

# THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY

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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, 1927

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#### THE LADDER OF CONSCIOUSNESS

**M**ANY Orientalists of a by-gone day, misled, perhaps, by learned but undiscerning Southern Buddhists, held that Nirvana, the consummation of the Buddha's path, meant annihilation of consciousness, annihilation of being, itself. Robert Childers, whose Pali Dictionary is still the foundation stone of our knowledge of the sacred language of Buddhism, states that view without reservation, and many scholars followed his lead.

This complete failure to understand is due, in a considerable degree, to a misapprehension of the Buddha's purpose, when he declares that "Self, Atta, has no reality," Atta being the Pali equivalent of the Sanskrit, Atma; and to a like misunderstanding of the states of consciousness which the Buddha describes, as leading up to Nirvana. To show that the consciousness of one approaching Buddhahood, and therefore drawing near to Nirvana, far from being negative, is intensely positive, we may quote a native gloss on that part of the Jataka, which describes the conditions under which the aspiration for Buddhahood may be successfully entertained:

"He who, if all within the rim of the world were to become water, would be ready to swim across it with his own arms, and to reach the further shore, he is the one to attain to Buddhahood; or, if all within the rim of the world were a jungle of bamboo, would be ready to break his way through it, and to reach the further side, he is the one to attain to Buddhahood; or, if all within the rim of the world were a floor of close-set spear points, would be ready to tread them, and to go afoot to the further side, he is the one to attain to Buddhahood; or, if all within the rim of the world were live embers, would be ready to step on them, and so to pass over, he is the one to attain to Buddhahood; then, but not otherwise, will his purpose succeed."

We owe this fine passage to Henry Clarke Warren, who, more intuitive than the earlier Orientalists, interprets Nirvana as "extinction of desire," and wisely adds: "I conceive that Nirvana can only be properly under-

stood by a tolerably thorough comprehension of the philosophy of which it is the climax" (*Buddhism in Translations*, page 284). It is certain that the quality of supreme determination described in the passage quoted could not conceivably be the prelude of extinction; but this quality is entirely in harmony with the Theosophical understanding of a Master, and of that Master of Masters, whom we know as Siddhartha the Compassionate.

It is clear that the Atta of the Pali scriptures is not the Parama-Atma of the great Upanishads, but is the lower self of the false personality; and that the purpose of the Buddha, when he teaches in detail the unreality of Atta, is, to help the disciple, or, perhaps, we may almost say, to compel the disciple, to that abandonment of self, which is the first step on the path of wisdom and attainment. That this abandonment of self leads, not to extinction, but to real being, will become abundantly clear, when we come to the Buddha's description of the states of consciousness which follow the abandonment of self. This description forms the conclusion of the *Maha-Nidana-Suttanta*, the first part of which has already been translated, under the title, "The Chain of Causation."

The Buddha begins the work of dissipating the disciple's belief in the reality of the false self by analyzing all the possible forms which that belief can take, and showing that they are untenable:

"In how many ways, Ananda, do they make declarations concerning the self?

"Either maintaining, Ananda, that the self has form and is limited, one declares, 'My self has form and is limited'; or maintaining, Ananda, that the self has form and is unending, one declares, 'My self has form and is unending'; or maintaining, Ananda, that the self has no form and is limited, one declares, 'My self has no form and is limited'; or maintaining, Ananda, that the self has no form and is unending, one declares, 'My self has no form and is unending.'

"In this way, Ananda, he who maintains and declares that the self has form and is limited, either maintains and declares that in this present life the self has form and is limited, or maintains and declares that in a future life the self has form and is limited, or his thought is, 'Since it is not like that, I shall build it over like that.' This being so, Ananda, enough has been said of the thought that the self has form and is limited.

"In the same way, Ananda, he who maintains and declares that the self has form and is unending, either maintains and declares that in this present life the self has form and is unending, or maintains and declares that in a future life the self has form and is unending, or his thought is, 'Since it is not like that, I shall build it over like that.' This being so, Ananda, enough has been said of the thought that the self has form and is unending.

"In the same way, Ananda, he who maintains and declares that the self has no form and is limited, either maintains and declares that in this present life the self has no form and is limited, or maintains and declares that in a future life the self has no form and is limited, or his thought is, 'Since it is

not like that, I shall build it over like that.' This being so, Ananda, enough has been said of the thought that the self has no form and is limited.

"In the same way, Ananda, he who maintains and declares that the self has no form and is unending, either maintains and declares that in this present life the self has no form and is unending, or maintains and declares that in a future life the self has no form and is unending, or his thought is, 'Since it is not like that, I shall build it over like that.' This being so, Ananda, enough has been said of the thought that the self has no form and is unending.

"In so many ways, Ananda, do they make declarations concerning the self."

All this may seem to us rather abstract and remote. We are evidently concerned, not with the impulses of selfishness, but with rather tenuous and metaphysical theories of the self. But it must be remembered that the disciples, for whom this teaching is designed, have already made a practical renunciation of the impulses of desire, leaving the household life for the homeless life, and surrendering all personal possessions; and, further, that other teachings of the Buddha are directly aimed at the impulses of desire. We are here, in fact, concerned with something more abstract, and more deep-rooted: with those thoughts of self, that cherishing of the thought of self, from which the impulses of selfishness may so easily rise again, through the operation of that chain of causation which has already been detailed. We are not now concerned with cutting away the leaves or lopping off the branches of selfishness; our purpose is, to destroy the seeds. Through right thinking, the seeds of wrong thinking are to be annihilated.

One may think of the self, says the Buddha, in a great many ways; but they all come down to this: the self may be thought of either as having form, or as not having form; the self may be thought of either as being limited in time, or as being unending.

Most of us probably think of the self, the imagined personality, as a replica of the body, but a very important replica. When we sign our names, we have, half-consciously, some such picture of the outward, bodily self in mind. So we think of the self as having form. Then again people are divided into those who believe that this self will definitely end at death, and those who believe that this identical self will continue in another world. They hardly stop to inquire which of the almost innumerable selves of a lifetime will thus be perpetuated: the self of childhood, the self of youth, or of maturity. Perhaps they have in view an eclectic self, made up of the best qualities of all three; thus, perhaps, dimly foreshadowing the selective process of Devachan, or Devaloka, as the Pali books call it. But, so far as we are concerned, they think of the self as having form, and as being either limited to the present life, or to be continued in a future life.

But there are those of more abstract bent, who are inclined to think that form belongs to the outer body, but not to the self. These again either believe, or do not believe, in survival. So we have the Buddha's four alternatives, which really cover all possible permutations and combinations of our imaginings of the self. But there is a further possibility. There are those whose

purpose is, to build up a self that shall possess such and such qualities; a purpose that is still self-centred and self-seeking; therefore to be swept aside with the same unflinching vigour. The Buddha's purpose is, to uproot the seed of that subtle kind of selfishness, which "renounces" self in this world with the definite purpose of achieving something for self in a future world; the love of reward, carefully disguised and pushed just over the rim of the horizon. The Buddha is determined to make an end of self-seeking, once for all; to attain to that revulsion from the desire of personal reward, whether in this world, or in another world, which Shankara Acharya describes as the Second Qualification. The vessel of being must be chemically clean, before the water of life is poured into it from above.

The paragraphs which follow in the Pali text remind us that the men of the Buddha's day and land were immeasurably more metaphysical, more argumentative also, than those of our day and generation. On the one hand, there were the class of thinkers, whom the Buddha elsewhere details and describes with delightful humour, who spent their lives in making affirmations concerning life and being, and spinning endless webs of argument in support of these affirmations. On the other hand, there were those equally ingenious and disputatious persons who spent their lives controverting and denying whatever the first class affirmed. The wrangling went on unceasingly. Both were wasting golden hours that should have been given to spiritual living, not to arguments concerning life.

So it comes that, having exhausted the possible combinations of thought on the affirmative side, the Buddha deems it expedient to go at equal length into the possible combinations on the negative side, as follows:

"And, further, Ananda, when no declaration is made concerning the self, in how many ways is no declaration made?" And, answering his own question, the great Master goes over the whole ground again, with the simple addition of a negative at each point. The point seems to be that, if men are plunged in disputatious argument, it does not greatly matter which view they are supporting; it is all waste of time and vanity.

Then we come to something closer to the thinking of our own times. The thought of self, of personality, may be based on feeling and emotion, rather than abstract thinking. Instead of Descartes's "I think, therefore I am," we may have "I feel, therefore I am." The Buddha sets himself to dissipate the emotional cloud, just as he has dissipated the mental cloud, by the simple and effective process of pulling it to pieces, and showing that it has no inherent unity, no essential "selfhood":

"And considering the self, Ananda, in how many ways does one consider the self? As feeling, verily, Ananda, he considers the self. 'My self is feeling,' he says. Or, 'My self is not feeling, my self is devoid of feeling.' Thus, Ananda, one perceives the self. Or he says, 'Neither is my self feeling, nor is it devoid of feeling; my self feels, feeling is one of its activities.' So, Ananda, considering the self, does one consider the self.

"In such a case, Ananda, when anyone says, 'My self is feeling,' one should

say to him, 'My dear Sir, there are three kinds of feeling: pleasant feeling, painful feeling, and feeling neither painful nor pleasant. As which of these three kinds of feeling do you perceive your self?'

"At the time, Ananda, when one feels pleasant feeling, at that time he does not feel painful feeling, nor feeling that is neither painful nor pleasant, while he is feeling pleasant feeling. At the time, Ananda, when one feels painful feeling, at that time he does not feel pleasant feeling, nor feeling that is neither pleasant nor painful, while he is feeling painful feeling. At the time, Ananda, when one feels feeling that is neither painful nor pleasant, at that time he does not feel pleasant feeling, nor feeling that is painful, while he is feeling neither pleasant nor painful feeling.

