirit is other than the body, the powers of perception and action, the emotional mind, the intelligence; let the disciple know the Spirit as the witness of these, ever as their king.

Because their powers of perception and action are busily engaged, the Spirit seems busily engaged to those who lack discernment, as the moon seems to race among the racing clouds.

The body, the powers of perception and action, the emotional mind and the intelligence move about after their proper objects bathed in the pure consciousness of the Spirit, as people move about bathed in the sunlight.

They attribute the qualities and works of the body and the powers to the stainless being of the Spirit because they lack discernment, as they attribute the blue of the sky to the ether of space. (20)

Because of unwisdom they imagine that the actorship of the mental vesture belongs to the Spirit, as they attribute the rippling of the water to the reflected moon.

Desires and wishes, pleasures and pains persist while the mind is awake; in dreamless sleep, when its activity ceases, they too cease; therefore they are of the mind, not of the Spirit.

As brightness is the nature of the sun, coldness of water, heat of fire, so being, consciousness, bliss, perpetual purity are the nature of the Spirit.

Through lack of discernment, linking together these two, the being and consciousness of the Spirit and the activity of the mind, the thought arises that I am actively perceiving.

There is no change in the Spirit, nor is there inherent light in the mind; the individual life, confusedly perceiving, erroneously thinks, I am the actor, I am the perceiver. (25)

Thinking the Spirit is the individual life, as the rope is thought to be the serpent, he suffers fear; but when he knows, I am not the individual life but the higher Self, he attains to fearlessness.

The one Spirit illumines the intelligence, the emotional mind and all the powers, as the lamp illumines water pots; the Self, the Spirit, is not illumined by these inert powers.

There is no need for another light to illumine the Self, for the Spirit itself is light; as a lamp needs no other lamp, the Self, the Spirit, shines with its own light.

Discarding all the vestures, according to the Scripture, It is not that, not that, let the disciple find the oneness of the individual spirit and the Supreme Spirit, according to the Scripture.

The body with its powers, born of unwisdom, is fugitive as a bubble; let the disciple find the stainless One, apart from these, affirming, I am the Eternal. (30)

Since I am other than the body, not mine are birth, decay, wasting and dissolution; since I am beyond the powers, I am not implicated in sounds and sights and sensuous things.

Since I am other than the emotional mind, not mine are pain, desire, hate and fear; so the Scripture declares, The Spirit is luminous, other than the life-breaths, other than the emotional mind;

• From the Spirit are born the life-breaths, the emotional mind and all the powers, the ether, air, fire, the waters and earth, sustainer of all.

Without qualities, without action, eternal, without separateness, without stain, without change, without form, ever free am I, beyond the darkness.

I am like the ether of space, without and within all things, imperishable; ever in all ways equal, pure, detached, free from stain, immovable. (35)

Ever pure, free, the one partless, secondless bliss, the real, wisdom, endless, the Supreme Eternal, verily, am I.

The conviction that I am the Eternal, thus ceaselessly impressed upon the mind, ends the distractions of unwisdom, as the healing essence drives disease away.

Seated in a solitary place, with passion dispelled and the powers well controlled, let the disciple bring to consciousness the one Spirit, steadfastly dwelling in thought on that endless One alone.

The wise man, dissolving all visible things in the Spirit through meditation, should bring to consciousness the one Spirit, ever stainless as the ether of space.

Setting aside name and colour and all differences, the knower of the supreme reality stands firm through that which in its own nature is perfect consciousness and bliss. (40)

The distinction of knower, knowing and known does not exist in the higher Self; formed altogether of consciousness and bliss, it is self-illuminated.

As the fire-stick is plied in the block, so let him direct meditation upon the Spirit; as the sparks of understanding glow, let him enkindle the fuel of all wisdom.

The former darkness is dispelled by illumination, as by the dawn; thereupon the Spirit is revealed, self-luminous, like the rayed sun.

The Spirit, though ever possessed, seems unattainable through unwisdom; when that is destroyed, the Spirit is known to be possessed, like a jewel on one's own neck.

As the man is imagined in the post, so the separate life is imagined in the Eternal; when the real existence of the individual life in the Eternal is seen, its separateness ceases. (45)

Through experience of the true being of the real, wisdom suddenly reveals itself; the unwisdom of I and mine vanishes like an error in direction.

He who has attained to union, possessing perfect wisdom, beholds all things dwelling in the Self, the Spirit, through the eye of wisdom recognizing the Spirit as One and All.

This world, verily, is Spirit, there is nought but Spirit; as all earthen pots are clay only, so the disciple beholds all as the Self, the Spirit.

Therefore, let him who has attained liberation in life, knowing this, detach himself from the qualities of his former vestures; let him become one with being, consciousness, bliss, as the grub becomes the bee.

Crossing the ocean of delusion, slaying the demons of lust and hate, he who has attained to union, perfected in peace, reigns in the paradise of the Spirit.

Detached from all outer, unenduring joys, wrapped in the joy of the Spirit, he shines, inwardly luminous, like a lamp set within a jar. (51)

Though still wearing the vesture, yet unstained by its qualities, like the ether, let the saintly sage move detached as the air, as one who knows nothing, though knowing all things.

When the vestures dissolve, let the saintly sage enter wholly into the Logos, as water in water, as air in air, as fire in fire.

The gain than which there is no higher gain, the joy than which there is no higher joy, the wisdom than which there is no higher wisdom: let the disciple know that this is the Eternal.

Beholding it, there is no more to behold; gaining it, there is no more to gain; knowing it, there is no more to know: let the disciple understand that this is the Eternal. (55)

Through and through, upward, downward, perfect, secondless being, consciousness, bliss; the one, endless, everlasting: let the disciple understand that this is the Eternal.

The imperishable, defined in the sacred sciences by excluding all that is of other nature, the one partless bliss: let the disciple apprehend that this is the Eternal.

That is in essence partless joy; fed on the fragments of that joy, according to their dignity, the high gods all rejoice.

Every substance is its being; every activity is its power; the Eternal pervades all things, as butter is everywhere present in cream.

Nor subtile, nor gross, nor short, nor long, unborn, imperishable; without form, or quality, or name: let the disciple know that this is the Eternal. (60)

Through that light shine the sun and all other lights; that is illumined by no other light; that, whereby all this is illumined, let the disciple know that this is Eternal.

Inwardly, outwardly, enveloping all, and causing this whole universe to shine, the Eternal enkindles all things, as a mass of iron glows with heat.

Though the Eternal is other than the world, yet there is nought other than the Eternal; whatever appears as other than the Eternal, is an illusion like the mirage in the desert.

Whatever is seen, whatever heard, is no other than the Eternal; and, truly known, the Eternal is secondless being, consciousness, bliss.



The eye of wisdom everywhere beholds the Spirit which is being and bliss; the eye of unwisdom beholds not, as the blind sees not the radiant sun. (65)

The individual life, enkindled by the fire of wisdom lit by hearing the sacred wisdom and by meditation, cleansed of all impurity, shines like refined gold.

For the Spirit, rising in the heaven of the heart, a sun of wisdom, dispels the darkness; all-enveloping, all-sustaining, that sun shines and illumines all.

He, for whom all spaces, places, times are one, who, putting away all other observances, worships in the shrine of the Spirit that stainless, everlasting joy that makes an end of all afflictions, knowing all things, entering into all things, attains to immortality.

C. J.

(The End)

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*Turn over the leaves of thy past life, and be sure to fold down where any passage of it most affects thee, and bestow thy remainder of time to correct those faults.*

—WM. PENN.

# THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

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## XV

### ST. TERESA

A STUDY of the great religious orders shows that, as, with the passing years, the ardour of the monks grew cold, the lofty aspirations of the founder were often brought low, and evil began to prevail where charity once spread its cloak. This is conspicuously true in the case of those founded by Ignatius Loyola and Francis of Assisi. Loyola's immediate successor gave to the Society of Jesus that bent toward intrigue and politics which has stigmatized it as a child of the Vatican; and even before the death of Francis, his little brotherhood was warped from its original intent. That all the greater orders still survive, after centuries of vicissitude, is proof of such original vitality that new growth could be formed, even while disintegrating processes were at work. It is a recurrent fact in the history of the orders that in their periods of wretched sloth and humiliation, they are blessed by the appearance among their members, of souls that burn with the founder's zeal for their original purposes, and thus disintegration is for a time arrested, reforms are set in motion, and what seemed a dying institution is completely rejuvenated. This has happened so many times that when a student consults a book of reference, he finds in each Order<sup>1</sup> the subdivision into branches and branchlets which also is characteristic of the dissenting Protestant sects. Thus the movement in the ninth century which centred around Cluny, was a successful protest against the laxity prevalent in the old Benedictine monasteries. Similar protests leading to reform and restoration are found in all the orders, and often, as in the case of Cluny, the monastery (or the leader) where the revivifying process starts, gives its name to the subsequent history of the order.

The Carmelite order (the Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel) varies somewhat from the others in this respect, for the founders and saints of its early period are completely eclipsed by its greatest reformer—St. Teresa.

The origin of the Carmelites is uncertain and disputed. Mt. Carmel is the hill in Palestine on which the prophet Elijah lived in hiding, during the years when Jehovah was forsaken by the Israelites who were worshipping in his stead, Baal and Ashtaroht; it is the hill on which Elijah challenged the priests of Baal to sacrifice to their god, while he offered to Jehovah a water-drenched altar and victim which were consumed by miraculous fire from Heaven. According to Carmelite legend, Elijah and his successor, Elisha, were mem-

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<sup>1</sup> The Dominicans allege that they do their own house-cleaning systematically, so that the need for drastic reform has never arisen.

bers of a company of austere hermits who dwelt in seclusion on that hill, for prayer and self-sacrifice,—and were able to perpetuate their band until the incarnation of Christ, when they became his disciples. It was after the resurrection that the devotion of the hermits gradually centred about the Virgin Mary, and they came to call themselves the Order of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, continuing as an austere and contemplative association through early Christian times. The first documentary mention of them is in a twelfth century account, and the absence of any earlier record has led Catholic historians to declare that the legend is nothing more than a pious fancy. It is impossible to take sides in the controversy, but those who argue, from the silence of recorded history, that such a band of contemplatives could not possibly have congregated as they are alleged to have done, are certainly dogmatic beyond what is warranted, for there are well authenticated traditions of similar hermitical groups in Palestine, such as the Essenes and the Nazarites.

In 1155, when the hermits of Carmel are first mentioned, they are under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Jerusalem who had given them a strict rule. Mahomedan conquest of the Holy Land made it expedient for them to seek a new abode, and, after trying Cyprus and other localities of the Mediterranean, they completely uprooted themselves, in 1240, and journeyed to Western Europe, where conditions, especially in England, favoured them beyond expectation. In a few years they became one of the popular European orders, though popularity was gained at the cost of a general relaxation of their rule. In England, they were called "White-friars," from a distinctive white mantle worn over their brown habit. On the continent, the Carmelites were cordially welcomed in Spain and Italy, winning the financial support of noble families, as well as the sons and daughters of those families for novices.

The fate of many other institutions fell upon them—the good favour which had upbuilt the order also hastened its downfall. One particular way in which the generosity of its friends made for laxity was the practice of endowing cells in a monastery. The family that made the endowment retained the right to appoint the monk or nun who should occupy the cell. By this means, membership in what had been an austere order, might be degraded into a pension or dole bestowed by outsiders upon family connections or dependents, who without any consecration of heart or mind, mechanically observed a minimum of religious exercises.

St. Teresa, in her twentieth year, entered the Carmelite monastery of her native town. She spent twenty-eight years in its worldly and undevout atmosphere, but as she was directed and encouraged by a Divine Teacher her progress in the inner world was not hindered by her environment. Outwardly, she led an unusually active life after she received her special call to service, as is witnessed by the large number of convents in the northern and central provinces of Spain which she founded.

Other reformers, however, have done as much or more than she in the building of religious houses, and the bare statistical mention of what she

accomplished may give an impression of her energy without conveying at all the tremendous significance of her work. The importance of what she did begins to dawn upon a student when he considers the severe illnesses against which she struggled, and the endless obstacles raised in her path by men and "devils." The opinion forms, and grows into conviction, that there was more in this work of hers than is obvious,—more than the founding of monasteries for the training of Catholic saints.

Those who would study St. Teresa's life and work have the unusual advantage of a voluminous and valuable mass of material written by her own hand. One is often dependent upon narratives of a saint's life, compiled by reverent but unintelligent admirers, whose descriptions and explanations have to be discounted and re-interpreted. It is a rare privilege to have an ample supply of accessible books that come direct from the head and heart of the person we would study. She was an object of suspicion as long as she lived, suspected by ordinary people of the world as well as by ecclesiastics and the officers of the Inquisition, and it is to those suspicious individuals that we are indebted for some of her books. She was twice required to write an account of her experiences, in order that officials might have data upon which to pronounce her orthodox or heretic. She wrote with difficulty, in moments snatched from pressing duties;—the result is her *Life*, a volume of over three hundred printed pages of large size, intensely interesting, obtainable in at least two English translations. Further accusations were made against her in the years when she was planting her monasteries throughout Spain, and a grave dispute arose as to whether her houses should be tolerated or closed. Whereupon another ecclesiastic bade her write an account of what she had done. This she called the *Foundations*; it is a volume of two hundred and fifty pages. There is another collection of eleven brief descriptions of her method of meditation, called *Relations* (narratives of her inward state), which she wrote from time to time for officials, and others who questioned her. She also composed two books of instruction for her nuns, *The Way of Perfection*, and *The Interior Castle*,—the names indicating that they treat of the path of union. Three volumes of her *Letters* have been preserved, though many others were lost, and there is also a volume of *Poems* (including Maxims). The richness of the available material is obvious—eight volumes, devoted to mystical experiences, which we have in modern translations and with scholarly editing.

Even a little reading of these books arouses reverent wonder in a student's mind; he begins to conjecture that the author of these letters, poems, and autobiographical accounts was something more than a saint. As he reads of the unusual and extraordinary degrees of interior consciousness to which this woman attained, it almost seems to him that St. Teresa might have been a chela of the great Lodge, who with splendid courage and perhaps at the risk of her own chelaship, went alone into the enemy's camp, and victoriously planted there, under the innocent name of a system of prayer, an ample handful of the precious seeds of Truth. What a piece of divine strategy! a portion of the terrain captured, a sector of the Roman Church turned into a hotbed for

the propagation of theosophical seedlings. Many withered and died without doubt, but some of them may have grown into saplings and oaks, and have become "pillars in the temple of our God."

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of St. Teresa's writings inasmuch as they contain the same instructions about prayer, continuous meditation and union, which were given to the world again in the nineteenth century through The Theosophical Society. Teachings that we study in *Light on the Path*, *The Voice of the Silence* and elsewhere, are translated in her books into a Roman Catholic vocabulary, and expressed in a form that could be understood by sixteenth century minds. The vocabulary and the form are not the chief thing; what is important is that the method of meditation she explains, had brought her to stand in the presence of her Master, so that her ear had heard his voice, and those who followed her could do the same.

She was born in 1515, and was thus a generation younger than Loyola and his friends. When she was suspected by other leaders of the Church, the Jesuits, and likewise the Dominicans, were generally her sympathetic advisers and defenders. Several of them were her confessors at different periods of her life, and appeared to understand her somewhat, as they encouraged her to continue her interior prayer, assuring her that she was divinely inspired and was not deluded by the devil. Her birth-place was the town of Avila, fifty-eight miles north-west of Madrid, in the old province of Castile. Avila was a small town (its population, at the end of the nineteenth century, was 13,000), but it was the seat of a bishop and contained a cathedral and once had a university. Within its mediæval walls (or nearby in the environs), were three convents for women, an Augustinian (40 nuns), a Carmelite, called "the Incarnation," dedicated in the year of St. Teresa's birth (180 nuns), and a Franciscan (number not given); while for men, there was a Dominican monastery which seems to have replaced an earlier Franciscan house, and, later, the Jesuits also made a centre there. Avila thus had the mediæval atmosphere of monasticism.

Both parents represented families of rank. Teresa's mother was her father's second wife, and besides her seven brothers and a sister, there were two half-brothers and a half-sister, children of the first wife. The two groups of children lived together harmoniously. When Teresa was twelve years old, her mother died (about 1528), and the half-sister, Maria, the eldest of them all, quite naturally took the mother's place in the supervision of the house and of the younger ones.

The parents gave their children a religious upbringing. Teresa's fervour was first kindled by the stories told in the family circle, and at the age of seven, with a brother for companion, she left home and passed through the town gate, on the way southward to Granada, to die, as she thought, a martyr among the Moors. Prescott says that Spanish families gained their noble rank through successful efforts against the Moorish conquerors, many of whom still lingered in the south of Spain after the general expulsion made by Ferdinand and Isabella in 1492. The vague terrors that American children

used to feel when Indians were mentioned, may suggest something of what Moors meant to the imagination of Spanish children. These two, Teresa and her brother, youthful aspirants to martyrdom, had scarcely passed through the mediæval gate of Avila, when they came face to face with an uncle on his horse, riding to town from the country. This uncle took them promptly home, and thus their dream of martyrdom ended.

The half-sister, Maria, married in 1531 and left Avila, necessitating some changes in the household, as Teresa, the elder of the two remaining daughters, was then only sixteen years old. The father solved his problem in a very natural manner by placing Teresa as a boarding pupil in the Augustinian convent of Avila, where she remained a year and a half, gradually growing to feel that she herself wished to become a nun. Her feeling deepened into conviction after she returned home and had to live again in association with people of worldly dispositions; but as her father opposed her desire, she talked frankly with another brother, whose secret she had guessed, and together, one morning at dawn, they left the paternal roof,—the brother going to the Dominican friars of Avila, while Teresa went to the Carmelite convent of the Incarnation just outside the old town wall. The apparent motive that led her to select the Carmelites was that at the Incarnation a friend of whom she was fond had already taken nun's vows. The Prioress received Teresa but sent immediate word to her father. The father went at once to the convent, apparently to lead Teresa back home; but, arriving there, he suddenly changed his mind and gave complete consent to her remaining as a novice. He may have recognized, at last, that his daughter's desire was more than a whim. In due time Teresa's dowry was made over to the convent. That convent of the Incarnation of Avila will need to be mentioned many times in this study; for the sake of brevity it will be called, as Teresa called it, simply, the Incarnation.

She entered there in 1533, and after a year as novice, took the vows in 1534, in her twentieth year. An illness that had for some time been troubling her became acute just then, and her father sent her for treatment to a physician of repute whose hospital was near the home of her half-sister, Maria. En route, Teresa and her friend stopped a night with an uncle, a devout old man, who gave her a little Franciscan *Primer of Prayer*. At the Incarnation she appears to have received little instruction in praying, and the *Primer* became a friend and was to be her companion and teacher during a long illness. She heeded its precepts, and in the days of acute pain, she learned to know some of the realities to which meditation opens the door. "I used to labour with all my might to imagine Jesus Christ, our God and our Lord, present within me. And this was the way I prayed. If I meditated on any mystery of life, I represented it to myself as within me." <sup>2</sup>

The physician to whom she had gone afforded no relief, and after a year of treatment, she returned to her father's home, apparently a hopeless sufferer,—

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<sup>2</sup> *Life*, p. 18.

her disease seemed a combination of tuberculosis and paralysis, with affections of heart and nerves. Death was approaching, friends said, and after four days of coma, she was pronounced dead. Her grave was dug in the Incarnation cemetery, and her actual interment was hindered only by the obstinacy of her father who would not believe it. He proved right, for the coma passed, and she lingered on to be taken back to the Incarnation, where for three years more, she continued in a miserable condition, unable to walk. Finally, she was cured, through special prayers to St. Joseph, she said; and henceforth she paid great devotion to him, giving his name to the first convent she built.

Illness and solitude had made her acquainted with the power of meditation and with the state of recollection; restored health threatened her with complete loss of both. At the convent there seemed to be as much freedom for visitors as there is in the average family of the world. Teresa had had some kind of a struggle against herself before she decided to become a nun, and when health succeeded her long illness, she followed the example of the other nuns and spent time frequently in social converse. How grave a fault she committed we can not know, for when she speaks of her own sins, one must be on guard not to take her too literally,—what the world would call a microscopic fault she would see as a mountain of evil. As her conscience gave her trouble over this matter of visitors, she attempted to lessen the disparity between her better and her lower self by an act of false humility—she omitted her daily meditation which had brought her some realization of the spiritual world. "I was ashamed to draw near unto God in an act of such special friendship as that of prayer. . . . It was the most fearful delusion into which Satan could plunge me—to give up prayer under pretence of humility. . . . I thought it would be better for me to live like the multitude—to say the prayers which I was bound to say, and that vocally; not to practise mental prayer<sup>3</sup> nor commune with God so much."<sup>4</sup> She even deceived her father (according to her own statement) as to her motive for omitting her meditation, telling him it was because she was still weak after her illness. Not long afterward her father died, and in talking with his spiritual adviser, she told him something of her inner condition and of the practice of meditation which she had abandoned for more than a whole year; he directed her to resume it at once, and she obeyed. She never forgave herself that deliberate abandonment of a spiritual exercise that had brought her to the Master's presence; and years later, when she was writing the *Life* and other books, she continually refers to it as a voluntary evil that burdened her with more guilt than hardened criminals carry. "I see clearly that it will give no one pleasure to see any thing so base; and certainly I wish those who may read this to have me in abhorrence, as a soul so obstinate and so ungrateful to Him who did so much for me. I passed nearly twenty years on this stormy sea, falling and rising, but rising to no

<sup>3</sup> She thus defines meditation or mental prayer: "It is nothing else, in my opinion, but being on terms of friendship with God, frequently conversing in secret with Him, who, we know, loves us."

<sup>4</sup> *Life*, p. 34.

good purpose, seeing that I went and fell again. . . . Though of mortal<sup>1</sup> sins I was afraid, I was not so afraid of them as I ought to have been, because I did not avoid the perilous occasions of them. I may say that it was the most painful life that can be imagined, because I had no sweetness in God, and no pleasure in the world." <sup>5</sup> As always, we must guard against interpreting too literally what Teresa says of her sins and distractions. From the point of view of the average man, all the saints greatly exaggerate when they speak of their sins, and she is no exception.

The advice of a priest led her to resume daily meditation, but the social conversations were not discontinued, even though Christ Himself stood before her in person in reproof of her conduct. That event is the first inner experience which she describes, and these are her words, written in her *Life* twenty-six years after the event. "Our Lord was pleased to show me that these friendships were not good for me: to warn me, also, and in my blindness, which was so great, to give me light. Christ stood before me, stern and grave, giving me to understand what in my conduct was offensive to Him. I saw Him with the eyes of the soul more distinctly than I could have seen Him with the eyes of the body. The vision made so deep an impression upon me, that, though it is more than twenty-six years ago, I seem to see Him present even now." <sup>6</sup>

People who have not accepted a leader to the point of obeying him, repeatedly ask for "a sign" that will be irrefragable proof to them of his divine origin. The Jews were constantly asking such a "sign" of Christ, and he as constantly refused. Teresa's interpretation of that "sign" Christ gave to her, suggests reasons he may have had for refusing "signs" to others. "It did me much harm that I did not then know it was possible to see any thing otherwise than with the eyes of the body; so did Satan too, in that he helped me to think so: he made me understand it to be impossible, and suggested that I had imagined the vision—that it might be Satan himself—and other suppositions of that kind. For all this, the impression remained with me that the vision was from God, and not an imagination; but, as it was not to my liking, I forced myself to lie to myself; and as I did not dare to discuss the matter with anyone, and as great importunity was used, I went back to my former conversation." <sup>7</sup>

C. C. CLARK.

<sup>5</sup> *Life*, p. 46.

<sup>6</sup> *Life*, p. 37.

<sup>7</sup> *Life*, p. 37.

(To be continued)



# PERSY

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MY son Persy and I keep house together.

Persy is a fine strapping boy, in fact, almost too strapping for a mere child of his age. He measures six feet one, in his stockings, and tips the scales at exactly two hundred pounds. He has auburn hair, a florid complexion, and a slight cast in his left eye, noticeable especially whenever he gets angry or excited. Also, he has a very resonant voice, not so very musical in quality, perhaps, but powerful, very powerful. And he likes to use it. In fact, he enjoys making almost any kind of a noise; this is one of his most pronounced characteristics. When he is not talking, singing or yelling for something he wants, he is likely to be playing on any one of several musical instruments, which I have given him from time to time. He has a trumpet, a drum, cymbals, a saxophone and one or two more, on which he performs, by turns, according to his moods.

For Persy certainly is moody; moody and temperamental. At times he is hilariously pleased with himself, and will blow his trumpet and beat his drum, incessantly. This is almost sure to be the case if one is so injudicious as to praise him for something. At other times he is glum, discontented, even sullen; often full of self pity; and then he moans and groans and even weeps audibly. This is what happens when he cannot have what he wants, or when he is criticized.

Persy has a number of favourite songs, which he sings over and over again. Everyone else becomes very weary of hearing these songs, but to Persy they seem an endless source of satisfaction. Among those which he sings loudest and most frequently are: "See, the conquering hero comes," "How dry I am," "There'll be a hot time in the old town tonight," and "Can't you see I'm lonely?"

I fear Persy is very selfish. This fact, of course, is indicated in many ways, but as an example I will mention one habit of his, which I find particularly trying. Our house has a large bay-window, which faces the street, and is the most prominent window in the whole house. Sitting in it, one can see all the passers-by, and also be seen by them. Persy has practically pre-empted this window as his own. His huge bulk fills the window seat, and leaves no room at all for me, unless I stand up behind him and look over his shoulder. As a result, Persy is known by sight, if not by sound, to most of the people of our town, while in all probability, few of them have ever seen me, or know that I exist. For I seldom go out.

We have a neighbour named Mr. Truth. This gentleman is a person of distinction, of true nobility. He and all his family are extremely worth while, and I would greatly like to know them intimately. They seem very friendly toward me. But, unfortunately Persy has very little use for the family of

Truth. He says they "give him a pain," and that, I believe, is because he knows they do not approve of his erratic manners. Persy hates and fears discipline of any kind. He has heard that Mr. Truth, though most generous and kind, is a strict disciplinarian. That settles him for Persy. If Persy sees any of the little Truths approaching our house, he is likely to make such a noise that they are driven away; or, if they come so far as to knock at the door, he immediately makes a clatter so that I shall not hear them, and thus fail to let them in. Occasionally it has even happened that one or two of the Truths have succeeded in entering our house, but before I had any opportunity for conversation with them, Persy immediately raised such a hubbub that they retreated hastily. Persy was hilarious, but their departure made me sad, as it seemed a misfortune and disgrace.

Probably I have said enough to show you that in Persy I have a real problem, and one with which hitherto I have coped unsuccessfully. But now, at least, I have lost some of my early illusions about him, and, in a measure, I face the facts of the case. Persy, or rather Personality, for that is his real name, must be reduced to his proper position in my house, and that as soon as possible. Otherwise life will not be worth living for me. I am telling you about it because I am going to start disciplining him to-day, immediately. In fact, the battle is on.

Congratulate yourself that you do not have a child like Persy.

C. M. S.

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*To be plunged in matter (i.e. to be incarnated) is to descend into Hades, and there fall asleep.—PLOTINUS.*

# FORGOTTEN COMMONPLACES OF EDUCATION

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A COMMONPLACE to students of theosophy, but one which is continually being forgotten in practice, is that each child, as each man, has a higher and a lower nature, or, as it is usually and better put, *is* a higher and *has* a lower nature. The age-old simile pictures the body and all its powers as the horses of the chariot, and the real man, the Will within us, as the charioteer who is either to rule the horses or to be run away with by them. The purpose of education is to train the horses to be driven, and the driver to drive where he wishes to go, and not where his horses may want to take him. Most of the mistakes of education come from failure to distinguish between horses and driver. One hears so often of a parent's desire to preserve the "individuality" of the child, and of the fear lest discipline should crush it. It is argued that nothing must be done to restrain the child; its every whim must have full play in order that the spark of genius within may not be crushed into the dullness of routine.

No one will insist more strongly than members of The Theosophical Society on the value of true individuality and the necessity for preserving it. The only question is how this can best be done.

A study of the old simile of the rider and his horse may throw a good deal of light on the principles involved. Anyone who has ever ridden to hounds knows that there are two classes of riders, those who "ride their own line," who choose for themselves the way that they think is best, and follow it irrespective of how others go, and those who follow the crowd, waiting their turn to get through the gates which someone else has opened. The rider who cannot trust his mount must often, against his desire, take the second course, for if he tries to ride his own line on an unreliable hunter he will be very likely to come to grief. To just the extent to which the horse insists on "expressing his individuality," by untrustworthiness and disobedience, the rider is unable to express his own. It is exactly the same thing with a man. True originality is of the soul. The personality, the lower nature, is pretty much the same with everybody. We all have, in varying degrees, the same desires, passions, appetites. They are all as old as the hills, and the child that indulges them is neither expressing himself nor being original.

On the other hand, each soul is original and has its own note to strike in the orchestra of the universe, which no other can supply. The problem of life is to give expression to the soul, which is only another way of saying, to the deepest and highest ideal that each one of us has. On a lower plane, the ideal of the musician is to give the closest expression that he can to the soul of music as he sees or feels it. Obviously his ability to do this is in exact proportion to his

vision or feeling, and to his control of his instrument. The only way in which the soul of a man can express itself is through its instrument, the personality of that man. When the personality is tough, unyielding and disobedient, insisting on its own self-will, the difficulty of the soul's task must be correspondingly increased. A sculptor can mould clay to the image of beauty he wishes to portray, but he cannot mould brick. It does not do to let the personality harden, and there is nothing more hardening than self-will and self-indulgence. Calling them "self-expression," or "individuality," does not change their effect.

Napoleon, an expert horseman, insisted that the horses intended for his use should be trained to the most perfect obedience, so that, high mettled though they were, pistols could be fired off in their ears without their moving a muscle. He could not afford, in the crisis of a battle, to have an instant's attention diverted from his plan of action to the control of his mount. Each soul has its own plan of campaign, its own purpose to accomplish. The trouble with most of us is that so large a part of our energy and attention has to be given to the control of the powers of our personalities, our tempers, our chattering minds, our vanity and feelings, our sloth and indolence. Napoleon trying to fight Austerlitz from the back of a bucking broncho would be a fair analogy.

In one aspect, therefore, the duty of the parent is that of Napoleon's horse trainer, to teach the horse, the personality, complete obedience to the will of its future rider, the soul, and to make it as perfect an instrument as possible; further, to arouse the rider, to teach him to know his mount and how to control it. The first step, in training either, is to realize that the horse is a horse and the rider a rider, and that the two are not identical; nor do they respond to the same methods of instruction.

It is in that fact that we find the reconciliation of apparently opposite methods of training children. The lower nature responds to fear and to force, as the higher nature responds to justice and to love. Both must be appealed to in the ways that they respectively understand. The lower must be made afraid of disobedience; and the way to make it afraid is to make it suffer when it disobeys. The purpose of the whipping—if, as is often quickest and most effective, it be a whipping—is to bring the rebellious personality back under the control of its rider, the soul, which wants it to obey. No child should ever be punished for any other reason.

There is no greater or more common mistake than to punish a child because of the effect of what it has done. Suppose a child has been told never to touch a certain valuable vase. It puts its hand as near as it dares, and looks to see what the parent is going to do about it, the spirit of disobedience manifest in every look. That child's soul will be grateful for an instant, sharp whipping. (This is the explanation of a fact that has puzzled many parents,—why it is that sullen, rebellious unhappiness may be changed quickly by a whipping to gladness and gratitude.) On the other hand, suppose that nothing has been said about the vase, and the child, taking it up perhaps to admire its beauty, breaks a priceless heirloom. Obviously, there is no reason to blame it even by a sharp word, and to do so would be unjust. It is the spirit, the motive, that

has actuated the child that ought to govern our feeling toward it, not the result of the child's actions. If we make the spirit right, the results will take care of themselves. To punish a child for some childish breakage of one of our treasured possessions, or for unintentionally frightening us by a dangerous act that we did not have imagination enough to foresee and forbid, is pure self-indulgence on the parent's part, and is sure to do harm. Most children have a keen sense of justice which should never be outraged. Conversely, it is far more important to punish a wrong spirit than a wrong act. It is a mistake to wait for outer evidence that would enable us to defend our action in a court of law. Nor is it necessary to give reasons. The child knows.

As the personality responds to fear the soul responds to love. There is no use training the horse perfectly if we leave the rider fast asleep. The soul must be aroused and trained to ride; must be brought to self-consciousness and to the realization of why it came to incarnation. "Right self-identification" cannot be begun too early. Many a child can be ruined by being told it is "a bad child." It believes it, and acts accordingly,—an obvious result which one would think might be foreseen more often than it is. Surprise that a good child permits itself to act in so naughty a manner—perhaps necessitating severe punishment—is a more effective method, and tends to preserve the right self-identification of the child, keeping it from identifying itself with the naughtiness, which is, in truth, no part of itself or of its real desire.

The soul responds to love, and love should of course be the motive for the child's obedience. The lower nature should be afraid to disobey, and the higher should love to obey, and should implicitly trust the orders of the parent. Naturally, all parents desire love and trust, but the only way to be trusted is to be trustworthy. When orders are given from caprice, from a habit of saying "No," or from any reason other than obedience to principle on the parent's part,—when, in short, there is no obedience in the order, none reaches the child, and accordingly there is none for him to give back. When a child obeys such orders, it is as if he drew on an accumulated store of obedience from within himself, a store that obviously cannot be expected to last indefinitely. On the other hand, when the parent is himself giving his directions in obedience to something higher than himself, the obedience flows through him to the child and the child gives it back easily and naturally. Children feel instinctively the wisdom and justice of such orders, and each one, obeyed, increases their store both of obedience and of trust.

It is, however, often a serious mistake to endeavour to explain the reasons for an order, particularly before the order has been obeyed. When that is done, the child's mind naturally begins to debate the wisdom of the order instead of thinking only of obeying it. The better its mind, the more likely it is to see the other side—that, in fact, is one of the functions of the mind, to see and present for consideration both sides of any question. Seeing the other side, the child naturally speaks of it, and the result is argument instead of obedience. This error is one into which the most conscientious parents are the most likely to fall, but their good intentions, unfortunately, do not change

the effect, which is often little short of disastrous. Children, particularly those with initiative and good minds of their own, may be brought by it to a state bordering on continual rebellion against their parents. The place above all others where obedience is best understood is the army. Fancy an army in which the officers explained the reasons for their orders to the privates! Russia once tried that, with results sufficiently well known.

Parents fall into this mistake through a desire that their children should "understand the reason why," or through an idea that "co-operation is better than blind obedience." We have already considered the need for obedience and its purpose,—to train the personality to obey the soul, "blindly" and without question, as a horse should obey its rider. During childhood the parent represents the soul of the child, or should do so. The function of the mind at any age is to carry out the orders of the soul, not to question them. The attempt to solve a moral question with the mind, leads to endless confusion. The mind—lower manas—is by nature a sophist, and can, for instance, easily prove that unselfishness is only a form of selfishness. It can—and does—supply us with a thousand excellent reasons for doing what we want to do, and for not doing what we do not want, but which we know in our hearts we ought to do. Moral problems are solved by the moral sense, a perceiving faculty of the soul, which is quite independent of, and above the mind. With "grown-ups," the obedience is due to the moral sense; with children, it is due to the parent. "Live the life, and ye shall know the doctrine." We gain light by obeying the highest light that we can see, not by debating about it. It is the same with children. We can talk endlessly of the advantages of, let us say, order and neatness, without effect. The only way to give a child a love of neatness is to insist on its being neat. With obedience to the rules of neatness will come love of it. "The obedience of to-day is the desire of to-morrow."

J. F. B. M.

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*Lord Beaconsfield said, The greatest tragedies of his life had been things that never happened. Carlyle said, That the reason why the past appeared to be beautiful in retrospect, was, that the element of fear was absent from it.*

# ELEMENTS AND ATOMS

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SCIENCE has declared, for many years, that the elements—lead, gold, mercury, oxygen, chlorine, and so on—are all made up of atoms of matter. The phenomenal discoveries made by scientists of the present day tell us more about those atoms than the previous generation ever hoped to learn. Perhaps the simplest way of marking this advance in knowledge about the unseen atom, is to list a few questions concerning it. Some of these obvious questions physicists and chemists feel that they can now answer with an approach to certitude. Others they may hope that experiments already initiated will determine. The point, however, is that all are questions which they would now be prepared to entertain, while forty years ago no one, except a profound student of the age-old teachings given out by the Masters in certain theosophical books, would have considered them seriously.

What are the atoms made of? What do they look like? How does an atom of hydrogen differ from an atom of uranium? What holds the atom together? What holds it apart? Is an atom at rest in itself, or is it in rapid motion as to its own centre? May an atom be pricked like a toy balloon, and if so what is there left? Is everything atomic in its structure? The electric wire is atomic; is electricity atomic? Are light, heat, magnetism, and radio waves atomic? Is the æther atomic? Is consciousness atomic? Are honour, courage, obedience atomic? Is God atomic? Are atoms eternal? Is the law of the atom fixed and rigid, or does it provide for endless evolution of the atom? Are the atoms of helium in the sun exactly like the atoms of helium in our earth's atmosphere? Do atoms make a noise or are they silent? If they are in rapid motion on their own centres, what lubricates the centres? Are there vacant spaces in an atom? If so, is that space atomic? Do atoms interpenetrate each other? Are atoms elastic and compressible? If all atoms are made of electrons and protons, are all electrons and protons alike, and what are they made of? An electron is said to be a charge of negative electricity; what does that charge centre about? A proton is said to be a positive unit charge of electricity; what maintains it as a unit charge?

Six books are enough to indicate, in outline at least, what is known about the atom—three by scientists, and three in which is recorded much that science has yet to discover on its own ground—*The Secret Doctrine*, *Isis Unveiled*, *Five Years of Theosophy*, Soddy's *Interpretation of Radium*, Rutherford's 1923 *Address Before the British Association of Science*, Andrade's *Structure of the Atom*.

What makes the ink on this page black? Carbon, a chemical element. Turn to page 214 of Soddy, or to page 209 of Andrade which is the later and better book, for the Periodic Table of the Elements. This table is an arrangement of the 87 known and the 5 undiscovered elements in the order of their atomic values. Just as the digits 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc., are arranged according to their

unit values, so it is with this table of the elements which is Mendeléeff's great contribution to science. He saw that the elements bore strange and interesting relationships to each other, and he arranged them in such a way as to permit those correspondences to be studied. In the table, the elements are arranged by their atomic weights, and are numbered in rotation, beginning with hydrogen, No. 1, atomic weight 1.008, and ending with uranium, No. 92, atomic weight 238.18. Carbon is No. 6, atomic weight 12. It is interesting to note that Mendeléeff worked by the old occult method of correspondences, and that Professor Bohr, whose brilliant corroboration of the sequence of elements in the table is based on dynamical principles induced from spectral phenomena, has made this law of correspondence the foundation of his system.

PERIODIC TABLE OF THE CHEMICAL ELEMENTS, 1920.

	Group O	Group I	Group II	Group III	Group IV	Group V	Group VI	Group VII	Group VIII
1 Hydrogen 1.008	2 Helium He 3.99	3 Lithium Li 6.94	4 Beryllium Be 9.01	5 Boron B 11.0	6 Carbon C 12.00	7 Nitrogen N 14.01	8 Oxygen O 16.00	9 Fluorine F 19.0	
	10 Neon Ne 20.2	11 Sodium Na 23.00	12 Magnesium Mg 24.32	13 Aluminium Al 27.1	14 Silicon Si 28.3	15 Phosphorus P 31.04	16 Sulphur S 32.07	17 Chlorine Cl 35.45	
A	18 Argon Ar 39.98	19 Potassium K 39.10	20 Calcium Ca 40.07	21 Scandium Sc 44.1	22 Titanium Ti 48.1	23 Vanadium V 51.0	24 Chromium Cr 52.0	25 Manganese Mn 54.93	26 Iron Fe 55.84
B		27 Copper Cu 63.57	28 Zinc Zn 65.37	29 Gallium Ga 69.9	30 Germanium Ge 72.5	31 Arsenic As 74.96	32 Selenium Se 79.2	33 Bromine Br 79.98	
A	34 Krypton Kr 83.94	35 Rubidium Rb 85.45	36 Strontium Sr 87.63	37 Yttrium Yt 88.9	38 Zirconium Zr 90.6	39 Niobium Nb 93.5	40 Molybdenum Mo 96.0	41 Technetium Tc 98.0	42 Ruthenium Ru 101.2
B		43 Silver Ag 107.88	44 Cadmium Cd 112.40	45 Indium In 114.8	46 Tin Sn 117.9	47 Antimony Sb 120.9	48 Tellurium Te 127.5	49 Iodine I 126.9	50 Xenon Xe 131.3
A	51 Cesium Cs 132.91	52 Barium Ba 137.37	53 Lanthanum La 138.9	54 Cerium Ce 140.12	55 Praseodymium Pr 140.9	56 Neodymium Nd 144.3	57 Europium Eu 152.0	58 Gadolinium Gd 157.3	59 Terbium Tb 158.9
	60 Dysprosium Dy 162.5	61 Holmium Ho 164.9	62 Erbium Er 167.3	63 Thulium Tm 168.9	64 Ytterbium Yb 173.0	65 Lutetium Lu 175.0	66 Hafnium Hf 178.5	67 Tantalum Ta 180.9	68 Tungsten W 183.8
B	69 Gold Au 197.0	70 Mercury Hg 200.6	71 Thallium Tl 204.4	72 Lead Pb 207.2	73 Bismuth Bi 209.0	74 Polonium (210)	75 Astatine (210)	76 Radium Ra 226.0	77 Actinium Ac 227.0
	78 Thorium Th 232.0	79 Uranium U 238.0	80 Protactinium Pa 231.0	81 Uranium U 238.0	82 Neptunium Np 237.0	83 Plutonium Pu 244.0	84 Americium Am 243.0	85 Curium Cm 247.0	86 Berkelium Bk 247.0

Only the six spaces marked — are vacant places.

The figures above the name of the element are the atomic numbers, and those below the atomic weights.

No. 72, Hafnium, has now been discovered, leaving only five vacant spaces.

When *Isis* was published 47 years ago, the elements had exactly the same profound significance that they have to-day, and innumerable clues were given there which would lead to an understanding of the mystery. The clues remain in *Isis*. More clues were given in the *Se. ret. Doctrine*, with labels tied to some of them, but most of us did not have the interest or the energy to follow them up. To-day, this subject has become specially easy for us to study, because the whole scientific world is ablaze with the light of new discoveries which have revolutionized earlier conceptions about the constitution of matter. Now we have the chance to ride in on the flood tide of interest and enthusiasm created by the splendid work of Rutherford, Bohr, Aston, Moseley, J. J. Thomson, Lodge, Lenard, Crookes, Becquerel, Roentgen, Mme. Curie, Prout, Planck, Wilson, Langmuir, and a hundred more who have added their labour and their genius to the work of illustrious predecessors.

If we knew the real elements of matter in their pure state, and could arrange



them in a table to show their real relationships, such a table would present, would it not, one view of the picture which was in the mind of God when he created the manifested universe? The way to knowledge of the laws of life, the conditions required, the assistance given by those who have attained, is the theme of our occult literature since the old-time before the earliest *Upanishad* was written. It is in the spirit of that teaching, and not with the wish to discover some new chemical compound which the Germans of to-morrow would use against humanity, that one would seek out the secret of the elements.

The table shows the comparative weight or mass of the atom of the different elements. This weight or mass is almost wholly the property of the nucleus of the atom. There is no element having an atom of the exact value of 1, as compared with the mass of other atoms. Hydrogen, whose atomic weight is 1.008, comes nearest to unity and is commonly regarded as the unit, in spite of its troublesome decimal, although some chemists prefer to use oxygen as the unit because its atom weighs an even 16.

There were 26 blank spaces in this periodic table when Mendeléeff, the great Russian chemist, published it in 1871, and many of his brilliant predictions regarding the characteristics of those undiscovered substances have been marvellously fulfilled. To-day there are only 5 vacant spaces, but most important of the 21 new elements was Mme. Curie's Radium, No. 88, because it gave to the scientific world not only an example of highly radiant matter, but also an element whose atom was visibly and violently disintegrating. This discovery of Radium opened the way to all of our present knowledge of the interior of the atom and the constitution of matter.

Glancing at the table, the most noticeable fact is that hydrogen stands outside of all the groups. Then one naturally wonders why the first of the nine vertical groups is numbered 0. These vertical groups are family groups, since they include elements having similar chemical properties. There is the strongest of family resemblances between the five inert gases of the Zero group, since none of them will enter into combination with any other element. The whole group is found in the atmosphere, in mechanical mixture with the nitrogen and oxygen of the air and with each other, but no chemical compounds are formed. This group has no chemical properties, and, therefore, its group Number is 0.