"Moreover, Ananda, pleasant feeling is unenduring, it is a composite, proceeding from antecedent causes, tending to dissipate, tending to pass away, tending to revulsion, tending to cease. Further, Ananda, painful feeling is unenduring, it is a composite, proceeding from antecedent causes, tending to dissipate, tending to pass away, tending to revulsion, tending to cease. Further, Ananda, feeling that is neither painful nor pleasant is unenduring, it is a composite, proceeding from antecedent causes, tending to dissipate, tending to pass away, tending to revulsion, tending to cease.

"If, when one is feeling a pleasant feeling, he thinks, 'This is my self,' then, when that pleasant feeling ceases, he thinks, 'My self has passed away.' If, when one is feeling a painful feeling, he thinks 'This is my self,' then, when that painful feeling ceases, he thinks, 'My self has passed away.' If, when one is feeling a feeling that is neither painful nor pleasant, he thinks, 'This is my self,' then, when that feeling neither painful nor pleasant ceases, he thinks, 'My self has passed away.'

"So it is evident that he who thinks, 'My self is feeling,' regards as self something that even here, in this present world, is unenduring, subject to pleasure and pain, having a beginning, and passing away. Therefore, Ananda, the view that 'My self is feeling' is, for this reason, not to be tolerated.

"Likewise, Ananda, when anyone says, 'My self is not feeling, my self is devoid of feeling,' one should say to him, 'My dear Sir, when there is no feeling at all, can one then say, "I am"?' "

"No, Lord!"

"Therefore, Ananda, the view that 'My self is not feeling, my self is devoid of feeling,' is, for this reason, not to be tolerated.

"Likewise, Ananda, when anyone says, 'Neither is my self feeling, nor is it devoid of feeling; my self feels, feeling is one of its activities,' one should say to him, 'My dear Sir, supposing that feeling of every sort, in every way, should cease altogether, without leaving a trace, could one then say, "This I am"?' "

"No, Lord!"

"Therefore, Ananda, the view that 'Neither is my self feeling, nor is it devoid of feeling; my self feels, feeling is one of its activities,' is, for this reason, not to be tolerated."

So far, so good. It is to be supposed that, by thoroughly digesting this teaching, by following, again and again, in his own mind, the steps of the Buddha's analysis of the outer, false personality, the disciple has thoroughly convinced his mind and understanding of the truth that the elements of true selfhood are not present in that personality. The self of the false personality has been utterly dissolved. What happens then? Is the result blankness and negation? Let us take first the Buddha's answer:

"Then, Ananda, when a disciple no longer considers his self to be feeling, nor to be devoid of feeling, nor says, 'My self feels, feeling is one of its activities,' ceasing to consider thus, he no longer clings to anything in the world; no longer clinging, he trembles not; trembling not, he attains to liberation, recognizing that the cause of rebirth has been destroyed, the discipline has been fulfilled, what was to be done has been done, this condition of bondage is ended.

"Then, Ananda, when the heart of that disciple is thus set free, if anyone should say, 'He maintains that after death the Tathagata is,' that would be meaningless; or if anyone should say, 'He maintains that after death the Tathagata is not,' that would be meaningless; or if anyone should say, 'He maintains that after death the Tathagata both is and is not,' that would be meaningless; or if anyone should say, 'He maintains that after death the Tathagata neither is nor is not,' that would be meaningless.

"What is the cause of this? So far, Ananda, as there is verbal expression, so far as there is a method of verbal expression, so far as there is explanation, so far as there is a method of explanation, so far as there is declaration, so far as there is a method of declaration, so far as there is reasoning, so far as is the sphere of reasoning, so far as there are rites and ceremonies, so far as rites and ceremonies are performed, the disciple, completely knowing them, is liberated from them; but, that the disciple, completely knowing them, and liberated from them, no longer knows nor sees, to say this would be meaningless."

The disciple has passed beyond the forms of reasoning. He has realized that "the end of the man who endeavours to live by thought alone is that he dwells in phantasies." He has found the path, not of reasoning, but of life; "from the hour when he first tastes the reality of living, he forgets more and more his individual self; no longer does he care to defend or feed it. Yet when he is thus indifferent to its welfare the individual self grows more stalwart and robust, like the prairie grass and the trees of untrodden forests. It is a matter of indifference to him whether this is so or not. Only, if it is so, he has a fine instrument ready to his hand. And in due proportion to the completeness of his indifference to it is the strength and beauty of his personal self." *Through the Gates of Gold*, from which these two passages are taken, is, perhaps, the best commentary on the part of the Buddha's teaching that we are considering. The Master goes on to describe the ascending planes or degrees of consciousness:

"Seven, Ananda, are the stages of cognition, and two abodes. Which are the seven?

"There are, Ananda, beings diverse in body, diverse in intelligence, that is to say, men, some of the bright powers, some of those undergoing purification. This is the first stage of cognition.

"There are, Ananda, beings diverse in body, uniform in intelligence, that is to say, bright powers possessing celestial bodies, reborn in the first degree. This is the second stage of cognition.

"There are, Ananda, beings uniform in body, diverse in intelligence, that is to say, the bright powers called the radiant. This is the third stage of cognition.

"There are, Ananda, beings uniform in body, uniform in intelligence, that is to say, the bright powers called the lustrous. This is the fourth stage of cognition.

"There are, Ananda, beings who have altogether passed beyond the cognition of form, who have transcended the cognition of separateness, whose perception no longer dwells on the cognition of diversity, who, with the perception that 'the radiant ether is infinite,' have attained to the dwelling place of the infinite radiant ether. This is the fifth stage of cognition.

"There are, Ananda, beings who have altogether transcended the dwelling place of the infinite radiant ether, who, with the perception that 'perceiving consciousness is infinite,' have attained to the dwelling place of perceiving consciousness. This is the sixth stage of cognition.

"There are, Ananda, beings who have altogether transcended the dwelling place of perceiving consciousness, who have attained to the perception that 'Nothing objective exists,' attaining the dwelling place beyond objective being. This is the seventh stage of cognition.

"Then the abode in which there is no consciousness of separation, and the second abode, where there is neither consciousness nor non-consciousness of separation."

While we cannot be certain of all the fine shades of meaning and of difference in this description of stages of cognition, it is quite clear that we are concerned with seven ascending stages, beginning with the ordinary consciousness of human life; that the first four of the seven are characterized by the presence of form, while the last three are above form, above that kind of limitation which expresses itself in form; and, further, that there are two more abstract degrees beyond the seven. This is in complete conformity with what we have learned, regarding the seven planes, divided into a lower quaternary and a higher triad, with something higher and more universal beyond.

We may further conjecture that the three stages which immediately follow the stage which includes mankind, while they may include different kinds of ethereal or angelic beings, also represent three degrees through which the disciple passes, when he has risen above the stage of "those who are undergoing purification." This would harmonize well with the description of the second stage, as containing those who have been "reborn in the first degree."

So we may consider that the three following stages, the fifth, sixth and

seventh, are degrees of development and consciousness in what has been called the causal body, "which is no body, either objective or subjective," as *The Theosophical Glossary* says, adding that it corresponds with Buddhi in conjunction with Manas. This would imply individuality above the limitation of form, and would thus agree with the Buddha's description of these three stages.

As to the seventh stage, above "the dwelling place of perceiving consciousness," we may find a simple explanation in the words of one of the Upanishads: "Where there is duality, there one sees another, one hears another, one knows another; but where all has become Self, Atma, by what and whom would one see, by what and whom would one hear, by what and whom would one know? By what would one know Him, whereby one knows the All? By what would one know the Knower?"

Concerning the two "abodes" which are above this seventh stage, it is hardly profitable to speculate; we are not yet in a position to comprehend Nirvana and Para-Nirvana.

One matter remains to be cleared up. There is the possibility that the disciple might be allured by one or other of the ascending stages, and might wish to halt there, rather than continue the arduous uphill journey. To this possibility the Buddha turns:

"Then, Ananda, concerning the first stage of cognition, where there are beings diverse in body, diverse in intelligence, that is to say, men, some of the bright powers, some of those undergoing purification,—he, Ananda, who understands it, understands its rising, understands its setting, understands its pleasure, understands its danger, understands the way of passing beyond it, is it possible that he should be allured and enthralled by it?"

"No, Lord!"

For each of the seven stages the Buddha passes through the same thoughts, as also for the two abodes, leading us, perhaps, to the supreme renunciation of Nirvana, the great trial and victory of a Master. So, for each stage, for each abode, there is a renunciation, a liberation, leading to something higher, nobler, more divine:

"When, Ananda, a disciple has mastered these eight liberations in their order, has mastered them in reverse order, has mastered them both in order and in reverse order, so that, as he may desire, when he may desire, so long as he may desire, he may enter, or rise above, each one of them, when he is purified of all impurity, when he knows and realizes liberation of heart, liberation of intelligence, in doctrine and discipline, such a disciple, Ananda, is said to be liberated in both ways; and than this liberation, Ananda, no liberation is higher or more excellent."

Thus spoke the Master. Full of joy, the noble Ananda rejoiced in the Master's words.



# FRAGMENTS

## *The Son of God goes forth to War*

A LONG roll of drums; the bugles singing; the tread of marching men. What is this? you say to me. Who are these? Where are they marching?

They go to war, I answer.

War, you say, war, when we at last have peace! War, when our sons gave their lives by millions on the blood-soaked fields of France and Belgium that there should never again be war. War, when men surrendered their souls, and are selling them daily, for peace—peace at any price, even at that high price!

Peace, I say,—and the word chokes me: No, it is war, unending war, so long as such peace-visions remain, so long as souls are numbed by them, or sold in droves into the hands of death.

These men are marching to that war. Beyond there, the standard of the Great Dragon looms, and the horizon is black with the swarms who rally to it—the spawn and output of Hell, the legions of the Black Lodge. These men go to push them back a foot or two, for they are marching into a new year. They are called the Battalion of Death, for they give their lives to this Cause. They cannot surrender, no one of them is ever taken prisoner,—they win, or die. A Warrior leads them, peerless in all that makes a warrior, who routed the hosts of Darkness singlehanded years ago, and whose initial victory makes possible the salvation of this world. Else were there no war to-day, but the deadly blank of uttermost destruction.