Compare the first two elements in group 1—Lithium, No. 3, with Sodium, No. 11—remembering that their atomic numbers are real things because they represent the quality of their atoms. Both of these elements are alkaline metals, both are electro-positive, both have a valency of 1. In the atomic table, they are separated by seven other elements, that is, they are an octave apart. The next member of Group 1 is Potassium, No. 19, one octave beyond Sodium, No. 11. Like all of the members of Group 1, Potassium is said to have a valency of 1. This means, according to current theories of the structure of the atom, that each element in this group has a single electron which it is ready to share in union with any other congenial atom which is seeking a single electron.

These octaves in the first section of the list of elements are so noticeable

that it is not strange that attention was called to their periodicity very soon after the first practical table of the atomic weights was published by the Swedish chemist Berzelius in 1815. Prout's Hypothesis, 1815, was the first of a long line of inquiries into the various relationships between the elements. Mendeléeff's arrangement is accepted as the standard expression of the periodic law, but the spiral diagram, which Prof. William Crookes gave in his lecture before the British Association in 1886, is, perhaps, most provocative of thought for those who seek in all things traces of the one great Law, behind and above all that is manifest.

Professor Soddy, in *The Interpretation of Radium*, brings the variations in the periodic table almost within the understanding of us all: "We may suppose that, when the number of electrons in the outer ring [of an atom] exceeds a certain limit, which in the first part of the periodic table is seven, a complete new inner ring of eight electrons is formed. The chemical properties, however, depend only on the outermost ring directly, and the inner rings exert a subordinate effect. The valency of such an element and its general chemical nature resembles, therefore, the eighth preceding element. This holds in the early part of the periodic table. At the 22nd element, titanium, a new and more complicated dual periodicity commences, in which the number of elements separating the consecutive members of one family is eighteen instead of eight. A new group of three closely allied elements, the so-called VIIIth Group, now appears in the middle of the period, where previously an argon element would appear, and the next seven elements have a partial analogy to the seven preceding the VIIIth Group. The easiest way of regarding the matter is to suppose that ten metallic elements, indicated in the Table between } } are interpolated into the old short periods.

"At the 57th element, lanthanum, the law suddenly and completely breaks down. A group of seventeen elements . . . of which two [now one] remain to be discovered, is interpolated into the series at this point. They all resemble one another and lanthanum with such extreme closeness that their separation and identification is one of the most laborious and difficult tasks that the chemist can undertake. At tantalum, the 73rd element, the series begins again almost as if it had not been interrupted, and continues normally to the end."

The structure of an atom, as now pictured by scientists, is a planetary system in miniature. At the centre is a nucleus composed of a very small and closely held group of positive particles called Protons, separated from each other by negative particles called Electrons. This central group or nucleus always contains at least one more proton than it has electrons. It is always positive. Although in some elements the nucleus is smaller than a single electron in one of the outer rings, the nucleus contains most of the mass of the atom, most of the energy of the atom, and acts as the sun of that tiny solar system. Around the central nucleus, revolve electrons in concentric rings. Quoting John Mills' *Within the Atom*: "In the nucleus there is always an excess of protons and the number by which this excess is specified is known

as the atomic number. The largest known atomic number is 92. On the basis of atomic numbers, therefore, a classification may be established of 92 types of atomic systems. These types may be cross-classified on the basis of valence. As we proceed from one type of atomic system to that of the next atomic number there is a change of one in the number of excess protons in the nucleus, and a corresponding change of one in the number of external electrons. For example, let us enter our system of classification by atomic numbers at the eleventh type, which is that of the sodium atom. We must picture this atomic system with eleven excess protons in the nucleus and eleven external electrons, the actual configuration of which is still problematical. Despite the fact that there is a quantitative balance between the protons and the electrons, of complementary properties, there is a lack of satisfaction in the portion of the system comprised by the external electrons."

A single glance at the periodic table, then, tells us that silver is No. 47, which means that it has 47 excess protons in the nucleus, and 47 electrons outside the nucleus and revolving about it. We find that silver belongs in Group I, therefore we know that silver, like gold 79, copper 29, sodium 11, and all the other members of Group I, has a single electron in its outer ring. Seven is often mis-called the perfect number, but it does not seem to be a satisfied number. Perhaps that is one reason for its being called perfect. In any case, seven seems to be the normal number of electrons for a simple outer ring. The elements in Group I are trying to be normal, and the obvious thing for any element in Group I to do, would be to combine with some element in Group VII, because all of the elements in Group VII have 7 electrons in their outer ring but are still looking for one more electron to satisfy their vanity or their ambition. What are the elements in Group VII? Chlorine, bromine, iodine, etc. We know what happens when chlorine has an opportunity to combine with one of the elements in Group I, because we know sodium chloride (table salt), silver chloride, gold chloride, etc.

Changes in the outer rings of its electrons do not transform the atom of one element into an atom of some other element. Sodium, for example, seems to be an element of simple structure, with 11 excess protons in the nucleus, and 11 external electrons. Of these 11 external electrons, 2 form the first ring outside the nucleus; then comes a satisfied ring of 8 electrons; outside of this satisfied ring, revolves the single electron of the outer ring typical of all the elements in Group I. Suppose some alpha particle, shot off from the nucleus of an atom of radium and passing at one-half the speed of light, should knock off into space that single, outer electron of sodium! The accident would not change the sodium into cobalt or nickel or some other element which has 8 electrons in its outer ring. On the contrary, that particular atom of sodium would only be waiting its opportunity to grasp the first electron which came near, either seizing a lone electron wandering through space on its own account, or robbing one of its neighbours of one electron from an outer ring. The nucleus determines the character of an atom, and no change outside the nucleus can affect the atom except temporarily. One may imagine a series of accidents which

might rob the sodium atom of all its 11 external electrons, but, unless the nucleus were injured, it would be only a matter of time and opportunity before that nucleus would have captured another set of 11 external electrons.

It was the study of accidents to atoms, and a brilliant series of inductive and deductive conclusions drawn from that study, which enabled Sir Ernest Rutherford to make a convincing picture of the nuclear atom, and its general structure so like that of a miniature solar system. Radium furnished the projectiles for the series of accidents which Rutherford produced and studied. We shall recall that radium is constantly dissipating its substance and its energy because its nucleus is breaking down. From the nucleus of an atom of radium, a particle of the nucleus itself is driven off, from time to time, with an explosive release of energy which hurls that bit of nuclear material straight off into space. As compared with the penetrating force of this dense nuclear material shot off from radium, the most powerful rifle bullet would have the effect of a soap-bubble wafted by a gentle zephyr. The nuclear bits shot off from radium are called alpha particles, and they go straight through everything in their path at a speed of 10,000 miles a second.

By an ingenious device, C. T. R. Wilson found the means for photographing the track which these particles make while flying through a moist gas. From a hill-top, looking down on the still surface of a pond, one can often see the tiny wake left by a muskrat swimming across the pond. From that distance, the muskrat is wholly invisible, but the wake on the surface of the water shows every twist and turn that he makes. In a similar way, Wilson showed that the wake left by alpha particles was usually a straight line, but occasionally one of them struck something which turned it off at an angle, or even drove it back in the direction from which it came. Nothing but a bull's-eye hit on the nucleus of an atom can turn one of these flying particles aside. Collisions of that type were produced under varying conditions, using atoms of different elements as the targets, the paths of the projectiles being compared.

From a series of photographs of the wake left by an invisible swimmer, would you be prepared to draw a picture of the swimmer, and also to determine the temperature and circulation of his blood? Rutherford's task was as difficult as the imagination can conceive. Andrade makes an amusing comparison: "The physicist attempting to construct an atomic model from considerations of spectral data has been compared to a man who, never having seen a musical instrument, should essay to construct a model of a piano by listening to the sounds made by it when thrown downstairs."

Behind and within the visible universe moves the invisible universe. Pass through the centre of the nucleus of a material atom, and, perhaps, we should find ourselves within an atom of finer substance and greater forces. Were we able to endure the piercing pressure at the centre of that freer and more powerful atom, we might pass through and enter a still higher form, where the infinitely small merges into the infinitely great, where substance is radiant, forces etheric, and where consciousness has become individual because it has become universal.

ALAN DOUGLAS.

# WORRY

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SOME words in common use to-day have travelled a long way in meaning from their original connotation. It is often true, however, that a root derivation, far from revealing merely the antiquarian value of a word, tends rather to indicate some simple and deep-seated human experience which underlies the almost habitual surface consideration of ordinary speech. At a glance we see how a present meaning grew from the old one by an extension to a wider range of similar experiences—perhaps inner rather than outer,—until the primary significance became obscured or was forgotten.

Such a word is the familiar term "worry." By current definition it means—what is familiar to all of us, not only in sense but in experience,—“to express undue care and anxiety; to manifest disquietude and pain”; to “borrow trouble”; i.e. a “state of undue solicitude.” But the root derivation gives the full force of the experience, and takes us a plane deeper:—the old Dutch *worgen* or *wurgen*, to strangle or choke. And that is exactly what worry does to the higher powers of the spirit of man—strangles and chokes them. Worry exerts a constrictive force, that inhibits or prevents the flow of spiritual refreshment into the mind and heart. As a result, the person most in need of spiritual refreshment, and at just the moment when that refreshment is required, cuts himself off.

Most people worry; and there are various kinds springing from divers causes. Some enjoy worries, and many manufacture them. It is to these a pleasing form of self-indulgence, evoking attention or consideration or pity from others, and giving to the minor affairs and concerns of life a fictitious importance. Needless to say the light of self-understanding has little opportunity to enter into dispositions so perverse, and real help is thoroughly unwelcome as it would immediately destroy the illusion. Nor are people wholeheartedly serving any cause who create difficulties and dangers, discover hidden evils, and imagine a host of possible misfortunes; rather they are seeking self in one of its least attractive forms,—self-pity. Such worries are manifestly artificial, and their exaggeration sometimes comes from stings of conscience—the uneasiness and disquietude that begins to discern what may follow the negligent performance of duties, and a sudden fear lest there be responsibility for evil consequences. So there springs up an unregulated desire to impress others with a real concern where there had actually been a more or less complete indifference.

All worries, however, are by no means conjured up to please an idle or a troubled selfishness. Many people are oppressed by them, but can not shake them off. Women are as a rule more out-spoken about their worries than men; and they it is who seem more frequently to discover numerous—nay, innumerable occasions for demonstrating both their ingenuity and their perspicacity

in uncovering and maintaining them. Men worry more deeply, and usually over graver matters; and often reveal a surprising lack of courage and of faith.

In theosophic terms, what is worry? What its cause and cure?

Obviously, worry can not be an expression of Buddhi—the spiritual will; nor of Higher Manas—that “intuition with certainty” and royal knowledge of seers and adepts. It is apparently, not so much a thing in itself, as the resultant of a twofold negative condition—*i.e.*, the absence of faith, and the absence of courage. Remove the negative condition, devote one’s interest to a cause, plunge fearlessly and with set purpose into the conflict, and the fogs and maya of worry dissipate into nothingness. A man steeped in work, a soldier on the battlefield, has no time for worry. Worry comes in the silent night watches, or in hours when the will is idle. Only the man whose determination is set unswervingly on the desired goal is capable of that “higher carelessness,” which is the opposite of worry, and the hall-mark of the true disciple.

To be without a living faith, and either conscious or instinctive courage, leaves a man the prey to unregulated imagination, and a victim of his personal desires. He can not see life truly. Every event and circumstance appears coloured by desires, which express themselves in fancies, in hopes and fears,—in what he wants to have happen, or does not want to have happen. Worry is, therefore, the perversion of Buddhi, a form of Kama joined to lower-Manas. The Kama, or self-will, is often battling against Karma, against the consequences, the complications and dangers created by its own past acts; and the friction strikes off sparks of worry. Lower-Manas, controlled by Kama, sees life, therefore, only in terms of personal desire—its fulfilment or frustration. To worry is to give more or less free reign to the hopes and fears, the arguments and debates, of such a lower Kama-Manasic consciousness, and is to strangle, or shut out, the soul.

To worry, then, is to lack a living faith—faith in what Mr. Judge calls the “Good Law”—and is to think and plan and desire from the personal centre.

So many people seem to adopt the attitude that unless *they* plan and scheme and devise, and unless *they* carry out a pre-determined course to a successful issue, the world will be the poorer, and their own life a failure. But Karma is misconceived if it be thought to operate only *after* the event,—a mere weighing and balancing machine. Karma, and the great Lords of Karma, have long since laid their far-reaching and skilful plans, and ceaselessly work, not only adjusting, but preparing each life in all its details. Therefore, the man of living faith does not seek in life the fulfilment of his own designs,—has learned indeed the fallibility and inadequacy of these,—but rather seeks to find the Will of Karma and the Master, and to serve that. In his own manifold and forever changing wills and desires, he can never rest secure; but in the Divine Will he may indeed confide, serenely confident that life holds no richer blessing than the fulfilment of the Master’s Will. “E la sua volontate è nostra pace.”

Every manifestation of worry is negative, is to admit and to entertain dark clouds of doubt, to belittle the Master’s wisdom and power, to pervert the right use of the imagination. Worry is often a back-handed admission by the

lower congeries of elementals that they are weak and short-lived, when they wish that they were strong and enduring,—and is their protest against that sense of impotence. A man worries when he seeks results—and these either for himself or for another; it is all one. It is a pathetic misunderstanding of love and affection that they drive so many to worry about the health, the safety, even the spiritual progress of the one beloved. Into such “undue solicitude” there unquestionably enters an element of selfishness. No man can truly love whose consciousness is so far enmeshed in the purely personal centre, and who still limits his vision of what is desirable to the ephemeral achievements or comforts or well-being of an earthly life.

Worry must be given up, or conquered, by the disciple. And the way to undermine the life and force of any worry is first to face it fearlessly, and then by act of will to withdraw the heart from its *attachment* to some immediate goal. Each worry has its objective—a hidden something that it wants, behind the outer things it fears. Lay bare this desire; study it, and seek always for the snake of self in it, however fair-seeming on the surface, because worry is proof positive of that dire presence. Are you worrying lest your accomplishment of some important duty may be imperfect? Then see to it that, mixed with the good, your hidden desire be not for praise,—be it solely the Master's praise,—or that *you* may succeed, rather than that the Master's Work and Will be done. Are you worrying lest a child fall into some bodily or spiritual harm, or that he may succumb to some besetting temptation? Remember that “People are like circumstances. You cannot make them over. Accept them. The only way you can hope to influence them is by what you are. Accept that also.” . . . “The man who rushes back to the world is not to be grieved over. He doubtless gained all he could while in our ranks, and now needs different training. Neither is he to be mourned who is snatched up in a psychic whirlwind and carried off before our eyes. Some one is carefully directing his course, we may be sure, and he will receive just the schooling he needs.” In the implications of that last sentence lies so often the touch-stone of our worry:—faith tells us that Karma directs his course, but *we want also to do the directing*, we have our own ideas and our own intense desires as to how it should be done. Yet who are we to shape a life and its development in terms of our vision and our desires? In very truth these more often blind our eyes to the real needs of our child; and we are, by more than half, seeking to force our will against the stone wall of fact and Karma, and so we beat ourselves like moths against the very light of truth.

You worry because you do not really love your child—or rather because you love your child as yet imperfectly. You may, and must, have an intense desire that good may come to him, but the element of worry enters where that desire is not an expression of the Divine Will, but is tinged with self. Detach yourself from that in you which clings to your own preconceived plans, which sees no alternatives but those within your very limited understanding of all the factors involved, which desires from purely human motives and instincts, and you will no longer worry. Your heart may still ache—events may even justify

your foreboding of evil—but there will no longer be the friction, the irritation, the unregulated agitation of worryment. Christ did not worry in the Garden of Gethsemane, nor when Peter professed so loudly and so emptily his loyalty and devotion.

. Worry is petty. Worry is a sign of weakness. Worry is a signal of the presence of self. Let us have done with worry,—by rising above it, by throwing heart and soul into action—be it outer work or inner intense prayer—but always through the assertion of the Divine power and beneficence, and by advancing fearlessly (with the carelessness of enthusiasm, with the steadiness of the trained and skilful workman), determined to be in and of the Work, seeking and accomplishing against all odds the Master's Will. So shall worry no longer choke or strangle the soul, but become instead a "stepping stone of our dead selves to higher things."

MARION HALE.

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*It is better to read one good book leisurely, lingering over the finer passages, returning frequently to an exquisite sentence, closing the volume, now and then, to run down in your own mind a new thought started by its perusal, than to rush in a swift perfunctory manner through half a library.*—ALEXANDER SMITH.



# MACROCOSM AND MICROCOSM

## AITAREYA UPANISHAD

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### I

**A**TMA, verily, Universal Self, alone was this in the beginning, nor was aught else with opening and closing eyes.

He beholding said: Let me now put forth worlds.

He put forth these worlds: the Great Deep, the Rays, the Mortal, the Waters. The Great Deep is the Heaven beyond the heavens, the Foundation; the Rays are the mid-world; the Mortal is the world; the Waters are beneath.

He beholding said: Here are worlds for me; let me now put forth Guardians of the worlds.

From the Waters, verily, drawing forth Purusha, the Heavenly Man, He moulded him.

He brooded over him with fervour. Of him, brooded over with fervour, the face was formed, as it were an egg. From the mouth, the voice; from the voice, the Fire-lord. The two nostrils were formed; from the two nostrils the breath; from the breath, the Wind-lord. The two eyes were formed; from the two eyes, vision; from vision, the Sun-lord. The two ears were formed; from the two ears, hearing; from hearing, the Spaces. The skin, with the power of touch, was formed; from the skin, the hairs; from the hairs, the plants and the lords of the forest. The heart was formed; from the heart, the mind; from the mind, the Lunar Lord. The navel was formed; from the navel, the downward-breath; from the downward-breath, Death. The procreative power was formed; from the procreative power, the seed; from the seed, the Waters.

### II

They, these Bright Powers, thus put forth, fell forward into the tossing ocean. He visited it with hunger and thirst. To Him they said: Prepare for us an abode, wherein established we may eat the food.

To them He brought a cow. They said: This, verily, is not enough for us!

To them He brought a horse. They said: This, verily, is not enough for us!

To them He brought man. They said: Well done, in truth! For man is a thing well made.

He said to them: Enter ye according to your abodes!

The Fire-lord, becoming voice, entered the mouth. The Wind-lord, becoming breath, entered the two nostrils. The Sun-lord, becoming vision, entered the two eyes. Space, becoming hearing, entered the two ears. The

plants and the lords of the forest, becoming hairs, entered the skin. The Lunar Lord, becoming mind, entered the heart. Death, becoming the downward-breath, entered the navel. The Waters, becoming the seed, entered the procreative power.

To Him hunger and thirst said: Make provision for us two!

To those two He said: Among these Bright Powers, verily, I give you two a place; I make you partakers among them!

Therefore, to whichever of the Bright Powers an offering is made, hunger and thirst are partakers in it.

### III

He beholding said: Here now are worlds and Guardians of the worlds. Let me put forth food for them!

He brooded with fervour upon the Waters. From the Waters, brooded upon with fervour, form was born. The form which was born, that, verily, is food.

Then this, put forth, sought to retreat and escape. He sought to grasp it by voice. He was not able to grasp it by voice. If he had grasped it by voice, uttering food, verily, he would be satisfied.

He tried to grasp it by breath. He was not able to grasp it by breath. If he had grasped it by breath, breathing upon food, verily, he would be satisfied.

He tried to grasp it by vision. He was not able to grasp it by vision. If he had grasped it by vision, seeing food, verily, he would be satisfied.

He tried to grasp it by hearing. He was not able to grasp it by hearing. If he had grasped it by hearing, hearing food, verily, he would be satisfied.

He tried to grasp it by touch. He was not able to grasp it by touch. If he had grasped it by touch, touching food, verily, he would be satisfied.

He tried to grasp it by mind. He was not able to grasp it by mind. If he had grasped it by mind, thinking of food, verily, he would be satisfied.

He tried to grasp it by procreative power. He was not able to grasp it by procreative power. If he had grasped it by procreative power, putting forth food, verily, he would be satisfied.

He tried to grasp it by the downward-breath. He consumed it. He, verily, who grasps food, is the Wind-lord.

He, the Self, beholding said: How may this be now, without me? By which do I enter?

He beholding said: If by voice it be uttered, if by breath it be breathed, if by vision it be seen, if by touch it be touched, if by mind it be thought, if by the downward-breath it be breathed downward, if by the procreative power it be put forth, who am I?

He, opening the head, verily, at the parting of the hair, entered by this door. This is the door, the opening, by name. This is the cause of joy.

Of this, there are three abodes, three dreams. This is an abode. This is an abode. This is an abode.

He, thus entered into birth, considered beings: What being, verily, would wish to speak of any other?

He beheld this man as the essence of the Eternal. I have seen the Eternal! said He. Therefore, His name is I-have-seen. I-have-seen, verily, is His name. He who is I-have-seen, Idan-dra, they call the Lord, Indra, in a mystery; for lovers of mystery, as it were, are the Bright Powers; lovers of mystery, as it were, are the Bright Powers.

## IV

In the man, verily, is this germ from the beginning. This is the seed, the fiery energy, brought into being from all the members. He bears a self within himself. When this is conceived in the woman, he engenders it. This is his first birth.

This becomes a part of the woman's own being, a member of herself. Therefore, this injures her not.

She nourishes this self, thus entering her. As nourisher, she is to be nourished. He, in the beginning, from birth onward, provides nourishment for the young child.

As from birth onward he provides nourishment for the young child, so he provides nourishment for himself, for the continuity of these worlds. For these worlds are thus continued. This is his second birth.

This, as his self, takes his place for holy works. As his other self, having done what should be done, completing his life-span, he goes forth. Going forth verily, from this world, he is born again. This is his third birth.

Thus by a Seer it was declared:

Being yet in the germ, I already knew all the births of these Bright Powers.

A hundred dwellings as of iron have guarded me. Downward like a falcon swiftly I descended.

While yet resting in the germ, verily, Vamadeva spoke thus.

He who has gained this knowledge, ascending after the parting from the body, in that heavenly world gaining all desires, has become immortal. He has become immortal.

## V

Who is this Self to whom we draw near? Which of the two is the Self?

He, whereby, verily, he beholds form; whereby, verily, he hears sound; whereby, verily, he smells odours; whereby, verily, he utters speech; whereby, verily, he discerns what is sweet and what is not sweet.

That which is the heart and the mind, is consciousness, spiritual perception, discernment, understanding, wisdom, vision, firmness, thought, knowledge, energy, memory, imagination, will, life, desire, power; these are all names of spiritual perception.

This is the Eternal, this is the Ruler, this is the Lord of beings, this is all the Bright Powers, the five great elements, earth, air, ether, the waters, the lights, and those which are mingled of the fine elements; these and these seeds, the egg-born, the womb-born, the sweat-born, the fission-born; horses, cows, men, elephants; whatever possesses the breath of life, whatever moves, or flies, or remains stable.

All this is guided by spiritual perception; in spiritual perception it is established. The world is guided by spiritual perception. Spiritual perception is the foundation. Spiritual perception is the Eternal.

He, through this spiritual perception, through the Self, ascending from this world, in that heavenly world gaining all desires, has become immortal. He has become immortal.

C. J.

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*Beloved Master, how rare is liberty! how inadequate our detachment! How often have we not been at the mercy of our attractions, of our passions, of our pride! Help us to break our bonds. Souls which are held to the things of earth by a thousand ties, think they are free, yet there is no slavery like their pretence of liberty. In lieu of the immensity—infinately loving and holy—of your good pleasure, which you offer them, they prefer the tyranny of their little interests, of their miserable instincts, of their tiniest caprice.*—CHARLES SAUVÉ.

# ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

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THE Philosopher, who had been plunged in thought, suddenly turned to us with the announcement that he had a wonderful text for a sermon,—"those immortal lines," he said:

"By the train at Dover  
He had his tail run over:  
It gave the folks a thrill.  
*Though he had no rudder there*  
*He waved his nothing in the air*  
*And went on walking still.'*"

Someone gasped.

"Exactly," the Philosopher continued. "The words are so pregnant with revelation, that comment is almost superfluous; but I am not a clergyman, and my only opportunity to preach is through the charity of the Recorder of the 'Screen.' That there are millions of people in the world who 'wave their nothings in the air, and keep on walking still,' is painfully evident; but are there, or are there not, so-called students of Theosophy who do exactly the same thing? Am I one of them? A truly awful question! Are there not those who, in lieu of a rudder, wave words, shibboleths, 'nothings,'—and keep on walking still—as pleased with themselves as the little dog of that poem?"

"What is the trouble now?" asked the Student, patiently.

"The same trouble. There is no such thing as a new trouble," the Philosopher answered. "A sermon is useless, anyhow, unless it is preached against oneself. I am preaching against myself. I am full of faults, thank Heaven, for faults keep one busy and out of mischief; but I do not count among my faults the common one of blaming my friends or my enemies or my environment for the one and only trouble with which I am afflicted,—the trouble of having a personality which is essentially ass, as all personalities are. The question is, whether words, that perhaps once were things and actions, have become 'nothings'—as the result of our having permitted life to run over us—but which we continue to wave in the air from habit?"

"Must not life inevitably run over us, as we grow older?" asked our Visitor.

"No," the Philosopher replied. "We ought to run over life; we ought to crush *its* tail: that is what we are here for."

"I wish you wouldn't be so cryptic," protested the Student. "Of what particular form of asininity are you accusing yourself? You will find us sympathetic."

The Philosopher laughed. "Thanks," he said; "but instead of eliciting your condolence by exposing myself, I prefer, on this occasion, to incur your indignation by exposing you. And you can always plead not guilty. I as-

sert, then, that you use words which ought to be rudders but which are not, and which, therefore, are mere nothings. You use words like 'cycles,' 'planes,' and 'cyclic progress,' without applying them to the problems of daily life."

"Prove it," said the Student, cheerfully.

"Do you approve of football?"

"No," answered the Student, evidently rather surprised.

"Why not?"

"I think it is a waste of time and that it's brutalizing."

"Do you feel the same way about baseball and hockey?"

"More or less. I suppose games are necessary for young people, for undeveloped people, as a safety-valve for surplus physical energy; but I always deplore the waste. I especially deplore the popularity of games as spectacles where tens of thousands congregate, just as they flocked to gladiatorial shows in the days of decadent Rome."

"I thought you would say that," the Philosopher commented; "and I venture to assert that you have proved the truth of my contention. We are agreed that there are different planes of life: that, for instance, a chela, the disciple of a Master, does not function on the same plane of consciousness as the average slaughterer of the stockyards, and that it would be a mistake to try to instruct an infant class in the higher mathematics. We are agreed, presumably, that chelas do not play football. But you evidently have not realized that the Ashwattha tree grows with its roots in the air, that *Demon est Deus inversus*,—and that football is the only means of leading a certain kind of young man toward the path of discipleship."

The Student looked at him with a glazed eye: either the Philosopher was talking nonsense, or he had something unexpected in reserve. "Please proceed," he said.

"I have known people," the Philosopher proceeded, "whose ego was their universe. They were incapable of eliminating their ego from the most ordinary problem that confronted them. Questions of right and wrong, of wise and unwise, of good taste and bad taste, of buying and selling,—every imaginable question was considered with self as its axis. They could never, in any circumstances, remove themselves from the centre of the stage, or cease to imagine themselves, even in their relations with a canary bird, as the heroic or patient or suffering central sun, around whom events revolved.

"Now chelaship, as we know, means the obliteration of self. The chela envisages a problem utterly without regard to his own participation in it. If a piece of work needs to be done, his sole desire is that the person best qualified to do that piece of work, shall do it. His mind is open to light from all quarters. Should he have committed himself to an opinion, he welcomes, none the less gladly, a different opinion from a junior, as from a superior, when he sees more truth in the other than in his own. His sole desire is for the truth. Being humble, he is detached and, in that sense, impersonal. He is one-pointed in his determination that his Master's will shall be done. He does not *try* to efface himself. Having left himself behind, long ago, he has become free

to think, to decide, to act with an undivided mind and purpose. But the key to his existence lies in the fact that he is one of a group, and that his feeling about himself is what we might imagine to be the feeling of a finger among the ten fingers of a man's hands. He is separate, but the sense of separateness is lost in the common purpose.

"If you were to preach that to people, as an ideal, most of them would not even trouble to scoff, while the few would say, 'That is what we have always maintained; that is Communism; give us what you have, and we'll divide it around; all men are equals, and must be made to eat out of the same trough.' So the few would use the truth for their damnation."

"Pardon me for interrupting you," said the Historian, "but I think the more common perversion is equally dangerous,—the sentimental perversion which springs from telescoping time and telescoping planes. It is the curse of what passes for idealism. America is full of it. Our ancestors were full of it. Most of them came here either to create, or to find ready-made, a new heaven and a new earth. Some came here to find freedom,—forgetting that freedom can exist only when man has freed himself from himself; others came to find wealth, forgetting that the only real wealth is that of character, and that money itself must be paid for, always with labour and often with moral disintegration. In any case, most Americans are born with dreams in their blood, off-setting their immense practical abilities as pioneers. Present them with an ideal, and they'll say, 'That's fine; let's do it; all the world must do it, at once; we can put the financial screws on those bankrupt governments of Europe, and force them to disarm, so that peace shall reign on earth for ever.' They want to jump from where things are, to anything they see as desirable. It is a splendid desire in some cases (though it accounts for many divorces). The danger of it lies in sweeping generalizations, sometimes of approval, sometimes of condemnation, but always springing from failure to see beneath the surface, and to recognize the real purpose or cost of things."

"That," said the Philosopher, "is my case against the Student. He telescopes his planes. He fails to see that one man's poison may be another man's means of salvation. He indulges in wholesale condemnation—football is merely an instance—and remains blind to the beneficent influence of that which he condemns. The Lords of Wisdom know better than to preach. They do not proclaim to the multitude, in big voices from the sky, that man should learn to obliterate himself. They know what the response would be, and that man, after he had recovered from his fright, would do his best to obliterate his neighbour. No, the Lords of Wisdom use man's instincts—his hunting and herding and competitive instincts—to lead him to better things. Tribal warfare was the first means. The victory of the tribe was more important than the victory of the individual. Team work was essential. As tribal wars became less frequent, games took their place, though games were intended as preparation for war. Games required team-work. It may have been family against family or village against village. In any case, the victory of the individual would have been regarded as a crime, if gained at the expense

of the larger unit. It was not merely that an ideal was kept alive, but that actual training and discipline were provided, and still are provided, in preparation for the developments of the future. The Lords of Wisdom *take men as they are*, instead of imagining that because, on another plane, men are souls, the motives of souls should actuate brutish bodies and empty minds."

"But how about the mobs that take part in such games vicariously, yelling from the side-lines? What earthly good can it do them?"

"My dear sir, on what plane do you suppose such people function? What do you expect them to do? Go to Church, or join The Theosophical Society and discuss the merits of Karma? If those who play such games are too often brutish in body and empty in mind, or, perhaps, merely infantile, at what stage of development would you place the spectators, who roar and scream and hoot, and, as you put it, join in the fight vicariously? It is evident to me that in so far as their frenzy permits them to recognize and to admire good team-play—the foundation of which is self-obliteration—they are better off than if they were admiring or pitying themselves, their ordinary occupation."

"Do you suggest," asked the Student, "that such egotistical people as you were talking about, would have been less egotistical if they had played football?"

"It does not follow that they would have been; but they might have been,—depending, of course, upon the extent to which they had proved able to forget themselves in a common aim. The Lords of Wisdom, who guide human progress, must be well aware that man will not surrender anything, least of all himself, except as the result of kicks and buffets. We, who discuss these things, prove it every day of our lives. Some of us learn to kick ourselves: that is the only difference. But there is a type of egotism that can be smashed by other people only, and only by those whom the culprit accepts as his peers. The criticism of elders is attributed to jealousy, to lack of appreciation, to natural superiority, to senility,—to anything, so long as the 'reason' serves as an excuse for remaining of the same opinion still. If a member of a football team steal the ball for his own glory at the expense of his team, or fail to pass it for fear that another, instead of himself, may win a goal, or claim credit which should go to another or to his team as a whole,—you know what is done to him. It is primitive but highly effective. The sinner is likely to learn."

"May I ask," the Lawyer inquired, "whether you encourage your boy at college to play football? And if not, why not?"

The Lawyer and the Philosopher are intimate friends, and the Lawyer knew that his leading question could meet with but one reply. He evidently wanted to see how his friend would cover himself.

"I do not encourage him to do anything of the sort," was the Philosopher's retort. "He is my son, and I have a hopeful disposition. My belief is, as I have told him, that he will have inherited sufficient intelligence from his mother (his mother and I play that, to and fro, when talking to him), sufficient intelligence, good taste and good feeling, to make physical kicks unnecessary when it comes to learning to forget himself for the sake of a larger unit. The



family is the true unit. Service of the family, self-identification with the family, was intended to be the check on egotism and to supply the preparatory training for membership in a group of disciples under a Master. It is only in 'advanced' and democratic countries that family life has ceased to have any meaning, and that football and similar games have to be used as substitutes. Surely you must realize that in our land of freedom, the captain of a team has infinitely more authority over a boy than his father and mother and grandparents combined! Things have changed since my day, so I am no longer sure if it is the captain or the trainer or the pack, which rends a culprit limb from limb: but the principle is the same. My boy is not naturally egotistical,—his mother's friends say that he takes after her. My boy is an exceptional boy, and therefore should not need the same kind of discipline as a savage. Besides, I venture to say he has parents; and parents are scarce."

"Not bad!" said the Lawyer.

"And now," the Student remarked, "having placed football, to your own satisfaction, among the weapons of the gods, perhaps you will tell us something of the benefits of drunkenness."

"On that subject," the Philosopher answered readily, "I prefer to quote an old and experienced missionary, who worked among drunkards for nearly half a century, and who, before the days of Prohibition, advocated such laws with zealous conviction. She found (my friend was a woman) that after Prohibition went into effect, 'dope fiends' became more plentiful, drunkards fewer, converts fewer. Fewer men were 'down and out,' there were fewer men on park benches, there were fewer men in need of a cup of coffee and of a warm place to sit. Sin, she said, was just as rampant, but, in the old days, men who lived 'in sin' nearly always drank, and drink brought them to the gutter, face to face with the consequences of their sin. They drifted into missions for a bed, or for coffee and a sandwich, hearing 'the Word' in spite of themselves,—sometimes touched by it, sometimes converted. By making drink much more difficult to obtain, and much more costly, such men were kept from the gutter but were not kept from sin. She did not definitely turn against Prohibition, but she came to realize that her Lord (she was a simple and saintly Christian) had used an existing evil for beneficent ends."

"To my mind," said the Lawyer, "the most clear-cut illustration of the principle you are working on—though how you came to hitch it to a tailless dog is more——"

"It wasn't easy," the Philosopher interjected; "but I read those lines in *Punch*, and they were obviously destined for the 'Screen.' Unaided, the Recorder would never have taken the trouble. Thanks for your congratulations."

The Lawyer sighed. "I was going to suggest," he said, "that the best illustration of your principle is what Faber and others call the vice of Human Respect, or the constant submission of ourselves and our conduct for the approval and, if possible, for the applause of other people. The man who tells a funny story, not for pure love of its humour, but because he wants to be recognized as a raconteur of funny stories; the woman who will wear her hair dis-

guised as huge periwinkles over her ears, not because she thinks it is pretty or becoming, but for fear that other women will think her *démodée* should she fail to do so; the man who sings, not for love of music, but that his voice may be admired; the man who stoops because he is afraid of being thought proud; the woman who spends money for fear of being thought poor,—all of them perpetually on all-fours, asking to have their heads patted by Public Opinion, though Public Opinion may be represented by nothing more formidable than an elemental in their own minds,—these are the people who notoriously exemplify the vice of which I am speaking.

"However,—while we must see how incompatible any such attitude is with discipleship (or, for that matter, with ordinary self-respect), and must see our need to decide and do things on the basis of their inherent merits, instead of for effect, we must also see that civilization itself would cease in an instant if it were not for this vice. The vast majority of people are as incapable of deciding and doing a thing on the basis of its inherent rightness or wrongness, as they are incapable of discriminating between the Holy Spirit and a spook. Further, they do not want to; they want to decide things to please themselves, for the satisfaction of their immediate appetite; and the only consideration that keeps them within bounds is the fear of being found out, the fear of Public Opinion—is Human Respect. In other words, and to repeat what the Philosopher said a few minutes ago: the Lords of Wisdom take people as they find them, using the material (the motives) at hand, even though the material be the reverse of spiritual. That which is poison for the disciple may be the ordinary man's remedy and cure."

"I doubt if many of us can afford as yet to eliminate Human Respect entirely as a motive," the Engineer suggested. "So long as we continue to identify ourselves at times with the lower, personal self, we shall need, at those times, to reinforce the muffled voice of our higher nature with whatever props we can find among lower motives. Vanity has often saved a beginner from making a hopeless and everlasting mess of what he has started out to do. Personal resentment and irritation have been suppressed, at least outwardly (better than nothing), for fear of 'making a show of himself' in the eyes of his fellows. Further, there are, I think, forms of Human Respect which are altogether justifiable. I doubt if there be one man in a million who is able to decide anything on the basis of its inherent rightness or wrongness,—anything, that is, except the cruder, external sins. It is nonsense to suppose that, from where he is, he can jump to God for enlightenment. His only chance is to look to the opinion of those he has learned to respect, and who, whether or not more highly evolved than he is, at least have the advantage of detachment about his own affairs. We *ought* to take into account and defer to the opinion of our superiors, if we have sufficient grace to recognize the superiority of anyone to ourselves."

"But you are not talking about Human Respect," the Lawyer protested. "You are talking now about a totally different thing. Have you ever travelled in the 'smoker' of a Pullman car, with half a dozen salesmen, and watched

them 'sell themselves'? Some will do it bluntly, by bragging about their own achievements; others, to exalt themselves, will brag about the firm they represent. Occasionally one of them will brag about his children, or his ancestors (usually a Southerner), or his automobile, or his collection of postage stamps, or the amount he can drink; but always to 'sell themselves,' to win admiration and envy, to impress others with a sense of their own importance. All of them lie, and the biggest liars are always the most credulous. There are unwritten rules, as there always are when men congregate for 'talk'; but the only rule of serious moment is that if Smith listens to Brown for ten minutes, it is not fair for Brown to go back to his seat in the parlour car until Smith has bragged to him for the same length of time. They dress and in many cases eat, with the same object in view. Practically all of them would eat with their fingers if it were not for this same 'vice' of Human Respect. Hideous, is it not! Yet I insist that every civilization that has ever existed, either in the East or in the West, has been founded upon, and has been held together by, this detestable and most vulgar of all human weaknesses. The social anarchist, who thinks he has freed himself from it—and who, some people would say, had been delivered from it prematurely, to his own undoing—is invariably the man who, having failed to win the approval of the many, turns, for solace, to failures like himself, whose bitterness he can hope to exceed and whose envy, therefore, he can hope to inflame."

"And yet, and yet," said the Ancient slowly, "deep in the heart of every real man there is that which desires no approval which is not wise and just, and that turns to the Lodge only for a verdict upon our deeds. From that centre, we distrust the good opinion of those who love us, fearing the bias of their love, —craving the perfect justice of those whose love alone is perfect. I do not know how the great ones feel—perhaps glad when praised by greater—but I do know that few things are more terrible, more crushing, than the generosity which showers gratitude upon us when our hearts are burdened still with a thousand sorrows for our sin . . . That, however, is a parenthesis, and perhaps the Student would like to say——"

"I should like to say," the Student responded, "that I am in sympathy with the Philosopher's main premise. I have been reading bits of Mark Twain's *Autobiography*, and it is tragic to see how he needed Theosophy and how utterly, for lack of it, he missed the purpose of life. Death and suffering everywhere: and what for, what for? Cruelty and folly everywhere: again, what for? We, who are students of Theosophy, ought to know better; but I am afraid that I, for one, am still too much inclined to see life in terms of joy and sorrow, looking for the 'use' or lesson of an incarnation in a wholesale way, as if the soul, at the end of its journey, were to be met by the Higher Self with, —'I told you so! Now don't you see that ambition (or vanity, or revenge, or whatever the main fault of the "deceased" may have been) could bring you nothing but trouble! Now will you be good!'

"It is an old and, I am sure, a true saying, that the Spirit works in unseen ways, in quiet ways; and it must follow that the obvious is not necessarily the

most real. Our attention is held by the obvious—as by sorrow and joy. They, doubtless, teach many lessons of which we know nothing as yet; but I suspect, also, that daily futilities (as they seem) are the source of most of our gain. Take such a thing as our daily jostling with crowds, on the streets, in surface-cars and subways. Just because it is an experience which people in our modern civilization take for granted, without thought, as inevitable,—we may infer that it is used as a hidden means of instruction. The average man may learn from it a certain ‘give and take,’ an awareness of the elbows of other people, and occasionally a certain consideration for others. What I mean is that an incarnation which to most of us would seem meaningless, purposeless, and sheer waste, so far as the ‘thread-soul’ is concerned, may actually have been full of instruction, could we but see beneath the common-place exterior and gauge the significance of small daily contacts and compulsions.”

“One thing is certain,” said the Lawyer. “It is impossible for a boy at school to see the real purpose of much of his instruction, or to understand what he gains by discipline. Some boys are so foolish as to decide in their own minds that the whole procedure is unreasonable, and perhaps that it is a device of their parents to keep them from natural enjoyments. For us, who are pupils in the larger school of life, to expect to understand its ultimate purpose, or to appreciate the benefits of its discipline, would be worse than childish. How *can* we understand! If Mark Twain, like so many others, condemned life because he could not fathom its meaning, he showed that, in the deeper sense, he never grew up.”

“I do not suggest,” commented the Philosopher, “that life as it is, has been designed by the Lords of Wisdom, in all its details, as the best way of effecting man’s salvation—that games, for instance, have been divinely instituted for divine ends—but that man, having ‘sought out many inventions,’ and having contrived these things for his own entertainment, has left the Lords of Wisdom no choice but to use them, to make the best of them, for ends which are nearly the opposite of man’s.”

“Not only our ‘inventions,’” added the Historian, “but our ‘necessary’ activities, such as eating, dressing, washing, must all of them be means to the same end,—spiritual growth.”

“I agree,” the Philosopher replied; “and I believe that this is the essential difference between optimism and pessimism. Most people would say that an optimist is one who ‘looks on the bright side of things,’ while the pessimist does the reverse. This means that both of them look on one side of things only, while my contention is that we should strive to see things as they are—childish things as childish, vile things as vile—but then, beneath their surface, should learn to recognize the good ends they may be made to serve, and, above all, should see that *utility depends upon the user*. Always there are two users, making, with the thing used, the eternal and omnipresent Trinity: there is the man who uses the thing, and the god who uses the man. As someone once said, ‘He laughs best who laughs last.’ We must become true Optimists by learning to anticipate that last laugh—at ourselves!”

T.

# LETTERS TO STUDENTS

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October 8th, 1913.

DEAR——

There are two points I want to write you about:

(1) You still look too much at what you are not; think too much of what you have not (as, for instance, leisure); estimate people and events by what you would like them to be, and not by what they are. It is the secret of the trouble with your Sunday School class. You form, in your mind, an ideal of what you want, and you think of, and try to treat those boys as if they approximated your ideal of them, instead of accepting them as a gang of ignorant young ruffians, with few even half-decent instincts, and quantities of glaring faults. The consequence is that you are constantly disappointed and often discouraged. Instead of seeing the (very limited, it is true) good you do them, you dwell on the failure to attain your ideal. You are seeking for results, and the results *you* want to attain, and are troubled when you do not get them.

(2) The other point is an effort to put a finger on another characteristic of yours. It is elusive and hard to describe. I can get at it best by an analogy. Many people, when talking to a foreigner who does not understand English well, will either talk in a loud voice as if to a deaf person, or, and this is the point, they will talk a sort of broken English. By some curious psychology, they seem to think that the foreigner will understand better if they do not talk simple English. Few people talk sense to a baby. Now you do this sort of thing constantly in your intercourse with others. You are not simple and direct, but seem to believe that, in order to be intelligible, you must express your ideas in some stilted way and according to some form. See if you can work out anything in this which conveys a meaning to you.

With kind regards,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

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October 20, 1913.

DEAR——

I am directed to send you the following comment on a recent fortnightly report:

"You have not yet got it into your *heart* that it is not what is done, but the spirit in which the least thing is done, that counts."

I have your letter and the two reports; these latter, and the loose leaves, I return.

I did *not* say that —— was "simple and direct." Once, when talking to you about such things, I said, "Look at the perfectly simple way —— does it."

But that referred to that particular thing and is very different from saying that he was simple and direct.

— is coming on for a fortnight. She has recently begun to realize that *she* can become a disciple *now*, and it has been a revelation to her. She is taking it seriously. I hope you and the others can set her such an example, while she is here, that she will return full of enthusiasm and devotion. Please look after her a bit.

With kind regards, I am,

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

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October 26th, 1913.

DEAR—

St. François de Sales once wrote to a nun, "It is the evil of evils amongst souls of good will that they should always wish to be what they cannot be, and that which they can be they do not desire to be." I wonder if he had you in mind?

Later, October 27th: I return a week's record which came this morning. Thanks for your note accompanying it.

I suppose you cannot help thinking of what you do not understand instead of what you do!

I am glad you saw —. She needs to calm down. Help her to go quietly, inside and out.

With kind regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

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January 1st, 1914.

DEAR—

My first letter of the New Year. May I again, therefore, offer you my best wishes, and my earnest desire that the year brings you many of the things your soul longs for. I shall not say *everything*, for that is asking for more than can be hoped for in any one year, however glorious.

I return some recent records. I have not re-read or commented on them, for I feel that for the present you have enough to think about and to do, but I shall be glad to have a talk before long, as there are one or two things I should like to say.

Again with best wishes, I am,

Sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

If you will look over these records and find whether there is any specific point you wish to ask about, I shall be glad to try.

January 4th, 1914.

DEAR——

I enclose something which has been given to me to send you if I think you can stand it. I think you can. Indeed I think you must, for the present state of affairs must not continue. Please give it the most careful consideration and then carry out the several recommendations.

"You should tell her to stop thinking about herself. She is like a squirrel in a cage, trying to watch her reflected images in the revolving wires. She is like a patient constantly taking her temperature, analysing her own states and feelings, symptoms and pains. You have corrected her for 'fussing' about the concerns of others, because this also was an expression of the same tendency: the mind fixed on self projecting itself at others, and seeing all things in terms of its own limitations. While you have recognized her good motive, both in this and that, you have realized that one cause of her discontent with you has been your lack of interest in her morbidly introspective peregrinations: like the physician who, instantly recognizing a case of hypochondriasis, listens with intentional lack of concern to the self-diagnosis of the subject. People in that condition may or may not be able to stand the truth. If you give her this, you will do so on your own responsibility, and at your own risk.

"As to remedy: she should write no reports or records of any kind until further notice; she should have no conversations with you, or about herself. Constructively, she should turn her entire attention to the Master—to his nature, character, works and plans, never as affecting the duty of others, but only for the purpose of trying to understand him better.

"Into all work given her to do, whether in the T. S. or otherwise, she should throw herself with ardour for the Master's sake, not watching the effect upon herself, but leaving the results to him.

"If she will take this prescription faithfully, she will soon break loose from her chains. She has it in her, as you always have said, to do so."

With best wishes, as always,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM, JR.

January 21st, 1914.

DEAR——

I see no objections to your speaking of your recent experiences to ——: on the contrary I think it might help you, for they may be able to see some of your troubles more clearly than you can. Therefore, to this extent, I am able to modify the previous prohibition regarding your speaking of yourself, provided that you do so with the definite intention of seeking light.

With kind regards,

I am, as always,

C. A. GRISCOM.

February 11th, 1914.

DEAR——

I was very glad to get your good letter.

The matter is not in my hands. Doubtless, in due time, I shall be advised when we may resume our relationship on the old basis.

In the meantime, I trust that you will go on trying as you have been doing, for that is what will count in the end.

With kind regards,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

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April 1st, 1914.

DEAR——

I am very glad that you feel as you do, for I have had and always shall have a constant and unalterable desire to do anything I can to help you.

The question of when and how remains, however; and this is not in my hands. At the last analysis it is chiefly in your own.

With most cordial regards,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

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Feast of St. Catherine, 1914.

DEAR——

I will show your note to ——, from whom you ask for the same kind of criticism that was given to —— and —— . But what was thus done for them, they earned by accepting criticism for several years, with more or less gratitude, and with less, rather than more, resentment and hurt feelings.

To put it in another way: they can stand a small amount of highly diluted frankness, and they *accept* what is said. You have not yet been able to do this.

Even when there is no active resentment, which is not the way your temperament reacts, there are hurt feelings, confusion, bewilderment, misunderstanding; so that it really does not help you, but hinders.

With kind regards,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

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May 25th, 1914.

DEAR——

First to answer your last letter. There is no need as yet for you to do anything. When there is—if the time comes—you will be told. In the meantime please let me express my personal appreciation of your offer. I know what those things cost.



Then there is your former letter about penances, which you spoke of yesterday. I had forgotten it. I have looked it over, and I see no objection to your doing Nos. I and III, but not No. II. No. I is no coffee for breakfast when getting up late. No. II, I do not advise. No. III is about self will, and choosing the less agreeable way of doing small things: doing the hardest and least agreeable of a series of things first; not crossing your feet; etc. These are all admirable and useful practices.

With kind regards,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

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July 3rd, 1914.

DEAR—

I am glad you wrote that letter, for I have been worried and troubled about you, and this letter shows a little better condition. You are having a hard time:—you are making a hard time for yourself—for that is the only way we have a hard time; but we cannot help it,—much, so there is no great consolation in hearing that our troubles are self-created! The sympathy of your friends flows to you, for your pain and trouble, no matter how caused.

It will pass—all things do, save those of the spiritual world; and when we are in a sea of confusion and misunderstanding, we must learn to find comfort in the fundamental facts of life—that all pain and trouble do pass, and that we get back to peace and understanding.

It seems to me that the plans for your summer should be comfortable, convenient, and enjoyable. I sincerely hope you will find them so. Indeed I hope you will make them so, as you can if you try. . . .

I will write you again from ——. This is just a word scratched off in great haste amidst many interruptions, while trying to finish work to catch a train

As always,

C. A. GRISCOM.

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July 5th, 1914.

DEAR—

I have given careful and prayerful consideration to your condition and needs, and as a result I am directed to ask you to make a new start.

Please give your best attention and best efforts to the following:—

1. Forget, so far as you can, all the specific directions you have received heretofore, which may seem to you to conflict with what follows.

2. Make it your principal practice to cultivate a sense of your own unworthiness, your insignificance, your unimportance, your entire lack of ability, merit, or capacity. Be meek, humble, obedient, retiring, self-effacing. Empty yourself of self—of self-love, self-will, of self-pity, of self-reference—by constant self-denial; and thus enable the Master to fill you with himself. "Nature abhors a vacuum." Make yourself a vacuum in this sense, and pray ceaselessly that he will fill you with his spirit.

3. Do not make suggestions to anyone about anything. Do not complain of anything or any body, to yourself or to anyone else.

4. Accept all crosses, and trials, and discomforts, illnesses, pains, depression, discouragement, as opportunities for self-sacrifice—as favours shown you by the Master, as steps upon the ladder you wish to climb. Seek reproof, humiliations, scoldings.

5. Pray ceaselessly for others, and particularly for those you like least and who get on your nerves most. Make yourself act towards them especially as if you loved to be with them, and enjoyed every moment of their companionship. Never avoid them, or opportunities to see and serve them; but do not force yourself or your offers of service upon them. Simply be ready at all times to take advantage of the opportunities which arise naturally.

6. Read your devotional books regularly, especially Thomas à Kempis's *Imitation*, and those giving an account of the training of novices in the religious orders; and meditate and emulate, not the practices necessarily, but the frames of mind and feelings, which you find in such accounts, of their way of seeking and accepting mortifications, humiliations, and reproofs.

7. I want you to try to get out of the atmosphere you have been trying to live in, and to get into the simple atmosphere of religious training and discipline, of body, mind, and will,—especially mind and will.

Do not adopt any ascetical practices or penances without previous permission. Your life will give you almost ceaseless opportunity to practise mortification, and in ways you do not like, which is the best kind, the only true kind, of penance.

Above all, cultivate humility, simplicity, meekness, self-effacement, self-sacrifice. Develop a sense of your unworthiness, your insignificance, your littleness, your unimportance. Take each of these in turn as your subject of prayer and meditation, and endeavour to feel these qualities and attributes in your heart, that you may be able to say at last, with Saint Paul, I live no longer, but Christ liveth in me.

Above all, and back of all these efforts, try to realize and feel the presence and interest, and love of the Master,—his concern, his solicitude, his love for you; his desire for your love; his desire for your regeneration and better understanding; his wish that you should get closer to him by this road of self-denial and self-elimination. Make him your confidant in all your efforts. Ask him each morning to help you in your prayer and meditation to feel more of the particular quality you have selected for that day.

Make up your mind to follow this method faithfully, and more and more thoroughly, year after year, life after life, if necessary, until it opens your understanding and brings you to him.

I enclose some extracts giving something of the spirit I should like you to emulate. Most of them are from the life of Sœur Thérèse de Jésus.

With kind regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM.

July 12th, 1914.

DEAR——

The advice in my last letter was not a *volte face*. As you learn to read, you must at times pass back to the alphabet and its fundamental sounds and meaning.

The fact that it seems to you a *volte face* means that you never thoroughly assimilated the significance of the earlier and basic instruction. Never mind. Few do. Now is the time. You will find happiness in it.

With kind regards,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

July 16th, 1914.

DEAR——

You do not seem to me to be happy. To put it positively, you seem to me to be acutely miserable. This is wrong. "We are closest to the heart of things when we are happy; when in spite of trials and adversities a fountain of joy and gladness springs within us."

Won't you please think of this and try to be happy. Do not worry about what may be, do not look ahead to conditions which may never come about.

Remember all "trials are ephemeral and will pass; the joy is immortal and divine and endures for ever." You are much on my mind, and I hate to have people on my mind—and heart!

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

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*Happiness is the light which comes from the East and disappears in the West. The whole world has it and thrills; but it passes.*—LACORDAIRE.



## CULTURE OF CONCENTRATION<sup>1</sup>

### PART I

THE term most generally in use to express what is included under the above title is SELF CULTURE. Now it seems to express well enough, for a time at least, the practice referred to by those who desire to know the truth. But, in fact, it is inaccurate from a theosophic standpoint. For the self is held to be that designated in the Indian books as Ishwara, which is a portion of the eternal spirit enshrined in each human body. That this is the Indian view there is no doubt. The *Bhagavad-Gita*, in Chapter 15, says that an eternal portion of this spirit, "having assumed life in this world of life, attracts the heart and the five senses which belong to nature. Whatever body Ishwara enters or quits, it is connected with it by snatching those senses from nature, even as the breeze snatches perfumes from their very bed. This spirit approaches the objects of sense by presiding over the ear, the eye, the touch, the taste, and the smell, and also over the heart"; and in an earlier chapter, "the Supreme spirit within this body is called the Spectator and admonisher, sustainer, enjoyer, great Lord, and also highest soul"; and again, "the Supreme eternal soul, even when existing within—or connected with—the body, is not polluted by the actions of the body."

Elsewhere in these books this same spirit is called the self, as in a celebrated sentence which in Sanscrit is "*Atmanam atmana pashya*," meaning, "Raise the self by the self," and all through the Upanishads, where the self is constantly spoken of as the same as the Ishwara of *Bhagavad-Gita*. Max Müller thinks the word "self" expresses best in English the ideas of the Upanishads on this head.

It therefore follows that such a thing as culture of this self, which in its very nature is eternal, unchangeable, and unpollutable by any action, cannot be. It is only from inadequacy of terms that students and writers using the English tongue are compelled to say "self culture," while when they say it, they admit that they know the self cannot be cultured.

What they wish to express is, "such culture or practice to be pursued by us as shall enable us, while on earth, to mirror forth the wisdom and fulfil the behests of the self within, which is all-wise and all good."

As the use of this term, "self culture," demands a constant explanation either outwardly declared or inwardly assented to, it is wise to discard it altogether and substitute that which will express the practice aimed at without raising a contradiction. For another reason also the term should be discarded. That is, that it assumes a certain degree of selfishness, for, if we use it as referring to something that we do only for ourself, we separate at once between us and the rest of the human brotherhood. Only in one way can we use it without contradiction or without explanation, and that is by admitting we selfishly desire to cultivate ourselves, thus at once running against a prime rule in theosophic life and one so often and so strenuously insisted on,

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from *The Path*, of July, 1888, and February, 1890.

that the idea of personal self must be uprooted. Of course, as we will not negative this rule, we thus again have brought before us the necessity for a term that does not arouse contradictions. That new term should, as nearly as possible, shadow forth the three essential things in the action, that is, the instrument, the act, and the agent, as well as the incitement to action; or, knowledge itself, the thing to be known or done, and the person who knows.

This term is CONCENTRATION. In the Indian books it is called Yoga. This is translated also as Union, meaning a union with the Supreme Being, or, as it is otherwise put, "the object of spiritual knowledge is the Supreme Being."

There are two great divisions of Yoga found in the ancient books, and they are called Hatha-Yoga and Raj-Yoga.

Hatha-Yoga is a practical mortification of the body by means of which certain powers are developed. It consists in the assumption of certain postures that aid the work, and certain kinds of breathing that bring on changes in the system, together with other devices. It is referred to in the 4th chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita* thus: "Some devotees sacrifice the sense of hearing and the other senses in the fires of restraint; some offer objects of sense, such as sound, in the fires of the senses. Some also sacrifice inspiration of breath in expiration, and expiration in inspiration, by blocking up the channels of inspiration and expiration, desirous of retaining their breath. Others, by abstaining from food, sacrifice life in their life."

In various treatises these methods are set forth in detail, and there is no doubt at all that by pursuing them one can gain possession of sundry abnormal powers. There is risk, however, especially in the case of people in the West where experienced gurus or teachers of these things are not found. These risks consist in this, that while an undirected person is doing according to the rules of Hatha-Yoga, he arouses about him influences that do him harm, and he also carries his natural functions to certain states now and then when he ought to stop for a while, but, having no knowledge of the matter, may go on beyond that and produce injurious effects. Then, again, Hatha-Yoga is a difficult thing to pursue, and one that must be pushed to the point of mastery and success. Few of our Western people are by nature fitted for such continuous and difficult labour on the mental and astral planes. Thus, being attracted to Hatha-Yoga by the novelty of it, and by the apparent pay that it offers in visible physical results, they begin without knowledge of the difficulty, and stopping after a period of trial they bring down upon themselves consequences that are wholly undesirable.

The greatest objection to it, however, is that it pertains to the material and semi-material man,—roughly speaking, to the body, and what is gained through it is lost at death.

The *Bhagavad-Gita* refers to this and describes what happens in these words: "All of these, indeed, being versed in sacrifice, have their sins destroyed by these sacrifices. But he alone reaches union with the Supreme being who eats of the ambrosia left from a sacrifice." This means that the Hatha-Yoga practice represents the mere sacrifice itself, whereas the other kind is the ambrosia arising from the sacrifice, or "the perfection of spiritual cultivation," and that leads to Nirvana. The means for attaining the "perfection of spiritual cultivation" are found in Raj-Yoga or, as we shall term it for the present, Culture of Concentration.

When concentration is perfected, we are in a position to use the knowledge that is ever within reach but which ordinarily eludes us continually. That which is usually called knowledge is only an intellectual comprehension of the outside, visible forms assumed by certain realities. Take what is called scientific knowledge of minerals and metals. This is merely a classification of material phenomena and an empirical acquisition. It knows what certain minerals and metals are useful for, and what some of their properties are. Gold is known to be pure, soft, yellow, and extremely ductile, and by a series of accidents it has been discovered to be useful in medicine and the arts. But even to this day there is a controversy, not wholly settled, as to whether gold is held mechanically or chemically in crude ore. Similarly with minerals. The crystalline forms are known and classified.

And yet a new theory has arisen, coming very near to the truth, that we do not know matter in reality in this way, but only apprehend certain phenomena presented to us by matter, and variously called, as the phenomena alter, gold, wood, iron, stone, and so on. But whether the minerals, metals, and vegetables have further properties that are only to be apprehended by

still other and undeveloped senses, science will not admit. Passing from inanimate objects to the men and women about us, this ordinary intellectual knowledge aids us no more than before. We see bodies with different names and of different races, but below the outer phenomena our everyday intellect will not carry us. This man we suppose to have a certain character assigned to him after experience of his conduct, but it is still only provisional, for none of us is ready to say that we know him either in his good or his bad qualities. We know there is more to him than we can see or reason about, but what, we cannot tell. It eludes us continually. And when we turn to contemplate ourselves, we are just as ignorant as we are about our fellow man. Out of this has arisen an old saying: "Every man knows what he is, but no one knows what he will be."

There must be in us a power of discernment, the cultivation of which will enable us to know whatever is desired to be known. That there is such a power is affirmed by teachers of occultism, and the way to acquire it is by cultivating concentration.

It is generally overlooked, or not believed, that the inner man who is the one to have these powers has to grow up to maturity, just as the body has to mature before its organs fulfil their functions fully. By *inner man* I do not mean the higher self—the Ishwara before spoken of, but that part of us which is called soul, or astral man, or vehicle, and so on. All these terms are subject to correction, and should not be held rigidly to the meanings given by various writers. Let us premise, first, the body now visible; second, the inner man—not the spirit; and third, the spirit itself.

Now while it is quite true that the second—or inner man—has latent all the powers and peculiarities ascribed to the astral body, it is equally true that those powers are, in the generality of persons, still latent or only very partially developed.

This inner being is, so to say, inextricably entangled in the body, cell for cell and fibre for fibre. He exists in the body somewhat in the way the fibre of the mango fruit exists in the mango. In that fruit we have the inside nut with thousands of fine fibres spreading out from it through the yellow pulp around. And as you eat it, there is great difficulty in distinguishing the pulp from the fibre. So that the inner being of which we are speaking cannot do much when away from his body, and is always influenced by it. It is not therefore easy to leave the body at will and roam about in the double. The stories we hear of this as being so easily done may be put down to strong imagination, vanity, or other causes. One great cause for error in respect to these doubles is that a clairvoyant is quite likely to mistake a mere picture of the person's thought for the person himself. In fact, among occultists who know the truth, the stepping out of the body at will and moving about the world is regarded as a most difficult feat, and for the reasons above hinted at. Inasmuch as the person is so interwoven with his body, it is absolutely necessary, before he can take his astral form about the country, for him first carefully to extract it, fibre by fibre, from the surrounding pulp of blood, bones, mucus, bile, skin, and flesh. Is this easy? It is neither easy nor quick of accomplishment, nor all done at one operation. It has to be the result of years of careful training and numerous experiments. And it *cannot* be consciously done until the inner man has developed and cohered into something more than irresponsible and quivering jelly. This development and coherence are gained by perfecting the power of concentration.

Nor is it true, as the matter has been presented to me by experiment and teaching, that even in our sleep we go rushing about the country seeing our friends and enemies or tasting earthly joys at distant points. In all cases where the man has acquired some amount of concentration, it is quite possible that the sleeping body is deserted altogether, but such cases are as yet not in the majority.

Most of us remain quite close to our slumbering forms. It is not necessary for us to go away in order to experience the different states of consciousness, which is the privilege of every man; but we do not go away over miles of country until we are able, and we cannot be able until the necessary ethereal body has been acquired and has learned how to use its powers.

Now, this ethereal body has its own organs which are the essence or real basis of the senses described by men. The outer eye is only the instrument by which the real power of sight experiences—that which relates to sight; the ear has its inner master—the power of hearing, and so

on with every organ. These real powers within flow from the spirit to which we referred at the beginning of this paper. That spirit approaches the objects of sense by presiding over the different organs of sense. And whenever it withdraws itself the organs cannot be used. As when a sleep-walker moves about with open eyes which do not see anything, although objects are there and the different parts of the eye are perfectly normal and uninjured.

Ordinarily there is no demarcation to be observed between these inner organs and the outer; the inner ear is found to be too closely interknit with the outer to be distinguished apart. But when concentration has begun, the different inner organs begin to awake, as it were, and to separate themselves from the chains of their bodily counterparts. Thus the man begins to duplicate his powers. His bodily organs are not injured, but remain for use upon the plane to which they belong, and he is acquiring another set which he can use apart from the others in the plane of nature peculiarly theirs.

We find here and there cases where certain parts of this inner body have been by some means developed beyond the rest. Sometimes the inner head alone is developed, and we have one who can see or hear clairvoyantly or clairaudiently; again, only a hand is developed apart from the rest, all the other being nebulous and wavering. It may be a right hand, and it will enable the owner to have certain experiences that belong to the plane of nature to which the right hand belongs, say the positive side of touch and feeling.

But in these abnormal cases there are always wanting the results of concentration. They have merely protruded one portion, just as a lobster extrudes his eye on the end of the structure which carries it. Or take one who has thus curiously developed one of the inner eyes, say the left. This has a relation to a plane of nature quite different from that appertaining to the hand, and the results in experience are just as diverse. He will be a clairvoyant of a certain order, only able to recognize that which relates to his one-sided development, and completely ignorant of many other qualities inherent in the thing seen or felt, because the proper organs needed to perceive them have had no development. He will be like a two-dimensional being who cannot possibly know that which three-dimensional beings know, or like ourselves as compared with four-dimensional entities.

In the course of the growth of this ethereal body several things are to be observed.

It begins by having a cloudy, wavering appearance, with certain centres of energy caused by the incipency of organs that correspond to the brain, heart, lungs, spleen, liver, and so on. It follows the same course of development as a solar system, and is, in fact, *governed and influenced by the very solar system to which the world belongs on which the being may be incarnate*. With us it is governed by our own solar orb.

If the practice of concentration be kept up, this cloudy mass begins to gain coherence and to shape itself into a body with different organs. As they grow they must be used. Essays are to be made with them, trials, experiments. In fact, just as a child must creep before it can walk, and must learn walking before it can run, so this ethereal man must do the same. But as the child can see and hear much farther than it can creep or walk, so this being usually begins to see and to hear before it can leave the vicinity of the body on any lengthy journey.

Certain hindrances then begin to manifest themselves which, when properly understood by us, will give us good substantial reasons for the practising of the several virtues enjoined in holy books and naturally included under the term of Universal Brotherhood.

One is that sometimes it is seen that this nebulous forming body is violently shaken, or pulled apart, or burst into fragments that at once have a tendency to fly back into the body and take on the same entanglement that we spoke of at first. *This is caused by anger*, and this is why the sages all dwell upon the need of calmness. When the student allows anger to arise, the influence of it is at once felt by the ethereal body, and manifests itself in an uncontrollable trembling which begins at the centre and violently pulls apart the hitherto coherent particles. If allowed to go on it will disintegrate the whole mass, which will then re-assume its natural place in the body. The effect following this is, that a long time has to elapse before the ethereal body can be again created. And each time this happens the result is the same. Nor does it make any difference what the cause for the anger may be. There is no such thing as having what is called "righteous anger" in this study and escaping these inevitable consequences.

Whether your "rights" have been unjustly and flagrantly invaded or not does not matter. The anger is a force that will work itself out in its appointed way. Therefore anger must be strictly avoided, and it cannot be avoided unless charity and love—absolute toleration—are cultivated.

But anger may be absent and yet still another thing happen. The ethereal form may have assumed quite a coherence and definiteness. But it is observed that, instead of being pure and clear and fresh, it begins to take on a cloudy and disagreeable colour, the precursor of putrefaction, which invades every part and by its effects precludes any further progress, and at last reacts upon the student so that anger again manifests itself. This is the effect of envy. Envy is not a mere trifle that produces no physical result. It has a powerful action, as strong in its own field as that of anger. It not only hinders the further development, but attracts to the student's vicinity thousands of malevolent beings of all classes that precipitate themselves upon him and wake up or bring on every evil passion. Envy, therefore, must be extirpated, and it cannot be got rid of as long as the personal idea is allowed to remain in us.

Another effect is produced on this ethereal body by vanity. Vanity represents the great illusion of nature. It brings up before the soul all sorts of erroneous or evil pictures, or both, and drags the judgment so away that once more anger or envy will enter, or such course be pursued that violent destruction by outside causes falls upon the being. As in one case related to me. The man had made considerable progress, but at last allowed vanity to rule. This was followed by the presentation to his inner sight of most extraordinary images and ideas, which in their turn so affected him that he attracted to his sphere hordes of elementals seldom known to students and quite indescribable in English. These at last, as is their nature, laid siege to him, and one day produced all about the plane of his astral body an effect similar in some respects to that which follows an explosion of the most powerful explosive known to science. The consequence was, his ethereal form was so suddenly fractured that by repercussion the whole nature of the man was altered, and he soon died in a madhouse after having committed the most awful excesses.

And vanity cannot be avoided except by studiously cultivating that selflessness and poverty of heart advised as well by Jesus of Nazareth as by Buddha.

Another hindrance is fear. This is not, however, the worst of all, and is one that will disappear by means of knowledge, for fear is always the son of ignorance. Its effect on the ethereal form is to shrivel it up, or coagulate and contract it. But as knowledge increases, that contraction abates, permitting the person to expand. Fear is the same thing as frigidity on the earth, and always proceeds by the process of freezing.

In my next the subject will be further developed.

## PART II

I is now over one year since I sent in Part I to the Editor of the *Path*. Since then I have heard that some students expressed a desire to read Part II, forgetting to observe, perhaps, that the first paper was complete in itself, and, if studied, with earnest practice to follow, would have led to beneficial results. It has not been necessary before to write No. II; and to the various students who so soon after reading the first have asked for the second, I plainly say that you have been led away because a sequel was indicated and you cannot have studied the first; furthermore I much doubt if you will be benefited by this any more than by the other.

Success in the culture of concentration is not for him who sporadically attempts it. It is a thing that flows from "a firm position assumed with regard to the end in view, and unremittingly kept up." Nineteenth Century students are too apt to think that success in occultism can be reached as one attains success in school or college, by reading and learning *printed words*. A complete knowledge of all that was ever written upon concentration will confer no power in the practice of that about which I treat. Mere book knowledge is derided in this school as much as it is by the clodhopper; not that I think book knowledge is to be avoided, but that sort of acquisition, without the concentration, is as useless as faith without works. It is



called in some places, I believe, "mere eye-knowledge." Such indeed it is; and such is the sort of culture most respected in these degenerate times.

In starting these papers the true practice was called Raj-Yoga. It discards those physical motions, postures, and recipes relating solely to the present personality, and directs the student to virtue and altruism as the basis from which to start. This is more often rejected than accepted. So much has been said during the last 1800 years about Rosicrucians, Egyptian Adepts, Secret Masters, Kaballah, and wonderful magical books, that students without a guide, attracted to these subjects, ask for information and seek in vain for the entrance to the temple of the learning they crave, because they say that virtue's rules are meant for babes and Sunday-schools, but not for them. And, in consequence, we find hundreds of books in all the languages of Europe dealing with rites, ceremonies, invocations, and other obscurities that will lead to nothing but loss of time and money. But few of these authors had anything save "mere eye-knowledge." 'Tis true they have sometimes a reputation, but it is only that accorded to an ignoramus by those who are more ignorant. The so-called great man, knowing how fatal to reputation it would be to tell how really small is his practical knowledge, prates about "projections and elementals," "philosopher's stone and elixir," but discreetly keeps from his readers the paucity of his acquirements and the insecurity of his own mental state. Let the seeker know, once for all, that the virtues cannot be discarded nor ignored; they must be made a part of our life, and their philosophical basis must be understood.

But it may be asked, if in the culture of concentration we shall succeed by the practice of virtue alone. The answer is No, not in this life, but perhaps one day in a later life. The life of virtue accumulates much merit; that merit will at some time cause one to be born in a wise family where the real practice of concentration may perchance begin; or it may cause one to be born in a family of devotees or those far advanced on the Path, as said in *Bhagavad-Gita*. But such a birth as this, says Krishna, is difficult to obtain; hence the virtues alone will not always lead in short space to our object.

We must make up our minds to a life of constant work upon this line. The lazy ones, or they who ask for pleasure, may as well give it up at the threshold and be content with the pleasant paths marked out for those who "fear God and honour the King." Immense fields of investigation and experiment have to be traversed; dangers unthought of and forces unknown are to be met; and all must be overcome, for in this battle *there is no quarter asked or given*. Great stores of knowledge must be found and *seized*. The kingdom of heaven is not to be had for the asking; it must *be taken by violence*. And the only way in which we can gain the will and the power to thus seize and hold, is by acquiring the virtues on the one hand, and minutely understanding ourselves on the other. Some day we shall begin to see why not one passing thought may be ignored, not one flitting impression missed. This we can perceive is no simple task. It is a gigantic work. Did you ever reflect that the mere passing sight of a picture, or a single word instantly lost in the rush of the world, may be basis for a dream that will poison the night and react upon the brain next day. Each one must be examined. If you have not noticed it, then when you awake next day you have to go back in memory over every word and circumstance of the preceding day, seeking, like the astronomer through space, for the lost one. And, similarly, without such a special reason, you must learn to be able to go thus backward into your days so as to go over carefully and in detail all that happened, all that you permitted to pass through the brain. Is this an easy matter?

But let us for a moment return to the sham adepts, the reputed Masters, whether they were well-intentioned or the reverse. Take Eliphas Levi who wrote so many good things, and whose books contain such masses of mysterious hints. Out of his own mouth he convicts himself. With great show he tells of the raising of the shade of Apollonius. Weeks beforehand all sorts of preparations had to be made, and on the momentous night absurd necromantic performances were gone through. What was the result? Why only that the so-called shade appeared for a few moments, and Levi says they never attempted it again. Any good medium of these days could call up the shade of Apollonius without preparation, and if Levi were an Adept he could have seen the dead quite as easily as he turned to his picture in a book. By these sporadic attempts and outside preparations, nothing is really gained but harm to those who thus indulge. And the

foolish dabbling by American theosophists with practices of the Yogis of India that are not one-eighth understood and which in themselves are inadequate, will lead to much worse results than the apochryphal attempt recorded by Eliphas Levi.

As we have to deal with the Western mind now ours, all unused as it is to these things and over-burdened with false training and falser logic, we must begin where we are, we must examine our present possessions and grow to know our own present powers and mental machinery. This done, we may proceed to see ourselves in the way that shall bring about the best result.

RAMATIRTHA.  
(W. Q. JUDGE.)

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*The highest greatness and the highest wisdom are shown, the first by a noble submission to, the second by a thoughtful providence for, certain voluntarily admitted restraints.*—RUSKIN.

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*Whoso cannot obey cannot be free, still less bear rule; he that is the inferior of nothing can be the superior of nothing, the equal of nothing.*—CARLYLE.



# REVIEWS

*The Philosophy of the Upanishads*, by S. Radhakrishnan, George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., London; price, 5s.

This lucidly written and clearly printed volume, which contains only 143 pages, may be confidently recommended as the best and most illuminating presentation of the Upanishads in English or any European tongue. The author is thoroughly familiar with the Upanishads in the original Sanskrit, and with the whole cycle of ancient Aryan literature; he has studied Jainism, Buddhism and the philosophical systems of India; he writes clearly and often eloquently; he possesses that spiritual insight which is the best heritage of Aryan India.

The book almost inevitably follows the lines which are inherent in the teaching of the Upanishads: The universal Being of the Eternal; the nature of the individual life manifested in each one of us; the underlying unity between the individual life and the Eternal; the steps by which this unity may be realized in spiritual experience. Perhaps the most valuable and original part of the book is the discussion of the reality or unreality of the manifested world, with the true meaning of the doctrine of Maya. The author makes clear exactly what reality and unreality mean in Aryan thought, and ably develops the idea of relative or conditional reality, as contrasted with sheer illusion. In the last analysis, only the Eternal is real; the visible universe, manifested within the Eternal, has no independent reality. But the universe is real for our experience; it is not a mirage, a phantom, an insubstantial pageant.

Perhaps the fairest way to convey the quality of a book is by quotation. Take, for example, this passage towards the end of the work under review:

"The theory of rebirth is quite as logical as any other hypothesis that is in the field, and is certainly more satisfactory than the theories of absolute annihilation or eternal retribution. It accounts for the apparent moral disorder and chaos of suffering. The unfair distribution of pain seems to contradict the rationality of the universe. As irregularities of the empirical world are a challenge to the logical faith, so moral disorder is a challenge to the belief in the goodness of the principle at work. If our faith is rational, there cannot be any intellectual or moral confusion. If moral chaos is ultimate, then moral paralysis would be the result. We have to reconcile the strangely chaotic appearances of the moral world with the faith in a good and great God. We should not be content with thinking that the world is organized in a haphazard manner. The hypothesis which traces the disorder and the suffering of the moral world to the freedom of man cannot account for the inequalities with which men are thrust into the world. These differences in the initial equipment contradict the idea of a divinely ordered universe. This hypothesis of rebirth gives us some explanation of the original difference. It makes us feel that the joy and suffering of the world are there for the progressive education of character."

A phrase towards the end of this passage, "the hypothesis of rebirth," suggests what is, perhaps, the one marked limitation of this excellent work. Many students of Theosophy believe that the teaching of rebirth is not a hypothesis; it is not the result of theorizing, it is the result of spiritual experience, of actual memory, as affirmed by Krishna and the Buddha. Throughout this work, many forms of knowledge are spoken of as the result of intellectual speculation, which students of Theosophy regard as being rather the fruit of spiritual experience.

C. J.

*Mysterium Magnum or An Exposition of the First Book of Moses, called Genesis*, by Jacob Boehme, in two volumes; published by John M. Watkins, price 50s.

These two large volumes are "published and dedicated by his widow to the late C. J. Barker, to whose self-denying generosity and industry this re-issue of the Works of Jacob Boehme is solely due."

There are many who find the writings of Boehme illuminating. To them we highly recommend these volumes. The translation, by John Sparrow, is a valiant and often successful effort to give Boehme's terminology a theosophic meaning. Chapter II, on the three different bodies of man—the "sidereal body" being "the highest excepting the divine in man"—may be found particularly suggestive. T.

*Nineteenth Century Evolution And After*, by the Reverend Marshall Dawson; The Macmillan Company, 1923; \$1.50. This book is a survey in popular, graphic style of the difference between nineteenth century misinterpretations of evolution, and the more mature theories which the best scientific and religious thinkers are offering to-day. Evolution was seen at first only in terms of progress; now, retrogression and degeneration are recognized as equally prevalent and probable results of the evolutionary impulse. Optimistic belief in an inevitable progress saps to the very foundation the strength of just those principles of conduct which alone achieve advance. Religion, properly understood, is the truest ally of all those constructive forces which impel men to surpass whatever they may already have accomplished, and so to fit themselves to move on with nature's upward march, winning for themselves thereby that immortality in the spirit which would seem to be their next step.

A stimulating, provocative, forceful book, suggesting interesting collateral reading, and in line with much in the second volume of *The Secret Doctrine*. A. G.

*Mumbo Jumbo*, by Henry Clews, Junior; published by Boni and Liveright, New York. Price, \$2.50.

We have heard wicked people say that they find much relief for their feelings when someone indulges in good, hard swearing over an annoyance shared in common. We have felt that way ourselves. The author of *Mumbo Jumbo* does not swear, but he has a vocabulary that leaves us speechless, and we envy him. Also he feels as we do about a great many things; that is to say he feels murderously, with a huge disgust which, one size larger, would result in silence, but which, as it is, must occasionally explode. Mr. Clews hates our machine-made civilization, with its graft, freak literature and art, commercialism and snobbery. More: it is a curious fact, he says, "that science, while giving us every conceivable kind of time-saving device, is robbing us of all our time for the real worth-while enjoyments of life, which, as the Divine Autocrat has decreed, are not only purely unscientific, but also entirely undemocratic. This would account, I imagine, for the fatuous, self-satisfied, aggressive and almost alarmingly vulgar expression of our democratized artists, philosophers and scientists, who, having lost their imagination, and consequently their capacity for true enjoyment, take infinite pains to complicate the simplest and most obvious facts of nature with highfalutin' phrases and mathematical symbols. And this abracadabra they then serve up to their brother bourgeois, whose egotism is always tickled by gibberosity, grandsillyquence and scientific mystification, believing this jargon to be expressive of 'progress'—a word with which his tongue is thickly coated, and of which he considers himself a divinely appointed guardian. What bourgeois would not choose to have himself transported by aeroplane, or wafted by a varnished three-legged department-store Ouija board into a heavenly kingdom of what he calls spiritualistic science, rather than be borne like a little child, on wings of faith, imagination and mystical adoration of nature, into the realms of God, where science, sex-equality and democracy enter not—thank God!"

One third of the book is given to an Introduction, one third to a description of "characters," and the remaining third to a "drama" in which the characters appear. One of the characters, Ezra P. Packer, is presented as the symbol of our epoch; and in case, from our previous quotation, it might be supposed that the author is anti-democratic in any limited sense, it is only fair to add extracts from his delineation of the said Ezra:

"He is Japan in pot-hat; China without pigtail, and 'Son of Heaven' set; England of Lloyd George, instead of St. George and King George, Emperor of India. . . .

"He is factory, kodak, phonograph, sewing-machine, cinema, Ford, tram, telephone, in the gentle, smiling isle of Queen Liliuokalani. . . .

"He is decadent monarch in 'golf outfit', 'tennis suitings', 'dress suit' and ingratiating kodak grin, cringing to decadent democracy.

"He is vulgarized, bankrupt, effete, jazzing European aristocracy, supported by jazzing, democratic daughters of High Finance and Synagogue."

Mr. Clews should be able to reach people whom we cannot reach. He talks the language of his own abominations,—we hope not habitually. His book has been excluded, we are informed, from the New York Public Library, though it is difficult to imagine why. To our taste, it is somewhat coarse in spots; but it is the last word in refinement if compared with practically all the classics, while scores of current novels, which the New York Public Library circulates without question, are intentionally salacious, and this is not only the opposite of Mr. Clews' spirit, but is as far as possible from his manner. In fifty years from now, *Mumbo Jumbo* is likely to be regarded as one of the great satires.

Yet, to tell the truth, the book suffers from being an act of pure self-indulgence. Its author too evidently revelled in its pyrotechnics. He belongs to the generation he condemns, and while this is the secret of his effectiveness, we believe it too big a price to pay for the ear of "Bessie", Clare Sheridan, *The New Republic*, *The Smart Set*, Bernard Shaw, and the rest of his horrors, all of whose ears combined are not worth the sacrifice of *restraint*. To fling that away, is to fling away art, and to lower oneself to the seventh circle of the Inferno, where those live who do violence to their own souls.

We sympathize so keenly with the author's purpose, and admire his gifts so unreservedly, that we feel as if we had a right to expect a less muddled expression of Theosophy from his pen. This is our excuse for venturing to criticize so frankly his present work.

H.

*Ignatius Loyola, An Attempt at an Impartial Biography*, by Henry Dwight Sedgwick; The Macmillan Company, 1923; price, \$3.00.

The writings and accomplishments of Ignatius of Loyola prove him to have been a man of unusual spiritual stature, if he was not actually one of those volunteers from the lower degrees of the Lodge, who assume the mental and other limitations of a particular time and country, in order to introduce by that means, the leaven of the Lodge into a decadent and unspiritual age. Much has been written about him, and the religious society he founded; but there has been so great prejudice, either for or against him and his work, that little of this literature can appeal to the student of Theosophy. The present book, therefore, will be welcome to members of The Theosophical Society, because the author, a man of letters and with the breadth of spirit which is born of a true culture, has written an impartial biography based on a thorough examination of original documents. Not the least valuable portion of the book is its translations from Latin or Spanish letters and documents which would be inaccessible to many English readers.

Mr. Sedgwick is neither a mystic nor an occultist. He, therefore, does not pretend to judge, or even to appreciate, the mysticism of Ignatius; but, reserving his own judgments in many cases, recounts faithfully what Ignatius himself, or his early companions and biographers, tell of inner experience. This unusual detachment enables each reader to form his own estimate, and certainly leads the way for many a "Protestant," who has inherited prejudices against everything suggesting the "jesuitical." It is of the essence of the theosophic method to penetrate prejudice and preconception, wherever found; and the life and writings of Ignatius can be studied to advantage as an exercise in this cardinal theosophic virtue. To the reviewer, this interesting volume has brought the conviction that genius and greatness of soul—clothed in whatever forms—reveal the same fundamental truths about life. Ignatius' teaching about obedience, for example, may be set beside that of Marshal Foch,—the spirit and essence are the same. The laws of life, the laws that govern the growth and upbuilding of the spiritual man, the secret of touching the hearts and lives of other men, the mysterious wonder and beauty of a

Master's love for his disciples—these are the things which Ignatius himself learned (or grew into), and these are the things which his biography and writings tell of. They are subjects of perennial interest; and many students of Theosophy will thank Mr. Sedgwick for his unconscious labours in their behalf.

A. G.

The following recent articles in the French periodicals seem especially worthy of notice:

*Revue des Deux Mondes.* M. Louis de Launay, of the *Academie des Sciences*, has contributed four delightful articles on the family and life of the great physicist, André-Marie Ampère (*Les Trois Ampère*, April 1–June 1). Science as well as the Church has its saints, and Ampère ranks high in the scientific hierarchy, not only for his discoveries, but for the humility, self-denial and humanity of his spirit. Like other saints, he had manifest imperfections, of which he was acutely conscious, though they could never dim the flame of his devotion to truth. Perhaps his gravest failing, which he shared with Sir Isaac Newton, was absent-mindedness. M. de Launay contrasts the abstraction of the scientific genius with the vanity and self-concern of so many artists, even the greatest. The artist and the scientist supplement each other, as well in their most typical weaknesses as in their strength. M. de Launay further suggests that the real value of the work of a *savant* depends in no small degree upon the quality of his personality, and upon the motives which guide him. "It is not a matter of indifference for the future of mankind, that a scientific discovery should be made and developed at a particular time and in a particular milieu." . . . In *L'An Prochain à Jerusalem*, now published in book form, the Tharaud brothers have continued their study of the Hebrew mind, so fortunate in its gifts, so unfortunate sometimes in its bias (April 15–May 15). There seems to be a vast gulf between the Galician Jew, steeped in the lore of the Talmud, and the international banker of London or New York; but both alike share the intuitive power and quick intelligence of their race, while revealing in equal measure the tendency to seek a gross material encasement for their thought. The noble Messianic ideal has never quite left them, but so often they have seen it only as reflected in images of the most worldly purposes and desires. The Tharaud brothers illustrate this tragic antithesis in many of their works, in none more poignantly than the present, which tells the story of the modern Jewish colonization of Palestine.

*Mercur de France.* In *La Crise de la Culture intellectuelle en Allemagne*, Madame Régina Zabloudovsky discusses the latest German craze for "occultism" and "Oriental religions" (July 15). There has been a flood of books upon these and kindred subjects, though evidently the supply is not yet equal to the demand. We read without enthusiasm of works in preparation upon Buddhism, Taoism and the Vedanta. There is no evidence that the Germans are seeking truth in the Eastern scriptures or anywhere else. The passing of the old order and of its attendant psychic exaltation has left them with a sense of pain, but without the resolve to read the cause of their suffering and to find its corrective. They ask for an anodyne, not a cure. Therefore, they have turned to the Eastern doctrine of *Maya* with motives analogous to those which actuate the drug fiend. Having failed to bully the Universe into submission, they now pretend that the Universe is only a dream. They have to learn that, though in the ordinary dream a man may seem to sin with impunity, in the Dream of the Universe he cannot escape the least of the consequences of his acts.

S. V.

*Books reviewed in these columns may be obtained from The Quarterly Book Department, P. O. Box 64, Station O., New York, N. Y.*

# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION NO. 299.—*Is the dread of death the fear of losing personality?*

ANSWER.—It may well be, in part. There must be many reasons, good and bad, for fearing death. Every part of our seven-fold being has its own consciousness, and may have its own reasons for fear. We feel each one of these fears as "ours" to the extent to which we identify ourselves with the part from which they spring, and are conscious of the reason for it or only of a vague instinctive dread according to the clearness of our consciousness in that part of ourselves. The body, from whose desires and fears our detachment is still, shall we say, imperfect, has its fear—very well founded, for it faces annihilation. So does the personality, lower manas and the great body of our every-day desires. Anyone who has ever tried to kill out a lower desire knows that it does not submit tamely, or face the process of annihilation without making us feel, for a time at least, that it is we ourselves who are being "sacrificed."

But good as may be the reasons of our lower natures for fearing death, it may well be that the higher has even better cause. We did not come into incarnation to amuse ourselves, but for a purpose. Have we fulfilled it? Perhaps it was to conquer a specific weakness, and, maybe, we were given by Karma ideal conditions for the task. Has it been accomplished? Perhaps, as was suggested in a recent *QUARTERLY*, there are some who adore their Master and yet in their last life may have been led by their weaknesses into betraying him and his cause. They may have begged for one more chance and, by his magnanimity, been given—one more. That chance, perhaps the last, may be nearly gone, and not yet taken. With death, the gates close.

J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—Is it not rather the fear of the results of the personality upon the enduring individuality? We are conscious throughout life in our real selves of the faults and weaknesses and sins of the personality, we recognize the extent to which they have held back the growth of the individuality that endures and goes on. In our real selves we do not dread death itself, for we know it for what it is. But while we know that each effort counts which we have made with the personal nature, we know, too, the many efforts which we should have made, might have made, and did not make, and we know the Law.

No, it is not dread of death so much as it is dread of the consequences of our failures, sorrow at the thought of the limit to that inner renewing and vision, which goes on after death, which we ourselves have imposed by our own acts or failures to act.

A.

ANSWER.—Hamlet made some famous remarks upon this very question. His fear was of the unknown, of the darkness beyond the tomb. His experience must be that of many, perhaps of the vast majority of mankind. "To die, to sleep; to sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub; for in that sleep of death what dreams may come?"

The fear of annihilation may often be the prime factor in the dread of death. Yet, the wise man cannot fear annihilation, but will rejoice in it. For what is annihilated? Surely not the spirit of man, for that is co-eternal with the spirit of the universe. It is not even the personality which need perish, but only those factors in personal life which cannot be assimilated by the immortal spirit. Is it not a blessing that the law of life and death will enable us to get rid of these finally and completely? As has been well said, "Nothing is meaner than the desire to live on for ever in any shape."