As they pass, see where the Heavenly Host, St. Michael in command, stand gravely at the salute. Do you not hear *their* bugles singing also, and mark the long streaks of light across the sky, where divine sentinels watch and flash the signals—the air corps of angelic combatants.

Volunteers: who will volunteer! Who will not volunteer, for who can resist the appeal of such a high endeavour. Your hearts must burn within you, O sons of Myalba, burn to give all or die. When we look in that Leader's face, must we not follow him? There is a magnet to draw out all your powers, downing the base and craven thing within, which whines and trembles and protests.

Leave thy fair dreams and fancies of to-day. Pick up thy broken sword and hie thee forth. On this great battle-field now prove thy worth. Forget thyself: behold, the former things are passed away.

CAVÉ.

# THEOSOPHY<sup>1</sup>

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THE purpose of The Theosophical Society is to keep alive the spiritual intuitions of mankind. Since we are here this afternoon as guests of the New York Branch of The Theosophical Society, it is proper that we should know what our purpose is, a purpose which each one of us, in the measure of his willingness, may share. What are the spiritual intuitions of mankind? On what do they rest? What do they seek as their ideal and goal? We reply that the goal is supremely simple; the goal is Eternal Being, one and undivided. Eternal Being is the foundation of all true religions, all true philosophies. The great founders of religions, the greatest prophets, the greatest seers have been great precisely because they perceived Eternal Being, and their essential identity with Eternal Being. This essential identity is the key to all that is splendid in human life, for truly to perceive Eternal Being is to become Eternal Being. The truth of Eternal Being is so simple that it needs no declaration. It stands of itself. Eternal Being is, and, because Eternal Being is, we are. The prophets and seers, all the great among the sons of men, gained their glimpse of Eternal Being, a glimpse which meant a beginning of assimilation, or, to speak more truly, a recognition of identity with Eternal Being, one and undivided. We are Eternal Being, for there is nothing else for us to be. As the seers and prophets gained this glimpse, they were so won by the wonder and splendour of the vision, that of necessity they dedicated their lives to the worship, the recognition of Eternal Being; obedience to it, assimilation with it. They began to be at one with eternal life. And, since that Being contains, among its many powers, its many facets, the power of manifestation—the expression of its hidden treasures, a power of which we see, at this time of year, a beautiful symbol, in the new leaves and blossoms of the trees and the plants of the earth, so delicately and irresistibly manifested year by year—in virtue of this inherent power, this beautiful necessity of manifestation, the seers and sages, when they had recognized their oneness with Everlasting Being, inevitably expressed that oneness and made it manifest, first, in a life completely conformed with the Divine Being; secondly, in teaching, in the enunciation of the truth regarding Eternal Being; and also in teaching of a more direct kind, through the contagion of their insight and their action, because Eternal Being is as much action as insight. It is power, energy, as much as consciousness and wisdom. Therefore, since those great Masters of wisdom were all in essence one, because all are facets of the one Eternal Life, all expressing that Life, for that reason, their teaching, however separated in time, to whatever nation it may have been given, is fundamentally the same.

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<sup>1</sup> From stenographic notes of a lecture by Charles Johnston, on May 1st, 1927, on the occasion of the Convention of The Theosophical Society.

If it be our purpose, the purpose of The Theosophical Society, to awaken and keep alive the spiritual intuitions of mankind, we shall be working for the fulfilment of that purpose if we can show this one fundamental spiritual reality underlying, inspiring, all religions and all religious philosophies. The realization of the unity of all religious truth should rejoice the heart of every man of good will. If they be not hopelessly narrow, penned in within the limits of sectarian prejudice, all who aspire and believe should rejoice beyond measure to find that their truth is an aspect of an infinite, universal Truth. We can hardly conceive a smaller and more contemptible trait in human nature than the desire to magnify one's own creed by attacking and denying the truth of others. But, if there be magnanimity, love of truth for the sake of truth, then one can conceive that great joy may come to the heart of every seeker, should he realize the superb fact that the truth before which he bows in reverence, is also the fundamental Truth in all the religions of mankind. This is one of the joys by which we, as lovers of the Truth, are rewarded. In every form of genuine religion, and even in many limitations of religion, something of that everlasting radiance shines.

The motto of our Society, and its declared objects, are aspects of that one Truth. In our motto, "There is no Religion higher than Truth," we affirm the oneness of Truth in all religions. Our motto is profound in its significance. Some light may be shed, perhaps, on the difference between the Oriental and the Western mind, if we translate into Sanskrit the famous sentence, "What is truth?" We shall discover that the Oriental tongue has developed in harmony with universal being. For, if the question, "What is truth?" be asked in Sanskrit, it is already answered: Truth is that which depends on, or belongs to, Eternal Being. So also the word "religion" in our motto has its deep significance, more fully revealed in the original Sanskrit of the motto. The word comes from a root meaning "hold." So there is no "hold" better than reality. There is no obligation stronger than that which rests upon Eternal Being. There is no religion higher than the recognition of Eternal Being. So our motto expresses the fundamental truth: Being upholds itself; Being stands.

Then the first object of our Society, to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed, caste, colour or sex. If it be true, as the great Masters of wisdom have shown by their experience, that Eternal Being is the one reality in the universe, and that we are facets of the diamond, each one "an inlet to the same, and to all of the same," then it is most certain that, in their essential nature, all human beings are one; not merely similar, not simply like each other, but, in the heart of Being, one. The diamond is not divided by the facets; it remains one; and, without the diamond, the facets have absolutely no existence. On the diamond, the facets have a relative reality. They are there, and we are those facets; each one of us, if we will, an entry not into a part, not into one side of Being, but, as Emerson says, into all of the same. But there is a truth that must be borne in mind when we speak of Universal Brotherhood; it has

already been suggested in speaking of the great Masters of religious and spiritual history, and in saying that they conform to Eternal Being: conforming to reality, to truth, to beauty, to that quality which we can best describe as the beauty of holiness. Without this conformity, this response of complete obedience and assimilation, we do not really exist. We are then facets detached from the diamond. Therefore it follows that mankind begins to be real, begins really to be, only through recognition of that splendid spiritual Being, and through the effort, following recognition, to make it real; not an abstraction or a theory, but a daily, hourly reality, entering a man to the tips of his fingers. Through realization we become real, through realization of spiritual Being. So that we may divide mankind into three great groups: first, those who have realized Eternal Being, the great Masters of wisdom; second, those who are seeking to realize Eternal Being; and, lastly, those who, so far as Eternal Being is concerned, are blind, deaf, dumb; those who at some later time may come into existence, but cannot yet be said really to exist. Therefore we have this formulation of our principle: to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of humanity; a nucleus to begin with, because we recognize that real humanity comes slowly into existence through perception of spiritual Being, through the effort to become one with that Being; or, to speak more truly, to realize our oneness with Being, since it is a oneness which, potentially, has been from everlasting.

We have already considered the second object of The Theosophical Society, which is the comparative study of religions, philosophies, science and ethics; the purpose of our search being to recognize in them partial revelations of this same spiritual Life, whose properties are truth, beauty, holiness. Even though much of modern science be one-sided, a narrowly limited view, a flattened-out truth, truth without Being, eternity without immortality, so that some scientists may be said to dwell in a two-dimensional universe,—nevertheless they are genuinely devoted to truth, honest and sincere in their search for truth; in that degree, they are votaries of Eternal Being, whose breath is truth. We study ethics also, the search for right conduct. What, according to our fundamental principle, will be right conduct? Surely it will be that conduct which is in conformity with spiritual Being. How are we to discover what it is? We must seek to learn it from the Masters of wisdom who are conformed to spiritual Being. While the records of Masters and their teachings may belong to a distant past, five or ten thousand years ago, we cannot think of a Master as being in the past. From the standpoint of students of Theosophy, there can be no dead Masters. They can hardly even be said to have risen from the dead, because they are eternally alive, since they have become one with eternal spiritual Being. They are as much here, now, as they were, let us say, in the valley of the Ganges thirty-five centuries ago. The Masters of wisdom must be here, since they are one with Being, and Being is here. So we may seek their teachings first in the historical records, the great Scriptures. Then, if we be faithful, persistent, we may one day be able to seek more directly, and to find; and, when we shall

have found, we shall have a true system of ethics, of conduct, because we shall have found the system which is in conformity with eternal spiritual reality. So much, concerning our second object.

We have considered Eternal Being as reality, beauty, truth, holiness. Let us turn now to another aspect of Being, another facet, another way of looking at Eternal Being: namely, Eternal Being as harmony, harmony making for perfection. To begin with simple illustrations: the principle of harmony, in physics, is equilibrium, the restoration of balance; that, in virtue of which the great billows of the ocean, after they have risen mountain high, sink down again to a level mirror; that which dictates that the planets, though they may sway from the normal of their orbits, nevertheless sway back again, in the eternal self-adjustment of the solar system. Going deeper, we may say that harmony means justice, but justice which is also mercy; for we can conceive of a justice literally rigid, which would therefore be unjust: a justice which would fall short of perfect justice. But the harmony of Eternal Being is at once perfect justice and perfect mercy. So we find this aspect of Eternal Being: namely, harmony, making for perfection, the principle of equilibrium, of balance restored, and therefore the principle of alternation. It is illustrated perpetually before our eyes, in the change from spring to summer, to autumn, to winter, each with its pageantry of beauty and delight; or the change from morning to noon, from noon to evening and night, each perfect in beauty; and likewise in our human destiny, the progression from birth to maturity, to death, to the paradise between death and rebirth, and so back again to birth; a restoration of balance, equilibrium, harmony.