A. X.

QUESTION NO. 300.—*In the Bhagavad Gita insistence is placed upon detachment from works and the sacrifice of works. Would not complete detachment take away the merit of sacrifice? If one views pleasure and pain, riches and poverty, success and failure with equal mind and claims no right to the fruit of one's work, can there be any sacrifice in the offering up of these things?*

ANSWER.—Let us use, instead of detachment, some other phrase, like disinterestedness, freedom from self-seeking, purity of motive, which mean the same; and ask the question: Does purity of motive take away the merit of sacrifice? It is worth while also to ask in what sense we are using merit: are we thinking of the nobility of the sacrifice, or of a possible reward to him that makes it? As to the last question, may not the sacrifice consist in working for that high spirit, in which these things are regarded with equal mind? It is worth while to try the experiment. J.

ANSWER.—In exoteric Christianity sacrifice is seldom conceived apart from moral suffering. But it is well to remember that the root-meaning of the word sacrifice (*sacer*, sacred, and *facere*, to make) makes it synonymous with consecration. To sacrifice one's works is to consecrate them, by performing them consciously and deliberately as an expression of the Divine Self. So long as we have lower natures, they will suffer in every sacrifice; but we may look forward hopefully to a day when our lower natures will have ceased to be. Surely it can never be necessary to keep a false personality for ever, merely for the purpose of suffering through it. A Master is perfected in sacrifice, because his detachment from the reactions, pleasurable or otherwise, of his manifested nature is complete. With his consciousness fixed in the Eternal, he does not say to himself: "Is it not wonderful, that, in spite of my suffering, I am still making this sacrifice?" He suffers in compassion for the stricken souls of others, but let us not confuse the suffering of a spirit labouring for humanity with the pain of a nature divided against itself or with the self-pity of a personality under sentence of death. S. L.

ANSWER.—But one does not often get to the point of viewing these things with equal mind, of claiming no part or right in results, without having, perhaps in some cases for years, made distinct and great sacrifices. It is the sacrifice of self, permanent and consummated, it is the conquering of self, the replacing of self, through the deliberate effort made through sacrifice after sacrifice, with something far greater than self, that brings the new view point, the new motive. Then, it is not sacrifice any more, one *wants* to give everything. But complete detachment, when finally arrived at, will have been through sacrifice, and the merit of that sacrifice will not have been taken away, for in a sense detachment itself must be the reward of that merit. C. R. A.

ANSWER.—Is it not a matter of the Right Performance of Action? The *Gita* teaches this especially, and that the Right Action is that performed with heart and mind concentrated on Krishna. Surely there is no merit in sacrifice for its own sake. But devotion to the Master leads to the performance of action for the Master's service. The man so devoted is detached from the concerns of the personal self, and it is from the standpoint of the personal self that certain actions bear the appearance of sacrifice. Then, again, the question centres upon the acquisition of merit. If action be performed for this object, there is no sacrifice. Is not the instruction in the *Gita* directed towards the performance of action through devotion? Meanwhile discernment between right and wrong kinds of action will lead to many opportunities of sacrifice. A. K.

ANSWER.—Let us try to re-phrase the question, thus: Can there be any merit in the sacrifice of a Master? The answer is, yes. For further information, see the notes to *The Voice of the Silence*, which explain the difference between a Pratyeka Buddha and a Nirmanakaya. This is a question, however, which does not appear vital to those of us who are struggling up the path of discipleship, and who realize that to understand detachment, we must become detached, to understand sacrifice, we must sacrifice, and that all seeming contradictions vanish, as Krishna said, when approached with the sword of experience—the only real knowledge. X. O.



QUESTION No. 301.—*We are told that there is no reality in materiality; if that is so, why is the personal, physical man with his appetites, so difficult of control by the higher, spiritual nature?*

ANSWER.—Matter is force embodied in form. Force is the action of consciousness, and form is the limitation of consciousness, which, however, is always absolutely free to act or not to act, to limit or not to limit itself, for consciousness is the only independent reality in the Universe and nothing exists outside it to move or to constrain it. Matter has no independent reality, but it has a relative reality, reflecting the limitations which we impose upon our actions. But withdraw the force from any form and that particular material manifestation will vanish like smoke. It is difficult to do this, because we have wrongly identified ourselves with the form which we would destroy. Yet we are assured that, if we keep trying, it can be done.

S. L.

ANSWER.—Who was the rash man who made the statement quoted? Surely not a student of Theosophy, who would realize only too well the "reality" of matter *on its own plane*. The sun is more "real" than the fog it dissipates, but the fog, while it lasts, may be a very real obstacle to navigation. It is not, however, by any means necessary that a thing should be real for it to be difficult for the higher nature to control. Maya, the great power of illusion, is terribly potent. Probably the most unreal thing in the world is our idea of ourselves, our vanity; yet few things have more influence over us or are harder for us to master.

J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—It all depends on where the attention is centred. The discoveries of the last twenty-five years have exploded the reality of matter as such, and shown that what we call "matter" is a mode of operation of force and that one substance differs from another according to the vibrations of force operating within it. The difficulty of demonstrating the operations of these forces may serve to illustrate the difficulty for the higher spiritual nature to manifest in the personal physical man. But just as the one can be done, so can the other by the appropriate means and operations. Let the student on these lines read the "Elixir of Life" from *Five Years of Theosophy*, and some of these points will be made clear. Just as the operations of physical science have to be patiently and perseveringly worked for by close application and experiment, so the difficulty of control can be conquered by right attention and by bringing about the right conditions. The centre of life and consciousness has to be shifted from the denser and more impure states of matter, from the personal, physical man, to the higher, spiritual nature; and it is found that one cannot "serve God and Mammon."

A. K.

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#### MEETINGS

The regular meetings of the New York Branch of The Theosophical Society are held on alternate Saturday evenings, at 64 Washington Mews, between Washington Square and East 8th Street. The meetings begin at half past eight, and close at ten o'clock. Meetings will be held on January 3rd, 17th and 31st; February 14th and 28th; March 14th and 28th; April 11th and 25th (Convention Meeting).

Visitors are welcome at these meetings.

JUAN JOSÉ BENZO

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The Theosophical Society has lost an old and valued member through the death of Juan José Benzo, of Caracas, Venezuela. An eloquent tribute paid to him by one of his fellow-members in Venezuela, reveals the spirit he inspired in others, and thus conveys a sense of his own spirit as no words of ours could do. Speaking of him as "that best of comrades and Herculean worker in the cause of Theosophy," who saved the movement in Venezuela "in the black hour of the Chicago Convention in 1898," the writer continues (translated from the Spanish):

"Benzo was the classical type of theosophist who, once affiliated, finds that the Society is his home and that he has been born in a family whose name he has to bear inevitably, and to whose mind it would never occur that he should not be so called. To think of Benzo as not being a Theosophist would be the same as to think of water that was not wet or of fire without heat. Such was his consubstantiality.

"He died heroically. He understood, suffered, was silent, and sacrificed himself. He left behind him a star which gives light in the midst of us, and a fulness in our hearts which makes it impossible to believe that he has died. As was his character, thus we follow it mourning. The interment was an unusual note. It seemed as if we were entertaining an Amphitryon on his name day. All were content and filled with happy auguries for the future of our Movement. We had sent an emissary to the other side of Life to which we had now more ready access and right of entry. A remembrance of him who so greatly loved the Cause and all his comrades."

*Ave, victor triumphans!*

He was and is, of "the Corps"—a cadet in the army of Heaven—and we ask the members in Venezuela to share these well-known lines with us, as we, on behalf of the Society, stand to salute him:

"The Corps! The Corps! The Corps!  
The Corps! bare-headed, salute it,  
With eyes up, thanking our God—  
That we of the Corps are treading  
Where they of the Corps have trod.  
They are here in ghostly assemblage,  
The men of the Corps long dead,  
And our hearts are standing attention  
While we wait for their passing tread.

"We sons of to-day, we salute you,  
You, sons of an earlier day.  
We follow, close order, behind you,  
Where you have pointed the way:  
The long gray line of us stretches  
Thro' the years of a century told.  
And the last man feels to his marrow  
The grip of your far off hold.

"Grip hands with us now though we see not,  
Grip hands with us, strengthen our hearts—  
As the long line stiffens and straightens  
With the thrill that your presence imparts.  
Grip hands, tho' it be from the shadows  
While we swear, as you did of yore,  
Or living, or dying to honour  
The Corps, and the Corps, and the Corps."

---

The Society has also lost an old and most faithful member through the death of

MRS. CARRIE G. GILSON

of Oakland, California, an example of the power of a beautiful spirit and a devoted life. Though burdened by constant illness, she made herself a centre of strength to the Movement by the ardour of her thought and aspiration.

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**INTRODUCTORY:** Culture of Concentration; Echoes from the Orient; Esoteric Buddhism; Idyll of the White Lotus; Meditation; The Occult World; The Ocean of Theosophy; The Theosophical Society and Theosophy.

# The Theosophical Society

Founded by H. P. Blavatsky at New York in 1875



THE Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the finer forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

The organization is wholly unsectarian, with no creed, dogma, nor personal authority to enforce or impose; neither is it to be held responsible for the opinions of its members, who are expected to accord to the beliefs of others that tolerance which they desire for their own.

The following proclamation was adopted at the Convention of the Society, held at Boston, April, 1895:

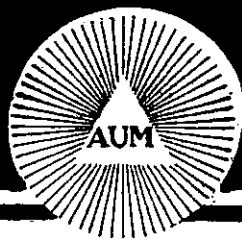
"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling toward all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane, and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a *scientific basis for ethics*.

"And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *path* to tread in this."

Applications for membership should be addressed to the  
Secretary T. S., P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York.



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### THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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#### STORIES OF THE MYSTERIES

**B**ESIDES the great Books of the Mysteries, we may recognize, in the spiritual records of all peoples and all times, a supplementary class of Stories of the Mysteries.

The Dramas of the Mysteries are primarily records of Initiation. Their purpose is, to record, so far as that may be possible, the tremendous spiritual realities that are revealed in Initiation through the transcendental powers of perception which are unfolded by the process of Initiation; to record these realities both for the general instruction of mankind, and for the particular guidance of students of spiritual life, who are consciously working and fighting their way toward Initiation.

A part of the Scriptures of all races and peoples consists of these records of spiritual reality based on knowledge gained through Initiation. The sacred cosmogonies; the descriptions of the remote past and future of the world; the teaching of the spiritual powers, latent in the uninitiated multitude, active in the Initiate; all these must, in so far as they correspond with reality, be records of the wisdom gained through Initiation. They may have been defaced or obscured by transmission; they may have been added to or curtailed; but the central nucleus, if it be real, can have no other source.

This part of the Scriptures we may think of as a record of spiritual science for the general teaching of mankind. The true Scriptures contain, in addition, teaching, the direct purpose of which is the particular guidance of disciples who are treading the path leading to Initiation. And the Scriptures might, in a sense, be graded by the validity and practical availability of these directions, and the distance they will carry the disciple toward his goal, aiding him to prepare for Initiation.

This direct practical purpose of the Sacred Books is described with eloquent simplicity in one of the discourses attributed to the Buddha, which is



named *The Fruit of Discipleship*. As is so often the case in the Buddhist books, it is introduced by a story. King Ajatashatru, namesake of a far earlier king in the period of the older *Upanishads*, desires to find the true way; he visits the famous teachers of religious doctrines, putting to each in turn this question:

"All practical arts and sciences show visible and immediate fruit. Thus the potter makes vessels which are useful to mankind, and the sale of which brings him money. So with the carpenter, the builder and others. Now, I wish to know whether there is in the life of the disciple any visible, tangible and immediate fruit like the fruit obtained by the potter, the carpenter, the builder."

Each of the famous teachers avoids giving a direct answer; one discusses the origin of matter; another, the indifference of all things; another, the complete extinction of consciousness. Ajatashatru protests, with humorous perplexity, that it is as though he had asked about a mango, and had been told about a breadfruit. Finally he comes to the Buddha, who thus replies:

"In this world, O king, a Tathagata is born, who sees and knows the universe face to face, the worlds above and the worlds below; and, having known it, makes his knowledge known to others. The truth, lovely in its origin, lovely in its progress, lovely in its consummation, he proclaims, in the spirit and in the letter; the higher life he makes known in its fulness, in its purity. Thence comes the awakening of him who hears, his renunciation of the world, his self-discipline in act, word and thought, his conquest of avarice, anger, sloth, perplexity, his attainment of joy and peace as he rises through the higher realms of consciousness to truth and mastery." A later passage speaks of the disciple "calling forth from this body another body, having form, made of mind, having all limbs and parts, not deprived of any organ"; the body of the disciple on the way to adeptship. "It is as if one were to draw a reed from its sheath, a sword from its scabbard."

Here, then, is the origin and purpose of what is most real in the Sacred Books: coming from Initiation, they lead to Initiation. The Stories of the Mysteries are guide posts along the sacred way; they reveal and record some aspect of the Mystery Teaching, telling something of the realities which are seen by those who know the universe face to face.

Stories of the Mysteries form a considerable part of the sacred records of Buddhism; they are held to be the words of the Tathagata himself, drawn forth by the questions or acts of his disciples; very often they are cast in the form of an account of the past births of those whom the Buddha is addressing, to throw light on the circumstances of the present birth.

One of them, not, however, the story of a former birth, is known as the Sutta of Kevaddha. It has that rich quality of humour so constantly present in the teachings of the Buddha; a humour which is more characteristic, perhaps, of that great Master, than of any other among the highest Teachers of mankind:



"Once, when the Master was at Nalanda, in the mango garden, a certain Kevaddha, a landlord's son, came to him and said:

"'Master, this our city Nalanda is great, rich, prosperous and devoted to the Master. Would it not be an excellent thing for the Master to bid one of his disciples who possesses occult powers to perform some phenomenal wonder here? Thus would our Nalanda become even more devoted to the Master.'

"But the Master answered: 'Kevaddha, I do not teach my disciples to perform phenomenal wonders for the multitude.'

"Kevaddha said: 'I do not wish to offend the Master, but what I said was that Nalanda is great, rich and prosperous, and that it would be an excellent thing for the Master to bid one of his disciples who possesses occult powers to perform some phenomenal wonder here, for thus would our Nalanda become even more devoted to the Master.'

"Again the Master answered: 'Kevaddha, I do not teach my disciples to perform phenomenal wonders for the multitude.'

"For the third time Kevaddha said: 'I do not wish to offend the Master, but what I said was that Nalanda is great, rich and prosperous, and that it would be an excellent thing for the Master to bid one of his disciples who possesses occult powers to perform some phenomenal wonder here, for thus would our Nalanda become even more devoted to the Master.'

"The Master answered: 'Kevaddha, I teach three wonders: occult powers, occult insight, and occult training. What are these occult powers? They are the powers by which a disciple takes many forms, becomes invisible, rises in the air, walks on the water. If a believer who had seen this should tell it to a skeptic, might not the skeptic say, "Oh yes, that is the Gandhara trick!"'

"'He might say so, Master.'

"'That is why I am opposed to exhibitions of occult powers. And if a disciple should read the thoughts of another, and a believer who had seen it should tell it to a skeptic, might not the skeptic say, "Oh yes, that is the Jewel trick!"'

"'He might say so, Master.'

"'That is why I am so opposed to the exhibition of occult powers. But the third wonder, occult training, teaches a disciple that he should think in this way and not in that way, that he should keep this in mind and not that, that he should shun this and not that. When a Tathagata appears, this is what a disciple should learn. A certain disciple desired to know how the four elements, earth, water, fire and air, dissolve and leave no residue. He meditated so deeply that the inner worlds were revealed to him.

"'He came to the angels of the Four Regents and asked them how the four elements dissolve and leave no residue. But the angels of the Four Regents answered: "Disciple, we do not know how the four elements dissolve. But the Four Regents are more advanced and more perfect than we; they will tell you about the four elements." So the disciple went to the Four Regents and asked them. But they answered, "Disciple, we do not know

how the four elements are dissolved. The angels of the Thirty-three are more advanced and more perfect than we; they will tell you about the four elements." So the disciple went to the angels of the Thirty-three, who sent him to the Thirty-three, who sent him to Indra, who sent him to Yama, who sent him to Suyama; and so it went till he came at last to the world of Brahma.

"He asked the angels of the world of Brahma concerning the four elements, but they answered: "Disciple, we do not know; but Brahma, mighty Brahma, the surpassing, the unsurpassed, the all-seeing, the omnipotent, the Lord, the maker, the creator, the most excellent ruler, the Father of what has been and what shall be, is more advanced and more perfect than we. Brahma will tell you about the four elements."

"Where is mighty Brahma?"

"Disciple, we do not know where Brahma is, or whereby Brahma is, or why Brahma is. But where the shining and the radiance appear, there Brahma will appear, for these are the signs of his presence."

"In no long time there came the shining and the radiance, and mighty Brahma appeared. Thereupon the disciple, approaching, asked him:

"How, Sir, do the four elements, earth, water, fire, air, dissolve without a residue?"

"When the disciple had thus spoken, Brahma said:

"I, O disciple, am Brahma, mighty Brahma, surpassing, unsurpassed, all-seeing, omnipotent, Lord, maker, creator, most excellent ruler, Father of what has been and what shall be."

"A second time the disciple addressed Brahma, saying: "Sire, I did not ask thee whether thou art Brahma, mighty Brahma, surpassing, unsurpassed, all-seeing, omnipotent, Lord, maker, creator, most excellent ruler, Father of what has been and what shall be. I asked thee where the four elements, earth, water, fire, air, are dissolved without a residue."

"A second time mighty Brahma said to the disciple: "I, O disciple, am Brahma, mighty Brahma, surpassing, unsurpassed, all-seeing, omnipotent, Lord, maker, creator, most excellent ruler, Father of what has been and what shall be."

"The disciple put the same question a third time. Then mighty Brahma took the disciple by the arm and led him to one side and said to him: "Disciple, the angels of the world of Brahma think that there is nothing that Brahma does not know, nothing that Brahma does not see, nothing that Brahma does not understand. Therefore I did not answer in their hearing. But the truth is, disciple, that I do not know where the four elements, earth, water, fire, air, are dissolved without a residue. But go, disciple, to the Buddha, and ask him. As the Buddha answers, so it will be."

"So, swift as a homing bird, the disciple came to the Buddha and put his question.

"The Buddha answered him that there is surcease of the four elements in the spiritual consciousness of him who attains Nirvana."

So far this Story of the Mysteries. It has a good many lessons. It shows, for example, that the desire to witness occult wonders was much the same twenty-five centuries ago as in our own days, and that much the same arguments were used to persuade the Masters to produce or permit them. There is a striking likeness of tone between the argument of the Buddha and that of a living Master, who is reported to have written: "It adds no force to our metaphysical truths that our letters are dropped from space on to your lap or come under your pillow. Put that conviction into your consciousness and let us talk like sensible men. Why should we play with Jack-in-the-box?" And this Master goes on to insist on occult discipline, just as the Buddha did. It is further worth noting that, confronted with the report of occult wonders, our modern skeptics replied, as of yore: "Oh yes, that is the Gandhara trick." The Gandhara trick seems to have been a bit of juggling, which created the illusion of invisibility; the Jewel trick had to do with apparent thought-reading; both may have been familiar feats of hypnotism.

It may well be that the Buddha told the story of the disciple to give a graphic picture of the ascending planes of consciousness, and to stress the truth that not all their denizens are possessed of ultimate knowledge, or can solve ultimate problems; yet another lesson which is relevant to many latter day revelations.

Finally, it would seem to be the Teacher's purpose to show that there is only one path along which we can proceed to the solution of cosmic problems, even those which appear to be questions of pure physical science. This is the path through the ascending planes of consciousness, the path of Initiation. Only when the highest consciousness is experienced, when the partition wall is broken down and the twain become one; only when Matter and Spirit are revealed as not opposed in essence, but as the two poles of the one Substance, the Life, can the problems even of pure physics find their final solution. Therefore Brahma, mighty Brahma, the personification of the pole of Spirit, sends the aspiring disciple to the Buddha, in fact to seek Initiation through the guidance of that great Master.

There are in Plato many echoes of the Mysteries and of the records of Initiation, the tradition of which was commonly current in Plato's day. The story of Atlantis admittedly comes through Solon from the hierophants of Egypt, and it would be well worth while to gather from Greek literature all the traditions in which Pythagoras, Solon and Thales and other founders of Greek philosophy and science are said to have gained their wisdom from the sacred schools of Egypt. It is probable that in Egypt, rather than in Greece, we should find the real source and foundation of Hellenic thought, which in its turn is the source of so much of what is best in modern thought, both philosophy and science.

In the *Republic* of Plato there are two famous passages which appear to fall within our category of Stories of the Mysteries. The first is the often quoted parable of the cave dwellers, at the beginning of the seventh book. Humanity in this earthly bondage is likened to men in a cavern-like dwelling, seated with their backs to the entrance, and so fettered and chained

that they cannot turn to the light. At some distance behind and above them is a great fire. Between the fire and the cavern men pass carrying all sorts of utensils and human statues and figures of animals, so that the shadows of these are cast on the wall in front of the fettered men, and the wall further sends them back echoes of the speech of those who are passing outside the door of the cave. Shadows and echoes are their world. Plato goes on to describe the great liberation:

"When any one should be loosed, and obliged on a sudden to rise up, turn round his neck, and walk and look up towards the light, and in doing all these things he should be pained, and be unable, from the splendours, to behold the things he formerly saw the shadows of, what do you imagine he would say, if one should tell him that formerly he had seen trifles, but now being somewhat nearer to reality, and having his face turned toward what was more real, he saw better; and so, pointing out to him each of the things passing along, should question him, and oblige him to tell what it was, do not you imagine he would both be in doubt, and would deem what he had formerly seen to be more genuine than what was now pointed out to him? And if he should oblige him to look to the light itself, would not he find pain in his eyes, and shun it; and turning to such things as he is able to behold, reckon that these are really more certain than those pointed out? But if one should drag him from thence violently, through a rough and steep ascent, and never stop till he drew him up to the light of the sun, would not he whilst he was thus drawn, both be in torment, and be filled with indignation, and after he had even come to the light, having his eyes filled with splendour, he would be able to see none of those things now called genuine. But he would need to be accustomed to it some time, if he were to perceive things above. And, first of all, he would most easily perceive shadows, afterwards the images of men and of other things in water, and after that the things themselves. And with reference to these things, he would more easily see the things in the heavens, and the heavens themselves, looking in the night-time to the light of the stars and the moon, than by day, looking on the sun and the light of the sun. And, last of all, he may be able thoroughly to perceive and contemplate the sun himself, not in water, nor images of him, appearing in any thing else, but as he is in himself, in his own proper region, such as he is. And after this he would now reason with himself concerning him, that it is he who gives the seasons and the years, and regulates all things in this visible region, and that, of all these things which they formerly saw, he is in a certain manner the cause."

Here, once more, we have the path of Initiation, the rough and steep ascent, following which the disciple attains each degree of spiritual consciousness in turn, until at last he enters the light of the Logos, which illumines all things, ordains the successions of cyclic time, and is in a certain manner the cause of all things visible. There need be no doubt about the meaning of the parable: Plato tells us that it represents "the soul's ascent into the region of Intelligence," that is, the Logos.

Even more impressive than the parable itself is its conclusion:

"If such an one should descend and sit down again in the same seat, should not he now have his eyes filled with darkness, coming on the sudden from the sun? And should he now again be obliged to give his opinion of those shadows, and to dispute about them with those who were dazzled, would he not afford them laughter, and would it not be said of him, that having gone above, he was returned with vitiated eyes, and that it was not proper even to attempt to go above, and that whoever should attempt to loose them and lead them up, if ever they were able to get him into their hands, should even be put to death?"

Even more celebrated is Plato's story of Er, son of Arminius, in the tenth book of the Republic, and ending that enigmatic treatise. Er, left for dead on the battlefield, is carried as a shade to the abode of the discarnate, where are visibly presented to him the mysterious workings of the law of rebirth through Karma, the utter destruction of those who are vile beyond redemption, and the liberation of the elect. Er returns to this world on the twelfth day, to reveal what he has seen. Here again, there need be no question as to Plato's meaning:

"If the company will be persuaded by me, accounting the soul immortal, and able to bear all evil and all good, we shall always hold the road that leads above. And justice with prudence we shall by all means pursue in order that we may be friends both to ourselves and to the Gods, both whilst we remain here, and when we receive its rewards, like victors assembled together; and, we shall both here, and in that thousand years' journey we have described, enjoy a happy life."

The thousand years' journey is the traditional period between two incarnations. The same period is given in the sixth book of Virgil's *Aeneid*, which closely follows the lines of the story of Er. It seems certain that the same meaning is conveyed by the thousand years, in the twentieth chapter of the *Revelation*; the serpent, the lower nature, is bound a thousand years, while the higher nature rests in paradise. It may be wise to include the *Revelation* among the Dramas of the Mysteries, a record of Initiation. There is, perhaps, a vision of Masters of the Lodge: the four and twenty elders, "clothed in white raiment."

This brings us back to the wonderful vision in the second book of *Esdras*:

"I, Esdras, saw upon the mount of Sion a great people, whom I could not number, and they all praised the Lord with songs. And in the midst of them there was a young man of a high stature, taller than all the rest, and upon every one of their heads he set crowns, and was more exalted; which I marvelled at greatly. So I asked the angel, and said, Sir what are these? He answered and said unto me, These be they that have put off the mortal clothing, and put on the immortal, and have confessed the name of God; now they are crowned, and receive palms."

Space does not permit us to speak of those authentic Stories of the Mysteries, the Parables of the Kingdom, beyond the suggestion that they fall into

that category. The parable of the Prodigal Son not only depicts the return of a penitent soul, it foreshadows the final return of the soul, the "pilgrim of eternity," when ascent of the steep and rugged way is ended and the cycle of wandering is completed.

There is another class of books to which the name, Stories of the Mysteries, might perhaps be given, though not in the same sense. These books are not records of Initiation, nor are they the work of Initiates. They are rather the testimony of eager, intuitive souls ardently striving toward the light and, through the intensity of their aspiration, catching glimpses of the way before them.

Such a book is the *Pilgrim's Progress*, in which John Bunyan's fervent soul and vivid, pictorial imagination has described the journey "from this world to that which is to come." It is based on real spiritual experience, but the experience of one who is at the beginning of the way, not of the victor who has completed the journey. Bunyan was writing from the depth of his own spiritual trials when he described the crossing of the river of death:

"Then they addressed themselves to the water; and entering, Christian began to sink . . . a great darkness and horror fell upon him, so that he could not see before him. . . ."

We might, perhaps, class with Bunyan's allegory some of George Macdonald's stories. *At the Back of the North Wind* has its passages of intuitive vision and poetic beauty:

"It seemed to Diamond likewise that they were motionless in this centre, and that all the confusion and fighting went on around them. Flash after flash illuminated the fierce chaos, revealing in varied yellow and blue and gray and dusky red the vaporous contention; peal after peal of thunder tore the infinite waste; but it seemed to Diamond that North Wind and he were motionless, all but the hair. It was not so. They were sweeping with the speed of the wind itself towards the sea."

And again, speaking of the cries of the drowning in the sinking ship, North Wind says:

"I will tell you how I am able to bear it, Diamond: I am always hearing, through every noise, through all the noise I am making myself even, the sound of a far-off song. I do not exactly know where it is, or what it means; and I don't hear much of it, only the odour of its music, as it were, flitting across the great billows of the ocean outside this air in which I make such a storm; but what I do hear, is quite enough to make me able to bear the cry from the drowning ship. . . . It wouldn't be the song it seems to be if it did not swallow up all their fear and pain too, and set them singing it themselves with the rest. I am sure it will. And do you know, ever since I knew I had hair, that is, ever since it began to go out and away, that song has been coming nearer and nearer. . . ."

That is a higher and more intuitive note than Bunyan ever reaches. It leads us directly to *Light on the Path*:

"Listen to the song of life. Store in your mind the melody you hear. Learn

from it the lesson of harmony. You can stand upright now, firm as a rock amid the turmoil. . . ."

And this leads us, by natural steps, to the most recent of the great Stories of the Mysteries, though it goes back to ancient Egypt, the *Idyll of the White Lotus*, with its final picture of Initiation:

"I went back to my room and sat down, holding the flower in my hand. It was the same over again as when I had, long ago, a mere child, sat in this same chamber, holding a lily and gazing into its centre. I had a friend, a guide; a union with that unseen Mother of grace. But now I knew the value of what I held; then I did not. Was it possible that it would be again taken from me so easily? Surely no.

"For I could understand its language now. Then it spoke to me of nothing save its own beauty; now it opened my eyes, and I saw; it unsealed my ears, and I heard.

"A circle was round me; such as had surrounded me when I had taught, unknowingly, in the temple. These were priests, white-robed, as those had been who knelt and worshipped me. But these did not kneel; they stood and gazed down upon me with profound eyes of pity and love. Some were old men, stately and strong; some were young and slender, with faces of fresh light. I looked round in awe, and trembled with hope and joy.

"I knew, without any words to tell me, what brotherhood this was. . . ."

We have quoted from many books, of widely separated times and lands and races, these Stories of the Mysteries, guide-posts along the way of immortality. Where is the need of other books, less worthy? Should not all true books record parts of this one mighty epic? What other concern have we, what other destiny, what other hope? This is the path, steep and rugged, yet leading to the sunlit summits, on which our feet should be firmly set, as we strive toward the goal.

# FRAGMENTS

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A GREAT Teacher once said to his disciples what was thus entered in the note-book of one of them: "There are only two things you can do with a principle,—one is to live by it, and the other to die for it. If you can change it, it is not a principle and never has been, no matter how honestly you have believed it to be so."

In answer to questions, further light was shed upon this bit of priceless wisdom, so much needed in the world to-day, when cant and superstition strut in curious garments, and hysteria uses catch-words to stuff its empty brains and justify its vanities and violence.

"Principles," he explained, "are absolute and relative, of course," which is only to say that in this world of reflection—which the mental world is—the images of Eternal things are all that we can possess. Absolute principles, we, as mortals, cannot know, save in highest vision when a man is rapt out of himself and becomes for the moment the Immortal. Absolute principles are aspects of the unchanging nature of God.

Relative principles might be figured as those convictions, or theories if that term be preferred, which unmistakably influence and colour the whole tenor of a man's thought and action. They may have little in common with what he proclaims—quite often they are the reverse; but always are they the things for which he will die before he will surrender them. "Unless a man have convictions which he will die rather than surrender, one cannot, strictly speaking, be justified in saying that he has any principles at all."

As in chemistry: if an element, so-called, can be resolved into composing parts, the analysis has determined beyond dispute that the supposed element was not an element.

We must preserve balance and proportion, those beautiful twins, first-born of detachment. We must not go through life refusing to see facts because they are ugly, or inconvenient, or disparaging to us or to the world about us,—in terms of the *dernier cri* in the present fashion of thinking, "unbrotherly" or "uncharitable,"—a use of words altogether unjustifiable, and evidence of that malign effort in our time to smother with sentimentality those two most glorious ideals which the high gods have striven to impress upon humanity, but which are travestied and made cheap by the cheap men who use them, unknowingly, in the service of the Black Lodge.

CAVÉ.



# A STUDY IN DISCIPLESHIP

## NAPOLEON'S MARSHALS

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IN the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY for October, 1918, Marshal Foch's lectures on the *Principles of War* were reviewed as a practical treatise on the spiritual warfare which each aspirant for chéliship must wage against the evil in his own nature. Though the goal of the inner life may be conceived as eternal peace, it is a peace which can only be won through battle, and its fullest realization may lie in the heart of war. The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. From the days of the Bhagavad Gita, the principles of discipleship have been presented as the principles of war; and by studying the principles of war, those of discipleship may be learned.

In his opening pages, Marshal Foch asks and answers the question as to how the art of war may be studied. Though there are those who hold that "war can only be learned by war," and though there must always be a "special advantage given to the mind by the habit of coming to decisions in the presence of a real adversary, and especially of resisting such emotion as naturally follows a blow," yet, "as a matter of fact, there is no studying on the battlefield. It is then simply a question of doing what is possible to make use of what one knows; and in order to make a little *possible* one must *know* much." Though the Austrians had fought in 1859, in 1866 they showed that they knew less of war than the Prussians, who had not fought since 1815. "The former had waged war without learning anything thereby; the latter had learned the art of war without fighting,"—for they had studied history. "*History must be the source of learning the art of war.*" Thus Marshal Foch answers his own question. In the words of General de Peucker, "the more an army lacks war experience, the more it needs to make use of the history of war for its instruction. Although the history of war is no substitute for actual experience, it can be a foundation for such experience. In peace times it becomes the true method of learning war and of determining the invariable principles of the art of war."

It is the purpose of this article to urge upon all members of The Theosophical Society, and especially upon all aspirants for chéliship, the deeper study of history from this point of view,—that they may learn from it the invariable principles of discipleship, and thus, coming to know much of the predictable effects and demonstrated consequences of each trait of human nature with which they have to deal, make it possible for them to use at least a little of that knowledge upon their battlefields.

Throughout the Society to-day there is much of good intention offered to the service of the Masters, but despite the teaching and experience of fifty years there is still, among the majority of the members, very little of knowledge or real understanding. Like the Austrians, they have waged war without learn-

ing from it. In their individual lives, they have struggled with their own lower natures, but they have seldom adequately analyzed the causes of their victories and defeats, which have therefore left them, perhaps humbler, but little wiser than before. In their local Branch they have worked with their fellows for Theosophy, often consciously striving to act as a group of disciples in the Masters' cause, but too rarely attempting to think out clearly what should be the principles of strategy and tactics which should govern such a collective endeavour, or how the various elements which enter into it can be most effectively used and combined. Indeed sometimes it appears as though there were no clear recognition of what these elements are, and but little comprehension of the dependence of the outer work upon the issue of the members' inner efforts. It is this lack in understanding which the right study of history should supply.

The history of the world is the history of great men. Every historical movement has turned upon a small group of men,—usually upon one *great* man, the central nucleus of the group, who is, in some sense, the incarnation of the cause he serves. "It is not the Roman legions that conquered the Gauls, but Cæsar. Not the soldiers of Carthage caused Rome to tremble, but Hannibal. It was not the Macedonian troops that penetrated as far as India, but Alexander. During seven years Prussia was defended against the three most powerful nations in Europe, not by Prussian soldiers, but by Frederick the Great." These are the words of Napoleon, and, as Marshal Foch comments, "he could have written more, and with still better cause, if he had included that wonderful period of history which he has completely filled with his own personality."

Great men need great instruments. None but Ulysses could bend Ulysses' bow; nor could that bow be corded with a packthread. Greatness is rare. No age produces more than a very few great men,—men who are inherently great in their own right, whose greatness is rounded and symmetric, and not confined to one or two exceptionally developed faculties. But in the nature of such greatness is a spiritual contagion which enables it to give of its own essence, to draw to it those capable of receiving its imprint, and to create in them some measure of likeness to itself. It is thus that the great leader must create his own agencies, forge his own weapons, and fashion the channels through which the power that is in him is to act. There was little evidence of greatness in the early apostles, when Christ first called them to him; but their later record shows that there was the capacity for receiving greatness, of being kindled by some spark of their Master's fire, of reflecting some facet of his spirit. In no two was exactly the same facet reflected; in no one was the reflection perfect. Each could respond but partially, and none could wholly overcome the Hebraic legalism into which they were born, and which, through them, still obscures the meaning of Christ's teaching. Yet through them, also, was liberated the force which revolutionized the western world. "I make use of the most weak to confound the strong, and it is generally in the despised and poor in spirit that my power is chiefly manifested, in order that they may attribute nothing to themselves." The authenticity of these words, spoken by the Master to a little nun in France, sixteen hundred years after his incarna-

tion in Palestine, needs no other proof than that afforded by his first apostles, but it is verified throughout the whole Christian movement. The world has completely misunderstood the principle of strategy there set forth, and, making no distinction between opposite poles, has commonly confused it with its inverted reflection, and has attributed it to the operation of meanness and jealousy. But as we analyze the history of war we shall find no more fruitful cause of failure than that which this strategy minimizes,—the assumption of greatness and independent action by agents who were great only in their union with their chief. Within The Theosophical Society itself, it has been a causal factor in each of the crises through which we have passed.

No adequate analysis of any historical movement or group of men is possible within the limits set by the pages of the *QUARTERLY*, but even the most cursory reference to such an example as Marshal Foch suggests, may serve to indicate some of the lessons in the principles of discipleship which the study of history should teach, and show how inevitably and swiftly the karma of the disciple's unconquered moral faults must work out in disaster to the cause he serves, if there be any slackening of his loyalty, any severance in spirit between himself and his Master. We may see how completely the Master must assume the karma of his disciple, and become, in his own person, the "guardian wall" which holds that karma back,—though the only restraining means he can employ are those furnished by his disciple's loyalty. If this fail, all restraint ceases and the wall is swept away. There is scarcely one of Napoleon's Marshals whose life does not blazon forth this truth. The stepping down of the field of effects, from the spiritual to the material plane, neither obscures nor alters the operation of the principles involved; and as we read the story of Napoleon's last campaigns, and see how narrowly victory was missed, time after time both in battle and diplomacy, despite our knowledge that deeper causes must have existed, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that had but one of those who failed him been able to stand firm, had there been but one real inner conquest in the place of blind, unconscious surrender to the innate tendencies of self, Napoleon's downfall might have been averted, and the whole history of Europe changed.

We need not be concerned, in such a study, with the weighing of evidence and the arriving at a true judgment of any individual character. We may take history as we find it, content only to note what it shows. It is certain that in particular cases the true facts must be unknown to history, and probably quite different from what we have been led to suppose. Napoleon was too great a power to be viewed impartially. Much of our knowledge of him and of his Marshals comes to us through the calumnies of frightened and embittered enemies, or through the panegyrics of self-seeking devotees,—neither of which can be safely trusted. Our interest, however, is not primarily in men, but in the principles their lives illumine; and if the action of these principles can be traced on the very face of the record, we need, for our present purpose, to look no deeper. We may take our texts indiscriminately from the familiar histories and biographies of the era, and I shall myself quote or paraphrase

from any of them, whenever it is convenient to do so, without further acknowledgment or apology.

In Napoleon's selection of his Marshals we may observe three principles which are applicable to the formation of every group of disciples.

1. As the spiritual world is open to all, irrespective of their condition in the outer world, so Napoleon drew his instruments from every walk of life. A stable boy or a son of the old noblesse, an artist or a notary, it mattered not at all what they had been, if their nature were capable of responding to the contagion of his genius, and of rising, in at least some particular, to likeness to it.

2. He held personal valour and indomitable resolution to be primary requisites. He took into his own immediate entourage, where they must be entrusted with the knowledge and execution of his plans, only those whom he had himself seen *dare the impossible*. Until this quality of the spirit has been born and roused in a man, he cannot become a chéla. It is no less essential in the agents of genius; for genius, like chélaship, is the embodiment in man of the creative power of life which transforms the impossible into the possible; which perceives and grasps the potential, hidden from other sight, and by the force of its own will makes of it the actual. But as the Master's vision exceeds the disciple's, so, in their greater undertakings, it will be only the Master who sees the possibility, and the disciple must act without seeing it. He cannot act, or cannot act with the full vigour which is alone capable of achieving success, if the impossible can daunt him,—for then his imagination will inhibit his powers, and a painted stretch of pasteboard will block his advance as surely as would the wall of stone it simulates.

Throughout Napoleon's career, from the turning of his cannon upon the Paris mob and his first crossing of the Alps, it was the "impossibility" of his strategy which made possible his victories. His fate rested always, therefore, upon his ability to command, in his subordinates, an obedience, loyalty and valour, which would act upon the "impossible" as steadfastly and vigorously as upon the possible. His ultimate downfall, the surrender of Paris, and his first abdication, were directly due to the crumbling away of this essential foundation. His Marshals would no longer follow him. The crucial test revealed the slow corrosion their elevation had wrought in the very spiritual quality which had caused it. Their physical courage remained undiminished, but their loyalty and moral valour had been eaten away by their concern for their own rank and dignities. They were no longer willing to front the impossible,—for it is one thing to risk all upon a hope, when hope itself is all one has to risk; it is a very different thing when the height of personal ambition has been attained. It is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

It would be well if modern aspirants for discipleship could be persuaded to give fuller consideration to the fundamental position which valour must occupy among the disciple's qualities. There would be less talk of impossibilities, less puling sentimentality. When "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob" commanded from the burning bush, was it *possible* for Moses, a condemned murderer and fugitive from Pharaoh's justice, to go to

Pharaoh single-handed, to stand before him with the demand for the liberation of the Jews, and to bring them safely out of Egypt? Was it *possible* for Joan of Arc, a peasant girl scarce seventeen, to win the consent of her parents and her Overlord, to make her way across the half of France, infested by English bands, to galvanize a sodden King and court to action, to raise an army, to relieve Orleans, to triumph in pitched battles, to storm walled towns, and to lead her King to his coronation at Rheims? The children of Israel murmured and lost heart; and because of it wandered for forty years in the desert they could have crossed in fewer days. Charles and his councillors thought enough had been risked and won; and so Paris was not taken—despite Joan's pleadings—and it was only after a further score of years, and Joan's martyrdom, that France was freed from English rule. The Commune, the debacle of 1870, the domination of Prussia, and the world war of 1914, were but some of the karmic consequences which the failure of Napoleon's Marshals contributed to entail,—and that karma has not yet run its course.

If we analyze the "faith" which Christ commended, in those upon whom he worked his miracles, we shall find in its essence the refusal to accept defeat. So central for discipleship is this moral valour, this ability to dare and achieve the impossible, that where it exists all else may be forgiven,—for by its sustained exercise all else may be remedied. It is the key to much that would otherwise be obscure, and may account for the acceptance of an aspirant who manifests few other signs of grace. It is more rarely found in age than in youth; for the imagination of youth, turning naturally to the potentialities of the future, has less respect for the actualities of the present, and is less dominated and blinded by them. Its common concomitants are personal ambition and conceit, by which it may be first fostered but must be ultimately destroyed,—by ambition as ambition is attained; by self-conceit as experience is added,—facts which we have already noted, and shall have occasion to note again. It strikes far deeper and more permanent roots in humility; for the humble man sees only the limitations within himself, and when, in faith and obedience to his Master, he succeeds in overcoming these, he knows no other bounds to possibility.

3. The third principle, illustrated by Napoleon's choice of his Marshals, has been described as the principle of eclecticism. It is, in fact, the principle of group effectiveness. One man, of balanced intellect and rounded faculties, even if these be of no unusual calibre, may be a safer dependence and more desirable agent than one of brilliant but erratic gifts. Where, however, action is to be entrusted to a group, a different principle is operative. The union of ten thousand common minds adds nothing to what is already possessed by each separately, whereas the union of ten minds, each of exceptional ability in its own special field, however lacking elsewhere, constitutes an agency of tremendous power. "It is true, one well balanced intellect is needed to control these conflicting energies, and force them to act in harmony on one great plan, or they will only waste themselves on each other. Bonaparte was such a controlling mind, and he cared not how one-sided the spirits were he gathered about him,

if they only had force: he was after *power*, acting in whatever direction. A combination of men, each of whom could do one thing well, must do all things well. Acting on this principle, he never allowed a man of any striking quality to escape him. Whether it was the cool and intrepid Ney, or the chivalric Murat—the rock-fast Macdonald, or the tempestuous Junot—the bold and careful Soult, or the impetuous Lannes, it mattered not. He needed them all, and he thus concentrated around him the greatest elements of strength that man can wield. It is fearful to see the spirits Napoleon moulded into his plans, and the combined energy he let loose on the armies of Europe. Knowing the moral power of great and striking qualities, he would have no leader without them. In this he showed his consummate knowledge of human nature, especially of Frenchmen. Enthusiasm, and the reliance on one they never trusted in vain in battle, will carry an army further than the severest discipline. A company of conscripts would follow Ney as far as a body of veterans a common leader. So would a column charge with Lannes at their head, when with a less daring and resolute man they would break and fly. Moral power is as great as physical, even where everything depends on hard blows. Mind and will give to the body all its force—so do they also to an army" (J. T. Headley).

In a group of *chêlas*, or aspirants for *chêlanship*, this union of dissimilars not only enables the group, as a whole, to be entrusted with responsibility and service in advance of the attainment of any one of its members, but it also promotes the most rapid and symmetric individual growth. Each member is stimulated to strengthen his personal weaknesses—and is compelled to measure them—by the high standards of performance kept constantly before his eyes by those of his fellows who excel where he falls short; while at the same time the friction of close association with those so unlike himself, acts to rub away his angularities and excrescences. United in a common aim and in a common devotion to the Master, reverencing the qualities of his spirit, whether manifesting in him or in one of their own number, and "eagerly anxious" to open their natures to its influx, the sympathetic ties between the members of the group become the channels of a spiritual circulation which carries to each some measure of the attainment of his fellows. The group as a whole, in its rounded symmetry of exceptional powers, serves as a matrix, or mould, which each of its members comes at last to fill with his own person; and when his faculties have been thus developed and fixed, he finds himself able to function on a new and higher plane.