If we go back again to our starting point: mankind as facets of the diamond, but as yet unconscious facets; mankind still asleep, which is the condition of the vast majority—mankind not yet even beginning to be conscious of fundamental spiritual unity with Eternal Being—we must quite clearly see that, if the goal be omniscience, omnipotence, perfection of beauty and holiness, then there is a long, long journey yet to travel, a distance that will not be covered in a day, or the day of a single life. Therefore we say that our principle of harmony, a justice that shall be also mercy, demands for each individual, for each still unburnished facet of the diamond, the time to make that journey, a sufficient opportunity, a continuity of life. The great work takes time, much time. Perhaps, if the ultimate truth be told, the soul spins time as it goes along, just as the spider spins his web; and what we call time is simply the expression of the slowness of the soul, in the process of growth, of realization, of awakening. But the point is, that there is this long development, this immense journey, demanding continuity of being. Yet not an unbroken journey; since these souls of men are little, and easily wearied, one can see that the quality of mercy cannot require that the great journey be made in a single day. There must be, and there are, periods of rest. Rest, and something more. When the man, overtaken by the night, has laid his weary head on the bosom of mother earth, when his outward vesture has returned to its source, he needs rest, rest for the weary; but he needs something

more. What provision has the great principle of harmony made for his restoration while he sleeps?

But let us go back for a moment to consider the source of this doctrine of continuity of life, of a long succession of lives, each one with a new gift of hope, of power, of opportunity. It would be quite possible for a logical mind to formulate the doctrine of many births. It is, indeed, the fact that, when an intuitional and logical mind once receives this thought, and sees how many enigmas of life it resolves, how many locked doors it opens, such a mind may support the doctrine by pure logical reasoning. The doctrine is eminently reasonable; yet one is inclined to believe that it was not arrived at by reasoning. That is not the light in which the great Scriptures of the world present it to us. Take one of the old Scriptures of India, which tells of the Master Krishna, who appeals to many of us because he is a warrior, teaching on the battle field as the armies are ready to clash, appealing to us because human life is the field of battle and we are of the army. Krishna does not put forward the teaching of reincarnation or rebirth, the succession of births, as a speculation, or the result of close logic. In the beginning of the fourth book of the *Bhagavad Gita*, he says, "I taught this doctrine to the lord of the Solar race, and to Ikshvaku." Arjuna, whom he addresses, is naturally astonished, saying: "Later was thy birth, O noble one, earlier the birth of the Solar lord. How then may I understand this, that thou hast declared it in the beginning?" Then Krishna gives the answer that is the fundamental revelation of how this knowledge comes into the world: "Many are my past births and thine also, Arjuna; I know them all, but thou knowest them not." Krishna did not, therefore, present the admirably logical teaching of successive births as the result of logic. He did not say, "Because there are tendencies in us at our birth, definite directions of character which must have had antecedent causes, therefore they must have been generated in an antecedent life." Nor did he say, "Look at these poor people, swept into the widespread net of death; far from being perfect and complete, they have not even begun; of necessity they must have new lives, new opportunities." This is sound logic, but it is not what Krishna said. What Krishna said was, "My past births I remember." Whoever is familiar with the Gospel according to Saint John must be struck with the similarity of this passage with a text that may cause a good deal of bewilderment to some of those who read it,—where the Master Christ says, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad." Exactly as Arjuna replied to Krishna, those who heard the Master Christ inquired of him, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" And again, in complete harmony with Krishna's answer, Christ says, "Before Abraham was I am." These words, "I am," are immensely striking. He does not say, "I was," he says, "I am." Having become one with the eternal Life, being himself that eternal Life, or, as John says, the Logos made flesh, and so living in the eternal present, he cannot say, "I was." For eternal life, there is no past. "Before Abraham was, I am," whether in ancient Egypt, or wherever it may be. Again, the same

Master uses the same striking word when he is commissioning his disciples, "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age." So in this, as in all else, we find that a Master of wisdom speaks in conformity with Eternal Being, whether those who heard and recorded his words, understood or fell short of understanding. There is the record, the hallmàrk of the Master of wisdom.

To go back to the seventh century before Christ, we find two eminent witnesses to the same teaching: Gautama Buddha, or, as he is personally named, Prince Siddhartha, "he who has attained his goal." Again and again he affirms his memory, his knowledge, of his previous lives. There is, among these, a stirring record of the steps up which he climbed to that supreme eminence of divine-human life which he represents,—for we do not say "represented." As Emerson said, "Jesus and Paul are very well alive," so we may say that Prince Siddhartha is very well alive. He relates stories of his earlier lives; and one of the striking forms of his teaching is this: when he finds a bitter problem, sore and hard to solve, he seeks to show the sufferers how their painful situation was generated by their own actions in some earlier life; a life which, though to them it is past, is present and plainly visible to him.

A great Master contemporary with him, Pythagoras, also said, "I remember." He is the fountain head of the teaching of reincarnation in the Western world, or, rather the Græco-Roman civilization. For, as Julius Cæsar tells us, it existed among the Gauls in Northern Europe, in all likelihood for centuries. Pythagoras is the source of the teaching in that late afternoon of the Græco-Roman world, which is all that we yet know of it, the last few centuries before our era, as he is also the beginning of Western philosophy, and the creator of that superb word, philosophy. There is an impressive rendering of the word in our Theosophical tradition. We hold that philosophy means more than the love of wisdom; it means the wisdom of love; the wisdom which comes from love of Divine Being, and of all that is in harmony with Divine Being: the wisdom of love. So Pythagoras is the head and source of our Western philosophy and our Western mathematics, both of which, it is practically certain, he received from the initiates of ancient Egypt, because it is recorded that he had been initiated in Egypt, and also, very probably, in India. But he did not say, "In India I heard of reincarnation, and I think it may be true," or, "In Egypt they taught me about successive lives." What Pythagoras said was, "I remember."

So four witnesses have been cited. It is worth considering where, if we take all the records of mankind, we could find four witnesses of equal eminence to testify to anything; and all four make the same statement, "I remember." Therefore our understanding of this law of reincarnation, of a series of lives, is not derived from logic, even though it be eminently defensible by logic. It is not the result of speculation, even though it be a very sane speculation, for nothing saner has ever been proposed, nor any better solution of the problems, entanglements and obscurities of human life. No, it is knowledge, the

knowledge of those who remember, the immediate memory of the great men who have borne testimony, the sanest men in all human history, men recognized by tens of thousands, by tens of millions, as masters of sanity, masters of right thinking, masters of right action, masters of justice, masters of mercy. These are the witnesses, or they are among the witnesses.

Further, they tell us something of the paradise of rest, between death and rebirth, which we were considering a little while ago, holding that it is a paradise of rest for the weary, rest and something more. There is, in each one of us, a higher nature, which already mirrors and exemplifies Spiritual Being, the point at which the facet and the diamond are one; that in us which looks into the heart of the infinite jewel. There are also the middle nature, and the lower nature; the latter in two senses. First, there is the lower nature which belongs to the biological world, the animal body, with its functions and its members. Perhaps it might better be called, not lower—because there is nothing essentially low about it—but the outer nature. But there is a lower nature to which that word ought to be attached, as a moral stigma: the nature of selfishness, brutality, cruelty, sensuality. I doubt if there be a human being who will not, in the abstract at least, brand these things as evil, and admit that they play a considerable part in human life. Then, to go back, there is the middle nature, in which, according as it is limpid or turbid, there are reflected the influences from above or from below, or much of both. Our ordinary states of mind, if we watch them for an hour or two, entertain this from above, that from below, mingled good and evil. The middle nature is the corridor, the place of meeting.

Take any ordinary human life, and you will see that there have been in it many gleams of light, or of longing for the light, touches of beauty, aspirations after truth, breathings of the spirit of holiness, hopes for high attainment, or shadows of hope. But it is also true that there has been, in such a life, very little fulfilment. The measure of fulfilment, compared with the measure of hope or of desire, has been very small, and we are considering the higher desires, the true desires of the spiritual heart. Therefore, the fundamental law of harmony making for perfection, which is an expression of Being itself, provides that, after the wayfarer lays his weary body on mother earth, there shall be compensation for him; compensation for all the frost-bitten hopes, the longings nipped in the bud, the aspirations that were chilled and never unfolded. This compensation is the essence of paradise, the expression of that justice which is also mercy.

During centuries, perhaps, this harmony of fulfilled hope and aspiration delights the weary spirit. But there is something more besides refreshment and delight. These better desires were all a reaching after something in Divine Being. A longing for beauty is a longing for real Being, since beauty is of the essence of real Being. A longing for the true is a longing for real Being, since truth is of the essence of real Being. So with all the true desires of the heart. Each of them calls on Being; each receives a response, because of that principle of harmony which is at once justice and mercy. Therefore



the higher nature of the man, in paradise, is not only rested, rewarded, refreshed, rejoiced, but also fed, nourished, strengthened, given seeds for growth in the next life, or many lives; so the soul comes back to birth, as Wordsworth says, "not in entire forgetfulness, not in utter nakedness, but trailing clouds of glory," glory received from that central heart of Being.

In an ancient Mexican Scripture there is the phrase, "Heart of the heavens, heart of the earth!" We oscillate between the heart of the heavens and the heart of the earth. A prayer, again from the *Popol Vuh*, "May the seeds germinate! May the dawn come!"—seeds of a greater future, dawn of a brighter day, of deeper truth and higher holiness. So the wayfarer comes back, trailing clouds of glory. He has gleaned new riches in the harvest fields of eternity. But at this point there is a question which may arise, which should arise. So far as we have considered the matter, the man is in a solitary paradise. As concerns his loved ones, what is the teaching of theosophical wisdom? Is he in truth alone and isolated? Or, to put it in the traditional phrase, Do we know our friends in heaven? The answer would seem to be, "Yes, if we have known them on earth!" Exactly in the measure in which our love is unselfish, exactly in the measure in which our love for another finds and serves that other, instead of merely gratifying itself, in the measure that love is real,—in that measure it is true recognition, and in that measure it can and must endure. Therefore, as we know each other now, if we really know, we shall know our friends in heaven.