We shall be able to trace very little of this in our study of Napoleon's Marshals. It is true that throughout all the early years they grew with astonishing rapidity in breadth, as well as along the lines of their native powers and genius. What Napoleon said of Lannes, "I found him a dwarf, I lost him a giant," might have been said with equal apparent truth of almost any of the Marshals, had they died, as did Lannes, before the final and crucial test. But it was by Napoleon himself that this growth was elicited and fostered. His Marshals owed everything to him. It was he who was compelled to supplement their deficiencies and to check their excesses; for they consistently and violently refused to learn

anything from one another. So far as inner development is concerned, therefore, they illustrate not the success of their group association, but its failure; and in the final failure, in which they separated themselves from Napoleon, they revealed the continued lack of symmetry of their proportions and the unaltered smallnesses in their natures.

The failures of history, however, have as much to teach us as the successes, and their lessons may be better suited to our need. Every occult power is a two-edged sword, cutting backward or forward in whichever way it is pressed. The same principles of group life that promote the development of the chéla's higher faculties, when animated by devotion to the Master and the hunger for spiritual possessions, must be equally potent in arousing and augmenting the lower nature in one whose loyalty is dependent upon self-interest, and whose aim is personal aggrandizement. As *Light on the Path* points out, the "power which the disciple shall covet is that which shall make him appear as nothing in the eyes of men." The "possessions" he is to desire are those which "must belong to the pure soul only, and be possessed, therefore, by all pure souls equally." The more of honour and wisdom, devotion and loyalty our fellows exemplify, the more we are ourselves stimulated and aided to grow in them. "So nobleness enkindleth nobleness." There can be no exclusion in the infinite world of spiritual reality,—no crowding out of truth by truth, or of attainment by attainment. But the mirror of popular acclaim is small, and can reflect but little at a time; to turn it in one direction is to turn it away from another. Therefore if our aim be not honour but honours, not wisdom but the reputation of being wise, not devotion and loyalty but the special favours and rank which we deem should be their reward, other merit than our own must seem a stumbling block in our path, and every promotion given to another appear as a slight to ourselves. True brotherhood is impossible while the heart is set upon self and its images; it can exist only in loyal devotion to another and in a common aspiration to the Real.

Regarded as a group, therefore, the primary cause of the failure of Napoleon's Marshals lies in the completeness of their externalization, and the consequent inner blindness that caused them to substitute the shadow for the substance, the reflection for the real. Spiritual capacities of a high order existed among them, but they show little evidence of a selfless love of spiritual possessions for their own inherent value. The last thing to which they would have owned was any need or desire to grow in honour or wisdom, devotion or loyalty. For the most part they were obsessed with the conviction that they already possessed these qualities in overflowing measure, and were preoccupied in endeavouring to force a like conviction upon the Emperor and the world. Any appearance of personal shortcomings could be only the result of cruel and unjust misunderstanding, to which they were subjected by prejudice, envy, or the unwarranted suspicion engendered by the slander of their enemies. Any greater recognition given to another, any evidence of higher attainment than their own, became as gall to their wounded vanity,—something they could not and would not brook; to be followed by childish sulks, bitter complaints and recriminations, and en-

during enmities, undermining first their loyalty to each other and then to the Emperor. We cannot wonder, therefore, that they illustrate the failure rather than the success of group association. Friction between such high explosives can result only in disaster.

Do what Napoleon might, he could not cure this self-seeking of his Marshals, nor guard them and France from its consequences. He raised them to rank and dignities and gave them power, beyond anything of which they could have dreamed in the early days; but ambition, once become dominant, knows no slaking and feeds upon itself. The more is given it, the more it hungers. Admonition and rebuke served only to drive the evil beneath the surface, and proved as ineffective as appeals to their loyalty and the promise that he would himself care for their interests. His letters reflect his unceasing efforts. Thus, in a letter dated March 29th, 1808, he writes to Murat, then in Spain:

"I will attend to your private interests; do not trouble yourself about them . . . Let no personal project occupy your thoughts, or guide your conduct; that would injure me, and would injure you still more."

At the same time he writes at length, warning Murat of the complexities and difficulties of the situation in Spain, and urging him to do nothing to commit the French to one side or the other, or to precipitate a crisis.

"Events have been singularly complicated by the transaction of the 20th of March. I find myself very much perplexed. Do not believe that you are about to attack a disarmed people, or that you can, by merely showing your troops, subjugate Spain. . . . You will have to do with a new people. It has all the courage and will display all the enthusiasm, shown by men who are not worn out by political passions. The aristocracy and the clergy are the masters of Spain. If they are alarmed for their privileges and existence, they will bring into the field against us levies *en masse*, which might eternize the war. I am not without partizans. If I present myself as a conqueror, I shall have them no longer. . . . My opinion is that nothing should be hurried forward, and that we should take counsel of events as they occur. . . . I do not approve of the step which your imperial highness has taken in so precipitately making yourself master of Madrid. The army should have been kept ten leagues from the capital. . . . I shall hereafter decide on what is finally necessary to be done. You will not pledge me to an interview in Spain with Ferdinand unless you consider the state of things to be such that I ought to acknowledge him as King of Spain. . . . You will manage so that the Spaniards shall have no suspicion which part I mean to take. You will find the less difficulty in this *as I do not know myself*. You will make the nobility and clergy understand that, if the interference of France be requisite in the affairs of Spain, their privileges and immunities will be respected. . . . You will speak of the splendour of religion, which owes its establishment to the Concordat which I have signed with the Pope. You will explain to them the advantages they may derive from political regeneration—order and peace at home, respect and influence abroad. Such should be the spirit of your conversation and your writings. Do not hazard anything hastily. . . ."



But Murat has already seen a glittering vision of himself as King of Spain, Emperor of the Americas. "Behold at length the moment of recompense had arrived. . . . On whom should the Emperor bestow so splendid a gift but on the man who had borne the burden and heat of the conquest. . . . All Napoleon's brothers and all his sisters had received their share of the conqueror's liberalities. Caroline alone, despite entreaties, tears, cajolery and indignation, had as yet failed to obtain for her husband the crown, which they had so long and so ardently coveted" (*Napoleon and King Murat*, Espitalier).

What could Napoleon's counsel and commands effect in the intoxication of that vision? How was it possible for Murat to believe that "the state of things was such" that Ferdinand should be recognized and established in the kingship which seemed within his own grasp? No, now was the time not for delay but for action. The crisis must be precipitated. His turn must come. "It was to bring matters to a head that he provoked a rising in the heart of the capital which he forthwith repressed, but in a manner so remarkable that his conduct on that occasion can only be ascribed to widely different motives from those which he alleged as the grounds of his action" (Beugnot, *Mémoires*).

Long afterwards, at St. Helena, Napoleon speaks thus to Las Casas: "The impolicy of my conduct in reference to Spain is irrevocably decided by the results. I ought to have given a liberal constitution to the Spanish nation and charged Ferdinand with its execution. . . . That unfortunate war with Spain was a real affliction. It was the first cause of the calamities of France. . . . I was charged in that affair with perfidy, with laying snares, and with bad faith, and yet I was completely innocent. Never, whatever may have been said to the contrary, have I broken any engagement or violated my promise either with regard to Spain or any other Power. . . . I could have preserved myself from these imputations by a little hypocrisy or by giving up the Prince of Peace to the fury of the people. But the idea appeared horrible to me, as if I was to receive the price of blood. Besides it must also be acknowledged that Murat did me a great deal of mischief in the whole affair."

The superior must take the responsibility of his subordinate's actions, even as the Master assumes the karma of the disciple. Neither can protect himself if the restraining bonds of loyalty and obedience yield to the pull of ambition and of self.

There is nothing to show that to the day of his death Murat had the least recognition of what he had done, or of how impossible his own acts had made it for Napoleon to give him the throne of Spain. When he learned that he was to be made King of Naples, and that Joseph was to be transferred to Madrid, he took to his bed in a fever of chagrin and disappointment—the first of many such attacks—but even from his bed he set his agents to work for the aggrandizement of his new position and to obtain everything possible for it from Napoleon. Appointed, in the words of Berthier, to be "his people's King, but his Emperor's Viceroy," he sought to be the first and not the second, rebelling more and more openly against all subordination. "For five years he refused to obey his brother-in-law, for five years he thwarted his plans and carried on an under-

hand warfare against him, till at last he emerged an open and avowed traitor to his Emperor and to France."

We have no space to follow his history here, but we commend its study to all who would trace the karma of vanity and the psychic illusions which it breeds. As has been shrewdly observed, "he lived always in an atmosphere of his own creation." To himself he was always the paladin of romance, and not even the tinsel of his white plumes and blue tights, his caperings and gesturings and his utter lack of statecraft,—no, not even the treachery into which his vanity led him and in which he was engulfed,—could wholly hide the germ of inner truth, the potentiality of the soul, from which the illusion sprang. Speaking of the battle on Mt. Tabor, where he had won instant promotion for the splendour of his personal daring and prowess, he is reported to have said that in the hottest of the fighting he thought of Christ, and of his transfiguration on that very spot nearly two thousand years before, and that from that thought there came to him ten-fold courage and strength. As one of his biographers remarks, "This single fact throws a flood of light on Murat's character, and shows what visions of glory often rose before him in battle, giving to his whole movement and aspect a greatness and dignity that could not be assumed."

Does it seem far fetched to think that if he could have conquered his ambition and his vanity, held himself loyal to his cause and his commander, kept open the channel of thought through which courage and strength increased in him ten-fold, and brought these and his troops to the service of Napoleon in the last critical years, the whole history of Europe might have been changed?

If we turn from Murat to Bernadotte, instead of the vanity of a child, dreaming dreams and resentful that others will not take them seriously, we find a boastful conceit, full-grown and malignant with envy, from the first glimpse that history gives of him. But we have said enough of the great betrayals to show that in war as in occultism, "Ambition is the first curse," and to point the way for such further historical study of its workings as our readers may be led to give. Let us look now, for a moment, at some one of the multitude of lesser betrayals, prompted by the fits of sulks or hurt feelings, personal jealousies or quarrels, which were continually breaking out between Napoleon's Marshals, and which time and again brought on defeat or lost the fruits of victory.

St. Cyr and Moreau may serve as an example. St. Cyr has been ranked as one of the ablest tacticians Napoleon had. "Cold as ice in an emergency," in him "consummate art took the place of a vivid imagination," and "calculation replaced the inspirations of genius so closely that he even knew when he *ought* to be moved by impulse." His conduct at Polotsk and his defence of Dresden show his capacities, but of his service under Moreau, on the Rhine, his biographer is compelled to write as follows:

"At the outset an unhappy cause of division arose between the two generals, which never healed, and ended finally in open rupture. Not satisfied with dividing the army into four corps, each complete in itself, with cavalry, artillery, etc., thus leaving much discretionary power to each general, Moreau insisted on taking the separate command of one corps himself. This St. Cyr

opposed on the ground that his attention would be too much taken up with the affairs of this single corps, and the general movements of the army neglected. The end proved that he was right; but Moreau, persisting in his arrangements, as he most certainly had a right to do, the co-operation of the former was not so hearty and generous as it ought to have been. Thus, at the battle of Engen, and afterwards at Maeskirch, where Moreau was hard pushed, and came near losing the day, St. Cyr did not arrive on the field till the fight was over. The officers around Moreau accused St. Cyr of treachery, and of keeping back on purpose to allow the army to be cut to pieces. But the truth is the latter, *offended at Moreau's procedure*, ceased to concern himself about his movements and confined himself to his own corps. He would not stir without orders, and seemed determined to make Moreau feel the necessity of changing his conduct by *acting the part of a mere machine; moving or stopping as he was bidden and doing nothing more*. Such independent dilatoriness would have cost him his place at once under Bonaparte. His tardiness during the battle of Maeskirch saved the Austrians from a total rout. His excuse for not coming up was that he had received no orders, though Moreau insisted he had sent them. It made no difference, however; he was in hearing of the heavy cannonading in front, and knew that a tremendous struggle was going on, and the fate of an army, perhaps, sealing. Had Desaix acted thus at Marengo, Bonaparte would have lost Italy. Not only did *he* have no orders to march on Marengo, but counter ones to proceed to Novi—yet no sooner did he hear the distant roll of cannon towards the former place than he put his army into motion, and marching it at the top of its speed, arrived just in time to turn a ruinous defeat into a victory."

How much impertinence, sullen insubordination and covert treachery can lie within such a pretence of compliance with orders, such hypocritical semblance of support, rendered with the secret hope that it may fail, and in its failure justify oneself and condemn one's superior! How many high enterprises of discipleship have not been wrecked by this minimum of obedience which is no obedience at all. And how vastly surprised and bitterly indignant those are, who indulge themselves in it, when their karma overtakes them and they are repaid in something of their own coin.

"The next day, however, St. Cyr would have wiped out the remembrance of this negligence, by crushing the Austrian army to pieces, had Moreau not been full of suspicions and averse to everything but the most mathematical regularity. The Austrians, in their retreat, were crowded on the shores of the Danube, in a sort of half circle, made by the bend of the river; so that there was no room to manœuvre, while consternation was visible in their ranks. St. Cyr, though cool and steady, saw at once that by a firm and impetuous charge, he could roll the whole unwieldy mass into the river, and waited anxiously the order to advance. In the meantime he brought forward some of his guns, and trained them on the close packed troops of the enemy. Finding, however, that his cannonading failed to draw the attention of Moreau to the spot, he sent an officer to him requesting permission to charge. But the former refused, either from too great prudence, or, as it is more probable, from want of con-

fidence in the good faith of his general. The opportunity slipped by, and the Austrians made good their passage over the Danube."

St. Cyr had revenged himself on Moreau, and Moreau on St. Cyr; and France paid for both.

We have urged that history be studied as the moving pictures on a screen which depict the outward working and karmic consequences of every inner quality of the human spirit; and we have advanced the thesis that in war, as in discipleship, each inner fault and weakness that is capable of loosening the bonds of loyalty between the subordinate and his chief, must work out swiftly and inevitably in disaster to their common cause. The examples we have so far adduced have been of the cruder vices; and it may, perhaps, be held to require little demonstration that overweening vanity and ambition, personal quarrels and jealousies, should spell defeat where unity is obviously necessary for success. Let us turn, therefore, to a subtler fault,—one which, indeed, is more often considered a virtue than a fault, by those who are afflicted with it,—the habit of sitting in judgment upon all about them, and the insistence upon deciding everything for themselves.

Like Marshal St. Cyr, Marshal Marmont was a son of the smaller nobility, and had been destined and trained for the profession of arms from his boyhood. His father had given him as a motto, "Merit without success is infinitely better than success without merit, but determination and merit always command success." He early distinguished himself, and was given a position on Napoleon's staff. He made a romantic marriage, which turned out most unhappily, and this tended to embitter him and to encase him still further in self. The first incident that we need note is described by an English biographer, whose portrait of Napoleon is so black that everyone else is whitewashed in comparison.

"The Minister of War wanted detailed information regarding the English preparations against invasion, and Bonaparte offered to send his aide-de-camp as a spy. Marmont indignantly refused to go in such a capacity, and a personal estrangement nearly took place. Their standards had nothing in common; in one honour could conquer ambition, in the other ambition knew no rules of honour" (*Napoleon's Marshals*, R. P. Dunn-Patterson).

We shall be concerned to examine the nature of Marmont's "honour" as his life developed it.

From the same biographer we may learn of Marmont's reported prediction to Junot, that Bonaparte would seize the crown upon his return from Egypt, and, later, of his resentment at Bessier's inclusion in a new list of Marshals while he himself was passed over. The Emperor explained to him that his own turn would come soon, but that this was Bessier's only chance. "In spite of this the neglect rankled, and from that day he was no longer the blindly devoted follower of Napoleon." Napoleon's judgment stood condemned in his eyes.

We turn next to his campaign in Spain, where Joseph, for whom Marmont had small respect, had been made King. Napoleon's orders to him, as Massena's successor over the army of Portugal, were precise and peremptory. "But,"

we quote now from J. T. Headley, "Marmont, discouraged, and averse to the position in which he was placed, showed a dilatoriness and want of energy that materially injured the plan of operations marked out for him. . . . But, soon after, he first redeemed his errors, then crowned them by one greater than all, at the battle of Salamanca." Marmont, faced by the Duke of Wellington, resumed the offensive and determined to open his communication with Joseph, which the English had cut off. Joseph was marching up to his relief. "If the two armies could effect a junction the English general was lost, and he strained every nerve to prevent it. Then commenced a series of marches, manœuvres and military evolutions, seldom if ever surpassed by any army." Marmont both outgeneralled and outmarched his adversary. He won the race for Contalpine, where Joseph could join him, "and at night Wellington halted his troops with the painful conviction that he was outflanked," and that Marmont and Joseph together could drive him before them in confusion.

"But at this crisis Marmont overthrew all his hopes, and by one of those rash and inconsiderate movements ruined his army and deeply tarnished his fame." If he waited for Joseph and Jourdan, he would be superseded in his command; decisions would be taken out of his hands and placed in hands he did not trust, and the glory of the victory, too, would be theirs. Had it not been for this unconquered weakness in Marmont's nature—that he could respect no one but himself—"statues to the Duke of Wellington would not have filled, as now, the public squares and edifices of England." Marmont did not wait for Joseph and certain victory. He attempted an encircling movement with his own forces, and laying himself open to attack, gave Wellington his chance. Instead of the victory that was within his grasp, Marmont was utterly defeated, his army crushed and routed, and he himself borne from the field with a wound which lost him his arm.

"Bonaparte was filled with indignation. . . . He declared that Marmont's dispatch to him, explaining his defeat, had more trash and complication in it than a clock. He ordered the Minister of War to demand why he had delivered battle without orders from the King—why he had not followed out the general plan of the campaign—why he had taken the offensive, when sixteen or seventeen thousand men were in two days' march to reinforce him. In conclusion he was forced to think that he had sacrificed to vanity, the glory of his country and the good of the common cause. Still, remembering his old friendship, he, in the height of his just wrath, ordered all these questions to be delayed, till Marmont had entirely recovered from his wounds."

These early incidents, revealing Marmont's distrust of all other judgment than his own, and his inability to yield the decision to another, explain, as does nothing else, his part in the closing scenes of the Napoleonic drama. In 1814, he fought brilliantly beside the Emperor to check the Allies' advance on Paris. When left alone with Mortier, he continued the struggle, so long as he himself felt that there was a possibility of success. Though Mortier was his senior, it was Marmont who made all decisions; and when his own judgment told him that the odds were too heavy against them, he was obsessed with the need

to act upon that judgment while he was still in a position to give it effect. Napoleon had passed Fontainebleau, "burning the road" and leaving dying horses in his track, in his speed to reach his capital and to reinforce its defence. Twelve hours more and he would be there. Twelve hours more and the decision would be no longer in Marmont's hands. Marmont surrendered Paris.

But Napoleon himself was still a power to be reckoned with; and it was only the refusal of his Marshals to follow him further—with Ney's curt statement that the troops would obey their commanders—that prevented his continuing the struggle. Finally he agreed to yield, if an abdication would be accepted in favour of his son, and Caulaincourt, Ney and Macdonald pressed this upon the Czar, who had promised to respect the desires of the French people.

But once more Marmont must act on his own judgment, contemptuous of all opinion but his own, and distrustful that the Emperor might yet withdraw his assent. In his own eyes further effort was useless, and therefore, to his peculiar temperament, it became his duty to prevent Napoleon from further sacrificing his troops and imposing a hopeless struggle upon France. On the night in which the Czar was to decide the question of the regency, Marmont ordered his twelve thousand troops to leave Napoleon's camp, and moved them over to the Allies. The men, when they found they had been betrayed, swore at their leaders in helpless fury. But it was then too late. When the news reached the Czar, he exclaimed to Pozzo de Borgo, "You see, it is Providence that wills it; no more doubt or hesitation now."

The Empire was at an end.

Between such "honour" and black treachery, only Marmont could distinguish; and to that task the remainder of his life was given.

We have quoted enough. Let us close our books, and give our imagination rein. What if our parallel were more than a parallel? Are the great Masters of life concerned only with individual souls, or with lilies and churches, lepers and rheumatic scrubwomen? Have they no interest in the fate of nations, no love and reverence for national genius, no will to preserve for the future what has been won so hardily from the past? Are they themselves not warriors and generals in the inner world, and must not their disciples in the outer world have some measure of likeness to them? In what more likely place should we look for their agents than in the wars where national existence was at stake? Why should not Napoleon, Cæsar, Alexander, have been disciples,—their aides disciples of less degree? Disciples are not perfect men; they are those whose devotion enables them to dare the impossible. Such work must be dirty and perilous; but someone must do it. It must require the surrender of vision that has been gained; of refinements that have been won. It must be like a diver, working in the mud and weeds of a harbour bed, far beneath the surface,—a bursting pressure in his ears and lungs, able to see but dimly, if at all, and all his faculties and movements hindered by the armour in which he is encased,—or as a man working among savages beyond the outposts of civilization. There is no telling what his fate may be; he takes his life in his own hands, trusts it to

his own powers and to the powers and fidelity of his comrades. Must there not be such adventures as this by the servants of the Lodge?

If we think of Napoleon and his Marshals thus, as disciples of greater or less degree, how then does their adventure seem to us? Did they fail wholly? They lifted France from the mire of the Revolution and saved her to the world,—saved her to save Europe and civilization. What if they did fall the victims of their own weaknesses, blacken their souls with treachery and dishonour? So does the diver drown when his life line fouls; so does the Alpine climber fall when giddy with mountain sickness, or when his rope frays and parts on a crag; so are men slain in battle; so are they crushed by tasks too great for them, which they yet dared, and which, even in their own death, they in some measure achieve.

Were our fancy true, and not mere fancy, what would be their souls' desire, when their task was done? Would it not be the same as that of any other soldier returning from the trenches, any other adventurer, again, for a brief time, in touch with civilization? I think it would be first to go and *wash*; to scrub away the slime and filth that covered them, and to feel themselves once more human and civilized. And next, I think that they would want to overhaul their kit,—to patch it up and supplement it in the light of their experience, profiting from the lessons of their failures. They would deem the time well spent in this, before they turned again to where it would be impossible. Once in the wilderness, there is no going back for what has been overlooked; no possibility of replacing a frayed rope by a new. One must then do the best one can with what one has; and if the rope breaks, it breaks.

Therefore, if they could have asked a guerdon of the Lodge they served, I think it would be this: that they be given the chance to conquer, once and for all, the faults that had betrayed them; that they be permitted one brief incarnation in the light, an incarnation in which they could *see*,—as preparation for a new adventure in the dark, where they would again be blind.

Fate was kinder to Napoleon than to his Marshals, for he had earned more than they; and therefore he had his years at St. Helena, in which to review and fasten on his soul the lessons of his mistakes. But there was then little possibility of remedying them, of correcting whatever he found amiss within himself. His soul, too, must have craved the chance to work upon itself with open eyes.

Perhaps they were granted that guerdon. Perhaps, as the reward of all they dared and did in the century that has gone, and in preparation for the "Next time" that is to come, they may have *earned* such privileges as are now ours,—ours as the unearned gifts of the Masters' great compassion,—the chance to work, in the white light of the theosophic teaching and with open eyes, upon those unconquered "little" faults that cause disaster.

HENRY BEDINGER MITCHELL.

# THE TOTAL ECLIPSE

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SCIENTIFICALLY trained members of the T. S. and students of *The Secret Doctrine* of Madame Blavatsky undoubtedly may explain something of the occult significance of total eclipses. Such a great aspect of the recent phenomenon is not one which this particular writer is qualified to discuss. What has been living in his mind since its occurrence is the question of what may be revealed by some of the human reactions to the total eclipse in 1925.

Anyone who has ever been at all in contact with astronomers and astrophysicists knows how they look forward to a total eclipse. Months of time are spent in preparation for accurate observation and for its accumulation of material for later study. When it has been necessary, hard and even dangerous trips have been made to lonely isles of the Pacific and Indian Oceans or into the heart of fever-laden wildernesses. No effort, no sacrifice has seemed too great to be given to the effort to get for science whatever those rare and vital one hundred and twenty seconds of time may present.

This year a total eclipse was made easily accessible to hundreds of thousands of Americans of all classes and grades. What did the experience reveal?

The newspapers did their best—according to their standards. As a well-known “popular science” writer has put it: “Nothing has ever been better press-agented than this total eclipse.” The result was that hundreds of thousands of people determined that they would see the eclipse in the path of totality. There was an enormous outpouring of physical effort, in circumstances of physical inconvenience, on the part of those thousands of excited and emotional Americans, of all classes, of all races, and of all grades of intelligence. They called this effort “sacrifice.” To many of them it meant getting up early in the morning, dressing in chilled rooms, motoring in the cold, or travelling in stuffy, overheated railway cars, and then trudging over ice and snow to slippery hill tops, where winds swept with unrelenting frigidness.

What was it which really inspired such an outpouring of energy? Was it that devotion to science, so praised by the author of *Light on the Path*? Undoubtedly praiseworthy motives controlled many, especially those associated with scientific parties from the astronomical observatories and physical laboratories of our universities and colleges. But was it self-sacrificing devotion to science—or to what—that inspired this great twentieth century crusade from comfortable homes to the frozen country side?

Among those who are fortunately ignorant, that is to say, whose ignorance has not been complicated by undue development of the psychic nature, there was undoubtedly a strong personal reaction to totality. To such a nature there was something appalling, and hence impressive, in the blanketing of the sun, slowly conquered by the onward-moving moon. Awe was excited in such



natures by the stupendous changes and aspects wrought by what the Chinese call the swallowing of the Sun by the dark dragon of the Moon. But, at least over the Connecticut hillside, there were few such people of fortunate ignorance. Most of them were unwittingly ignorant in that they thought themselves wise, whereas they were dominated by psychism. To the astronomers and scientists, the eclipse, undoubtedly, was impressive. Perhaps on a few meditative persons it may have made a deep impression, stimulated wholesome awe and respect for the Powers That Be, whatever their nature.

But it is a good deal to ask of a thrill-mongering, sensation-seeking people that they be impressed by reality, even on the physical plane. Most of the people who saw the eclipse were secretly disappointed in it as a spectacle. They could not have explained why. They did not try to explain. They rested content in the gratification of having something that others did not have. Pleasure came to them from the consciousness that they were among the comparatively limited few who participated in totality. This gave them that sense of personal superiority, which may explain why people buy books they do not enjoy, or automobiles they cannot afford, and indulge themselves in other similarly ridiculous ways.

Yet there was an opportunity to be seized in studying one's own reactions to the great spectacle. It was a clinical demonstration, available to any thoughtful person, of the probable validity of the Oriental analysis of varying planes of human consciousness.

The eclipse may not have been impressive as a simple, visual spectacle, without support from understanding, memory, will, and imagination. There was nothing to gratify Kama Manas in it. The psychic desire did not obtain gratification at the moment of totality. Psychism was awakened only in the sense of separateness, from having something that others could not have, both before and after the eclipse; but at the moment there was in most cases only the reaction of disappointment. "Is this all that I get for all that I have given?" was probably the unspoken comment of thousands.

It was only as one controlled psychism and emotionalism, to rise to the right use of imagination, memory and understanding, that the full meaning of what one was watching could be at all appreciated.

Perhaps the most impressive thoughts were these: astronomers and physicists, by study and application of their observations, have worked out laws which enabled them to say that in this small strip of territory at a set time there would be totality, and not half a mile away or five minutes earlier or later. Second came the thought of how insignificant we human beings are, as physical factors. In the crowds that tramped from train to hill top there was a sense of overpowering numbers; but in that strange light of amazing shadows and revealed true values, there came a sensation of the pitiable insignificance of the human race on the purely physical plane.

The third interesting reaction was the thought that it is only through ignorance that the Solar God in man can be eclipsed by the Lunar Dragon of

sin. The corona gave light and proved the immortality of solar life, even when the pall was completely drawn.

In the light of the revelation of the silliness and stupidity of psychism, selfishness, and separateness, within oneself at such a time, it is interesting to see how controlling these lower factors attempt to be in all one's attitude towards life. How much of my so-called "sacrifice" is really for others, and how much is inspired by self-indulgence and self-gratification?

Moreover, times come in one's life when it seems as if the lunar, or lower self—so graphically portrayed in *The Voice of the Silence*—were totally eclipsing the solar or higher self, within one's own sphere of consciousness. Panic and surrender may begin. If so, the teachings of the past should take the place of the plans of the astronomers and astrophysicists in regard to the total eclipse of the sun. It is for us to plan and prepare for eclipses within ourselves, and to make sure that they shall be ephemeral in effect, not permanent in their reactions and hence death-dealing. We know that under the law of cycles the lunar body will swing across our consciousness, with all its dread darkness revealed, no longer camouflaged by stolen light reflected in inversion. We may prepare for this. We may be ready even to learn its lesson. We may be on guard against its reactions and their residua. We may even use it to awaken love, praise, and thankfulness that the Centre of our own solar system cannot be obscured in fact. If, in moments of dryness or darkness, we are prepared to watch for the corona of the immortal true self—"proved servant to Master and loyal brother to all Seekers"—we shall rejoice in the beauty and power of the "Solar God"—our Higher Self—and know that It is the Warrior of *Light on the Path*: "—then will he fight in thee and fill the dull void within. And if this is so, then canst thou go through the fight cool and unwearied, standing aside and letting him battle for thee. Then it will be impossible for thee to strike one blow amiss. But if thou look not for him, if thou pass him by, then there is no safeguard for thee. Thy brain will reel, thy heart grow uncertain, and in the dust of the battle-field thy sight and senses will fail, and thou wilt not know thy friends from thy enemies. He is thyself, yet thou art but finite and liable to error. He is eternal and is sure. He is eternal truth."

Each day of our lives—if we be students of Theosophy half as eager and energetic as are students of astronomy and astrophysics—we may find great events happening in the celestial dome of our own consciousness. These we may use or abuse. If we use them, we may progress in the science of right living. If we abuse them they will be feeders of the psychic and producers of evil, just as fully as in the case of the thrill-mongers and sensation-seekers who watched the total eclipse of 1925. The High Gods offer us heaven daily. Why, oh! why will we insist upon remaining in hell. We are "as the gods" in our power to choose. What idiocy not to exercise our divine privilege! Our sin would be folly—were it not for the seriousness of the harm it does—especially to those who love us.

SERVETUS.

# CHHANDOGYA UPANISHAD

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## THE PARABLE OF THE SUN

THE closing verses of this Parable of the Sun tell us that it is a part of the Secret Teaching; more than that, it is a part of the primeval wisdom impressed on the minds of the earliest human beings by the Divine Spirit who presided over the inception of our race. We should, therefore, be prepared to find in it many spiritual meanings, each in conformity with the Secret Doctrine.

First, there is the teaching regarding the sun. We may take as a basis of comparison what has been said of the sun by an Aryan Master, summed up in these words: "The sun is neither a solid nor a liquid, nor yet a gaseous glow, but a gigantic ball of electro-magnetic Forces, the store-house of universal life and motion, from which the latter pulsate in all directions, feeding the smallest atom as the greatest genius with the same material unto the end of the Maha Yuga." In this sense, therefore, "the sun is the honey of the bright powers," the term *Deva*, which has been translated "bright powers," and which comes from a root meaning "shine" or "radiate," including the bright powers on all planes, up to the most spiritual, the various classes of Planetary Spirits, who, descending into incarnation in our world, become human beings, and who are destined to reascend to the divine worlds.

Regarding the appearance of the succeeding veils or vestures of the sun, there is a close correspondence between the observations of modern astronomy and what is taught in this Upanishad. There is, first, the "red form" of the sun, the rose-coloured chromosphere, a part of which was plainly visible to the naked eye during the recent eclipse, and which could, therefore, have been seen as easily during any total eclipse ten thousand years ago. It is a throbbing, surging veil of shining rose colour, which encloses the luminous globe of the sun with a covering many thousands of miles deep. Within it is the "luminous form," now called the photosphere, from which we receive the sunlight, shining through the rose-coloured veil. Astronomy has discovered that the luminous globe of the sun is not a continuous surface, but is made up of immense luminous flakes or grains, which, because of their shape, have been compared to grains of rice or willow leaves. Sir John Herschel said of them: "The definite shape of these objects, their exact similarity one to another . . . all these characters seem quite repugnant to the notion of their being of a vaporous, a cloudy, or a fluid nature. . . . Nothing remains but to consider them as separate and independent sheets, flakes . . . having some sort of solidity. . . . Be they what they may, they are evidently the immediate sources of the solar light and heat. . . . Looked at from this point of view, we cannot refuse to regard them as organisms of some peculiar

and amazing kind; and though it would be too daring to speak of such organization as partaking of the nature of life, yet we do know that vital action is competent to develop at once heat, and light, and electricity." Commenting on this, an Occultist says that these wonderful objects are "the reservoirs of solar vital energy, the vital electricity that feeds the whole system in which it lives, and breathes, and has its being." Or, as our Upanishad puts it, "the sun is the honey of the bright powers."

At certain times, on certain areas of the sun, these luminous flakes appear to drift apart, or to be driven apart; the spaces which they disclose are dark, and are known as sun spots. These also are not infrequently visible to the naked eye, as black flecks on the face of the sun. They are surrounded by a dark penumbra with a darker centre, and astronomers believe that these darker layers everywhere underlie the luminous layer. So that we have also the "dark form" and the "very dark form" of the sun, in the words of the Upanishad. The article in *Five Years of Theosophy*, from which we have just quoted, further speaks of "the true Sun, an invisible orb of which the known one is the shell, mask or clothing," corresponding, it would seem, to "that which throbs in the heart of the sun," as the Upanishad puts it. This appears to be the first, or astronomical, meaning of our Parable.

In the Upanishad, the four Vedas, the Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda and Atharva Veda, with the Secret Instructions as fifth, are taken as the basis or framework of a series of correspondences. To come close to the thought of the teaching, we should remember that a verse of the Rig Veda, for example, is not regarded simply as a phrase, a set of words, a fragment of a descriptive poem. The verse is conceived to be a potent force, a magical incantation depending on the occult correlations of sounds and vibrations in the spiritual ether, the Akasha. The Mantra is a vital force, rather than a bit of literature. It thus has its correspondence with the vital forces radiated from the sun.

Therefore, the four Vedas and the Secret Instructions are taken to represent five ascending planes or worlds of living energy, while the verses represent the powers possessed by the beings on each of these planes; what have been called the ascending, or descending, degrees of the Planetary Spirits, some of which are more backward than man, while others are far more advanced. They are what man has been, and what man is destined to become.

It will follow that man contains within him either the actuality or the potentiality of all the powers manifested in the different degrees of Planetary Spirits. He has developed the powers of those which are in the descending cycle behind him; he possesses the potentiality of the powers of those which are in the ascending cycle ahead of him. Therefore, man, the microcosm, sums up within himself all the powers of the macrocosm.

This Upanishad adopts a fivefold classification of the principles of man, which appears to correspond closely with the fivefold classification of the vestures, or sheaths, of the *Taittiriya Upanishad*. Beginning with the lowest, these are: the vesture formed of food; the vesture formed of life-breath;

the vesture formed of mind; the vesture formed of understanding; the vesture formed of bliss. The highest of these vestures corresponds with, and is revealed by, the Secret Instructions. It is the Higher Self, which, "rising above, shall rise no more, nor go to his setting any more."

So we have an indication at least of the astronomical, the macrocosmic and the microcosmic interpretations of our Parable of the Sun. Regarding man, the Parable tells us that, on each successive plane, his powers go forth and gather the essence of that plane, making him a vesture of this essence, weaving it into the substance of his being. So experience is converted into enduring substance. The man grows, until he reaches the full stature of the immortal Higher Self, to which he carries upward the essence, the gleaned experience, of each successive plane and world.

The ascending excellence of these planes and worlds appears to be symbolized by the increasing periods attributed to each, in the poetical phrases regarding the rising and setting of the sun. Without doubt, the Parable of the Sun has further, deeper meanings, which are beyond the ken of the present interpreter.

#### THE PARABLE<sup>1</sup>

The sun yonder is the honey of the bright powers. The dome of the sky is the bent bamboo supporting it. The luminous air within the dome is the mass of honey combs. The sun's rays are the brood.

The sun's eastern rays, verily, are the eastern honey cells. The Rig verses are the honey gatherers. The Rig Veda, verily, is the blossom. The nectars are the currents. As honey gatherers, verily, the Rig verses brooded over the Rig Veda. From it, brooded over, were born fame, radiance, power, valour and food, its essence. The essence flowed; it wrapped itself about the sun. This, verily, is that red form of the sun.

And so the sun's southern rays, verily, are the southern honey cells. The Yajur verses are the honey gatherers. The Yajur Veda, verily, is the blossom. The nectars are the currents. As honey gatherers, verily, the Yajur verses brooded over the Yajur Veda. From it, brooded over, were born fame, radiance, power, valour and food, its essence. The essence flowed; it wrapped itself about the sun. This, verily, is that luminous form of the sun.

And so the sun's western rays, verily, are the western honey cells. The Sama verses are the honey gatherers. The Sama Veda, verily, is the blossom. The nectars are the currents. As honey gatherers, verily, the Sama verses brooded over the Sama Veda. From it, brooded over, were born fame, radiance, power, valour and food, its essence. The essence flowed; it wrapped itself about the sun. This, verily, is that dark form of the sun.

And so the sun's northern rays, verily, are the northern honey cells. The Atharva-Angirasa verses are the honey gatherers. The histories and tradi-

<sup>1</sup> Part III, Sections 1-11. The earlier Parts of this Upanishad are too technical to be of general interest.

tions are the blossom. The nectars are the currents. As honey gatherers, verily, the Atharva-Angirasa verses brooded over the histories and traditions. From them, brooded over, were born fame, radiance, power, valour and food, their essence. The essence flowed; it wrapped itself about the sun. This, verily, is the very dark form of the sun.

And so the sun's rays which go upward are the upper honey cells. The Secret Instructions are the honey gatherers. The Eternal is the blossom. The nectars are the currents. As honey gatherers, verily, the Secret Instructions brooded over the Eternal. From the Eternal, brooded over, were born fame, radiance, power, valour and food, its essence. The essence flowed; it wrapped itself about the sun. This, verily, is that which throbs, as it were, in the heart of the sun.

These, verily, are the essences of the essences. For the Vedas are the essences, and these are their essences. These are the nectars of the nectars. For the Vedas are the nectars, and these are their nectars.

That which is the first nectar, on that the bright powers called Vasus live with Agni, the Fire-lord, as their leader. These bright powers, verily, do not eat or drink, but beholding that nectar they are sated. They, verily, enter into that red form and ascend from that red form. He, verily, who truly knows this nectar, becoming one of the Vasus with Agni, the Fire-lord, as his leader, beholding that nectar, verily, is sated. He, verily, enters into that red form, and from that red form he ascends.

As long as the sun shall rise from the east and shall go to his setting in the west, so long shall he fully possess overlordship and sovereignty over the Vasus.

And so that which is the second nectar, on that the bright powers called Rudras live, with Indra as their leader. These bright powers, verily, do not eat nor drink, but beholding that nectar they are sated. They, verily, enter into that luminous form and ascend from that luminous form. He, verily, who truly knows this nectar, becoming one of the Rudras with Indra as his leader, beholding that nectar, verily, is sated. He, verily, enters into that luminous form, and from that luminous form he ascends.

As long as the sun shall rise from the east and shall go to his setting in the west, twice as long shall the sun rise from the south and go to his setting in the north; so long shall he fully possess overlordship and sovereignty over the Rudras.

And so that which is the third nectar, on that the bright powers called Adityas live, with Varuna as their leader. These bright powers, verily, do not eat nor drink, but beholding that nectar they are sated. They, verily, enter into that dark form and ascend from that dark form. He, verily, who truly knows this nectar, becoming one of the Adityas with Varuna as his leader, beholding that nectar, verily, is sated. He, verily, enters into that dark form, and from that dark form he ascends.

As long as the sun shall rise from the south and shall go to his setting in the north, twice as long shall the sun rise from the west and go to his setting in the

east; so long shall he fully possess overlordship and sovereignty over the Adityas.

And so that which is the fourth nectar, on that the bright powers called Maruts live, with Soma as their leader. These bright powers, verily, do not eat nor drink, but beholding that nectar they are sated. They, verily, enter into that very dark form and ascend from that very dark form. He, verily, who truly knows this nectar, becoming one of the Maruts with Soma as his leader, beholding that nectar, verily, is sated. He, verily, enters into that very dark form, and from that very dark form he ascends.

As long as the sun shall rise from the west and shall go to his setting in the east, twice as long shall the sun rise from the north and go to his setting in the south; so long shall he fully possess overlordship and sovereignty over the Maruts.

And so that which is the fifth nectar, on that the bright powers called Sadhyas live, with Brahma as their leader. These bright powers, verily, do not eat nor drink, but beholding that nectar they are sated. They, verily, enter into that form which throbs in the heart of the sun, and from that form they ascend. He, verily, who truly knows this nectar, becoming one of the Sadhyas with Brahma as his leader, beholding that nectar, verily, is sated. He, verily, enters into that form which throbs in the heart of the sun, and from that form he ascends.

As long as the sun shall rise from the north and shall go to his setting in the south, twice so long shall the sun rise above and go to his setting beneath; so long shall he fully possess overlordship and sovereignty over the Sadhyas. And so after that, rising above, the sun shall rise no more, nor go to his setting any more, but shall stand alone in the midst.

Therefore, there is this verse: There is no setting there, nor any rising for ever. O bright powers, through this truth may I never be divided from the Eternal!

For him, verily, there is neither rising nor setting, for him it is everlasting day, who knows this Secret Teaching of the Eternal.

That is that which Brahma declared to Prajapati, Prajapati to Manu, Manu to the descendants. This Eternal his father declared to Uddalaka Aruni, his eldest son. This, verily, should a father declare to his eldest son, or to a fully qualified disciple, but not to any other. Even if any should offer him this world which is surrounded by the waters, filled with wealth, this Teaching is greater than that, it is greater than that.

C. J.

*(To be continued)*

# SOME ASPECTS OF FAITH AND BELIEF

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THERE are three main methods of approach to religious or philosophical beliefs, if one hold, as does the writer, that they are incapable of exact scientific demonstration, in the ordinary sense of that term. The first might be described as a reverent but perfectly logical agnosticism. It has the obvious disadvantage of being purely negative, and consequently fails to evolve a philosophical system which renders happiness superior to the accidents of fate or circumstance. For this reason, the great majority of people have never cared for agnosticism, and will continue to seek some answer to the riddles of existence. Perhaps the most popular method of approach has been to base beliefs on faith in the "revelations" of religious teachers and in the testimony of "saints" and "disciples,"—there being confidence that the truth of the belief has been established by their personal experience. Perfection may lead to omniscience, but no one is content to wait so long a time for knowledge, and many religious beliefs are capable of some type of philosophical endorsement, the third method of approach.

Without a careful definition of terms, beliefs based on faith might be made to appear quite ridiculous, and one of the rarest of gifts thus be brought into contempt and disrepute. This seems to be particularly true today. The advance of science made popular a re-examination of many old beliefs in the light of new discoveries, and little or nothing was found to endorse them. On all sides we see people who have "lost faith" in what they had, but who have been incapable of using the opportunities afforded them to procure an improved substitute. We are beginning to realize that having no religion is worse than having a foolish one, and that intellectual emancipation from a narrow theology is a dangerous thing, when the individual is not sufficiently evolved to acquire a broader philosophy. It is true that the discoveries of science have not endorsed the existence of a hell where bad people burn for ever; but the social decay, the thirst for individual liberty, the decline of morals, and the increase of lawlessness make it all too apparent that the world is amply supplied with people who need some such crude fear of consequences to induce them to practise restraint.

Two inferences can be drawn at this point. The first is that the validity of a man's faith and the reasons he can give to endorse it will be in direct proportion to his intellectual development; and if he have no intellectual development, he can either believe in nothing, or believe what he is told by some one of superior competence. To sneer at his beliefs, then, is both foolish and dangerous. The Roman Catholic Church is often criticized for the large demands it is alleged to make on the credulity of its votaries, but people should pause to



appreciate the enormous service it performs for civilization in keeping much of the peasantry of Europe a lap or two ahead of relative barbarism. Surely it is more important to induce such people to make some moral effort, than to try to render their theology intellectually up to date, when they are incapable of real intellection. In one sense, therefore, we are responsible for the faith of our inferiors. It is their right to expect us to confirm and strengthen it, to absolve their doubts, and to help them as they stumble blindly on. If we laugh at their intellectual defects our quarrel will have to be with God rather than with them.