These, then, are a few fundamental aspects of the one truth that Being is one and undivided; expressions of the motto of The Theosophical Society, "There is no Religion higher than Truth," because there is but one universal religion, which depends upon everlasting Being. Our first aim and purpose is, to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of humanity. The true Brotherhood is made up of those who have realized the Real, who are one with Eternal Being. The nucleus consists of those who are seeking Eternal Being. Our purpose, our effort is, to increase the number of those who seek, and, so far as we can, to strengthen our own light that we may lighten the way for them. Here, we touch on the third object of The Theosophical Society, a part of which is, to investigate the psychical and spiritual powers latent in man; "psychical and spiritual," is the wording of *The Key to Theosophy*. What are these powers? Whence do they come? Are they strange outgrowths of the human mind, as alien as an orchid on a palm tree or a spray of mistletoe on an oak, something abnormal, parasitic? No; they are expressions of the stages by which we realize ourselves in Eternal Being. All that you have heard of the miraculous powers of Masters—let us say, the miracles in the New Testament—is but an incomplete expression of what a Master inherits in becoming one with infinite Being, with omnipotence. Of the Master Christ it is recorded that he could do no great works in certain cities because of their unbelief. The same limitation lay upon him through all his mission. It is quite impossible to reveal to mankind, such as they are, such as we are, anything like the plenitude of the powers of a Master. We should

be blinded; or, perhaps it would be nearer the truth to say that these powers are quite beyond our range of vision. But the vital matter is, that these powers are the natural, inevitable efflorescence of oneness with Being; they are in perfect conformity with the harmony of Being.

As members of The Theosophical Society, as students of Theosophy, we have set ourselves this task; or, shall we say, the great law of harmony and justice has set it for us; or, better still, has conferred on us the immense privilege of endeavouring to keep alive the spiritual intuitions of mankind. What are the conditions of the task? What is the goal? We can only keep alive spiritual intuitions in others if spiritual intuition burns and glows in our own hearts and minds. Only a live coal can kindle a coal. Only a living heart can kindle a heart. Only living intuition can kindle intuition. Therefore it will follow that, so far as we are, in our degree, faithful stewards in this service, by that fact we shall enter into the superb reality of Being; not seeking a reward, not desiring a reward. How can we? Being, itself, is infinitely greater than any conceivable reward; but, if you wish, rewarded by Divine Being; rewarded, not primarily in or for ourselves, though that will also be true, but rewarded, little by little, by seeing the light in human hearts begin to glow and gleam; the aspiration in human hearts begin to burn a little brighter, as the stars come out in the twilight; the miracle of everlasting Being, as it is already known to the Masters of wisdom, beginning at length to reveal itself for the redemption, the salvation, the supreme joy of mankind.

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*"He who is not with me is against me," is God's criterion of friendship. God can have no part with Belial; truth none with falsehood. To forego one's own rights, may on occasion be commendable; but to yield before error is to abandon God's rights, and that is disloyalty.—BOOK OF ITEMS.*

# DEVOTION AND INTELLIGENCE

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*Open thy breast to the truth which is coming, and know that so soon as the organization of the brain is perfect in the embryo, the First Mover turns him to it, rejoicing over such art of nature, and breathes into it a new spirit filled with virtue, which draws into its substance that which it finds active there, and becomes one single soul, that lives and feels and turns round on itself.*

*And that thou mayst marvel less at my words, look at the sun's heat, that is made wine when combined with the juice which flows from the vine.*

PURGATORIO, XXV, 67-78.

*The Sons of Wisdom . . . came down. They saw the vile forms of the first Third, still senseless Race. "We can choose," said the Lords, "we have wisdom." Some entered the Chhayas. Some projected a spark. Some deferred till the Fourth Race. . . . Those who entered became Arhats. Those who received but a spark remained destitute of higher knowledge.*

SECRET DOCTRINE, ed. 1888, II, 18, 161.

IT has been suggested that there exists in the general membership of The Theosophical Society much real devotion to the objects of the Society, but that it has become increasingly necessary to gain a clearer view of those objects. The devotional faculty must be better provided with an intellectual basis. Unless there be growth in the right understanding of theosophical duty, real progress will cease, and devotion will become a meaningless, automatic repetition of ritual acts, or it will degenerate into fanaticism.

Intelligent devotion or intelligent obedience to Truth is demanded. There is nothing new or remarkable about such an appeal. Devotion means more than a *feeling* of love. It implies *action* on behalf of what is loved, and this action must be intelligent, based on some perception of the nature of what is loved. The action may be physical or mental or spiritual, but the principle is the same. It is impossible for a human being to act rightly, unless he has some mental awareness of what he ought to do. We find Marshal Foch asserting that there is no military obedience which is not to some degree *intelligent obedience*. The higher the rank of an officer, the more definite becomes his duty to discover the spirit within the letter of the orders which he has to execute.

In its broadest meaning, obedience is an attitude whereby an entity conforms to Nature and thereby makes manifest the unique series of forms which it is destined to embody. Such an attitude is equally necessary for Archangel and for atom, though there are as many ways of obeying as there are creatures. Let us consider obedience briefly as a cosmic process, first as it is revealed in the kingdoms below man.

In the mineral kingdom obedience or conformity to natural law is measured by the exactitude and concord of all motions pertaining to a system, whether this be an atom with its electronic content, or a universe of stars. In the vegetable kingdom the proper nature of the plant is hidden within the seed, and the whole growth of the plant is a continuous embodying of that interior pattern. In the animal world the individual creature is the vehicle of a deep and enduring purpose which is super-individual; for what is instinct but the adjustment of the localized life in the animal to the demands of the life of the species to which the animal belongs? Atoms and solar systems, plants, animals are thus, in their various ways, obedient to the respective plans laid down for them by Nature, and it is by virtue of that obedience that their types survive and evolve. In one sense, they are incapable of disobedience. Certainly deliberate nonconformity to Nature is inconceivable among them. Some, indeed, evolve and attain form more rapidly than others, and there are several which seem to drift into some backwater, to remain there for ages or even to degenerate and disappear. But one may believe that these "failures" have somehow become over-charged with the *vis inertiae*, the great conserving power of matter, the *tamas* of Indian philosophy. Inertia, so necessary to the orderly progression of form, may stabilize some form to such a degree that consciousness cannot abstract itself from it. The oyster is the proverbial example of an inert creature; but the oyster is more to be pitied than blamed. It is not disobedient, though its faculty of obedience has become dull and slow.

The whys and wherefores of relative success or failure in the lower kingdoms constitute an interesting subject for speculation, but it lies outside the scope of this article. The outstanding fact in what may be called subhuman obedience seems to be the absence from it of deliberation, of self-conscious purpose. There is purpose, certainly, but the creature coöperates without reflecting upon what it is doing. The responsibility for failure—if there be failure—rests upon Nature or God or the Creative Host—or, perhaps, upon man, "the thaumaturge of the Earth." The creature is certain to obey, in so far as it acts at all.

Let us pass in imagination from this negative pole of manifested consciousness to the positive pole, to the kingdoms above the human or rather above that elemental part of the human kingdom where most of us are usually functioning. Mystics of all ages and races have testified to the existence of beings whose whole life is an illumined obedience, an intelligent or *knowing* aspiration towards an ever more perfect realization of the divine natures which are reserved for them. Consider for instance the beatific vision in the last cantos of the *Paradiso*. That vision and the response which it awakens in the Heart of the Heavenly Host correspond to the process whereby an animal or plant or mineral becomes that which it is its nature to become. The difference between the two states of being may be defined by the all-comprehensive fact that the Heavenly Host do actively and intelligently what their lowly brethren do passively and blindly. In the language of Spinoza, it is the difference between *natura naturata* and *natura naturans*, between the simple activity of

living in accordance with the laws of life and the dynamic experience of "the intellectual love of God."

This divine form of intelligent obedience is attainable by man. Otherwise men could not even imagine it as an objective of effort. The human kingdom belongs properly to the spiritual world. The lives of saints and sages and heroes, above all of Masters, show forth an ascending scale of progress in intelligent devotion to the ideal of human perfection. And as the parent tree "deposits" its form and life in the seed,—so the Buddhas and Christs of humanity, by embodying the ideal of man's essential excellence, may be said to have the power to awaken, in the consciousness of those who follow in their footsteps, the perception of their divine potentiality, and the will to make it manifest.

However, the human kingdom as a whole appears to be distinctly anomalous. The average human being has in large part lost or perverted the animal's faculty of instinctive obedience and has not acquired the art of intelligent obedience. Alone of all creatures known to us, man—that is, *elemental* man—does not live habitually in conformity with Nature. According to the relative development of his faculties, he drifts quite aimlessly without even the semblance of a purpose, animal or divine; or he tends to disobey deliberately those promptings of instinct or of conscience of which he is conscious.

It is necessary to emphasize the abnormality of the status of elemental man in Nature. Mistakes are presumably possible at any point in the whole scheme of evolution. The creatures of the lower kingdoms may be overcome by inertia; the beings of the higher kingdoms may make errors of judgment. The chance of relative failure does not decrease, after the individual entity takes over the management of its own affairs. A Master hints at "the necessity of failures even in the ethereal races of Dhyân Chohans" (*Secret Doctrine*, I, 188). However, that which constitutes the failure of *elemental* man is not simply a lack of complete understanding or of perfect devotion. Understanding and devotion arise in his consciousness—when they arise at all—only as flashes in a night of ignorance and self-will. Therefore, his actions leave the impression of an almost continuous nonconformity to Nature.

The *Secret Doctrine* offers an explanation of this truly grotesque condition. The explanation is veiled and is open to various interpretations. But this much seems clear, that the first men on this planet, with few exceptions, developed their psychic natures before they received more than a "spark" of their spiritual natures. In the light of this theory, one may profitably meditate upon the allegory of Adam and Eve, or upon certain familiar modern educational systems which seem designed to convert children into powerful and dangerous elementals, before their souls have awakened.

Obviously the transition from the instinctive obedience of "matter" to the intelligent obedience of "spirit" must be a difficult process. In fact, it is so very difficult that one is virtually unable to explain it at all. One can only fall back upon the "doctrine of correspondences" and seek to find analogous processes at work in other departments of Nature. The *datum* of

the origin of species may be thus illumined, if it can never be mentally explained.

We do not know *why* human nature is evolved out of animal nature any more than we know why an acorn evolves into an oak through the assimilation of the mineral substances of the soil and air in which it grows. But we can discern *how* such things happen. A certain seed may become an oak when its parents are oaks; there is really no question of the soil and air spontaneously shaping themselves into a tree. A descending current of form and vital force meets an ascending current of matter. The result of the blending is a state of being in which a living or astral form is clothed with substance and substance is endowed with a higher rate of vibration, so that new "lines of force" are laid down for the atoms of that substance.

By analogy, one may conceive that human nature is not simply one more variety of animal nature, that the individual human soul is the seed of a parent soul which derived its humanity from its own parent, and so on. The animal nature into which the soul falls is the soil in which it grows. It provides the substance which the soul assimilates to form its personality, but the atoms of the substance are no longer animal but human, after they have been transmuted.

If one accept individual reincarnation as a plausible hypothesis, the "correspondence" between plant and man may be worked out in detail. The *Secret Doctrine* suggests a larger application of the principle, to include the human race as a whole. As the individual, the higher ego, is represented as reincarnating in a series of personalities, so the most advanced men of one planetary chain, the *Manasaputras* or Sons of Wisdom, are said to incarnate as the nucleus of the humanity of another planet. Certain beings who had attained a measure of individual human existence in another Manvantara were commissioned—so to speak—to bring the seed or spark of human consciousness to the Earth.

However—to return to our analogy—the physical matter of the plant's body modifies and limits the actual exfoliation of the seed's potentialities. The power of growth derived from the seed is continually resisted by the power of inertia which is peculiarly the attribute of mineral substance. Therefore, in this sublunar world, the objective form of every plant necessarily varies to a greater or lesser degree from the form of its astral model that was deposited in the seed. In extreme cases, a plant may become a shapeless or hideous growth not bearing even a superficial resemblance to the form typical of its species. The spark of its proper life seems to be hidden beneath a mass of matter which it has drawn from the mineral kingdom but which it has converted very inadequately into vegetable substance.

The evolution of man appears to have been partly of such a monstrous order. The force of growth has been in many instances overcome by the inertia of the animal life-atoms which should have been completely transmuted into atoms of higher "frequency." The personalities thus formed have been distorted copies of what they should have been.

The Eastern doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma represent the present evils of an individual's life as the effects of certain evil actions in a previous life. When consciousness and force are put into an act, they remain in the ego's atmosphere as skandhas, as incitements to repeat the act. One may ask without any hope of an answer why or how the first wrong act was committed. May one not avoid or at least indefinitely postpone such a question by assuming that the human race as a whole has skandhas, analogous to our individual skandhas; that the origin of mankind on this planet involved not only the intervention of the Sons of Wisdom but also the awakening of the illusions of a previous humanity; that from another aeon man received the seeds of Karma, both bad and good?

In truth, one can only feel one's way in such matters, affirming the fundamental unity of all consciousness, from which proceeds the corollary that in so far as an individual knows his own nature, he can understand what is analogous to his experience in Universal Nature. We know that we suffer from certain gross delusions about ourselves and about our destiny. At the same time, we feel that incarnation provides us with the opportunity to destroy delusion and so at last to understand the purpose of human existence. None can say how many opportunities have already come to us. In any event it seems certain that ignorance and illusion must have come to us from a measureless past. Is it not Shankaracharya who has called unwisdom *beginningless*? But not *necessarily endless*! One recalls the phrase of H. P. B.,—"A Mystery, truly!"

Illusion is suspended between the perceiver and the perceived, like a cloud blurring the outline of the object seen. In more dynamic terms, illusion distorts the appearance of the model which is to be copied in action. Its objective or substantial basis has been defined as the cosmic mystery of differentiation. Its subjective basis, its reflection in consciousness, is surely the sense of separateness, the confused notion that the apparent differentiations of the One Self are more real than the One Self which seems to differentiate.

We cannot explain the appearance of differentiation nor discern how or why it arises. It is an unfathomable mystery, like the ultimate reason why the Universe exists at all. But we know by experience some of the forms assumed by the sense of separateness,—pride, vanity, sensuality, love of comfort. These seem to be animal qualities imperfectly transmuted into human qualities, and by virtue of the force with which we endow them, they have the power of reproduction. They are to be overcome by devotion to the supreme reality of the One Self. But as human beings we must give that devotion freely and with knowledge of what we are doing. It is conceivable that countless aeons may pass before the soul is converted to the idea of its own kinship with the Immortals. How many ages have we already wasted!

In Dante's words, there must be for each individual "one single soul, that lives and feels and turns round on itself." Man must decide for himself whether he will evolve or not. He must turn round on a fixed centre which

is the Higher Self, referring the incidents of his life to the "centre of gravity" which he must seek and find for himself in his own consciousness.

Each individual is the creator of himself. Yet the Theosophical Society has its *raison d'être* in the principle of coöperation, for no man can create without helping others to create or without being helped by others. Many students of Theosophy believe further that the perfect man is constitutionally incapable of thinking even of his own development apart from the development of his fellows, for the sense of separateness has disappeared from his consciousness. Such perfection is said to exist to-day in the Lodge of the Masters of Wisdom who represent what humanity as a whole is destined to become.

There is a tradition that the Lodge was established on this planet by the Kumaras, the highest order of the Manasaputras to whom reference was made above. Therefore, in spite of an unfortunate beginning of its history, humanity has never lacked a living ideal. It seems inconceivable that men to-day could have any assurance, however confused it be, that "knowledge exists and is attainable," unless there existed human beings who had actually attained this knowledge. Our sense of perfection is an indication that the seed of perfection is present in us. It should also indicate that this seed is continually kept alive, vivified, strengthened—whenever we permit it—by the Masters. Unless there be some oak trees which come to maturity and bear fruit, the race of oaks must disappear from the earth. Does not the same law of the necessity of continuous revivification prevail also in the race of men?

The germ of intelligence is present, as the germ of devotion is present, wherever there is a spark of real humanity. Growth is certain, if we make any effort at all. But it is essential to think of intelligence and devotion as two aspects of a single state of consciousness. Whenever we brood with desire over any object, the mind is naturally drawn towards a deeper penetration of the object, and the will is moved towards an adaptation of conduct to our vision. This blending of desire, imagination and will is constantly occurring on the lower strata of our natures, but it is an operation which may at any instant be translated to higher planes.

Fortunately there is one part of our being where illusion is less manifest than elsewhere. We are mostly blind to the truths about ourselves, but we still possess some power to respond to truths which do not directly concern our daily lives. It is possible to love an attested scientific fact, because it is a fact and therefore a truth, and to love it disinterestedly, even with the most generous passion. Such passion is, perhaps, not often found, but it exists and has been the driving power of natural science since its beginning. And even a quite commonplace person can train his mind to rejoice in the presence of another mind more profound than his own. This is a positive virtue, a living proof of the existence of a soul. It must be impossible to persist in any love of Truth, without an increasing desire on the part of the lover to divorce himself from the qualities which blur his perception and halt his expression. So, sooner or later, he will turn bravely to find out the truth



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about himself. From such beginnings the tree of knowledge will grow, until it attains the stature of the perfected Sons of Mind who know the Truth because they love it, and who love the Truth because they know it.

Intelligence is not to be sought as an end in itself, as the world so often seeks it. In other words, spiritual intelligence involves much more than mental training, though this is by no means to be disregarded. The soul must be intelligent in order to fathom the nature of that which it loves and so to evolve into the likeness of the beloved.

STANLEY V. LADOW.

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*A truth that disheartens, because it is true, is still more of value than the most stimulating of falsehoods.*—MAETERLINCK.

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*Stand like a beaten anvil. . . . It is the part of the champion to be stricken and yet to conquer.*—IGNATIUS THE MARTYR.

# PERSEVERANCE

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I WONDER how many of us who are beginners have learned, *but really learned*, to appreciate the profound necessity for a minute to minute perseverance in our daily lives,—perseverance, that golden fruit of the Will? How many of us remember that it can and *must* be exercised in the smallest detail of living, and during the performance of the most infinitesimal of our duties? Perseverance is a big word, implying a kind of will which is in something like “perfect running order”; the sort of will which, alas, few of us possess; therefore we are too prone to relegate it, because of its large significance, to matters of importance, and to think that perhaps we are not doing so badly if we exhibit some degree of it in these. We “persevere,” for instance, in keeping our regular times of meditation, knowing that this is a matter of grave concern, while simultaneously, as the days fly past, we neglect our social correspondence because we consider it relatively unimportant, and probably also, because it bores us. Yet in both cases it is the *same* perseverance which is needed, and its source is always the same,—an awakened, or awakening, Spiritual Will. It is only a matter of degree, and, indeed, in the case of meditation, when the object seems worthy of our utmost effort, less, not more actual perseverance may be needed than will be the case when it is a matter of keeping abreast of that tiresome, petty, daily round of letter-writing which is the awful Karmic inheritance of civilized (?) man. Thus it may well be that by the persistent carrying out of any and all of the countless small and wearisome duties which fall to our lot, we shall not only “acquire merit,” but we shall almost certainly gain much actual power over our faltering lower natures,—even more, possibly, than when we are performing, with an *easier* obedience, some of our more obviously imperative duties. In the first instance, there will be a mass of resistance pent up within ourselves—inertia, distaste, insupportable boredom, Tamas unchained—all of which has to be combated (and we know what a stout fight against opposing forces always does for us); while the more manifestly urgent duty, because of its very gravity, will call out a spontaneous effort which does not exist where our supposedly trivial letter-writing is in question, and perhaps, therefore, will need a lesser degree of solid perseverance.

There is not a moment during our waking hours (nor, I suppose, during sleep, though I know nothing of that, as yet) when perseverance is not a prime factor in life; without it, how can we hope to scale the precipitous heights which tower above us, and which must be climbed, step by step, as we persevere in the conscientious performance of each little, seemingly insignificant act? There are such endless ways in which we can persevere; as many ways as there are duties in life to perform; therefore we shall, I suppose, never reach the place where it can be dispensed with, for perseverance and evolution move

hand in hand; they are almost synonymous. This thought,—the continued and continual need of dauntless perseverance, seen down long vistas of time and far into the fathomless spaces of eternity, should not discourage, it should stimulate; for so long as we have the *power* to persevere, even ever so little, so long we may know that, somewhere, hidden away, life is pulsing within us, and "while there is life, there is hope."