There is a second class of people, however, whose religious beliefs are the product of the accidents of environment plus a large share of laziness or cowardice. They are Episcopalians, let us say, because their parents were Episcopalians. They were confirmed at the age of fifteen, at which time they swallowed the Nicene Creed at one gulp, and have always professed to believe it ever since. Thus properly inducted, as it were, into the limbo of Christian respectability and conformity, they have never given religion any further consideration. They believe in the Virgin Birth, but they cannot give an intelligible explanation of what they mean by it. They may be too lazy to study or think about religion, and often they do not dare—it might, perchance, arouse a slumbering conscience. Several other well-known types belong to this class, differing according to factors in their inner development. One is the intolerant bigot, whose own theology is so insufficiently endorsed, that he dare not risk investigating another, and becomes angry at the slightest sign of heterodoxy. Another finds that his beliefs do not adequately sustain him in the trials of life: he thinks that more "faith" is the proper solution of his troubles: he either gets more of what he calls faith or he does not, but the really essential elements are left to Fate. A third condition is perhaps the worst of all. It is that of the person who is absolutely satisfied with a narrow creed, which he is convinced represents the whole, perfect and only Truth,—but whose life does not prove it in the slightest particular. He is little more than an intellectual will-o'-the-wisp. Many other types will doubtless occur to the reader, but enough has perhaps been said to draw the obvious moral: the so-called "faith" of all these people is a hopelessly negative one, and does not inspire respect.

It is small wonder, then, that the ranks of the skeptics and irreverent agnostics are largely recruited from this class. A generation ago the narrow theologian, who accepted the finding of science that the world was not created in the year 4004 B.C., lost his hold on Christianity completely. At first sight it may not seem clear just how the appeal of the Passion of Christ and His teaching was so tangled with the chronology of Archbishop Ussher, but the truth is, such people could not see the forest for the trees. The reason is simple: they had never really seen the forest, and when the nearest trees were cut down, their landscape was obliterated. I know a phlegmatic man of this kind whose father died in the fulness of time. About a week later the son announced to a shocked circle of friends that the death of his father had caused him to "lose

his faith," and various plans were hastily concocted to get it back for him. Now it is absolutely certain that everybody's father is bound to die, and such an event, sorrowful as it may well be, is scarcely sufficient to invalidate one of the world's great religions. My acquaintance described his own condition exactly. He had always been a sober and sincere Christian, had fulfilled all the necessary observances punctually; he had done so surrounded by people who did nothing of the sort, and yet they were care-free and successful. It was not fair that he should be stricken, and his faith in the blessings of a Christian life was destroyed. The truth is that he had "too much Ego in his cosmos," and his so-called faith was such a flimsy house of cards that the first puff of adversity toppled it over.

But fortunately there is a third type of faith, the real "faith with works" of St. Paul, a positive force, radiant and splendid with action and accomplishment. It is a very rare quality, possessed by few people, but we may at least be allowed to admire it from a distance. It has performed seeming miracles, saved nations, and led to great discoveries. It does not depend for its validity upon intellectual endorsement; the latter, however, will always be used to strengthen it. Joan of Arc had faith that France could be freed from the foreign English yoke, but she could not have proved it scientifically in advance. Columbus could not prove that the world was round, but the strength of his convictions enabled him to discover the New World. Sir Isaac Newton lived in an age when exact science was in its infancy, and few indeed were the natural phenomena for which a definite cause was known. But he had an unshakeable faith that there was a reason why an apple should fall to the ground, and so discovered the Law of Gravitation. Christ had an utterly transcendent faith in the power and reality of the spiritual world, and his life and sayings bore such splendid witness to his convictions, that even to-day millions wonder, and feel stirring within them the germ of their own spirituality. The real endorsement of true faith has always been action, a life moulded in accord with the glimpse of truth perceived, the result often a success so great that it has become an event in history. Those who have sneered have lived to be ashamed. Those who have hated have lived to be despised or overthrown. Let us by all means distinguish between true faith and its negative imitation, so characteristic of much of the *soi-disant* religion of to-day, yesterday, and to-morrow.

Little has yet been said about the philosophical endorsement of religious beliefs. It is most useful to those who lack the gift of true faith. There is nothing objectionable in doing whatever lies in one's power to confirm and strengthen whatever germ of faith or belief one may have. If conscientiously pursued, it will help to eliminate much bigotry at one end of the scale, much crude or time-worn theology at the other. Such endorsement will perhaps bring about the day when belief can be transformed into action in daily life, and the beginning will have been made which will ultimately result in spiritual illumination. But it must be remembered that intellectual exercise alone will never solve spiritual riddles, or put us into possession of the real truth. The

intellect is an instrument, which is or should be useful, but the mind of imperfect man cannot possibly mirror aught but a feeble reflection of the Absolute,—just as the patient mole can accomplish its proper destiny, but it will never really comprehend the human beings it may encounter. Nor can the instrument of one plane adequately reflect the conditions of a higher plane. There will always be religious questions, there will always be spiritual riddles, there will always be skeptics, until intellection, the faculty of the mental plane, has become transformed into illumination, the faculty of the spiritual plane. In this connection no religious teacher ever asked his disciples to swallow a mass of theology. Christ most certainly did not. Such religious precepts as they were given, they were asked to work out for themselves; the conviction of their truth could only come through personal experience. This is one way of describing the principle of scientific experiment. The student of chemistry cannot discover the properties of oxygen without performing, as directed, the necessary experiments. The teacher, no matter how learned, cannot prove to him the properties of oxygen, if he refuse to perform these experiments. The absurdity of refusing to perform chemical experiments until the reality of the properties of oxygen have been proved, must be patent to all. Most of us, however, object strenuously to performing the experiments in our lives necessary to the discovery of the reality of a religious truth, until its reality has been intellectually determined beforehand. We must often appear very absurd in the eyes of "whatever gods there be."

The foregoing aspects of faith and belief would seem to apply to so-called theosophical doctrines as much as to any others. In their present-day expression they cannot possibly be the ultimate, ineffable truth. They cannot be scientifically demonstrated. We have seen the relation between faith and belief, religion and theology. Each member of the T. S. can make of the theosophical teaching what he will. He can make a creed out of it, or a new theology; he can accept it too lightly and appear foolish; he can seek to endorse it philosophically in whole or in part. Only in the latter case can he hope to influence others or interest them, since every one should be able to bear some witness to his beliefs. But a theosophical creed is no better than any other creed if it lead to nothing; or at least the possessor thereof will have gained nothing by his exchange. He can be as narrow a bigot, as gullible a fool, as self-satisfied a cad as any holder of any other creed. If he get too involved with Fohat, the Lipikas, and the Tattwas, he may well live to regret the simple faith of his forefathers, and he might be better off if he had never left it. It is the writer's conviction that the real heart of Theosophy is the age-old emphasis on "works" and action, the vital necessity of "living the life to know the doctrine." Perhaps this emphasis is needed to-day because ancient faiths are dormant, leaving in the outer world only their husks, some forms and ceremonies. But it is the only scientific experiment that has a double reward. For if you live the life, you understand the Kingdom of Heaven and attain it at the same time.

F.

# PYTHAGORAS

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## II

*If anyone should say, "I am God," let him create a world like this and declare, "This is my work"; but he must not only declare, "This is my work," for he must inhabit and fill the world he has created, as the True God has done by this.*

PYTHAGORAS.

"ACCORDING to the Pythagoreans," said Aristotle, "numbers are things. Because the properties of objects may be defined by numbers, these philosophers have concluded that all things, even physical bodies, are composed of numbers."<sup>1</sup> The Pythagoreans taught what is affirmed to-day by every chemist, physicist and astronomer. Modern science not only defines matter by numbers; it actually identifies the essence of matter with the essence of number. For the physicist, colours and sounds are numbers, rates of vibration. For the chemist, the atom is a number or rather the ratio between the numbers of its positive and negative, electro-magnetic components. For the astronomer, the stars are numbers, illustrating, by their motions and chemical structures, the same mathematical laws which shape and move the atom. What appeared almost as nonsense to Aristotle has become an axiom of science, that "the first principles of mathematics are the first principles of all existing things, and the whole heaven is a musical scale and a number."

It is part of the greatness of Pythagoras that he so clearly formulated the mathematical or quantitative method of describing the processes of Nature; and now, after centuries of mental gestation, the Pythagorean pronouncement, that "numbers are things," has become part of the habitual consciousness of our race. But it is said that every profound statement of Truth has at least seven meanings. How many meanings have we found in that axiom of Pythagoras? Certainly one; probably no more. Through its help we have vastly increased our knowledge of the physical plane and our dominion over the physical elements; and that is about all that it means for us.

It must have meant more for Pythagoras. He sounded the keynote of an Age of Science, but the Science which he foreshadowed, was not a mere description of material things. Although it was founded on the data of physical experience, its purpose was self-knowledge through the revelation that the Self within man and the Self within the Universe are one. Pythagoras was not interested in the study of matter conceived apart from consciousness. Probably, such a study would have appeared to him meaningless, untrue, a betrayal of the Divinity of Nature.

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<sup>1</sup> *Metaphysics*, I, 5, 6; XIV, 3.

The Pythagorean teaching was intended to be esoteric, to be entrusted only to "the few." As the heart of the student expanded, drawing his personal consciousness towards harmony and union with the Divine Self, Pythagoras prepared the mind, the centre of self-consciousness, by an instruction designed to attune its activity with the changed aspect of the heart. He accustomed the disciple to think of all things and all events as manifestations of universal force and universal law. The personal life of a man produces scarcely a ripple on the waters of space, but in that personal life is contained the germ of a consciousness both eternal and limitless. The disciple has begun the transformation of a personality. His life is truly in accordance with Nature, for it fulfils, by its growth in Self-consciousness, the purpose for which all life exists,—the transmutation of the non-eternal matter or chaos (*apeiron*) into its Eternal Prototype or Model (*peras*).<sup>2</sup> As discipleship signifies the transition from the elemental to the Divine, so the physical Cosmos symbolizes a universal conversion of unconsciousness into consciousness, of the unformed into the beautiful, of that which is potential into that which actually is.

This doctrine recalls the Secret Doctrine of all ages. However, the Pythagorean method of instruction was unique, being adapted to the mental habits of our Western race. The Oriental finds no great difficulty in the assertion of his essential Divinity. The modern Western mind, on the contrary, must be led to this affirmation by a series of preparatory affirmations. We of the West are far more absorbed in what we experience than in what we are. Therefore, Pythagoras directs us to meditate at first not on our being, but on our experience. If we are in essence divine, so is that which impinges on our senses and causes experience. It will be easier for us to begin to recognize Divinity there, in the world of objective Nature, because we are so interested in that world. All that is needed to convert our interest in externals into a means of liberation and spiritual rebirth, is the awakening of a love of Truth. If we describe Nature honestly, we shall not fail to discern the Divinity of Nature. The intellectual method of Pythagoras was designed to awaken the love of Truth, first, by training the disciple in the rigidly accurate description of the facts of the external world; secondly, by giving some evidence of the beauty and magnitude of those cosmic vistas, which exalt the vision of the true scientist. Pythagoras perfectly reconciled religion and science, for he conceived science as a religious exercise.

Lucian has left the record of a brief dialogue between Pythagoras and an unknown philosopher. "How do you count?" asked Pythagoras. The reply was, "One, two, three, four." "Do you not see?" interrupted Pythagoras. "What you take to be four, that is ten ( $1 + 2 + 3 + 4 = 10$ ) and a perfect

triangle, . . . and our oath."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *Peras* is literally the finite as opposed to *apeiron* the infinite. Greek philosophy identified the "finite" with form and consciousness or spirit, and ranked it as superior to the "infinite" which is the formless, the unconscious.

<sup>3</sup> *Auction*, 4, I, 317.

Everyone with a fragment of a mind can count. Counting, enumeration, elementary arithmetic, may be the humblest of mental functions, for we share it with the brutes, but it is also the most trustworthy. Two objects, such as two eggs or two cows, cannot conceivably be anything but two. This is so obvious that we call its truth axiomatic, nor is there any other order of truth with equal axiomatic force, unless it be the interior assurance of one's own being. The Eastern sage rooted his thought in the fact, "I am." The Western teacher testified to the fact that there is an exact correspondence between the enumerative faculty of the mind and the enumerative action of Nature, so that, when we see two cows in a field, we know that there are two, neither less nor more. The only difficulty in grasping the importance of this truth is its very simplicity, which is such that the mind meets no opposition in stating it. Most so-called truths are a blend of opposites. However, there is no conceivable paradox involved in the fact that two cows are two cows. So far as it goes, this is absolute truth.

There is consolation in this thought for all human beings. Whenever we perform the simplest arithmetical operation, we are living a truth, nor does our action differ in essence from the act of enumeration, whereby the Logos, the Cosmic Monad, emanates from itself the three worlds succeeding to its own "silence and darkness," as two, three and four succeed mentally to one. The functions of numbers in the mind are the same as the functions of numbers in Nature.

The Lesser Mysteries of the Pythagoreans were taught in the form of mathematics, which was divided, according to Proclus, into four branches, arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy,—the *quadrivium* of the mediæval Schoolmen. The first three sciences were abstract and universal, providing a key to the understanding of particular phenomena. Astronomy was, on the other hand, an applied science, a concrete and detailed illustration of the general laws revealed by arithmetic, geometry and music. Astronomy was also, as we hope to show, a direct introduction to the science of man.


We have already touched upon the significations hidden in arithmetical calculations, which correspond to cosmic processes. Among these mysterious analogies Pythagoras emphasized that which concerns the number ten, the perfect *decad*. In arithmetic 10 is the number best adapted to complete one gamut of enumeration and to begin another. In Nature we may observe the objective illustration of this numerical law. To take one simple instance, the germination of a seed is just such an enumeration, completing its gamut in the formation of the mature plant and beginning a new gamut in the production of a new seed. On the metaphysical planes, we may expect to find an analogous perfection symbolized in the Arabic notation by 10, for, 1, the unit or vertical line, stands for the Logos, the Divine Principle which transfigures matter, and the 0 is the boundless circle, the potentiality of the matter which is transfigured.<sup>4</sup> The two together—as 10—symbolize the completion of a


<sup>4</sup> "The Arabs had their figures from Hindustan, and never claimed the discovery for themselves." The Hindus seem to have taught decimal "ciphering" esoterically, and "Pythagoras derived his knowledge from India." In common practice, the Greeks denoted numerals by letters of their alphabet (*Secret Doctrine*, I, 361. Ed. 1888; Philolaus, quoted by Stobæus, *Ecl.*, I, 3).



phase of cosmic evolution, the return of the Three Worlds to their parent, in readiness for their reëmergence in a higher phase.


Each number must have a place in the arithmetical series (1, 2, 3, 4, . . . n), for it contains within itself all lesser numbers and generates a unity, in which it merges its identity, thus forming the next higher number of the series,—as 3 contains 2 and 1 and by the generation of unity produces 4. By analogy, an atom and a Universe are two phases of a single and continuous process. An atom is potentially a Universe; a Universe is the full manifestation or limit (*peras*) of the generative force of an atom.

The generative power of numbers—what Proclus called continuous quantity<sup>5</sup>—was the special study of Pythagorean geometry. Continuous quantity is most clearly revealed in terms of spatial relations, and there is little doubt that Pythagoras invented or introduced from Egypt a form of the abacus, on which geometrical figures were designed by dots or pebbles. In this way, he identified number with form, and was able to form various groups of numbers having specific generative powers. For example, if we arrange the pebbles of

the abacus in a continuous series we shall inevitably construct a triangle  ;

the succession of odd numbers will form a square ; and the even numbers, often described as evil, because they are indeterminate, will produce an ob-

long figure of changing relative dimensions . If we glance back at the successive sums produced by these series, we shall find in the case of the triangle 3, 6 and 10; in the square 4 and 9; in the oblong 6 and 12. This will explain the designations, sometimes given to these numbers as respectively triangular, square and oblong. To take another instance of continuous quantity as the cause of form, the series 1, 2, 3, 4 may be expressed as the point (1), producing the line —, the line (2) producing the triangle or plane 

the triangle (3) producing the tetrahedron  or solid (4).<sup>6</sup> Thus the series (1, 2, 3, 4) which was so important in arithmetic, derives an added significance in geometry, since it engenders the three dimensions of physical space and completes objectively the gamut or decad of a whole phase of existence. We may now dimly perceive why Pythagoras spoke of ten as being "a perfect triangle and our oath." Ten is a triangular number and its form was known as The Holy Tetraktys.<sup>7</sup>

Pythagoras is generally regarded as the first to place the study of geometry on a scientific basis, and many of Euclid's propositions are attributed to

<sup>5</sup> In *primum Euclidis elementorum librum commentarii*, p. 97, quoted in the excellent article on *Pythagorean Geometry* by G. J. Allman (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th Ed.).

<sup>6</sup> *Secret Doctrine*, I, 616.

<sup>7</sup> A derivative of the Greek word for four (*tessares* or *tellares*).

him or to his disciples. But one may suggest that Pythagorean geometry was at once more dynamic and more metaphysical than the geometry of Euclid and the Alexandrians. The Universe is a "self-moving essence"—to use Aristotle's expression—and all forms contained within the Universe are transitional, creations of a past and creators of a future; there can be no such thing as a static existence. And the same is true of human thought; no idea can exist save as a conclusion and a premise of other ideas. Logic, like geometry, is really a study of dynamics.

Arithmetic reveals the world as a plenum containing an infinity of beings, which are manifested as things and defined as numbers. Geometry describes a process within the plenum which enforces upon things or numbers a continuous change of "unit value." Each number, though individually distinct from every other number, is at the same time all the other numbers, since it already contains these within itself—as 4 contains 3—or it will generate and pass into them—as 4 generates and passes into 5. Arithmetic and geometry, as Pythagoras conceived them, were metaphysical expressions containing the essence of the later, more diffuse, if more intelligible doctrines of Plato.<sup>8</sup>

There is another property of numbers which is especially revealed by music, the study of harmony or proportion. Proclus described music as that science which treats of the relations between numerals. No number can be conceived as existing only in itself, for it cannot exist apart from the series by which it is generated and which it helps to generate. But its existence as a creative factor is due to the harmonic order of its parts, that is, of the lower numbers of the series which have been merged in its nature. By virtue of this interior harmony it has the power to merge its own nature into the still more perfect nature of the succeeding number which it generates.

This abstruse theory may become clearer, if we consider the specific contribution of Pythagoras to the science of music. He is said to have invented the eight-stringed lyre, as the result of the following experiment, which he may have learned in the Schools of Chaldæa.<sup>9</sup> By actual measurement he showed that the pitch of any tone of the lyre is determined—all other things being equal—by the length of the string sounding the tone. He was then able to demonstrate that the tones, which are related as the three descending concordant intervals of the Greek scale, are sounded by strings, which are respectively equal in length to  $\frac{4}{3}$ ,  $\frac{3}{2}$ , and  $\frac{2}{1}$  the length of the shortest string of the lyre. If we arrange the length of the four strings in an integral relation, we shall have the proportion, 6:8::9:12, including the tonic, the fourth, the fifth and the octave.<sup>10</sup> This is the classical formula of a perfect proportion containing within itself an arithmetical mean, 9; and a harmonic mean, 8. It possessed an added significance for the Pythagorean, because it was the pro-

portional counterpart of the Tetraktys  $\begin{smallmatrix} & & \cdot & & \\ & \cdot & & \cdot & \\ \cdot & & & & \cdot \end{smallmatrix}$ . Descending from the apex,

<sup>8</sup> *Isis Unveiled*, I, 9.

<sup>9</sup> Iamblichus: *On the Arithmetic of Nicomachus*, p. 168.

<sup>10</sup> Philo: *Life of Moses*; II, 115; Armand Delatte: *Etudes sur la littérature pythagoricienne*, p. 257-258.



which is here equivalent to a given pitch, one hears in ascending succession, within the sound, the octave, 1:2, the fifth, 2:3, and the fourth, 3:4, these being the first three harmonics of the fundamental tone.

Let us try to interpret one of the numerical mysteries contained within this "harmonic proportion." The decad signifies the completion of a phase of being and the power of generating a new phase. One attribute of the decad is perfection of form, made possible by the equilibrium or harmony of its component elements. Greek art, Greek ethics, Greek religion—while they lasted—gave a living expression to this doctrine of the Golden Mean, the essence of all beauty. The Pythagorean geometers, in their dynamic language, called the Tetraktys "the fount and source of Eternal Nature."

Pythagoras is said to have used the language of mathematics to express the first principles of things, because those principles seem so abstract, when represented intellectually, that words cannot be found to denote them.<sup>11</sup> Modern science has so far recognized the justice of this remark that it really gives a Pythagorean definition to the *prima materia* which it studies. The ultimate substance of physical things is conceived sometimes as an aggregate of numbers, sometimes as a *codex* of mathematical laws. Scientists do not know what it is in itself, and most of them deny that such knowledge is possible.

Pythagoras would surely have agreed that intellectual knowledge of the essence of anything is unattainable. But if one cannot know it intellectually, one can know it—in another and more profound sense—by making it an actual part of one's consciousness. "Man, know thyself,"—that is, be thyself. The students of the second degree in the Pythagorean Order were called mathematicians (*mathematikoi*, those who are disposed to learn). In the third degree, we may imagine, were found those who were disposed to be.

It is possible that astronomy was the special study of the disciples of the third degree. Arithmetic, geometry and music reveal only the broad principles on which all existence is based; but astronomy is concerned with the concrete manifestation of those principles in the particular phase of macrocosmic life, with which we are brought into direct physical, psychic and spiritual contact. The human soul is a "number moving itself," a dynamic microcosm, one of the countless self-moved "numbers," whose procession from perfection to perfection leads at last to union with the number of the macrocosm; and as the macrocosm contains within itself the essence of all microcosmic life, we may expect to find a correspondence of nature between a planet and the atoms of which it is composed, between the science of the stars and the science of man. No one can really seek knowledge from the Heavens, without thereby illumining the mysteries of personal human life.

The detailed astronomical teaching of Pythagoras is not available, and we must rely upon the statements of later philosophers and scholars, who probably had access to some of the esoteric documents of the Pythagoreans. There is no evidence that he discussed what may lie beyond our solar system. It is

<sup>11</sup> Porphyry: *Life of Pythagoras*, 48.

said that he corrected the existing calculations of the length of the year, and various discoveries were attributed to him or to his disciples by ancient writers,—that Venus is both the morning and the evening star, that the Moon shines by reflected light, that the Earth is a sphere freely suspended in space. He seems to have revealed the natural causes of eclipses and to have explained changes of season by the obliquity of the ecliptic.<sup>12</sup> H. P. B. states categorically that Pythagoras described the Earth and the other planets as revolving around the Sun.<sup>13</sup> It is apparently impossible to confirm this statement by any available ancient source. The most famous exponent of the heliocentric theory in antiquity was Aristarchus of Samos (281 B.C.), whose assertion of the central position of the Sun was so uncompromising that he was charged with heresy, for "overthrowing the altar of the Earth."<sup>14</sup> Aristarchus' speculations had been foreshadowed by Heraclides of Pontus, by Ecphantus, notably by Hicetas of Syracuse (*cir.* 500 B.C.), who had probably been a member of the original Pythagorean Order.<sup>15</sup> The work of Hicetas, though unknown in detail, is of special interest, because it inspired Copernicus who wrote, in his letter to Pope Paul III: "I first discovered in Cicero,<sup>16</sup> how Hicetas stated that the Earth moved (*terram moveri*). From that time I began to reflect upon the mobility of the Earth."

Probably the heliocentric doctrine was part of the Mystery-teaching, and Pythagoras was—as in other instances—a revealer, rather than an originator. The misunderstandings of later uninitiated students were caused, perhaps, by the symbolical form of all the Pythagorean teaching which was intended for disciples. But Aristotle has suggested the way in which the Pythagoreans demonstrated the rotation and revolution of the Earth, by criticizing them for believing in these and other "absurdities" because of their mathematical appropriateness.<sup>17</sup> Has not Henri Poincaré said that the modern astronomer believes in the heliocentric doctrine, not because it has been definitely proved, but because it is clearer, simpler, more beautiful as a mathematical exposition of the facts than is the geocentric system? The more beautiful is the more true.

Pythagoras taught that the planets are separated from one another by distances, which, compared numerically, stand in a proportion that is again reflected in the ratios between the velocities of the planets. This proportion constituted the harmony of the spheres, a divine music, of which all earthly music is an imitation or—as Plato would have said—a reminiscence. As the sound of a forge is ever present to the consciousness of the smith, but he does not heed it, so man does not notice the divine sound which encompasses him. Only the sage can hear the music of the spheres, doubtless because the sage is no longer merely encompassed by it: he has drawn its essence into his nature; he hears the song of life, because that song is—to an ever-increasing degree—himself.

<sup>12</sup> A. E. Chaignet: *Pythagore et la philosophie pythagoricienne*, II, 140-156.

<sup>13</sup> *Secret Doctrine*, I, 117.

<sup>14</sup> Plutarch: *On the Apparent Face in the Orb of the Moon*.

<sup>15</sup> Chaignet: *op. cit.*, II, 143.

<sup>16</sup> *Acad.*, IV, 32.

<sup>17</sup> "The Pythagoreans based their convictions not upon facts, but upon reasons." *De Coelo*, II, 13.

It is obvious that at this point we have crossed the boundary between astronomy and astrology. Students of Pythagoras are easily confused because it is often difficult to decide on which side of the line one stands. This is especially true as regards the fragments of Pythagorean teaching preserved by Philolaus, an older contemporary of Plato.<sup>18</sup> According to Philolaus, the Sun is a vitrescent orb, revolving with the Earth, Moon and planets, about a Central Fire, known variously as Hestia (Vesta), the Tower of Zeus, the Measure of Nature, the Altar. The Sun was said to reflect and to distribute the light of the Central Fire, tempering its radiant energy to the receptive power of the Earth, so that the Sun, in this system, is not the centre but the heart.

In the opinion of the present author, this Hestia-centric system, as we may call it—was astrological, in the sense that the Eastern conception of the Earth's chain of globes is astrological. The following interpretation is suggested.

It has been said that we do not see the real Sun, but only its reflection or veil.<sup>19</sup> Perhaps, one meaning of that statement is that we are able to perceive that part of the solar radiance which may be assimilated or mirrored by the Earth's atmosphere. For example, it is known that our physical senses respond to some vibrations and not to others, because the nerves are like the strings of a musical instrument, being attuned to a limited range of wavelengths. The Sun, the planets, the stars have their own individual existence beyond the Earth's sphere. We see their shining orbs in the sky, but what is it that we see? Surely only those phases of their being, to which certain vibratory responses are made by the Earth. The Earth is a miniature Cosmos, having its distinctive nature or tone, which is attuned to all other natures in the Universe, and these other natures are contained within the Earth's sphere somewhat as an harmonic of a sound is contained within the sound itself, though the vibration of the harmonic becomes audible only when it is brought in contact with the string which sounds the harmonic as its fundamental tone. Our physical senses are too feeble to grasp more than a fragment of the Cosmic symphony. As Eugenius Philalethes said, no man has yet seen the true form of the Earth. When Pythagoras was dying, he bade his disciples to touch the monochord, reminding them that the whole science of music was contained potentially within the compass of its single string.

In the system of Philolaus, the planetary system has the following order: Hestia, the Antichthon or Anti-Earth—which we cannot see because we are turned away from it—the Earth, the Moon, Mercury, Venus, the Sun, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn and finally Olympus, which is the firmament, the sphere of the fixed stars. According to the interpretation which we have ventured to offer, these heavenly bodies signify zones of the Earth's substance, which correspond in vibration to the real Sun, Moon, etc. The order of the zones differs from the order of their prototypes, because it is composed according to the mode or key of the Earth. Thus, the arrangements of the notes of a musical scale must depend upon the note with which it commences and—in the modern diatonic

<sup>18</sup> Chaignet: *op. cit.*, I, 213-254.

<sup>19</sup> *Secret Doctrine*, I, 540, seq.

scale—upon the major or minor mode which determines the degrees of the intervals.<sup>20</sup>

Hestia seems to be the symbol of the Central Spiritual Sun, a ray or monad of which is present, as the spark of reality, at the centre of every atom, planet or solar system. When the Fire of Hestia mingles with the undifferentiated matter of Olympus, the zones or elements are born and, with the creation of the elements, begins the history of the Earth. When the union of Fire and matter has been perfected, the "true form of the Earth" becomes visible. The decad appears, in the conjunction of the Monad (1) and the Sphere (o).

But Hestia is present not only as the positive nucleus or *proton* of the Earth. It is one with the principle of existence everywhere; and its activity is initiated by the "cycles of the stars" as these are recorded in the substance of Olympus. Olympus is sometimes called the fifth element or Ether, and is identified with *Kronos*, the Power of the Cycle or Time. It contains the essence of the material elements, as the ether of modern science is conceived to be the source of all atomic energies. The substance of Olympus is akin to that of the stars, which lend to it their radiance. There is a continuous interchange of force between Olympus and the Infinite. The Earth breathes, inhaling and exhaling space.<sup>21</sup>

Astronomy reveals the Law of Correspondence which governs the procession of beings in the Cosmos, wherein there is no division of qualities, for each being contains the power of manifesting, ultimately and completely, every quality which can be manifested, as every acorn is potentially a perfect oak. Man is one of those beings destined to become divine. In studying the nature of the Heavens, he contemplates his own destiny and sees, in objective form, the operation of Principles, which are at work, even now, in the moulding of his consciousness.

One does not, however, study consciousness in the same way that one studies material bodies, the vestures of consciousness. To know what a particular state of consciousness is like, one must be conscious in that state; imagine trying to explain the taste of an orange to someone born without a sense of taste. Pythagorean astronomy means much or little to the student, according to the degree in which he can recognize in his consciousness the counterparts of celestial laws. Presumably, Pythagoras taught astronomy to his disciples, partly at least because it enabled them to become aware of their own progress. The progress itself had come as an inevitable result of obedience to the rules of the Order; astronomy explained its rationale and prepared the way for further progress by broadening and deepening the imagination.

An instance may be given from the science of medicine. Plato gave a Pythagorean definition of the Soul or principle of life as a harmony,<sup>22</sup> that is,

<sup>20</sup> H. P. B. refers to the "Seven powers of terrestrial and sublunary nature, as well as the seven great Forces of the Universe, proceeding and evolving in seven tones, which are the seven notes of the musical scale." *Secret Doctrine*, II, 602. The exoteric Ptolemaic system may have arisen through the confusion of the sublunary with the Universal.

<sup>21</sup> Plutarch: *Placita philosophorum*, II, 9.

<sup>22</sup> *Phædo*, 83e.

as the mean reconciling a "pair of opposites." Health is then, the condition of consciousness, upon any plane, in which no organ or faculty functions excessively or defectively. To take a crude example, the animal in a state of nature, eats to satisfy hunger and, at other times, will not touch food however tempting. There is a mean between eating and not eating, a mean present in the instinct or proper nature of the animal itself. Man, considered as an animal, is unhealthy, because he does not obey the mean. He eats and refrains from eating, without reference to the genuine demands of his body. Therefore, he sounds a discord. Medicine was a means of restoring harmony, prescribing drugs for the sick body, music to still the passions and emotions, and philosophy to bring into appropriate exercise the higher faculties of the mind.

It was a Pythagorean teaching that the soul is in the body, as in a prison.<sup>23</sup> The final objective is liberation, but between the present state of man and the goal of his evolution extend many gamuts of existence, as between 1 and 100 there are ten series, each of ten numbers. These gamuts may be described as a series of lives on earth, for how can man escape the universal law which demands that each creature must proceed by degrees towards perfection, omitting no intermediate stage,—in the same way that we cannot properly omit one number from an enumeration? In the words of Philolaus the soul is joined to the body by the virtue of number and reciprocal correspondence.<sup>24</sup>

The doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma were thus brought to the attention of the West at the dawn of its modern history. Pythagoras is said to have remembered his past lives, through the favour of Hermes. In particular, he recalled his incarnation as the Trojan hero, Euphorbus, whose shield hung in a temple of Juno at Mycenæ.<sup>25</sup>

The present author feels wholly incompetent to express even an opinion as to the more subtle correspondence between the macrocosm and man. The teaching of Pythagoras, however, has the splendid power of appealing to the will. Therefore, one may propose certain questions, which the reader is invited to answer, though it is probable that there exists for them no answer in words, since their key is to be found in consciousness, in the direction and intensity of the will.

What bearing has the doctrine of the Harmony of the Spheres upon sacred friendship and upon the brotherhood of man? To what principle in man does Hestia, the Universal Fire, correspond? Is the need for personal purification justified by the law that the Earth participates in the Universal Order, because the Earth is itself the expression of a perfect interior order and proportion? Does the relation of the Lodge to humanity or of a Master to a disciple resemble the relation of the Stars or of the Sun to the sphere of the Earth?

S. L.

<sup>23</sup> Plato: *Gorgias*, 493a.

<sup>24</sup> Chaignet: *op. cit.*, II, 187.

<sup>25</sup> Iamblichus: *Life of Pythagoras*, XIV, Diogenes Laertius, VIII, 4.

# LODGE DIALOGUES

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## V

M. T. is tall and slender; his dark eyes are rather large for his oval face. He looks the scholar and the ascetic, but the poet and the dreamer are there also. He is very erect, and one of his marked characteristics is the stately carriage of his head. He is very quiet; there is a certain hush about him, like that which comes at sunset on a summer evening. He had been away from home a long, weary while, and after the din and confusion of those foreign lands, how sweet the peace and coolness of the garden! We who noticed his thinness and accentuated pallor, and the heavy circles about his eyes, saw also what it had done for him,—how it had developed and matured him. He paced up and down the familiar paths among the lilies, book in hand as always, though not reading.

The Littlest One espied him. "Oh, M. T.!" he cried, "may I come?" but joined him without waiting for the assured invitation, fitting his impetuous steps into his brother's even pace, and confidently taking his hand.

Then the Littlest One began explaining things in his eager, musical voice. The Big Brother being absent, as so often of late, he seized upon this coveted chance to pour himself out to the next one, this Still Brother, whose eyes are wells of reflection, and his heart a deep cistern of clear, unbroken contemplation. It was not half so satisfactory, for there was less response. At the same time one could not disregard the advantages of freedom from interruption or the apprehension of possible teasing.

"There are some things I cannot understand," he went on, "I think and think, as Big Brother tells me to do, but still I cannot understand." The Still One eyed him gently; their ways of thinking were quite different. The Littlest One was quick: "O you are not like me,—never in a hurry; without moving you go,"—he laughed gaily; "Big Brother says because you are French—the French of yesterday and of to-morrow—that is one of the things I do not understand." The Still One smiled, content as ever not to explain himself.

"Where is the Big Brother now?" "In the Snows with the Father, at the Great Meeting," was the elder's answer. "And next year you go?" "Yes, next year." "And then some day I shall go," the child added softly, a note of reverence in his tone at the thought of that wonderful event.

"I want to explain about the Voice of the Silence,"—he hurried back to the thought possessing him, "I am trying now to catch it. I think and think about it. I do not see why I cannot hear it. I have been lying out in the long grass where it was so still; not even a bird. The light was sleeping in the shadows under the trees; it rocked on the tassels over my head. I lay there

a long, long while, many times, listening, but I could not hear it. There were little rustles I heard; now and again the wind came and whispered a secret; some insects talked, too, in low tones; but that was all I heard, though I never stopped one moment listening. Once I went down, far down into the valley, where the great Buddha sits in the temple. There is much silence there. You know how much, when the little bells ring and touch it with their light fingers. Right after the bells, I was sure each time the Voice of the Silence would come, but I never heard it. Then at night, under the stars, where Simiolchum points its finger up into the sky, and there is no sound at all except, deep down, you can hear the mountains breathing. Big Brother says they are praying, while the angels carry their tapers in procession. Tell me, M. T., why do I never hear the Voice of the Silence, however hard I try?"

They took a turning in the path, and came upon a group of older Chêlas. To his vast delight they made the child welcome and sat him in their midst and questioned him. M. T. had gone, wisely leading his little brother where his answer might be found as it were best to give it to him. There was a tender protection in their attitude, mingled with deference,—a beautifully blended sense of his youth, with recognition of his dignity.

"What are you thinking of these days, Little Brother, while the Big Brother is so much and so far away?" they asked him. A shade passed over the sweet, transparent face, as clouds are reflected in clear water. Then the sunshine touched it again. "Haru is with me and cares for me," he said; "now M. T. is back again, and I have so much to think about. I am trying to catch the Voice of the Silence"—and he repeated, rejoicing in his opportunity, all he had just been saying.

In the gathering twilight the older Chêlas listened, the flute-like modulations of the voice suggesting in its own undertones the very thing the Littlest One was seeking. Perhaps some echo of the feeling he stirred, impressed the boy himself, for when he had finished his tale he did not break the pause that followed with further speech, but remained silent, not an usual proceeding.

Then one of the Chêlas said: "In your heart is the Voice of the Silence, O questioning child. In the outer world, only its echoes are sounding. 'Seek the way by retreating within,' comes *first*, in the little book you have learned by heart. 'Seek the way by advancing boldly without,' comes *second*. Within our hearts lies the power of hearing these things which belong to the inner world. There is where we must listen,—not out, but in. Until we can hear it there, we can hear it nowhere else. Hearing it there, we gain the power to hear it elsewhere; for the inner world, in truth, is the only world there is. When we find it, we must cultivate it. It is easy to lose; so we must never forget. Like a blind man learning to see, we must learn to understand what we are hearing, so that we shall not make false pictures. Otherwise we shall know less than if we had never heard at all."

When M. T. came a little later, he led the happy, sleepy child away.

M.

# THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

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## XV

### ST. TERESA (*Continued*)

**S**T. TERESA'S father died in 1544. In her *Life*, she passes almost immediately from that date to an incident in the year 1555 which led her finally to turn to a more strict life than the other nuns. The years intervening between 1544 and 1555 formed a part of the twenty year "strife and contention which arose out of many attempts to reconcile God and the world." "When I was in the midst of the pleasures of the world, the remembrance of what I owed to God made me sad; and when I was praying to God my worldly affections disturbed me. This is so painful a struggle, that I know not how I could have borne it for a month, let alone for so many years. Nevertheless, I can trace distinctly the great mercy of our Lord to me, while thus immersed in the world, in that I had still the courage to pray. I say courage, because I know of nothing in the whole world which requires greater courage than plotting treason against the King, knowing that He knows it, and yet never withdrawing from His presence; for, granting that we are always in the presence of God, yet it seems to me that those who pray are in His presence in a very different sense: for they, as it were, see that He is looking upon them; while others may be for days together without even once recollecting that God sees them." <sup>8</sup>

Remembering her struggle, prolonged through twenty years, no mortal who is aiming for the "path" ought ever to be discouraged. Even for her, twenty years were necessary to make one-pointed her divided purpose; up to her forty-first year, even she wavered. Ought any one therefore to be surprised at the obstinacy of his lower nature? Her example, however, may have this element of danger in it; a man may see in her long conflict excuse for prolonging his neutrality, instead of bringing his warfare to decisive action. Teresa did win, splendidly, and took a courageous stand on God's side; while some might be content to oscillate for ever between God and the world.

The incident in 1555 that brought her long warfare to a successful termination was a picture displayed at the Incarnation for a special holy day. "It was a representation of Christ most grievously wounded; and so devotional, that the very sight of it, when I saw it, moved me,—so well did it show forth that which He suffered for us. So keenly did I feel the evil return I had made for those wounds, that I thought my heart was breaking. I threw myself on the ground beside it, my tears flowing plenteously, and implored Him to strengthen me once for all, so that I might never offend Him any more." <sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> *Life*, p. 47.

<sup>9</sup> *Life*, p. 53.



The picture rekindled her efforts to meditate, and, referring to this period, she writes: "This was my method of prayer: I contrived to picture Christ as within me; and I used to find myself the better for thinking of those mysteries of His life during which He was most lonely. It seemed to me that the being alone and afflicted, like a person in trouble, must needs permit me to come near unto Him."<sup>10</sup> The victorious decision she had made, yielded rich fruit in her meditations, and also deepened her intimacy with the Master, beyond the degree of which the nuns around her spoke. There were, however, some notorious women in Madrid whose alleged visions were a common topic of conversation. To her horror, Teresa discovered that in her own experience there were points which appeared to resemble some of the things related by them. Truthful, conscientious, humble, and self-accusing, Teresa was now plunged in the deepest distress; was she like those evil women, she asked herself. In books, she had read that such relations as the Master had now formed with her He gave to people of consecrated lives, whereas she called herself an ungrateful sinner. What then was she to infer—that she was being misled by a devil (she deserved no better, in her own esteem) as those mediumistic women of Madrid had been? In her distress, she went to a "good" man of Avila,—a man who heard Mass and sermons regularly, and who regularly said his prayers,—and asked him, together with his parish priest, to advise her. (It is sufficient comment upon the Incarnation that there was no one there with whom she could talk.) She told them humbly of her life, she called herself a hardened sinner who for twenty years had lived in deliberate sin, and then she told of the richness of her meditations, her spiritual intimacy with Christ. Her advisers accepted literally the words about her "sins," told her "these things were inconsistent one with another," as such intimacies were given to people who had made great progress and led holy lives, and, in sincere alarm (the "good" man was a kinsman), they expressed their fear that he, with whom she was in such relations, was not Christ but the devil. Frightened by their opinion, which she had feared while hoping against it, she lent to her two advisers a book that had helped her in her meditations, a Franciscan manual, entitled the *Ascent of the Mount*, in which experiences like her own were clearly described, and were attributed to Christ as his direct work. The manual did not change the opinion of her advisers nor alleviate their distress over her condition; they referred her to a priest of the Society of Jesus who had just come to Avila, as one more skilled in matters of religion than they, and in terror, she prepared for this new ordeal, writing out fully the "evil" of her life so that her judge might not condemn her for concealing it. The Jesuit father understood in a measure; he conducted her through Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises*, laughed at the nonsense about the devil, bade her continue the healthful and profitable practice of meditation, taking as topics the mysteries of the Passion and our Lord's Divine Humanity; but he also directed her to *resist* the loving advances made

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<sup>10</sup> *Life*, p. 54.

to her by the Master. This counsel relieved and encouraged her. Two months later, another Jesuit came to Avila, St. Francis Borgia, formerly Duke of Gandia; he too encouraged Teresa by telling her she was led by Christ, and he removed the restriction placed upon her by the former Jesuit, bidding her now to welcome any favour Christ might show her.

The following year is memorable—1558, when she was forty-three years old—in that she then for the first time heard the Master's voice. Contrary to her priest's opinion, she still insisted that conversation with certain very intimate friends of whom she was fond, could not harm her. The priest bade her make it a matter of meditation, repeating to herself the hymn, "Come, Holy Ghost, Creator blest." She did so, saying to Christ that she wished to please him in all things. Suddenly, he replied: "I will not have thee converse with men, but with angels."<sup>11</sup>

Her comment upon the words which the Master spoke to her, from time to time, during the rest of her life, is illuminating. "The words are very distinctly formed; but by the bodily ear they are not heard. They are, however, much more clearly understood than they would be if they were heard by the ear. It is impossible not to understand them, whatever resistance we may offer. When we wish not to hear any thing in this world, we can stop our ears, or give our attention to something else: so that, even if we do hear, at least we can refuse to understand. . . . But, when our Lord speaks, it is at once word and work; and though the words may not be meant to stir up our devotion, but are rather words of reproof, they dispose a soul at once, strengthen it, make it tender, give it light, console and calm it; and if it should be in dryness, or in trouble and uneasiness, all is removed, as if by the action of a hand, and even better; for it seems as if our Lord would have the soul understand that He is all-powerful, and that His words are deeds."<sup>12</sup> She adds, as to the Master's words: "They instruct us without loss of time, and we understand matters which seem to require a month on our part to arrange."<sup>13</sup>

It may be of benefit to bring together a few of the sentences that at different times were spoken to her by the Master, since some readers may find that they are marked by traits common to New Testament utterances. Once, when she was grieving that other persons, more holy than she, knew nothing of His actual Presence, He replied: "Serve thou Me, and meddle not with this."<sup>14</sup> When some of her devotional books were taken from her (people who suspected her, tried to hinder her communion with the Master by denying her books, and time for solitude), and she was grieving, the Master said: "Be not troubled; I will give thee a living book."<sup>15</sup> Much later, when she began to establish her monasteries, people told her she was acting contrary to St. Paul's explicit directions, for he had spoken quite clearly as to what women should and should not do. Teresa, always ready to accuse herself of wrong-doing, became very distrustful of her purpose, whereupon the Master said: "Tell

<sup>11</sup> *Life*, p. 172.

<sup>14</sup> *Life*, p. 125.

<sup>12</sup> *Life*, p. 173, ff.

<sup>13</sup> *Life*, p. 187.

<sup>15</sup> *Life*, p. 177.

them they are not to follow one part of Scripture by itself, without looking to the other parts also; perhaps, if they could, they would like to tie My hands." <sup>16</sup>

Teresa maintained strict silence about her inner experiences, except to her spiritual advisers, and it was their indiscretion which roused suspicion and occasioned harsh judgments of her. The two Jesuits who had given sympathy and encouragement, were only visitors,—they did not live in Avila. Other priests and laymen whom she consulted, understood her less, and some of them, disturbed over her state, and likewise not wishing to be in any degree implicated in her possible heresy and witchcraft, took counsel of friends, and thus were responsible for making her experiences a common topic of gossip. The identity of her "teacher" was gravely suspected (was he God or devil?), and she was directed to pray that he would discontinue his visits and oral comments, and would guide her by some other method. For two years she did so petition, but vainly, for he only increased his kindness to her, which she thus narrates: "I was in prayer one day, when I saw Christ close by me, or, to speak more correctly, felt him; for I saw nothing with the eyes of the body, nothing with the eyes of the soul. He seemed to me to be close beside me; and I saw, too, as I believe, that it was he who was speaking to me. As I was utterly ignorant that such a vision was possible, I was extremely afraid at first, and did nothing but weep; however, when he spoke to me but one word to reassure me, I recovered myself, and was, as usual, calm and comforted, without any fear whatever. Jesus Christ seemed to be by my side continually; . . . I saw no form; but I had a most distinct feeling that he was always on my right hand, a witness of all I did. . . . I went at once to my confessor, in great distress, to tell him of it. He asked in what form I saw our Lord. I told him I saw no form. He then said: 'How did you know that it was Christ?' I replied, that I did not know how I knew it; but I could not help knowing that he was close beside me,—that I saw him distinctly, and felt his presence. . . . My confessor next asked me, who told me it was Jesus Christ. I replied, that he often told me so himself; but, even before he told me so, there was an impression on my understanding that it was he; and before this he used to tell me so, and I saw him not. If a person whom I had never seen, but of whom I had heard, came to speak to me, and I were blind or in the dark, and told me who he was, I should believe him; but I could not so confidently affirm that he was that person, as I might do if I had seen him. But in this vision I could do so, because so clear a knowledge is impressed on the soul that all doubt seems impossible, though he is not seen. Our Lord wills that this knowledge be so graven on the understanding, that we can no more question his presence than we can question that which we see with our eyes: not so much even; for very often there arises a suspicion that we have imagined things we think we see; but here, though there may be a suspicion in the first instant, there remains a certainty so great, that the doubt has no force whatever." <sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> *Relations* III, par. 10.

<sup>17</sup> *Life*, p. 189 ff.

Summing up this new consciousness of her Master, she writes that in the earlier stages, "certain inflowings of the Godhead are present; but in [this] vision, the Sacred Humanity also, together with them, is pleased to be our visible companion."<sup>18</sup> It was the body of the resurrection in which he manifested himself to her, she writes, suffused with brilliant but soft light. She saw him thus, frequently, for two years and a half, and very much desired to see the colour of his eyes, but never succeeded, since she lost sight of him whenever she tried to meet his look. Once he took the cross of her rosary, and when he handed it back, the wood was changed to precious stones; he told her she should henceforth always see the stones though other people would see merely the wood.

The more intimate Teresa's experience became, the greater became the suspicions and alarm of the priests and advisers whom she consulted; they were convinced that the devil had made her his victim; consequently they now ordered her to repulse her Visitant and treat Him with contempt. Always obedient to her advisers, Teresa endeavoured to carry out their behests, but if she succeeded in manifesting contempt, it did not have the result they had hoped for.

The next important date is 1560, when plans were broached for establishing a convent that should not be connected with the Incarnation, and in which the primitive, austere rule of the Carmelites might be observed. At first, the plans moved smoothly and it appeared likely that the new convent would soon be a fact.<sup>19</sup> Her divine Master commanded and encouraged the undertaking, promising Teresa true success; and the official head of the Carmelite convents in that district of Spain, gave his permission for the building. Legal papers conveying this house were about to be signed, when the tide turned, and the well laid plans were wrecked. The opposition of the nuns of the Incarnation, and of the Avila townspeople, seemed the obvious cause of failure, but later, when new plans had been carried through to success, Teresa attributed the initial failure to the Master's disapproval of her arrangement for revenue, as she said he wished the convent founded without endowment.

The hostility of the nuns was to have been expected, and Teresa writes thus of them: "I was now very much disliked throughout the whole monastery, because I wished to found another with stricter enclosure. It was said I insulted my sisters; that I could serve God among them as well as elsewhere, for there were many among them much better than I; that I did not love the house, and that it would have been better if I had procured greater resources for it than for another. Some said I ought to be put in prison; others—but they were not many—defended me in some degree. I saw well enough that they were for the most part right, and now and then I made excuses for myself, though, as I could not tell them the chief reason, which was the commandment of our Lord, I knew not what to do, and so was silent."<sup>20</sup> The townspeople in their opposition were moved, perhaps, by civic pride; to

<sup>18</sup> *Life*, p. 191.

<sup>19</sup> *Letters*, Vol. I, p. 3, ff.

<sup>20</sup> *Life*, p. 249.

them, Teresa was a kind of witch, and they did not want her to make Avila notorious.

It is interesting to observe the steps by which she accomplished the "impossible" and won a victory over complete opposition. For several months she did nothing; then, at the recommendation of a friendly Dominican adviser, she took the matter again in hand, though secretly. That she had any chance whatever of success lay in the fact that even in the Roman Catholic Church, with its closely-knit organization, there may be an over-lapping of authority. The Dominican, with his experience of authority and its limits, perceived a slight chance of success, and urged her to take it, since he believed her commission was divinely inspired. The first and most important step toward establishing the convent was to obtain ecclesiastical sanction for it, and her Dominican adviser knew that the Bishop of Avila might be (if he cared to) a loophole of escape from the impasse. While the Carmelite official had prohibited the convent, that prohibition held valid only within Carmelite jurisdiction, and was in no degree whatever binding upon a Bishop who, with a license easily obtainable from Rome, could give sanction to a new convent as one of the religious "works" of his diocese. The Dominican knew, and the Bishop appears to have known just as clearly, that such a sanction, which in fact invalidated the Carmelite prohibition, was contrary to no legal or ecclesiastical or moral law. True, a foreboding mind might have asked of what benefit it would be for Teresa to start a new convent seeing that, as a Carmelite, she would not herself be permitted to live there, in view of her superior's ruling; fortunately, Teresa's was not a foreboding mind—she did not exact that she should cross all her bridges in advance, or she would never have taken a single step. It was sufficient for her, that her director declared there was a chance of getting the convent started; she would not risk delay, in the hope that some other plan might later be found that would give her the desired residence within the walls of the new house. The way which the Dominican pointed out was this,—she could build and present to the Bishop of Avila (if he would accept) a convent for which the Carmelite officials would not give her their permission—and this without violating any law of state, church or conscience.

The next step was to approach the Bishop. He appears not to have resided in Avila, but at a distance, and to have taken no interest in the quarrels and prejudices of the inhabitants; he had heard of Teresa from friendly priests, and judged her to be a truly religious woman; further, he was himself a thoroughly good man and commanded general respect. He was not unsympathetic to the scheme, when it was presented to him, but hesitated at the provision of "no endowment," though when it became apparent that Teresa and her friends were capable managers (one friend undertook to obtain the necessary license from Rome), and were not likely to impose financial or any other heavy responsibility upon him, he gave cheerful consent. The first step was thus accomplished, and the next step was to plan for a house,—all to be done in secret on account of the general hostility. Prudence pointed to Teresa's

sister (her younger sister, Juana, not the half-sister, Maria) as a screen for the real undertaking, and the sister gladly co-operated, coming with her husband and family from their country village, as if to establish a domicile of their own in Avila. It was this sister's boy who was supposed to have been killed by a falling wall of the new building, and when, in an agony of grief for that sympathetic sister, Teresa took the dead body in her arms and implored the Master to restore life—the boy revived. Notwithstanding all the precautions, the comments made upon Juana's house showed that suspicion was not dead. It may be that some individuals communicated their suspicions to the Carmelite superior, for he ordered Teresa to go to Toledo, seventy-five miles distant from Avila, on an errand of mercy which detained her there six months. Difficulties in connection with the new house never ended, but as fast as they arose she met and solved them. The house was at last roofed and habitable, and Juana's family could "camp" there; the next problem was to bring Teresa herself under the roof, for supervising the final details which no one else could direct. At this point, according to Juana's husband, Providence itself stepped in and cut the knot: Juana was summoned to the country for business of her own, and scarcely had she departed from Avila, when her husband fell desperately ill; he seems to have glimpsed the divine strategy, for he averred that he had been "made" ill, meaning, of course made ill by Providence (it was not a feigned illness). In this emergency, the prioress of the Incarnation felt that common philanthropy required Teresa to minister to the forlorn family; so she was sent by her own prioress to the spot where her presence was needed for many other things besides ordinary household duties.

When all preparations were ended, the convent was dedicated to St. Joseph on August 24th, 1562; Mass was said in the small oratory with a congregation of ten persons, and Teresa gave to four novices who were to dwell there, the primitive habit of the Carmelites, a distinctive feature of which was the sandal worn upon a bare foot.<sup>21</sup> Teresa herself, as a nun resident at the Incarnation, could make no change in her own.

When Avila awoke to what had been done in broad daylight, under its very eyes, a storm of rage broke.

C. C. CLARK.

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<sup>21</sup> This feature of the habit gives the name to St. Teresa's branch of the Carmelites—"discalced Carmelites" (from the Latin, *discalceatus*, which goes back to the word *calx*, meaning heel).

(To be continued)

# THE CROWN OF HUMAN LIFE

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HUMAN life is not thought of by many as other than a coming and going of numberless personalities, each having its own capabilities, tastes and peculiarities, but with no defined goal or object of attainment. It is, therefore, profitable to have come to the point of realizing that life has some purpose, and of determining to express that purpose day by day. If we can advance in life from stage to stage, what possibilities are there not before us? We must not, however, picture this as a mere striving upward for our own aggrandizement, as that would be only transferring worldly ambition to another plane, and we should consequently defeat our own ends. There is a way of true growth and all who search may know of it; it is along this way that the state of consciousness referred to in the title of our article is reached.

To have seen something of the purpose of life, is to have come to the understanding that life must be lived from the standpoint of unity instead of diversity; that we can no longer regard other people as beings quite separate from ourselves and in no way related to us. This understanding of life has its basis in the spiritual unity of mankind; all men, in essence, are divine, no matter how unaware of it they themselves are, or how obscured it may be in some of them. Of course our consciousness of the divine entirely depends upon the exercise of the will in that direction. If our lives be absorbed in material things, in selfish interests, to the exclusion of the things of the spirit, there can come no response from the higher nature, which will eventually seek other vehicles for expression in the world. On the other hand, if we recognize this as a glorious opportunity, the door of the universe is opened anew to us, and there is no limit to the service we can render.

From what has been said we may rightly infer that the purpose of life is to express the divine through the mortal man. If, then, we have come to the point of knowing this, and, in some measure, of realizing its importance, we may decide to endeavour to embody it in our lives. Having made this decision, we shall be very likely to proceed on our new way of life in a most enthusiastic manner at first. We shall be anxious to tell others what we know, and at the same time be eager to learn more ourselves. Yet while we may appreciate the devotional aspect of the spiritual life to some extent, and no doubt gain a great deal of benefit by it, much of our understanding in these earlier stages will be only of a superficial or intellectual character. We do not know ourselves to anything like the degree that we shall know, as growth opens our eyes. So we may go on in this way for a time, of varying length in each case, until we arrive at that point of development which is spoken of as the "moment of choice." Here we have the opportunity definitely to make up our minds to put our knowledge and our faith to the test. Seeing the two ways before us,

we can, if we so determine, leave the one with which we are more or less familiar, and traverse the one that is new ground. The familiar way is the ordinary worldly struggle for life in competition with others, our sole reliance placed on material methods to achieve our purpose; the unfamiliar way is that whereby we place our whole lives in the hands of the Good Law and the Masters,—those Elder Brothers who are the spiritual teachers of mankind. This has its correspondence in a lower stage of growth where many devout people place their trust in Providence, and accept what comes to them in that spirit. Faith is required in both cases, but the former is more enlightened. We are told that the Masters are the perfect embodiment of the Law, that they always work with it, and consequently do not retard the spiritual progress or advancement of the world. This "moment of choice" might then be said to be practically the beginning of the way, when the neophyte, student or would-be disciple consciously sets out to work with the Law. This definite calling upon the Law, for that is what it amounts to, brings in its train various consequences and associations. We have determined on a certain course of life and it remains to be seen how we face and deal with the tests of that course, as they occur from day to day; they need not be special tests, nor by any means extraordinarily difficult, for we shall find in our psychic and mental make-up plenty of ordinary things to rise above, control or eliminate. So we shall progress for a time in a kind of see-saw fashion, rising above one thing and falling over another, until, by never-failing effort to rise and try again, gradually we are able to maintain some balance, some surer foothold on the road we wish to travel. We must not, however, let this little advance persuade us that we are now immune from attack, for the sleepless adversary will come upon us in unexpected ways, and in a manner that it will take all our strength to resist; it will show us that, thinking we have triumphed in one direction, the same temptation in another form may find us unprepared. We shall, therefore, do well not only to pray but to watch—to keep alert for the things we inevitably shall encounter. It would not seem that our new way of life is altogether a bed of roses, for until now there have been more thorns and prickles than anything else. Yet somehow we could not think of going back to the old life of uncertainty and irresponsibility. We are beginning to realize, if only dimly, that behind all these obstacles, all these ups and downs, there is a joy which only we ourselves can diminish or destroy, and which is infinitely worth all the so-called "pleasures of life" put together, and which, moreover, is open to those poorest in earthly possessions.

We find one other most valuable and helpful thing in the companionship we can experience, as we follow the Gleam; there is no friendship like unto that which has its source in the Soul. We find that no part of the way is untraversed, or without a helping hand where need exists; in fact it may be our good fortune, for a time, to be associated personally with those who are also fellow-pilgrims on the great journey. In that case it would be for us to take advantage of this as much as ever we can; to learn from them, as even they may learn from us; and, at the same time, humbly to remember that above us all



are the light and guidance of the Masters, and that only in so far as we provide the right conditions of harmony and unity—oneness of heart—can we receive that light and guidance which will enable us to do Their work in the world. There is a saying that we are gods if we will it so; which is the opposite of the common expression that we are only human. Between a man and a god—a highly evolved Spiritual Being—there are numberless stages of growth, the great majority of which it is neither in our ability, nor in our province to deal with; but they are, at any rate, all pointers to the possibilities of the human race. As we, then, definitely continue in this new path of life, we not only become associated with others of similar growth, but find that there have been teachers and pupils throughout the ages; and why not to-day? Because they are not blazoned forth is no proof that they do not exist. It may be our opportunity and our great privilege also, to contact fellow-pilgrims who are farther ahead than we, who in themselves are proofs of further stages on the way. But whatever our experience, it strikes home to us that, in the last resort, the crux of the question lies in the amount of real effort we put forth to “live the life” ourselves. So we set out with renewed vigour to learn the lessons and to do the work that is immediately before us. We discover that it needs a positive attitude successfully to accomplish our task in the world, whether in the sphere of our daily occupation, of our home, or in other surroundings. We have a work to do at our stage of development in cultivating and expressing the sunshine of the higher nature, for there is no doubt about it that love, faith, courage, sympathy, patience, and courtesy, do belong to that part of man’s being; we have only to meet one who is a disciple, entirely to satisfy ourselves on that head. What then must these things be when expressed by a Master! We have verily a work to accomplish in controlling the personality with all its leanings towards the lower nature, as evidenced in envy, hatred, malice and all uncharitableness; in vanity, jealousy, and in love of the outward shows of life, which at last prove to be hollowness itself, and turn to dust and ashes in the mouth. We have to conquer the perverted appetites of man that are often looked upon as the substance of life itself; those natural functions, regarded even as sacred by all true seers and mystics, that have been and are so degraded from age to age, that it is difficult to withstand the atmosphere of psychic thought this perversion creates.

If through our efforts we have learned, more or less, the right use of the physical body, we have then to undertake the right use of the consciousness in other departments of our being. Away from the psychic side of life is the mental or intellectual; we have set ourselves a task indeed when we realize that we have to determine the character of our thoughts, for that involves constant direction and choice. Our duties largely compel our attention throughout the day, though there will, doubtless, be intervals when we have time, and when we can, if we like, think of our Master and his love for us, and how we can strive to be more worthy of that love. We shall equally be serving the Master by thinking of some little service that we might do for a neighbour or a friend; a letter we might write to cheer and invigorate some soul struggling on life’s

highway; or we could meditate on some verse of scripture, or some point in a paper or article, whose meaning is not very clear to us, or which we do not at all understand,—occupied with something, in short, that will be useful and helpful from the point of view of the Soul. So much then for our working hours; though before we proceed to examine our leisure time, it might be as well to say that the more we do with our *might* what our hands find to do, the more effectively shall we exercise the will in our Master's service when we have leisure to follow the bent of our heart's desire.

In passing to our leisure hours we must realize how important and at the root of the matter is our heart's desire; and the significance of the familiar teaching that "Where the treasure is, there will the heart be also," is very clear and definite. We can soon find out where our treasure is, and whether "living the life" is the thing in any degree that we pictured it as being. If it is the delight of our lives, as it more surely becomes as we go along the Path, we shall value our leisure as we have never done before. We shall gradually eliminate the useless and indifferent, and in every way endeavour to employ our time to the very best advantage from the standpoint of that never failing guide and instructor—the Soul. We shall see the word recreation in a new light; we shall see it as re-creation—a building anew, physically, mentally and spiritually, and we shall act accordingly. We shall make all our desires lean to and centre upon, the acquisition of the Eternal Wisdom. Constant effort in this direction is bound to make a difference in the character as time goes on, and we shall see more clearly many things that before were vague and obscure; not only that,—by continuous application we shall acquire a stability and control that will enable us to do our work more efficiently. It may be dawning upon us now, that the relative perfection of control, and of other qualities, is an outward and visible sign of discipleship. If so, every time we gain confirmation of having acted rightly, our view of the way is clearer, and we can better proceed to the next step.

As we review the past, what do we find? We find a gradual turning away from all that is lower, a gradual purification of the mind and heart, and hence a gradual detachment from the so-called "pleasures of life"; a gradual increase of peace, of faith and joy, which are sure indications that we are living our life from its higher side; that this living of life from its higher side is no aloof, indifferent, dreamy, "castle-in-the-air" sort of business by any means; quite the reverse; for all the vigour and alertness we possess are necessary. The gradual transfer of the consciousness from the things of the world to the things of the spirit is the change from the mortal to the immortal, from the human to the divine; and the point at which we first consciously come into contact with the divine, first consciously approach the Master in love and unity of heart, may truly be said to be "The Crown of Human Life."

E. HOWARD LINCOLN.

# NORFOLK AND ITS MYSTICS

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THE sun sets over an expanse of marshland and reeds, and touches with golden light the silent waters; the evening breeze has dropped and the sailing boats come slowly to their moorings. In the distance is seen a line of sand-dunes, and beyond them the blue sea. Now and then the cry of gulls is heard; a heron flies over, with its long neck and wings outstretched; coots and other water-birds chatter and play among the reeds. The shadows lengthen over the waters; the sun sinks behind the horizon in a glory of flame and gold, leaving long ripples of clouds, like angels' wings. Then there is silence, and the peace of evening descends over Broadland.

This landscape is typical of much of England's county of Norfolk, with its flat expanse of marsh and fen, broken here and there by windmills, or by the great square towers of village churches, and over all the silence of the English countryside. Much of Broadland has, in the last centuries, been reclaimed from the sea, and the land has been drained to afford pasture. In the winter the marshes become impassable, but the waterways form the main roads, and the trading wherries, with their black sails, pass slowly up and down at all times of the year. The low-lying parts of Norfolk constitute the "Broads"; in some parts of the county the fens reach far inland, and into Cambridgeshire, where the great cathedral at Ely stands high on an island above the waters. The drier parts of the country are the wheat-growing lands, and agriculture is the chief occupation; there are few towns of any size, and the people live in scattered farms and small villages, each village having its old church with a tall square or round tower that is a landmark for miles around. In some places there are ruins of convents and monasteries, which date back to the time when Norfolk and Suffolk (the old kingdom of East Anglia) were the land of faith, and men gave generously to the glory of God. The churches are one of the most interesting features of East Anglia, and there are examples of every style of architecture, Saxon, Norman, early English; but the most usual architecture seen in village churches is the Perpendicular style of the 14th century. The casual visitor cannot understand why there are so many great churches for so small a population, until he looks up the history of the county, to find that, in the Middle Ages, East Anglia was an important commercial centre, having the monopoly of the wool-trade with Flanders. Wealthy merchants, wishing to increase merit towards their account in Heaven, founded great churches with the bulk of their fortunes; soldiers and knights, returning from the wars, endowed monasteries and abbeys, with the proceeds of their plunder, and in expiation for their sins. The churches, or the ruins, exist to this day, a record of their faith, though the population has dwindled and the light of faith has grown dim. Some parts of the country are thickly wooded, the haunt of all kinds of birds and beasts;

nearer the coast there is heath and moorland, bright in summer with yellow gorse and purple heather. In the winter, when the fierce winds sweep in from the sea, coast and fen-land and heath are desolate and silent, save for the cry of the birds, and at all times the traveller is impressed by the silence of this country, and the austerity that is its chief characteristic. The severity and the simplicity of the landscape are reflected in the life and character of men and women from this part of the world. The people of Norfolk are a hardy and vigorous race, who have had to struggle to make a scanty living in the harvest of the soil and the harvest of the sea. It is the vigour which, in past centuries, lent purpose and character to their faith, and there is embedded in the race, and in the soil, that austerity which is expressed in churches and landscape and scenery.

In early history, the kingdom of East Anglia passed through all the tumults and invasions of the early English kingdoms. Among its kings was St. Edmund, patron saint and martyr; he was born in the year 840, was made king at the age of 15, and later became a model ruler. At one time he is said to have retired into his royal tower at Hunstanton, for a year, to learn the Psalter by heart. He then emerged to make war on the invading Danes, but they returned to fight him in overwhelming numbers. King Edmund was captured; he offered himself as a ransom for his people, and he was tortured and put to death in the year 870. In the 10th century his relics were removed to Bury St. Edmunds and became a centre of popular devotion. The Danes were not always destroyers. In 1034 King Canute founded the famous abbey of St. Benet, on the banks of the Bure. The ruins of the gateway and the extensive foundations of the abbey can be seen to this day by the yachtsmen of the Broads, and local legend speaks of a secret passage that led, beneath the river, to a place far distant. East Anglia numbers other saints in its annals, besides knights and men-at-arms, gallant sailors and seamen, poets and artists. In recent centuries there has been a special school of Norfolk painters, who have reproduced, in their landscapes, something of the purity and transparency of the atmosphere, its unusual light effects, due to the presence of wide expanses of water, and the soft shades of colouring that are revealed by the reflected light.

The prosperity of the country greatly increased during the 14th century, with the extension of the wool-trade, and the arrival of the Flemish weavers who settled at Norwich and Worstead. They brought their craft and learning, their art and their mysticism over from the Netherlands. Towards the end of that century, the population suffered terribly from the ravages of the Black Death; whole villages were wiped out by the scourge. In the present day, the village of Erpingham has the curious feature of having its church a mile from the village. At the time of the Black Death, the survivors among the village people moved to a place a mile off to avoid the scourge, but the church remained where it had been founded. Many Dutch settlers came over to Norfolk during the religious persecutions of the 16th century. After the Reformation, the country accepted the Protestant religion; the Religious

Orders were driven out, and the famous old monastic foundations fell into disuse and ruin. In the Civil wars of the 17th century, the country, as a whole, was Puritan in its sympathies, and sided with Cromwell. There is a wonderful old church at Blythburgh, in Suffolk, with beautiful sculptures in the roof, of winged angels. There, as in many other churches, Cromwell's soldiers stabled their horses; the men were enraged at the figures of the angels, and tried to shoot them down. But they were poor marksmen, for the angels still survive, and the bullet holes can be seen in the roof, wide of the mark.

A student of history would find much to delight him, in a tour of Norfolk and Suffolk. In earliest times, the see of the bishopric of East Anglia was at Dunwich, which remained for many centuries a famous port, and a centre of religion, with "fifty-two churches, chapels, religious houses and hospitals"; now it is a forgotten village, with interesting old ruins and few inhabitants. Local legend tells of seven great churches buried beneath the sea; it was the custom to build churches on the edge of the cliff, for a landmark to mariners by day and a beacon by night, and as the sea encroached, the churches one after the other fell over the cliff. The chime of their bells may yet be heard, it is said, in the stillness of the evening. Further along the coast there is Southwold, a small town with a marvellous church, its chief feature of interest being a painted rood screen, showing the twelve apostles and the nine choirs of angels. The 15th century rood screens are a feature of many of the East Anglian churches; some have survived the ravages of time and the destructive work of the Reformers, and they reflect the devotion of the Middle Ages. The influence of such art can sometimes be traced in the writings of mystics, who transcribed their revelations as a series of pictures. Ranworth church, in the midst of the Broads, has a famous painted screen, and also a marvellous 15th century Psalter, with exquisite illuminated work. After the Reformation, this book was lost for many centuries, until it came to light at a sale in London in 1911 and was bought back for the church. Thus, at all places, the present and the past are interwoven into one pattern.

One of the most unusual places on the Norfolk coast is Blakeney, now a forlorn village, once a famous port. The boats came up the creek which has now become silted with mud; smugglers sailed up and down by night, or carried their ill-gotten goods in safety over the deserted marshes. The great church stands above the village and can be seen far out at sea, as the mariners often realized to their peril, for its high tower was sometimes used as a "wrecking-tower,"—the townsmen lit false fires to mislead the sailors and wreck them on the shoals, and then they carried off, as plunder, the cargo washed up on shore. There was a famous Carmelite Priory at Blakeney. Now the town is peopled by fisher-folk, and by the ghosts of smugglers and pirates, townsfolk and monks, for:

"Time is dead at Blakeney  
In old forgotten Blakeney

What care they for Time's scythe or glass  
 Who do not feel the hours pass  
 Who sleep in sea-worn Blakeney."

Enough has perhaps been said to show that Norfolk has its own history and atmosphere, unspoilt by the progress of modern times. The country, as a whole, is isolated; railways are few and trains infrequent, and the rush and roar of the twentieth century has not penetrated its remote villages. The atmosphere of any place may be expressed, but can rarely be described; it is certain that the devotion of by-gone centuries lingers yet around the places made holy by the prayers of suppliants. We are influenced, more than we would admit, by our environment and surroundings; sometimes these appear to us unfavourable, and we react against them, but in time we learn the lesson of acceptance. The roots of our nature strike deep into the country which we love, and from which we draw life and nourishment. "The meek shall inherit the earth" is a beatitude which may be interpreted quite literally, for it is often those who live in lowliness, and close to the soil, who overhear the whispers of Nature, and learn the secrets of the earth, and so, in a true sense, possess the land. If a student of English history were asked to name the districts, in England, where the light of faith burnt most brightly, he might perhaps choose East Anglia, Yorkshire, and Northumbria as affording the most notable examples of the devotion, learning, and spiritual vigour of many centuries. Those who are alive to-day enter into the spiritual inheritance of the past, and consciously or unconsciously, draw life from its life. It would be interesting to members of The Theosophical Society to make a study of those places, in different countries, where the Theosophical movement has taken root and grown into Branches, so as to understand to what extent conditions have been favourable to the revival of the light of Ancient Wisdom which has burnt from time immemorial. Local conditions are certainly influential, whether they appear to us to afford overwhelming difficulties, trials and friction,—material which is there to be overcome, to furnish proof of valour, to exercise the warrior-spirit—or whether they appear more favourable when affording peace, tranquillity and silence, the outer expression of the inner silence in which all true work is performed.

In olden days men and women were often led, by the thirst for perfection, to spend solitary lives as hermits or anchorites, giving their whole time to contemplation, study, and the worship of God. The same ideal is alive in the world to-day, but it is not confined to the rule of life of Solitaries of the East, or to the religious in contemplative orders of the West. It is a life which can be led in the tumult of the world, when he who aspires to such a life has learnt to build the "cell of the heart" and there to dwell. It is interesting to study the lives of hermits of old, to see to what extent the modern ideal may approximate to the spirit of the mediæval solitaries. It has been stated that in the Middle Ages there existed in East Anglia a greater number of hermitages and anchorages than in any other county save Yorkshire. There

were many hermitages along the coast, where the hermits often acted as light-keepers; a chapel, for this purpose, was founded by St. Edmund at Hunstanton. Anchorites were stricter than hermits and did not leave their cells, which were usually attached to a church; such anchorages can still be seen, built against the wall of several of the old churches of Norfolk. Women were no less ready than men to embrace that form of religious life, and two anchoresses of Norfolk have become known to students of mysticism, from their written records—Margery Kempe of Lynn and Juliana of Norwich. It is interesting, before studying their writings, to learn something of the life of an anchoress, and this has been clearly described for us in a thirteenth century document, the *Ancren Riwe*,<sup>1</sup> which is one of the gems of mediæval mystical literature. During the thirteenth century there were many vocations to the life of anchoress; the *Ancren Riwe* may have been written for nuns in Dorsetshire who were recluses, and it is possible that the author was a certain Bishop Poore who died in 1237. The treatise sets out, with great precision and clearness, all the details of an inner and outer life of an anchoress, who lived alone, though she might have one or two "hand-maidens"—women of mature years and known discretion—who attended to her wants. The anchoress was to follow a rule of silence and austerity; her life and her prayers were to be the *anchor* of the Church. She might have two meals a day, taken alone, though if any woman friend were to visit her, the hand-maid might "entertain her with good cheer," and the anchoress might "open her window once or twice, and make signs to her of gladness at seeing her." The silence was to be complete on Fridays, and on other days the anchoress was to be sparing of her speech; her time was to be employed in devotions, and work for the church and the poor. She was to have no external cares, and was not to hold a school; her vows were obedience, chastity, and constancy as to her abode. The outward rule was for the guidance of the inner life, and details of the outer life were left to the discretion of the anchoress, who might alter them as occasion arose; only the vows were binding.

The *Ancren Riwe* is divided into eight short books, and the various subjects are dealt with clearly and in order. The first book is very beautiful, and suggests the religious devotions suitable to an anchoress, whose inner life was to be strengthened by ardent prayer and frequent meditation. The prayers include many of the early liturgical devotions, in which the number seven is found frequently recurring. There was to be special meditation on the Passion at mid-day; all daily life was to be sanctified by prayer and aspiration. The second book deals with the custody of the five senses. The third book describes the vocation of the anchoress; in a curious simile she is likened to a bird, flying with head low—a sign of humility—and wings outstretched, for the wings of Prayer are to bear her to Heaven. She is reminded to keep silence about herself, for good deeds lose their value when spoken about. Books IV, V, and VI deal with temptations, confession and penance,

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<sup>1</sup> *Ancren Riwe*, modernized by J. Morton (King's Classics).

with a wealth of detail, and a quiet sense of humour, that prove the author to be an experienced director of the souls of devout women. The seventh book is one of the most beautiful, on the subject of Divine Love; "Purenness of heart is the Love of God only; in this is the whole strength of religious professions." The author quotes, from St. Gregory, "all God's commands are rooted in Love," and discourses of the eternal Love of Christ for the souls of men. Christ is represented as knight and fighter who wages war to win souls; the crucifix hung in the church as the Crusader hangs his shield, is to remind us of "Jesus Christ's knighthood, which He practised on the Cross." The last book returns to external matters, and regulates certain details of domestic life with sound common sense and practical wisdom. The anchor-ess should not keep domestic animals, except a cat; she must not engage in "traffic." Her clothes must be plain and warm and sufficient to keep out the cold; she should have thick warm shoes, and she might not undertake severe penances and disciplines; she must, at all times, have care of her person, as befits a servant of God. She may have one or two maids, and must be careful to maintain, between them, the peace and concord which is most pleasing to God and most displeasing to the devil. The author puts down his pen with a thankful sigh at the end of the treatise, and having completed his task he declares that: "God knows, it would be more agreeable to me to set out on a journey to Rome, than to begin to do it again."

There exists a beautiful collection of early English mystical treatises, published under the title of *The Cell of Self-Knowledge*<sup>2</sup>—a phrase borrowed from St. Catherine of Siena. It was first printed in 1501, and contains seven treatises by mystics, of various dates, from the 13th to the 15th centuries—a period described as the "golden age of mystical literature." Three of the treatises are by unknown authors, others are written by Richard of St. Victor, St. Catherine of Siena, and Walter Hilton, and finally there is an exquisite little treatise of "Contemplation, taught by Our Lord Jesus Christ, or taken out of the book of Margery Kempe, Ancess of Lynn." The town of Lynn, or rather King's Lynn, was one of the most important towns of Norfolk, and at one time a flourishing port. It is known to have had many religious foundations, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and at one time to have possessed convents or priories of Benedictines, Augustinians, Franciscans, Carmelites and Dominicans. Nothing whatever is known of Margery Kempe, nor can any trace be found of the book to which the title refers. An old record speaks of one "Margery Kempe" who, between 1284 and 1298, gave up all her rights to certain lands and property in favour of the convent of Christ Church, Canterbury, and it is possible that she became the "Ancess of Lynn" and the recipient of mystic revelations. The fragment of writing which has come down to us shows the profound character of her Love, and the perfect simplicity of her intercourse with her Lord. She had desired to suffer many things in conformity with her Master's sufferings. Her Lord replies:

<sup>2</sup> *The Cell of Self-Knowledge*, edited by Edmund Gardner.



"Daughter, if thou wear the habergeon or the hair-shirt, fasting bread and water, and if thou saidest every day a thousand Pater Nosters, thou shalt not please Me so well as thou dost when thou art in silence, and suffrest Me to speak in thy soul. Daughter, for to bid many beads, it is good to them that can not better do, and yet it is not perfect. But it is a good way toward perfection. . . . And I have often told thee, daughter, that thinking, weeping, and high contemplation, is the best life on earth, and thou shalt have more Merit in Heaven for one year thinking in thy mind than for an hundred year of praying with thy mouth; and yet thou wilt not believe Me, for thou wilt bid many beads." Her Lord ever counsels her: "Have mind of thy wickedness, and think on My goodness." Her humility—that hall-mark of the saints—increased with her advance in the way of contemplation; her charity embraced all mankind, and her prayers were earnest for holy men and for sinners, for Christians and Saracens. It would seem that she understood the meaning of suffering and self-sacrifice, accepted gladly for love of the Crucified. "Lord," she said, "for Thy great pain have mercy on my little pain." And she is reminded that "By this way came I and all My disciples."

Margery Kempe of Lynn was the precursor of another Norfolk anchoress and mystic, Juliana of Norwich, of whom something may be said in a later article.

S. C.

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*God never imposes a duty without giving strength and time to do it.—RUSKIN.*

# ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

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THE Philosopher, who declares that he is never disappointed or discouraged because he always expects the impossible, none the less sat down with a studied exhibition of collapse.

"I give it up," he said. "I have talked myself hoarse, and the more I talk, the more confused they become. They cannot see that Truth can be expressed in terms of paradox only,—by which I mean that the *nous*, one of whose functions is to recognize differences, cannot perceive the Truth until it has learned to include in its range of vision, not only the difference, or contradiction, but also, and simultaneously, the point of reconciliation. I talk to them one day, and present one aspect of the truth; I talk to them another day, and present another aspect of the truth. They go away, and see nothing but a contradiction. If I speak of freedom, of liberty, as something to be intensely desired, and then, later, of obedience, of glad servitude, as an ideal condition, they feel as if I had left them in a fog. Even when I explain to them that true freedom can be won only by obedience to divine law, and that obedience which does not give the sense of freedom is an imperfect obedience,—they are inclined to think that I have been performing mental gymnastics for their bewilderment, rather than striving, to the best of my ability, to convey the truth in the only way in which Truth can be conveyed."

"Well," remarked the Lawyer cheerfully, "if a class-room of boys drives you to exasperation, what, do you suppose, must be the effect upon an Adept when trying to teach us!"

"An Adept," was the retort, "is supposed to be completely and permanently on top of his nerves. I am not an Adept."

"But have you ever thought what it must cost the Adept, from minute to minute, to maintain his poise, his mastery? His nerves must be much more alive than ours, his perceptions infinitely more keen! Think, for instance, of the present condition of France, and of some Adept or Master whose function it is to watch over its destinies. We must assume that he loves the place and its people; that he sees their capacities; that his right—which means his ability—to interfere is limited strictly by Karma, and that even then his success must depend upon the receptivity of those who neither look nor listen for inner guidance. I should think he would go insane!"

"But surely some people in France must listen for inner guidance," the Student expostulated.

"Many, doubtless; but are they men of affairs, men of influence? Naturally, I am only speculating, but I have often thought of Foch, of Castelnau and others—sincerely religious men—men of prayer—whose Roman Catholicism, however, is part of the fibre of their being. This means, first, that they would pay more attention to the opinions of their confessor than to any

inner promptings they might receive, and, secondly, that they would interpret anything they felt to be true, in terms of the 'truths' of their Church and what they believe to be its needs. It would be easier, probably, to reach a freethinker."

"But what is the matter with France?"

"The worship of material success. The poverty left by the war has been so bitter, the prosperity of Germany and America has seemed so unjust, that principles are being sacrificed and short-sighted expediencies set up in their place. The French people are listening to those who promise them the quickest relief,—prepared to snatch at a *sou* at the cost of their spiritual integrity, and of course, therefore, at the cost ultimately even of material profit. They are being untrue to themselves—not for the first time in their history; and they are all the more to blame because their superior intelligence makes them more responsible than other nations. No one who loves them and who believes in them can fail to be heart-broken over the 'note,' the tone, they are now striking internationally, although it might have been expected, I suppose, so long as their form of government is so utterly unsuited to their genius. They have sense enough to have no respect for their politicians, and yet they accept their leadership."

"Incidentally," the Historian interjected, "I don't think you have been fair to the French Roman Catholic. I don't think he is as priest-ridden as you suggest."

"It is not easy to be fair in a general statement," the Lawyer replied; "but when a man is notoriously *dévo*t, much may be inferred. I was reading only the other day a treatise entitled *La Journée des Malades*, by the Abbé Henri Perreyve, many of whose books are unusually helpful, and which still have an immense circulation. Listen to what he says about priests. It is on page 80: 'The priest is God in Jesus Christ when he teaches; for the truths which he declares are of the supernatural order, and are divine, eternal, unchangeable. . . . The priest is God in Jesus Christ when he binds and unbinds the consciences of men. . . .' It is true that the Abbé admits that the priest is 'a mixture of man and of God,' and that therefore, 'the priest is an enigma but a divine enigma.' This admission in no way affects, however, the terrible significance of his basic dogma. Incidentally, the attitude expressed in *The Mahatma Letters* toward priestcraft should be easy to understand when priesthood at its best can enunciate such a proposition as that of the Abbé Perreyve. My point is, however, that although many practising Catholics doubtless accept such a doctrine without a thought, just as many Protestants accept the Creed, those who really believe it and whose conduct therefore is influenced by it, necessarily bring their opinions about most things into harmony with the views of the priesthood; while the priesthood, with rare exceptions, usually brings its opinions into harmony with the views of Rome. Consequently I think I was justified in saying what I did about the difficulty of reaching such people 'from within.'"

"I want to talk about something else!" the Engineer now exclaimed,

thrusting up his arm like a small boy at school. "I want to talk about myself! If the Recorder wants us to supply him with 'copy,' he must pay for it occasionally by listening to personal revelations, including feelings, grievances, hopes and fears: and I am full of an idea."

"Delighted to hear it," the Recorder answered. "Charmed to listen, too; but I won't promise to record a word of it. Further, I should like to remind you of a saying of Balzac,—that 'one of the most important rules in the science of manners is that you preserve an almost absolute silence concerning yourself'!"

"That's easy," retorted the Engineer. "I'll attribute my idea, as well as my feelings about it, to Smith; or you can put it into the third person in the 'Screen.' It's not my idea anyhow. It's as old as the hills and was echoed a few weeks ago at a meeting of the New York Branch. Briefly, this: we make a mistake when we think of the lower nature chiefly in terms of 'low' or 'immoral,' as compared with the higher or moral. The so-called lower nature is a lunatic, *per se*, and we shall not handle it, or ourselves, effectually, until we are saturated with that realization. In many of his moods the average man ceases to be interested in morality, and is inclined to take refuge behind what he calls the 'natural.' The fact is that there is nothing 'natural' about the lower personal self. Wild animals are natural; their instincts are natural; but man perverted, ages ago, whatever was natural in his make-up, until now it is a twisted, crazy, demoniac creature, howling or, in some cases, whining for things which, when gained, invariably bring misery to itself and also increased desire for them. Now the hall-mark of lunacy is the inability to see facts and to foresee consequences; to imagine, for instance, that iced water will boil an egg, or to be convinced that you are the King of France when actually you are the son of an Irish waiter or of a Chinese laundryman. It is upon such illusions as these that the life of the lunatic self depends. So-and-so is vain; he wants to shine in the eyes of other people. To do this, he displays his 'wares': his physical strength, or his learning, or his asceticism, or his teeth, or his modesty,—the only result being that other people, though blind to their own peculiarities, read him like an open book, and, instead of admiring him, call him a vain ass. He defeats his own end, as the lower nature invariably does, and as ordinary good sense would foresee,—a lunatic performance. The innate folly of the creature could be illustrated more easily, more perfectly, in the domain of sex and its illusions,—but I know that the Recorder could not use anything under that head. Take, instead, the case of a brother and sister (I know them well), both of them married, and sincerely attached to one another, but who quarrelled some two years ago about a cake which the sister had baked. I assume that unkind things were said by both of them. In any case, they have not been on speaking terms from that day to this. Both of them regret it; both of them admit that their behaviour is foolish and worse; yet it looks as if they would wait for reconciliation until their old mother dies—whose grief, meanwhile, in no way moves them! Explain it as you choose,—as due to false pride or to self-centredness,

... other trait of the personal self: it is a lunatic performance from point of view; and the worst of it is that most of us continue to identify ourselves with the lunatics, at least in some respect, instead of treating them as the superintendent of an asylum treats his patients,—a straight-jacket for some, and a change of occupation, with diverted attention, for others."

"I agree with every word you've said," declared the Student; "but I, in my turn, want to change the subject. It's worse than talking 'shop.' I've lived with my lunatics for more years than I can number. Past lives reveal nothing but lunatics and yet more lunatics—miles and millions of them. I spend the better part of my life hurling 'ass' and 'idiot' at their chatter. There must be times when the most benevolent of superintendents finds his patients getting on his nerves, and when he needs to assure himself positively and frequently that he is not one of them. I want to be reminded that I'm none of that, none of that." And the Student spoke almost as if he meant it.

"That you are the real self?" the Ancient commented. "Yes, we do not think or speak of that sufficiently. We should read about it more than we do. It is good for tired hearts and frayed nerves. It is better still for the soul. That which is not *in* a man, he cannot know; that which he knows, must be in him. So many people ask, 'How can I know that Eternal?' If they ask it with desire, the desire they feel is the desire of the Eternal in them that they shall know Him; it is His desire to be known. 'Wheresoever ye turn, there is the face of Allah'; but the heart of Allah is in the net of your own heart. The same thing was said by Christ to Blaise Pascal in another way: 'Console-toi, tu ne me chercherais pas, si tu ne m'avais trouvé'—'Be comforted; thou wouldst not seek me if thou hadst not found me.' It is the ancient mystery, the simplest of all mysteries. Truly, if we loved the Light sufficiently, the darkness would cease to trouble us; if we were to listen to the voice of the Highest, we should no longer hear the chatter of our wandering, foolish selves. Yet the life in them must be redeemed, for it is His life, which we have perverted; besides which, there is a purpose in all this,—the formation of a spiritual and independent microcosm, as the soul cures and masters its 'purgations.'"

"It is easier, I think," said the Student, "to believe in a Master or in Masters, and in a Logos or Universal Self, than in one's own inner existence as a being of wisdom and light. Experience supplies so many adverse arguments!"

"Try Mr. Judge's method," the Ancient replied. "Look for the things in yourself that you like and wish to cultivate: your love of truth, of beauty, of goodness; your desire to be generous, unselfish, noble. Look for the things that are worthy of immortality, for those are a part of your real self."

"Some of the Sufis," said the Orientalist, "used to invoke what they called their 'perfect natures.' It appeared to them as a form, a being, during the sleep of the body. The Sufi used a special *mantram* before going to sleep, after a preparation of some days in the matter of food and religious exercises.

Then a form appeared to him, saying 'I am thy perfect nature, answer any question previously prepared.'

"'Nearer than hands and feet,'" quoted the Lawyer. "We seek and always the answer is: 'one step beyond myself.' Who was it who said 'God hath made all atoms in space mirrors, and fronteth each one with His perfect face'?"

"It was Jāmi," the Orientalist replied. "Here is another translation of the whole passage:

"Wherever Beauty dwells  
Such is its nature, and its heritage  
From Everlasting Beauty, which emerged  
From realms of purity to shine upon  
The worlds, and all the souls that dwell therein.  
One gleam fell from It on the Universe  
And on the angels, and this single ray  
Dazzled the angels till their senses whirled  
Like the revolving sky. In divers forms  
Each mirror showed it forth, and everywhere  
Its praise was chanted in new harmonies.

Each speck of matter, did He constitute  
A mirror, causing each one to reflect  
The beauty of His visage. From the rose  
Flashed forth His beauty, and the nightingale,  
Beholding it, loved madly . . .

Where'er thou seest a veil,  
Beneath that veil He hides. Whatever heart  
Doth yield to love, He charms it. In His love  
The heart hath life. Longing for Him, the soul  
*Hath* victory. . . ."