I suppose that to each human being there are special difficulties; duties, outer and inner, which need a special courage, which call on our utmost fidelity, so that what will be a serious trial for one, may appear but a trifling obstacle (or hardly that) to another. The giving of specific examples, therefore, is not of much value, but I think there is one experience common to all, and we cannot remind ourselves of it too often. We know that if, as each new duty presents itself, we face it *positively*, without allowing one instant for drawing back, that that one particular duty seems, in some miraculous way, to get itself done with unusual ease and rapidity. One moment's hesitation, and the succeeding effort to perform that duty appears to have increased tenfold. An instantaneous obedience has been required of disciples at all times and in all ages, we are told, and I believe that one unsought reward of prompt and unhesitating obedience to what we recognize to be right, must be an *increased power* to persevere. However this may be, it is surely a fact which we have all demonstrated, over and over again, that the very first response which we make to any of the multitudinous daily duties which present themselves, is what seems to give to the performance of that duty, a peculiar colour of its own. If the first reaction be positive, our performance is correspondingly swift, effective, efficient; if negative, if we hesitate, if our obedience be not straight from the heart, the weight of the world's woes seems to be laid upon us,—and no wonder, for we have, in reality, identified ourselves with them. "*Il n'y a que le premier pas qui coûte*," is a maxim which has much truth and wisdom in it, and let us not forget to apply it in our day's work. If our wills are pointed in the right direction, if our first step is along the right road (which it needs must be, if our will is active) then we are set fair for the haven of our hopes. Whether or not we reach that haven at last, depends largely, I believe, on perseverance in little matters, but we have a greater chance of success because of that first step.

I wonder, though, if there *are* such things as "little matters" in life? Molehills are small, but history warns us that they have a dangerous way of growing into mountains, and even if this does not happen, the handling of a "little matter," like the proverbial "feather," is an indication of the direction of the wind,—it shows which way our will is pointed. Take the bad habit of leaving small duties unfinished (again letter-writing)—a dismal letter to some still more dismal relative, for instance; a letter half completed because, not being in the mood, we lose patience and "put it by for a rainy day." (This is one of *my* pitfalls, therefore I have chosen it as illustration.) Yet how much more real force I should have gained (not to mention an easier conscience) had I persisted in finishing that letter, dismal or not, before passing on to my next

duty. The chances are that if the writing of that letter had really bored me almost past endurance, and if, in the face of this boredom, I had persisted in carrying out to the end the task which belonged to that hour, my dismal relative would have found that my dismal letter had somehow taken on quite a cheerful and interesting tone after all, and he or she would no doubt have wondered why this should be, since *all* my letters had invariably been dismal. The real reason would not have been guessed,—that because I had had the energy and the fidelity to persevere even in so small a task, I had attracted all the powers for good in all the universe to my side. That is a large claim, but I believe it to be true. Or take the habit of snatching one last wink of sleep after our alarm has sounded. (This does *not* happen to be one of my temptations, therefore, again, I choose it.) Why do we set our alarm clock at that particular hour, unless we know that we ought to get up? And if we *ought* to get up then, *why not do so?* Our whole day would be more positive, we should have a firmer grip on ourselves if we would resolve, the night before, to be out of bed and standing with our own two feet firmly planted on the floor before the alarm ceased to ring. A little matter, perhaps, but try it, you who love that fatal “last wink,” and see what it will do for you.

Of course, the most difficult field of action is perseverance in the control of our thoughts and feelings, but this is so exhaustless a subject that it would need a “chapter” all to itself; besides which, I am not qualified to speak, since I have never, myself, succeeded in controlling either. We can all play about with theories, however, and here, again, I think it is often the little things which trip us, at least they are more likely to retard what otherwise might be a steady, enough growth; for there is a solemnity in wrestling with an evil thought or emotion, because we are quick to recognize in it an opponent which calls on us to prepare for a life and death struggle; and, as in the case of the performing of important or of insignificant duties, our effort is spontaneous or otherwise in more or less exact ratio to that importance or that insignificance. Therefore, if our wills be firm, if they have been even a very little purified, any really evil thought or emotion will be recognized as such, immediately, and it will be dealt with; perhaps quite unsuccessfully, but at least a gallant attempt to overcome it will have been made; perhaps too, we shall feel that as we have been dealing with large issues, we must surely, for that reason, have absorbed some of the force and power which these large issues have been holding prisoners within themselves. But there seem to be no large issues at stake in the control of trifling, time-wasting thought, at least we shall probably think this until we come to the point where we have determined to replace it by something more worthy of ourselves as would-be disciples. When we have made this decision, we shall find that just because the thoughts have been trifling, their power for insidious, corroding evil has not been noted, and that for this reason our more valorous efforts have never been engaged, have never sprung forward to grapple with the enemy as had been the case in the graver danger. *Now* we learn, suddenly and to our cost, that the habit of indulging in little, time-wasting thoughts, or of giving way to petty feelings, has acquired

a power over us which is quite out of relation to their seemingly insignificant proportions, the result being that perhaps more real, almost exhausting perseverance is needed in our honest effort to dominate the difficulty, a more persistent, because a less absorbing and heroic courage, than was the case when dealing with the gigantic evil.

Perseverance is, however, not alone necessary in the management of our own lower natures, for there is almost continual need of it in meeting and in fighting the general slackness of the times in which we live. How often, during the day, are we forced to call upon our scanty store of perseverance in the simple matter of telephoning? The telephone call not being perhaps imperative, it would often be far easier to give it up altogether, and to resort to the "penny post," than to endeavour to awaken an indifferent and inattentive operator to a tardy sense of duty,—if, indeed, any such sense of duty exist. Or we order something in a shop, and something which we *did not* order is sent us. This second something may really do quite as well—this has often happened to me—but the fact remains that I did not order it, and I am morally certain that the error arose from the practically universal indifference to orders which exists in nine-tenths of the working class of to-day. Am I going to subscribe to this indifference and let that error pass, thus becoming in my turn, indifferent? Am I going to think of loss of time and strength and ease, and so follow the comfort-loving majority, instead of taking the thorny road which "the few" have chosen? I devoutly hope that this will not be so with any of us. These seem little matters to think and write about, but indeed I am sure they are very great, and I think that in the very least of them we have a golden opportunity, which we can by no means afford to let slip,—a golden opportunity for the exercise of the spirit of "no compromise." Hardly a day passes when we are not called upon to stand and deliver, once, twice, thrice and more. It often seems to me like a weary grind; one asks oneself:—"Is this real life, or is it just intermittent *opéra comique*?" I sometimes take comfort in recalling to mind Mozart's inimitable *Enlèvement*, and his presentation in it of the great and solemn spiritual truths underlying all human experience, but which he masks by the delicate touch of comedy,—an art peculiarly his own. This does not mean that I am to consider the impertinent indifference of my telephone operator in the light of amusing and airy burlesque (even if that were possible—though I confess there *are* humorous moments), but it should mean, I am sure, that we are to look below the surface of the petty annoyance of the moment, and see, by the help of its light, the vast field for strenuous, self-abnegating work which lies open to each one of us, and to seize that one little, seemingly insignificant opportunity for a sword-thrust. Whenever we are guilty of false tolerance toward unwilling or indifferent service in restaurants, in buses, in subways; whenever we permit a "benevolent" smile to excuse some glaring discourtesy, or worse still, some gross familiarity offered in the name of "brotherhood"; just so often have we ourselves enlisted in the great army of "slackers" (that sore danger-spot during the great war); just so often have we sold our services to the enemy. We must meet this slackness either in our-

selves or in others, with all the will which we can muster, and we must realize that it is quite as important that there should be "no compromise" with that which is *weak*, as with that which is *actually wrong*. Let us realize that it is only by constant supervision, by exacting the "pound of flesh" (the *best*) from ourselves and from others, that we shall help to bring one step nearer, for those others, let us hope, as well as for ourselves, the goal which we know to be just behind the clouds and mists.

Fail? Of course we shall fail, times out of number, but what difference does that make, since we know that we learn by our failures? The more times we fail, the more secure and safe we may be, for aught we know, in our brief moments of "success"; and I often think that it is in our hours of keenest suffering, in our times of shame and remorse, that we are most truly *alive*; at least I think that at such times we are less cursed by the "sense of separateness"; for in those dark hours we have a clearer vision of the difficulties, the temptations and the struggles of others; we draw closer to those others; we *need* them more because they too have suffered, and through suffering have won great victories, and the deeper the need, the more certain we may be of the heavenly response. . . . Besides which, we can if we choose, always have the pleasure of picking ourselves up again. Browning voices this by those brave words of his, in which, I think, lurks much of the spirit of discipleship, if we read them with that idea in mind:—

It is but to keep the nerves at strain  
 To dry one's eyes and laugh at a fall,  
 And baffled, get up and begin again—  
 So the chase takes up one's life, that's all.  
 While, look but once from your farthest bound  
 At me so deep in the dust and dark,  
 No sooner the old hope goes to ground  
 Than a new one, straight to the selfsame mark.  
 I shape me—  
 Ever  
 Removed!

That is the kind of perseverance which we should all do well to cultivate; yet we must not deceive ourselves, for in this very perseverance there lies foreshadowed much of the necessarily attendant suffering of discipleship.