"Heaven bless you," commented the Lawyer. "That is just the sort of food we need; just the sort of food with which art and literature ought to supply us—revelations of divine beauty in man and in nature,—instead of which they give us 'studies' of cesspools and 'impressions' of hell. How I hate modern art—that is 'modern'! 'Art for Art's sake'—musical, pictorial and literary 'stunts': Kama-manas at its worst! Compare them with those who lifted the veil between the seen and the unseen, such as Turner, and with those who revealed divine beauty in human form, such as Praxiteles! I wish someone would write an article for the *QUARTERLY* on that subject. It is beyond me,—and I certainly don't want to change our present line of thought, which is an unspeakable relief after a dose of human nature as it is, one's own included. Help us for a few minutes to get away from it, to forget it. Tell us some more about the real self, the real world."

"We don't need to get away from it or to forget it," the Ancient answered; "what we need as a rule is to see, and to insist upon seeing, the real within and behind an appearance that belies the reality. Too often we allow ourselves to be beaten down by the insistence of surface impressions—of surface explosions."

"I know," said the Lawyer; "we are such children in those respects. One's only hope is that Compassion will have compassion on our childishness."

"You too have been re-reading it!" smiled the Ancient.

"Coventry Patmore's poem? Yes, I have."

"Read it to us," exclaimed the others.

"I am afraid it has no connection whatever with the subject we were discussing."

"Unless," suggested the Ancient, "anything that evokes the real self—our 'perfect nature'—or that lifts us to its plane of consciousness, serves the very purpose we had in view."

So the Lawyer read "The Toys":—

"My little son, who looked from thoughtful eyes  
And moved and spoke in quiet grown-up wise,  
Having my law the seventh time disobeyed,  
I struck him, and dismissed  
With hard words and unkissed,  
—His Mother, who was patient, being dead.  
Then, fearing lest his grief should hinder sleep,  
I visited his bed,  
But found him slumbering deep,  
With darkened eyelids, and their lashes yet  
From his late sobbing wet.  
And I, with moan,  
Kissing away his tears, left others of my own;  
For, on a table drawn beside his head,  
He had put, within his reach,  
A box of counters and a red-veined stone,  
A piece of glass abraded by the beach,  
And six or seven shells,  
A bottle with bluebells,  
And two French copper coins, ranged there with careful art,  
To comfort his sad heart.  
So when that night I prayed  
To God, I wept, and said:  
Ah, when at last we lie with tranced breath,  
Not vexing Thee in death,  
And Thou rememberest of what toys  
We made our joys,  
How weakly understood

Thy great commanded good,  
 Then, fatherly not less  
 Than I whom Thou hast moulded from the clay,  
 Thou'lt leave Thy wrath, and say,  
 'I will be sorry for their childishness.'"

"Beautiful, is it not?"

"It certainly is," the Student responded; "and what restraint, what admirable simplicity! What a delight it is to get into that current again! Men have misused Beauty as they have not been able to misuse Truth and Goodness—though they have done their best to use all three for selfish and despicable ends. None the less, Beauty still cries to us:

"Look forth on everlastingness!  
 Through the coil'd waters and the ebb of light  
 I'll be thy sail!"

"And that Eternal Beauty is the only real." It was the Ancient who spoke. "Life seems hopeless at times—tragically hopeless when we are young, sadly hopeless when we are old. Yet it is the lower self that sees things in that light, and we should treat such moments as moments of shame, driving them from us as the money-changers were driven from the Temple. At our worst and lowest we can remember that (if you will forgive so oft-quoted a verse)—,

"Sometimes a breath floats by me,  
 An odour from Dreamland sent,  
 That makes the ghost seem nigh me  
 Of a splendour that came and went,  
 Of a life lived somewhere, I know not  
 In what diviner sphere,  
 Or memories that stay not and go not,  
 Like music heard once by an ear  
 That cannot forget or reclaim it,  
 A something so shy, it would shame it  
 To make it a show,  
 A something too vague, could I name it,  
 For others to know,  
 As if I had lived it or dreamed it,  
 As if I had acted or schemed it,  
 Long ago!"

"You haven't had any poetry in the 'Screen' for years," said the Engineer, "and now your readers will think that we've suddenly become poetry-mad! I vote for some more. It's in a good cause anyhow. The Student's savage-breasted lunatics must have wilted already. A little more, and they'll eat out of his hand!"



"I hope not," the Student retorted. "You may have them, gladly, if you're looking for more pets of that description. I should have thought that your own supply would have seen you through!"

"Ha, ha! Not quite wilted yet," laughed the Engineer; "and yours will go down with colours flying, as I might have known. . . . I want another poem, please."

"I cannot supply the poem," the Ancient commented, "but I do think that while we are on this general subject of the lower or elemental self, and of escape from it, we ought not to overlook self-centredness as the secret of its hold over us, while the secret of escape from its clutches is love of that which is outside of and greater than oneself,—preferably love of the Masters or of a Master. Just as self-love is the root of all evil—and of all lunacy—unselfish love and devotion is not only the beginning but the end of all wisdom,—and of all peace. We should remember, further, that in this respect we do not have to take the initiative (indeed, we could not), because the more self-centred we are, and in that sense 'lost,' the more ardently are we being sought; so that all we need is to respond,—any turning of the heart from self, being but an answer to that far cry to turn again home."

Quoth the Lawyer:—

"When the night was in the sky,  
And heavily went the hours,  
My Beloved drew nigh  
With His Hands full of flowers—  
Burning red flowers  
Like cups of scented wine—  
And He said, 'They are all ours,  
Thine and Mine.

'I gathered them from the bitter Tree—  
Why dost thou start?  
I gathered the Five of them for thee,  
Child of My Heart.  
These are they that have wrung my Heart,  
And with fiercest pangs have moved Me—  
I gathered them—why dost thou shrink apart?  
In the house of them that loved Me.'"

"Thank you," said the Ancient. "Who wrote it?"

"I don't remember; but it's in *The Oxford Book of English Mystical Verse*, which contains an index of first lines, and the first line of the first verse is 'When the storm was in the sky.'"

"There is something by Louise Imogen Guiney which perhaps completes the pattern of our sampler," the Lawyer continued. "Probably you know it,"—and he quoted:

"A man said to his angel  
 'My spirits are fallen thro',  
 And I cannot carry this battle;  
 O brother, what shall I do?'"

Then said to the man his angel,  
 'Thou wavering witless soul,  
 Back to the ranks! What matter  
 To win or lose the whole,  
 As judged by the little judges  
 Who hearken not well, nor see?  
 Not thus, by the outer issue,  
 The Wise shall interpret thee!'"

"Then the angel bids the disheartened mortal stand up boldly to defy,

"'Though out of the past they gather,  
 Mind's Doubt and Bodily Pain,  
 And pallid Thirst of the Spirit  
 That is kin to the other twain,  
 And Grief in a cloud of banners,  
 And ringletted vain Desires,  
 And Vice with the spoils upon him  
 Of thee and thy beaten sires,—

'Thy part is with broken sabre  
 To rise on the last redoubt:  
 To fear not sensible failure,  
 Nor covet the game at all,  
 But fighting, fighting, fighting,  
 Die, driven against the wall.'"

"One more, if time and space permit," the Philosopher pleaded; "from a poem by Edmund Gosse:

"Not with a choir of angels without number,  
 And noise of lutes and lyres,  
 But gently, with the woven veil of slumber  
 Across Thine awful fires,  
 We yearn to watch Thy face, serene and tender,  
 Melt, smiling, calm and sweet,  
 Where round the print of thorns, in thornlike splendour,  
 Transcendent glories meet.

"Most sweet of all, when dark the way and moonless,  
 To feel a touch, a breath,

And know our weary spirits are not tuneless,  
 Our unseen goal not Death;  
 To know that Thou, in all Thy old sweet fashion,  
 Art near us to sustain!  
 We praise Thee, Lord, by all Thy tears and passion,  
 By all Thy cross and pain!

"For when this night of toil and tears is over,  
 Across the hills of spice,  
 Thyself wilt meet us, glowing like a lover  
 Before Love's Paradise."

"For old sake's sake," said the Student, "give us George Eliot before we adjourn. How does it go? 'O may I join the choir invisible.' You know,"—and he turned appealingly to the Lawyer.

"She begins it," was the response, "with a quotation, the source of which I do not know:

"'Tis, by comparison, an easy task  
 Earth to despise, but to converse with heaven—  
 This is not easy.'

"Then she opens,—

"O may I join the choir invisible  
 Of those immortal dead who live again  
 In minds made better by their presence: live  
 In pulses stirred to generosity,  
 In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn  
 For miserable aims that end with self,  
 In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,  
 And with their mild persistence urge man's search  
 To vaster issues. . . .

May I reach

That purest heaven, be to other souls  
 The cup of strength in some great agony,  
 Enkindle generous ardour, feed pure love,  
 Beget the smiles that have no cruelty—  
 Be the sweet presence of a good diffused,  
 As in diffusion ever more intense.  
 So shall I join the choir invisible  
 Whose music is the gladness of the world.'"

T.

# LETTERS TO STUDENTS

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New Year's, 1915.

DEAR—

Thank you for your letter.

You have tried and are trying. You know—we all know—that if one tries and continues to try one wins out, no matter what the task. Therefore take heart of grace, and go on trying, with the assurance that all will be well.

You are too self-conscious. Self-consciousness can be a very bad thing, when it manifests in the cruder or grosser ways—or it can be a half-good thing, when it takes the form of concentrating on self, for the purpose of self-improvement. But even then it is self-centred, and that means that it contains an element that must be got rid of.

You need to transfer your interest from yourself to the Master or to the Cause. Make one or the other the mainspring of your life, and let your interest in yourself and your efforts toward self-improvement, be to fit yourself for better work for the Master or for the Cause. Do not be interested in yourself save for this reason. Do not think of yourself, save from this point of view.

You should not care what you are, or do, or say, or think, or how you look, or dress, or act, save as these things bear upon the Master's work. Do things because he wants them done, not because you want them. Be good because he wants you to be good, not because you want to be good, or think you ought to be good.

You have my sincere prayers for your New Year.

As always,

C. A. GRISCOM.

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January 16th, 1915.

DEAR—

Please pardon pencil. I am truly very glad you continue to be happy. That makes me happy.

As for questions about "Duty to Oneself"; if you have Pusey's *Private Prayers*, and you should get it if you have it not, you will find a section in the end of the little book on Self-examination, Appendix ii. Many of these questions concern our Duty to God, many our Duty to Others, many our Duty to Ourselves. All you have to do is to read them to discover to which category they belong—although some of his questions in this form cover two categories. Also in the *Treasury of Devotion*, you will find not only an examination on the Ten Commandments which is searching and true, but also one on the

seven deadly sins which goes into things in detail, and which contains many questions on our duty to ourselves. However, as all this is general, and you love specific information, I append a brief form of Self-examination on the threefold basis I have suggested:

*Duty to God.*

Have I neglected any spiritual duty through sloth or carelessness, or because of wilful distractions?

Have I lacked faith in God's mercy and love?

Have I spoken with levity or disrespect of anything belonging to religion, etc., etc., etc.

*Duty to Others.*

Have I entertained feelings of jealousy, aversion, resentment or contempt?

Have I been unkind in act or speech?

Have I judged or suspected others harshly or rashly?

Have I yielded to impatience or irritability?

Have I told lies?

*Duty to Myself.*

Have I yielded to thoughts or feelings of vanity or pride?

Have I yielded to sensuality, sloth or idleness?

Have I neglected or done carelessly my appointed work?

Have I indulged in idle, useless thoughts and vain imaginings, in day-dreaming?

Have I sinned against the spirit of the vow of poverty by extravagance or waste?

Have I disobeyed any order, or murmured against any direction?

I think that these will give you the idea. I have not written them down for your special case, therefore it does not follow that they suit you. Disregard those which are meaningless, and add other questions you think you should ask yourself. But before you discard, be sure that the question you do not like or understand does not contain a point which you should ask yourself in some other form.

The vow of chastity, for instance, in addition to the conventional meaning, covers the whole ground of physical, mental, and moral purity, from washing yourself properly up to the subtlest kinds of mental and moral impurities:—thoughts and feelings which are usually not considered impure at all, but which are tainted, if looked at from the Master's point of view.

To go back to the *Treasury of Devotion*, the first four Commandments and the questions asked under them, refer to our Duty to God. The 5th and 6th, and 8th, refer to our Duty to Others. The 7th, 9th, and 10th, to our Duty to Ourselves. But these all overlap more or less, and cover two or more categories.

I trust, however, that this will give you a start. I shall be glad to do anything I can to help further.

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

May 21st, 1915.

DEAR—

I am much obliged for your letter which is satisfactory in the main. But why, oh why, after we have all told you something five hundred times, did you dismiss it as a "fender, not meaning anything in particular, but intended to stop" your worrying me? Is there no way in which we can get this idea into your head and get you to act on it?

Now to be specific and definite. I do not think you need any outward physical repression. You have no obvious faults of manner or bearing or attitude. Therefore, take as your definite practice this same old matter of thinking and saying derogatory things of yourself. Forbid yourself such thoughts as well as their expression in speech or action. Pinch yourself well whenever you catch yourself at it, and then, at night, for every breaking of your rule, stand up and recite the enclosed sentiment, and *mean* it. I do not approve of either of your proposed penances.

I hope this is clear and simple and definite.

With best wishes,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

June 4th, 1915.

DEAR—

By all means, try to walk on your toes, instead of noisily on your heels. . . .

What you say about squeamishness is characteristic. It is a *virtue*, not a fault, as you seem to think. The disciple ought to be squeamish, and the more squeamish you are, the better. Things, lots of things, ought to "turn your stomach." But you must be careful how you act, and must learn to control all outward manifestations of your feelings, unless circumstances call for a definite expression of them. We get more and more sensitive in every way, but with the increased sensitiveness must go increased self-control.

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

June 20th, 1915.

DEAR—

I told you some time ago that you were one of my blessings, and now you have proved it by writing me such a kind and generous and inspiring letter. I simply have to try to live up to your praise and your expectations.

I shall try to reply to your other letters later.

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

June 26th, 1915.

DEAR——

I am glad to be able to write that I have been directed to say, in response to your recent note, that you may resume your fortnightly reports to me, provided you confine them to recording the successes you have, the virtues you express, and do not make them a history of your shortcomings.

This does not mean that you cannot refer to genuine perplexities and difficulties, save when these seem to arise from deficiencies of yours. Circumstances often create problems for us to solve. Discuss these freely and as you like. But beware of any self-depreciation.

With kind regards,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

July 22nd, 1915.

DEAR——

Your record seems to me to show improvement of the kind desired, but there is still a tendency to confuse performance with some ideal, to your detriment. Do not make outer action your criterion of achievement. It does not matter very much what we do, what we accomplish. You are always trying to *do* things, not only with yourself, which often is right, but with others, which usually is not right. And you gauge your day by the amount you have done, with yourself or with others, not realizing that it is your motive, your desire, your attitude of mind and heart, which really matter.

Your desire to influence —— to act and think in a certain way which seemed to you desirable, would have power to influence her to be and to do what you want, what you consider desirable, so far as the Master sees it to be desirable; and beyond that, he would use the power of your good intentions to help in other ways he knows of, and which you do not know. The moment you go further than this, and press for results, and try to get evidence of the success of your plan, and make outer results the measure of your success, you are going beyond the legitimate bounds of your activity, and are likely to hinder and interfere. If *your* plan is not wholly good (and how can you hope for such a miracle?), then your pressure to accomplish something not wholly good, negatives all your good intentions and your wish to help and benefit.

In other words, when she, or anyone else, is under pressure, you can and ought to want to help, to inspire, stimulate, encourage, and pray for the person. But the moment you decide *what* she ought to do, and *how* she ought to feel, you cross the border line and incur great danger, and assume an unwarranted responsibility. One of the minor consequences is that you are sure to get on her nerves.

I hope this is all clear.

With kind regards,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

August 26, 1915.

DEAR——

Referring to your letter of the 15th: "In effect, to wish to love God is to love Him:—"

"When I loved Thee in consolation, O my God, I was very happy. Now that I am in a dry and desert land, I will love Thee better than when feeling the sweetness of Thy love. My heart tells me I do not love Thee: then will I love Thee with my will, in spite of my heart."

As always,

C. A. GRISCOM.

September 18th, 1915.

DEAR——

I spoke of what you ask in your letter to ——, who said that everything depended upon what you meant. It might mean just a little, or it might mean everything; that only you could decide this; as in all the early steps. You must make the decision, take the responsibility.

If you want, or think you want, to be a "novice," you must create the conditions yourself, constitute yourself it, make your own "novitiate," your own rules, be your own novice-mistress. This will help you ascertain how much in earnest you are, without any danger to yourself or to others.

There are books you can read. St. Teresa wrote much about novices. Her *Way of Perfection* was written for them. There is another book, by Mother Francis Rafael, *The Daily Life of a Religious*, which might help you make up your mind,—for that is the point: for you to find out what you *want*; see what is required, and then see quite honestly how much of that appeals to you and you are willing for. Of course these books are written for Catholic Sisterhoods, but the *principles* of the religious life are the same. Ascertain these principles. Take the course of life outlined for their Religious Orders by the Roman Catholic Church, which are all based on these principles, and adapt them to your duties and necessary mode of life. I say *necessary*, for there will be many unnecessary habits, luxuries, etc., which you will have to surrender, as you will find out if you honestly try it.

But above all, remember this, —— tells me specially to emphasize it, that you are not under the least necessity to do anything of the kind; that it is your own notion, and your own responsibility altogether. No one will be to blame, if it be a failure, but yourself: to no one but yourself will credit be due, if it be a success. Indeed, one of your first tests to yourself, as to whether you are really in earnest about it, or only fancying it, will be in your ardent desire to try the thing quite alone, even if there were no one else in all the world the least bit interested. For those who are really most interested will read your heart, and judge you by that alone. Those who love the religious life are jealous of the place it holds, and cannot share it with those who look upon it as a sacrifice, rather than the joy and privilege it is. If a



man love his chains and grieve over losing them, I suppose the best thing is to leave him with them until he discovers that they are chains. I have never known argument or eloquence to effect this result.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM.

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October 26th, 1915.

DEAR——

I have not much to say on your long letter to —— about your work. He was anxious that you should not fall into the family failing of only being able to be interested in and work at one thing at a time, and he did not want you to go ahead and resign from the activities at the Chapel.

You say that you do not feel that you are of any use in these activities, especially certain of them, but that is not the point. You are *not* needed in them, or in anything else. Get that idea firmly in your mind. But you need them very much indeed, which is the reason why we do not want you to drop them. We must get out of our minds the idea, very prevalent, that the Master needs us in certain work. He puts us in work because we need it, not because the work needs us; and we should do *everything* in this spirit and from this standpoint. What *we* can contribute is our love and devotion.

In re-reading this I can see a good chance of your misunderstanding the last of it. I do not think your real trouble is lack of feeling, so much as lack of belief in the feeling—in your heart and in the hearts of others, for you. You need more trust and faith, in the power of your own and other hearts, to feel as the Master would wish them to feel.

If you believed that someone liked you, and so acted, you would get along much better than if you acted as if you were trying to make that person like you. See?

I am keeping your records for a few days more.

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.



# REVIEWS

*The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, transcribed by A. T. Barker; published by T. Fisher Unwin, Ltd., London, and Frederick A. Stokes Company, New York. Price, \$7.50.

The personality of Madame H. P. Blavatsky at the various stages of her mission, will remain, and, for the "profane," is intended to remain, one of the greatest mysteries of history. The publication of these letters, instead of helping to solve the problem, will merely prove once more the truth of the saying that "whosoever hath (understanding), to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have."

As in the case of *The Mahatma Letters*, we consider publication dishonourable. Letter after letter in this collection was marked by their writer, "Private and Confidential" or "Secret," while almost without exception their contents show that they were intended for the recipient and his wife only. We do not question Mr. Barker's motive in this matter, for we know nothing about it. Owing to dissensions in Mrs. Besant's Society, of which he is a member, and particularly on account of the spiritualistic and psychic practices which she appears to encourage, publication doubtless seemed expedient; but to base action on an appearance of expediency at the cost of violating eternal principles of honour, must always be wrong and therefore must also be bad policy. Further, if Mrs. Besant and her misguided followers consider that they know more about the *post-mortem* states than the H. P. B. of *The Key to Theosophy*, what reason can there be to suppose that they will listen to the H. P. B. of these letters? "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead"! From every standpoint, therefore, we regard publication as inexcusable.

None the less, now that they are published, and are likely to be read and criticized by inquirers as well as by enemies of Theosophy, it will certainly be necessary for some older students to read them, so as to be in a position to defend a Lodge messenger to whom we owe all the knowledge of Theosophy which we now possess. Our debt to H. P. Blavatsky is incalculable. Her letters to Sinnett, properly understood, or, rather, not too hopelessly misunderstood, can only increase our sense of obligation. They are meat for the strong,—not milk for babes; and they certainly were not written for perusal by *les jeunes filles*. Among others who inspired them was (is) an Adept who is a past-master in "shock tactics." Does not the earlier history of the T. S. prove it! The amount of force liberated through H. P. Blavatsky comes nearer to being a standard of her greatness than any ordinary criterion, and it would be almost impossible to read her letters without gaining some sense of that force, if it were only in terms of her intense and constant suffering, which made her life a martyrdom—and a superb victory.

T.

*Buddhist Philosophy in India and Ceylon*, By A. Berriedale Keith, D.C.L., D. Litt.; Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1923; price, \$3.50.

This book is one of a number of able works on Buddhism, with special reference to Northern Buddhism, which have recently appeared. Their general tendency has been to rescue the teachings of the Buddha from the rationalistic and materialistic mutilations which these teachings suffered, a generation ago. This work should, perhaps, be discussed as a part of the series, but to do this within the limits of a review is obviously impracticable.

Dr. Keith, who is Regius Professor of Sanskrit and Comparative Philology at the University

of Edinburgh, appears to be excellently equipped, both by temperament and scholarship, to survey the whole literature of Buddhism, not only in Pali and Sanskrit, but also in Tibetan, Chinese and Japanese, into which so many Sanskrit Buddhist books were translated in the great missionary period. Dr. Keith, with clearness and careful accuracy, unfolds for us the history of this long cycle of scriptures, so far as it is at present known to Western scholars; he further gives us a convincing analysis of the philosophical and ethical ideas and ideals which were dominant at each period of this long development, showing exceptional ability to follow with sympathetic understanding the sometimes remote thought-processes of one or another Buddhist doctor of philosophy.

The most valuable part of Dr. Keith's book appears to the present reviewer to be that in which he develops the contrast between the Hinayana and the Mahayana teachings; the former, the "Lesser Vehicle," being broadly synonymous with the Buddhism of the South, of Ceylon, Siam and Burma; while the latter, the "Greater Vehicle," is the Buddhism of the North, of Tibet, China and Japan. Perhaps the contrast is best brought out by the use of two words: the "monk" of the Southern Hinayana, as contrasted with the "adept" of the Northern Mahayana. This contrast may be illustrated by the following passage:

"It is now possible to understand the claims of pre-eminence over the Hinayana insisted upon for the Mahayana by both Asanga and Vasubandhu. . . . The Mahayana is comprehensive; whatever has been taught by Buddhas, not by Shakyamuni in one life alone, is accepted; nay more, as we have seen, whatever is well said is to be deemed the word of a Buddha. Secondly, the Mahayana aims at general salvation, not at individual release, thus excelling in love for all created things. Thirdly, the Mahayana is intellectually wider in range than the Hinayana; the latter denies the reality of the self, the former goes so far as to deny all phenomenal reality whatever. Fourthly, the Mahayana inculcates spiritual energy; to seek swift release for oneself is not its aim as it is that of the Shravaka. Fifthly, the Mahayana is skilled in the manifold means to lead men to salvation; it is unwearied in their varied application. Moreover, it leads to a far higher ideal; the adept aims to become, not a mere saint, but a Buddha in his complete perfection. Lastly, when an adept becomes a Buddha, he has the infinite power of manifesting himself throughout the universe in a body of bliss."

Students of Mme. H. P. Blavatsky's writings will remember that she has much to say concerning Northern Buddhism, which she studied in the Himalayan regions; concerning the Nirmanakaya and the Sambhogakaya, which is "the body of bliss," Mme. Blavatsky wrote, in 1888:

The first is that ethereal form which one would assume when, leaving his physical, he would appear in his astral body—having in addition all the knowledge of an Adept. The Bodhisattva develops it in himself as he proceeds on the Path. Having reached the goal and refused its fruition, he remains on Earth, as an Adept; and when he dies, instead of going into Nirvana, he remains in that glorious body he has woven for himself, invisible to uninitiated mankind, to watch over and protect it.

"Sambhogakaya is the same, but with the additional lustre of 'three perfections,' one of which is entire oblivion of all earthly concerns."

The 319 pages of Dr. Keith's scholarly and able book form a valuable addition to the material for the study of Eastern religion and philosophy.

C. J.

*Modern French Philosophy*, by J. Alexander Gunn, Ph.D., Fellow of the University of Liverpool; Dodd, Mead & Co., 1922.

This book satisfies a want long felt by students of French thought, for until its publication there existed no consecutive account of the philosophical developments of the last hundred years in France. Dr. Gunn was excellently equipped for his undertaking by study at the Sorbonne and by personal relations with Boutroux, Bergson and others whose work he has discussed.

He has made very clear the recent outstanding accomplishments of France in the domain of metaphysics. The French have not been partial to complex and artificial systems in the man-

ner of Kant and Hegel, nor have they fallen into the other extreme of merely analytical criticism which is the hallmark of the English School. Like the Greeks, whom they so greatly resemble in other respects, the French have especially sought in their thinking to be clear. In the past, those who loved the foggy idealism of Germany were accustomed to classify French philosophy as essentially materialistic because the greatest materialists of the last two centuries were Frenchmen. They were great, even as materialists, because their ideas were clear. At the present time it is impossible to bring the charge of materialism against the dominant thinkers of France. Once again, clarity of thought makes misunderstanding very difficult; and one may say that it was this very zeal for clarity which enabled the French mind to escape from the untenable position of Nineteenth Century materialistic dogmatism, and to open the way to a new and most significant study of consciousness.

To Renouvier, Ravaisson, Lachelier, Fouillée, Boutroux, and Bergson, we may refer the beginnings of the "new psychology" of the subconscious. These men have sought Truth, not only as reflected in the intellect, but, above all, as actually manifested in the conscious exercise of the will. They have revealed a state of being, where subject and object are blended in a direct act of intuition, and where creation and knowledge appear as aspects of a single, undivided movement of the individualized spirit in response to the stimuli ever present in the field of Cosmic Nature. Dr. Gunn gives a remarkable quotation from Fouillée, which seems to synthesize the essential views of the so-called *Spiritualist* School: "There is in every idea a commencement of action, and even of movement, which tends to persist and to increase like an *élan*. . . . Every idea is already a force" (p. 124). Dr. Gunn indicated the vigour and promise of this new metaphysics of the will, so characteristic of the humanism of the French tradition. Metaphysics is free again, after many centuries, to move ahead in its proper course, as in the age of Plato and Pythagoras. As Maine de Biran wrote a hundred years ago: "Who knows what may be attained by concentrated meditation, and whether there may not be an interior 'new world', to be discovered some day by a metaphysical Columbus" (*op. cit.* p. 22).  
S. V.

*Immortality*; edited by Rev. Sir James Marchant, K. B. E.; LL.D.; with an introduction by the Rt. Hon. Lord Ernle; G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1924.

This book is a collection of separate essays by eminent specialists, representing the common stock of past and contemporary ideas on the life of the soul after death. It is a timely book in an age which does not hesitate to question things which in the past were taken for granted. No cogent proof of immortality is offered, nor is it, of course, possible. But the "doubting Thomas," whose faith has been shaken, will find in this book that not only has a belief in immortality been fundamental in all the great religions, but also that it is the most adequate philosophical interpretation of the ethical and spiritual values of the life of mankind, and that the discoveries of science have in no way demonstrated its impossibility as a truth, even if they cannot endorse it.

Accordingly the Egyptian, Greek, Indian, Hebrew and Christian conceptions of immortality are given in order. These are followed by chapters on the philosophy of immortality, its ethical basis, the relations of science to the same subject, and the reflections of it in the works of the leading poets. The last chapter seems to the reviewer to have little if any point. On the other hand it appears remarkable, at first sight, that the Christian idea of immortality is the only one written almost in an apologetic vein, and the one which an intelligent sceptic would reject first, as involving too great a strain on his credulity. Whether this reflects to the disadvantage of Christian theology or to the writer of the chapter, the reviewer is not competent to decide, but it is obvious that any unfavourable comparisons which the reader might be tempted to make must depend for fairness on a demonstrated similarity of treatment. It is probable, for instance, that there is as great a gulf between modern Buddhist theology and the essence of Buddhism, as there is between Christ's teachings and modern Christian theology. If this be correct, it is apparent that modern Christian theology would scarcely compare favourably with the ideas of immortality derived from the ancient scriptures of India.

Readers of the *QUARTERLY* will, however, have still another angle of approach to this book.

The majority of them are not "doubting Thomases," and accept immortality as axiomatic. For these the earlier historical chapters will have little interest, as they contain nothing new, and Theosophists have long been familiar with the ideas of the great religions upon this subject. The later chapters are, however, definite and original contributions, and consequently the points of view of the authors, eminent in their respective fields, are matters of keen interest. Thus Rudolf Eucken adopts the view that immortality has an ethical basis, but also believes that ethics depends upon immortality. In other words ethics, as a basis of right moral action, cannot be endorsed on a scientific foundation of reason alone. The existence of an ethical instinct or sense in all peoples in all ages can scarcely be accounted for, unless the world is ultimately governed by spiritual values, and the ethical struggle of this life is carried on, or bears some fruit after death.

The two chapters on philosophy and science are easily the most interesting in the book. There is no space here to outline their respective arguments; indeed they deserve to be read, not outlined. To sum them up: philosophy would demonstrate that the nature of reality and of things is such as to render a concept of immortality reasonable and necessary. The discoveries of science, on the other hand, have had little bearing on the problem, but have produced no body of evidence which would make a belief in immortality illogical or untenable. Indeed if it be held that the teaching of modern biological evolution lead to an even wider teleology, then man has been created for a spiritual purpose and must serve a spiritual end. This is merely another way of leading up to the verdict of philosophy, already recited.

The chief flaw in these two chapters, from the standpoint of Theosophy, would be the vague definition of the soul, and the assumption that the personality is immortal. According to this view continuity of memory is essential, and the soul is little else than the personality plus a certain germ of spirituality derived from goodness knows where. One must have some sympathy for the desire for memory, once the personality is regarded as the true and immortal part of us. With this premise, reincarnation becomes meaningless and unsatisfactory, and does not reconcile the inequalities of human life with Divine justice. As one of the authors puts it, "it does not seem just that God should punish me for sins which He has erased from my memory." Following this reasoning, immortality itself would be equally meaningless without memory. To use Christian terms for a moment, who would care to strive for Heaven in the belief that Heaven was a far happier state than life on earth, if he did not remember, when he got there, that he had lived on earth, and consequently appreciate fully how much better off he was? But the assumption that the personality is immortal is gratuitous, and is entirely without adequate endorsement in either chapter. Once we make the assumption, however, that the personality is merely a means to the development of the immortal soul, the problem becomes radically altered, and the deductions made quite different. These any Theosophist should be able to make for himself. We shall merely suggest here that the adequate endorsement of our theosophical assumption will rest in the spiritual nature of the Universe, which is admittedly a philosophical necessity. The only part of a human being which can be eternal, is that part which is a reflection of or part of the Eternal, namely the spiritual part, or the soul. With this the personality has nothing to do, containing as it does much that is base and material, much that is born of desire, and much that is the reflection of a temporary environment. Let us rejoice that the soul is something far better and more worth while than any of these.

*The Witness*, written down by Jessie Platts; published by Hutchinson and Co., London, at 5 shillings.

This book is described on its cover as "a series of messages from a young officer of the Royal Marines, Lieut. E. F. L. Platts, who was killed in action in April, 1917, aged seventeen-and-a-half years. These messages have been received automatically through the hand of his mother, and in clear straightforward language the boy describes after-death conditions and life in the spirit world"—as he, poor boy, found them, and as his mother's mental and psychic condition induced their description.

Scores of such books have been written since the war. *Raymond*, by Sir Oliver Lodge, is

probably the best known of them. For students of Theosophy, much of their interest lies in the fact that they show how deeply the psychic world has been impressed with Madame Blavatsky's teaching—for all of them are more or less "theosophical" in doctrine—and in the further fact that they confirm our basic belief about the after-death states, namely, that men find what they take with them, find that which they are. Lieut. Platts must have been a clean, unselfish, splendidly brave boy. That he found Christ, but also found fishing, is just what we should expect (he did not kill the fish he caught, but threw them back into "the lake"!).

"Earth-bound," though in the most favourable sense; and his mother, whose intentions of course were of the best, did not and could not realize it. There are some people, calling themselves Theosophists, who encourage this kind of psychism, so fatal to the progress both of the medium and of the disincarnated entity; and it looks as if the mother, in the course of writing these "messages," had become acquainted with that group in England, and had accepted *their* "messages," in confirmation of her own, particularly in regard to "the Master Hilarion," whose supposed utterances remind us of Hartman's *Talking Image*.

Yet we are not among those who call such a book either a fraud or a delusion. On the contrary, the book is genuine, and for that reason is tragic. It is tragic because so many will accept it as the truth, when it is no nearer the truth than a blind man's idea of Japan if based upon a city-bred child's description of a Japanese garden. It is tragic because it results in such "ideals" as this: "We [disincarnated entities of the more enlightened class] hope to see before very long all this psychic investigation controlled by the proper people, and that in those churches where the priests are spiritualists, certain mediums should be retained by them, and work as part of the staff,"—to which we beg to add that if priests ever do it, they will deserve it! It is tragic because, to those who believe in the spirit and soul of man, the whole procedure is materialistic and stultifying. If we were to invite such communications from those whom we have loved and lost, we should feel that we were lowering them, lowering ourselves, and were violating the standards of the Masters whom we strive to serve.

X. O.

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The Quarterly Book Department is about to publish *Fragments*, Vol. III, by Cavé; *Letters to Friends*, by John Gerard; *The Crest Jewel of Wisdom*, translated by Charles Johnston; *Plotinus*, by Stanley V. LaDow.

A new one volume edition of *The Secret Doctrine* may be ordered from the Quarterly Book Department. This volume of 1567 pages, 1 3/4 inches thick, duplicates the two volumes of the 1888 edition, as issued by Madame Blavatsky. Price \$7.50.

# QUESTIONS OF THE ANSWERS

QUESTION NO. 302.—*What circumstances and principles were involved in the crises of The Theosophical Society in 1884-85, in 1894-95, and in 1898? What is involved in the turn of the cycle, in 1925?*

ANSWER.—The principles are always the same, though the circumstances differ with the progression of the cycles.

If we believe, as many students of Theosophy do, that, in 1875, The Theosophical Society was founded by Masters of the White Lodge, as a part of the enduring Theosophical Movement, then it is clear that, to fulfil its mission, The Theosophical Society must in a measure understand the principles and purpose of the Lodge, and must be unswervingly loyal to these principles, with a loyalty stronger than death, a loyalty in which self is obliterated.

We may best understand what is at stake by recalling the words of a Master, written during the crisis of 1884-85:

"The present crisis that is shaking The Theosophical Society to its foundations is a question of perdition or salvation to thousands; a question of the progress of the Human Race or its retrogression, of its glory or dishonour, and for the majority of this race—*of being or not being—of annihilation.*"

What was required at that time was an understanding of the fundamental truth that The Theosophical Society had been founded, and was protected, by the Masters of the Lodge; this involved a recognition of the work and character of the chief agent and messenger of the Lodge, H. P. Blavatsky. It is futile to talk of loyalty to the Lodge without loyalty to the Lodge's agents.

Those who had a loyal understanding of H. P. Blavatsky's position, as a representative of the Lodge, carried The Theosophical Society through that crisis. They recognized the superb devotion and sacrifice, the magnificent courage, the Occult knowledge and power of the messenger; through this recognition, they recognized the Lodge. Those who failed, or thereafter were half-hearted adherents of The Theosophical Society, were, without exception, shipwrecked on the rock of suspicion, a suspicion engendered and fostered by personal vanity.

Ten years later, in 1894-95, came another crisis. The principle was the same: a loyal understanding of the purpose of the Lodge of Masters. The circumstances were different only in so far as W. Q. Judge, who, after H. P. Blavatsky's death in 1891, was the chief agent and messenger of the Lodge, had become the central object of attack; and in the further fact that this time the attack came from within, not from without. Once again, suspicion inflamed by vanity was the fatal rock in the channel, a vanity reinforced by personal ambition.

Those who, recognizing W. Q. Judge as the chief agent of the Lodge, were unswervingly loyal to him as the representative of the Masters, carried The Theosophical Society through the crisis. It should be added that the continued life of The Theosophical Society was, and is, due to the loyalty and understanding of disciples of W. Q. Judge.

In 1897-98, the principle was, as always, the same: a loyal understanding of the purpose of the Lodge of Masters. The circumstances called for adherence to that purpose, as against personal vanity and ambition. Those who were loyal to the principle carried The Theosophical Society forward.

To-day, in 1925, the principle is the same. The completion of the first fifty years of The Theosophical Society means that, in addition to a general understanding of the purpose of the Lodge of Masters, and a general adherence to that purpose, something further is required, corresponding to the growth and maturity of The Theosophical Society. It is required that those who are to form the heart, the living nucleus of The Theosophical Society, shall have an individual understanding of the purpose of the Lodge of Masters, an individual loyalty to that purpose. This will mean active co-operation with Masters, intelligent, devoted, self-forgetting: the effective loyalty of disciples, chélas. It need hardly be added that, since the Lodge is eternally one, this individual loyalty will include the closest union and co-operation, genuine oneness of heart, self-forgetting, full of fiery devotion, among the members. Those who draw nearer to the Lodge, of necessity draw nearer to each other; their loyalty to the Lodge is the cement that binds them together.

Now, as always, it is a question of the progress of the Human Race or its retrogression, of its glory or dishonour, of perdition or salvation.

C. J.

QUESTION NO. 303.—*We flatter ourselves that it is the animal part of us that is full of sloth, and dislikes to make effort. Do we find in animals an unwillingness to become fit that would give us countenance?*

ANSWER.—It seems we do flatter ourselves and are rude to the animal. The animals have a more natural reaction to the stimulus of their surroundings, and if they are inert and become unfit, they cannot survive. Animals are moved from within by the animal Monad (cf. *Five Years of Theosophy*), while man has been endowed with the right of "choice" which he has debased by self-indulgence in various forms. The Tanha, or thirst for life, has been dulled by self-indulgence until experience of sensation, both positive and negative, becomes the habit-complex, and man drifts into slothful inertia. The animals have the instinct to follow natural law, while man has mostly made choice of the wrong road and is really put "out of countenance."

A. K.

ANSWER.—It would seem that there is nothing essentially wrong with the animal nature in itself. The point is that we have deliberately and with full responsibility exploited the faculties and senses of our animal natures, until we have converted them into monstrosities, belonging neither to the animal nor to the human kingdom. A wild animal sleeps a great deal, but it is not lazy. It is blessed with too many enemies ever to dare to be off its guard for an instant. But a human soul, incarnating in an animal body, uncovers a multiplicity of psychic possibilities in the bodily functions. Thus, even sleep may become a vice, if it be cultivated as a means of self-indulgence. One result of the abuse of sleep is sloth, the dislike of effort. It is clear, however, that the animal is not to blame, but the fallen soul.

L.

ANSWER.—We cannot account for our sloth and inertia on the ground that it is the animal part of us which is getting in our way. Rather is it our lower psychic nature, full of illusion and warped vision, and plausible reasons and excuses, which prolongs our inertia, obstructs our constructive action, or even leads us into the commission of acts which in their effect accentuate what the questioner thinks of as the sloth in us, and make it more difficult than ever for us to break clear.

A.

QUESTION NO. 304.—*Where do the qualities of soul come from—such as endurance, courage, faith, love?*

ANSWER.—From the Soul, of which these and many other lovely and heroic virtues are the inherent qualities. They come to us by the channel of the Masters, who supremely possess them. They are of the essence of the Logos, expressions, therefore, of the One, concerning which even Masters do not speculate. The important thing is, not so much to guess their origin, as to possess them, and we can already find at least the beginning of each of them in ourselves.

J.



ANSWER.—Surely the qualities named are the soul in action—they are the soul itself—they are also both its qualities and possessions. And compare with this, Rule 16 of *Light on the Path*, where we are told that such “possessions must belong to the pure soul only, and be possessed therefore by all pure souls equally.” Is not the soul a spiritual force working outward; and does not this force or vibration, contacting with “matter” in its more subtle forms, weave the garments or sheaths of the soul, in what we recognize as endurance, courage, faith, love? K.

ANSWER.—The qualities of the Soul, like the qualities of the body, may be regarded as reflections of still higher qualities resident in the Logos, which is itself a reflection or modification of the Eternal. In occult Nature there is neither separation nor division of parts, since there is an identity of essence joining together all things from the highest to the lowest. The only distinction is to be found in the varying capacities, which the monads or parts of the Oversoul possess, for containing the consciousness of the One Self. We may say that the qualities of the Soul manifest the Real more perfectly than do the corresponding qualities of physical things, but that they are in turn only stages in the eternal progress of the Divine in Self-Consciousness.

S. L.

QUESTION No. 305.—*We are told to search through the familiar presentations of truth in the past until the facts are discovered behind the symbols. This would seem to call for an equipment of either intellect or intuition, or of both, which all do not possess. What, if anything, can take the place of such equipment?*

ANSWER.—We must do more than discover the facts. We must go back of the facts to the purpose and meaning behind them; we must try to become at one with that purpose and meaning. How to do this? We must approach the facts, not in a search for knowledge or with a desire for growth in personal stature, but in a spirit of devotion, with a real desire to serve. We must try to understand with the heart, meditating upon the familiar presentations of truth until we begin to glimpse something at least of what lies beyond and behind them.

Then, if we will try to apply to the concrete problems of every day such measure of truth, of the real inner meaning that lies back of outer form, as we have been able to apprehend, we shall find that our understanding and perception deepen and grow in ways which may have nothing to do with intellect or intuition. Right and selfless motive in action, devotion, effort, aspiration, bring inspiration and vision.

C. R. A.

ANSWER.—Surely the answer is, “Nothing can take the place of such equipment.” But because that equipment is not a present possession, is no reason why it should not be developed. If anyone seeks to have a faculty not yet possessed, surely the best thing is to take the opportunity of setting to work to acquire it, and be thankful that one perceives the need to set to work. If one *really* desires such knowledge of the facts behind the symbols, one will try to acquire the power and strength to pierce behind the outer symbols of presentation. Remember *Light on the Path*, Rules 15 to 20, and the instruction given.

A. K.

ANSWER.—Observation and experience. Did the meaning behind some beautiful legend ever flash upon you—such as the story of Ceres and Proserpina? It is astonishing how much may be found when once one begins to look.

S. M.

ANSWER.—Perseverance in study and meditation, coupled with a sincere desire to know the truth for truth's sake, and not mere curiosity; in time light will break and the needful intuition will be developed, perhaps in this life, or, if not now, in another, as a direct result of our effort.

S.



## NOTICE OF CONVENTION

### THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

#### *To the Branches of The Theosophical Society:*

1. The Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society will be held at 64 Washington Mews, New York, on Saturday, April 25th, 1925, beginning at 10:30 A.M.

2. Branches unable to send delegates to the Convention are *earnestly requested* to send proxies. These may be made out to the Secretary T. S., or to any officer or member of the Society who is resident in New York, or is to attend the Convention. These proxies should state the number of members in good standing in the Branch.

3. Branch Secretaries are asked to send their annual reports to the Secretary T. S. These reports should cover the significant features of the year's work and should be accompanied by a complete list of officers and members, with the full name and address of each; also a statement of the number of members gained or lost during the year; also a record of the place and time of Branch meeting. These reports should reach the Secretary T. S. by April 1st.

4. Members-at-large are invited to attend the Convention sessions; and all Branch members, whether delegates or not, will be welcome.

5. Following the custom of former years, the sessions of the Convention will begin at 10:30 A.M. and 2:30 P.M. At 8:30 P.M. there will be a regular meeting of the New York Branch of the T. S., to which delegates and visitors are cordially invited. On Sunday, April 26th, at 3:30 P.M., there will be a public address, open to all who are interested in Theosophy. Tickets are not required for admission. Invitation cards will be supplied to all members, on request, so that they may have opportunity to call the lecture to the attention of their friends who reside in New York or in the vicinity.

ISABEL E. PERKINS,  
*Secretary, The Theosophical Society.*  
P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York.

February 16th, 1925.

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### MEETINGS

The regular meetings of the New York Branch of The Theosophical Society are held on alternate Saturday evenings, at 64 Washington Mews, between Washington Square and East 8th Street. The meetings begin at half past eight, and close at ten o'clock. Meetings will be held on April 11th and 25th (Convention Meeting).

Visitors are welcome at these meetings.

### THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY

All changes of address, whether a summer address or a permanent change, should be sent to the Subscription Department, P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York, at least two weeks before date of publication.

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