I often ask myself, though, why we are so afraid of suffering. Can we not recognize what a good friend it is to us? Yet someone said to me, not long since, someone who was in great distress: "Why do we have to suffer? Why do people say that we grow during times of suffering? That is not rational; keen suffering crushes, we do not thrive under it. The most we can hope for is that we shall endure. Plants grow and gather strength in the sunshine, not in snow and hail." Poor, blind human reasoning! The idea of human disobedience, of self-will, of sin and its retrieval, was quite left out of my

friend's scheme of life. But *why* are we so afraid, for no one ever *died* of suffering,—not if it has been real; not if the knife has cut deep enough. Suffering stings you into life. I think it is very easy to die of happiness, happiness as we poor earth-bound mortals usually gauge it. We drink of the waters of Lethe and we forget, and in forgetting we die,—die to Life's great realities, die to the message of the Cross. In times of superficial suffering we fancy ourselves betrayed, tricked by Life's false promises which have never come to fruition, and so we rebel; but when we are older and wiser, because we have suffered more, we recognize with an overwhelming shock of repentance that we ourselves have been the betrayers, not the betrayed; and if, by this time, we are very old and very wise, we shall not fail to take ourselves valiantly in hand, we shall seize more firmly the "snake of self" and we shall vow, come suffering come death, nothing shall ever again turn us from our course. Has the suffering, then, been in vain?

We have all read of "final perseverance,"—that mighty force which will carry the aspirant of Divinity across the threshold in the last great initiations, but to those of us who are beginners, that is a condition so far beyond us that we have difficulty in reaching out to it, even in imagination. There would seem to be a hidden significance in the phrase "final perseverance" which no beginner can expect to grasp, I should think, but of this I am sure,—that lofty state of conscious power must be the simple and direct result of unflagging perseverance in little, homely tasks; and if we but persevere in these, whether we see or whether we are "blinded by our tears"; if we keep even such feeble wills as we may possess, fixed and true; if we be "faithful in that which is least," can we not trust our Master to help us to be "faithful in that which is much"? Can we doubt the promises? Could he fail us, if only we *really* want him more than anything else in this or in any other life to come? Surely not. Often in thinking of our Goal; in trying to get the "feel," the "touch" of what it must be like, I repeat to myself a line (slightly altered and adapted to fill my own particular need) of a beautiful Elizabethan lyric which has very old and dear associations:

"Time stands still while gazing on His face."

To me, that is my Goal, and when I reach that state, not as a hope, but as a burning reality, then I shall know that I am Home at last; then I shall know that the Kingdom of Heaven has come.

BEGINNER.

# BRIHAD ARANYAKA UPANISHAD

## PART II. SECTIONS 1-3

### KSHATRIYA AND BRAHMAN

THE dramatic dialogue in the first of the three sections here translated illustrates a situation which occurs many times in the great Upanishads: the superiority of the Heart Doctrine which was in the possession of the Kshatriya kings, or Rajputs, as compared with the Eye Doctrine in the possession of the Brahmans. Two famous dramatic dialogues which come later in this Upanishad are illustrations of the same superiority. In all of them there is a spirit of fine irony, somewhat at the expense of the Brahmans, as, for example, the description of the young Brahman Shvetaketu, as "conceited, vain of his learning, and proud." So the word Dripta, which forms the first part of the Brahman's name in the present dialogue, means "arrogant"; "Arrogance, the son of Balaka," would be a fair rendering of his name. Further, he is called "learned" rather than "wise." So small touches are multiplied to give the dramatic fragment its atmosphere.

In conformity with this fine and gentle irony, the Brahman, when he comes to King Ajatashatru, does not wait until the king asks him a question, but at once volunteers to impart to him the ultimate wisdom, making use of a polite imperative, "Let me declare to thee the Eternal!" King Ajatashatru speaks as though he accepted the Brahman at his own high valuation, "A thousand cattle we give for teaching such as that!"

Then, when the Brahman names the spiritual Power in the sun as the Eternal, the king replies in effect, "Rest not thy claim to superior knowledge on that, for I know it already, and still more." And it is worth noting that, while in each sentence the Brahman gives only a mental statement, an expression of theoretical knowledge, the king not only responds that this is already known to him, but adds a description of the concrete spiritual fruit which is gained when that theoretical knowledge is transformed by action into realized wisdom.

A consistent symbolism runs through all the answers. We are, in fact, explicitly advised that the teaching is symbolic in the second section here translated, where we are told of the "inverted goblet" in which all glory is disposed, and on the rim of which seven Seers are seated. For the text of the Upanishad goes on to tell us that the inverted goblet is the head, while the seven Seers are the powers of perception whose organs are on the surface of the head, with interior powers corresponding to them, which we may identify as active centres in the brain. In the same spirit of interpreted symbolism the Commentary attributed to Shankara Acharya not only gives a spiritual



rendering for each of the king's responses, but adds what we might call correspondences in the inner nature of man, "in the heart," as he expresses it.

The powers named have the same mystical meaning as always in the great Upanishads, or, to speak more exactly, each has a multiple meaning. Thus the sun means at once the visible sun and the spiritual sun, the Logos; and in the visible sun a series of principles are recognized, beginning with the outer robe of the sun, which is the source of vital heat for living things upon the earth, and ascending to that higher corresponding power which nourishes the higher principles of our complex nature. Thus the sun is "of all beings the head and ruler"; and he who really knows the powers of the sun, and the spiritual powers of the Logos which they represent, becomes in truth "of all beings the head and ruler."

In the same way the moon is the symbol of a series of correlated powers. The moon, called King Soma, represents, first, a power which is concerned with vital functions, including the germination and growth of plants. Therefore it is said that he who rightly knows this power is nourished and sustained by food. But Soma is also the juice pressed from a plant esteemed as sacred, which induces psychical states of lucidity, and to which much of the Sama Veda is dedicated. Soma, the moon, stands for the psychical nature, both mental and emotional; a fitting symbol, because the moon, like the psychical nature, shines by borrowed light, and perpetually waxes and wanes, like the moods of the psychical nature.

Again, "progeny" or "offspring" has a series of meanings: first, the primary meaning of sons, indispensable in the Brahman system, because they perform the sacrifice to the shades of departed ancestors, whose welfare and happiness in the unseen world depend on the punctual and repeated offering of this sacrifice; a system which is in full force among the Brahmans at the present day, and on which their law of inheritance depends. But "sons" also mean future incarnations, which are the children of the present and past incarnations. Finally, as we shall see in a later section, the "child" is the true personality, who comes into being through the transmutation of the outer personality. In this transmutation a power described as "lightning" appears to play a part; therefore the wise king says, "Radiant becomes his progeny" who rightly knows this teaching.

The king's next response, regarding the spiritual power in "shining ether," that fine essence which is called Akasha, carries the same teaching a step farther. For "cattle" are the symbol of powers of perception and action, in this case spiritual powers. Therefore the king declares that he who rightly knows this power is rewarded by "offspring and cattle." The "child" grows and comes into the use of his powers; becoming a present immortal, he "does not depart from this world."

The wind is the symbol of the Great Breath, of which the power called Fohat is said to be the active manifestation. Therefore the king says that he who rightly knows this power, becomes victorious, invincible, conquering his foes.

Fire again is a multiple symbol: bodily fire, electrical fire, spiritual fire, with the highest form, divine fire, of which these three are aspects, and which contains them all. Of him who rightly knows this, the "progeny" also is victorious.

The same teaching is carried on in the response regarding the "waters" and the "secondary" form. The waters generally stand for the reflecting power through which manifestation and self-consciousness are brought into being. In the present case, the "secondary form" is, perhaps, the "subtile" body, whose nature and consciousness are described in another Upanishad. The "mirror" in the next response would seem to be a higher aspect of the same power.

By "the breath of the word that goes after him who goes," the Gargya may mean either a voice calling one who is departing, or the invocation of the shades of the departed, in the sacrifice offered by the son and heir. The Commentary explains it as the "breath of life," perhaps a power transmuted, or transferred, to the subtile body, in conformity with the general trend of the king's teaching.

In the king's next response, the "inseparable companion" seems to be the higher individuality, attained by him who has followed the path which the king has already indicated. But the higher individuality is not thereby isolated, "nor is his company separated from him."

The symbolism of the "shadow," of "the light and the shadow," occurs many times in the Upanishads. In general, the "shadow" is the vesture on any plane, while the "light" is the consciousness within, or belonging to, that vesture. In the larger cosmic sense, the light is the Logos, while the shadow is Nature, in and through which the Logos is manifested.

By "the spiritual power within oneself," the Brahman seems to mean no more than the outer, personal consciousness. This thought the king expands by adding the inner, higher Self.

Then comes the finely ironical climax of the story. The Brahman is silent. The king asks, "Only so much?" And the Brahman is compelled to answer, "Only so much!" He has come to the end of his knowledge, which at each step has been proved inadequate and incomplete.

Then, like the humble father of the young Brahman Shvetaketu, but unlike Shvetaketu himself, the Brahman asks the Rajput to accept him as a disciple. The Rajput accepts him, after reminding him, once more with fine irony, that this is "against the grain," quite contrary to the view of the Brahmans regarding their own superior wisdom.

In the strange episode that follows, the method of symbolism is continued. The man who is "asleep" appears to represent the common consciousness of mankind; as Paul the Initiate says, "It is high time to awake out of sleep." Two efforts are made to awake the sleeper. First, he is called by a name we have already met, "King Soma." This seems to mean the appeal of the mind to the mind; but a mental appeal, affecting the mind only, will not awake the sleeper. Then the king presses him with his hand, and he awakes; the meaning would seem to be that the touch of the Master is needed.

The teaching that follows, regarding the indrawing of the powers of perception and action, whether in sleep or in death, has already been given in "Prashna Upanishad," and, more completely, in "Mandukya Upanishad," which describes the ascending planes of consciousness from the physical, through the psychical, to the spiritual and divine. These ascending planes are traversed, in part at least, on three occasions: first, as we sleep each night, passing into the realm of dream, and then into dreamlessness; this last stage being hardly developed for the great majority of mankind, and therefore contributing almost no element to the personal memory; second, the passage of the soul through the same planes after death, the soul bringing back from the higher plane refreshment and vigour to begin a new life, but, as before, little definite memory; third, the conscious and victorious ascent of liberation, "from which he returns not." In each case, the first step is the withdrawal of the powers of perception and action from an outer to an inner vesture, but only in the last case is this vesture fully defined.

Something has already been said regarding the meaning of the second section here translated. The mysterious "child" appears to be the nascent spiritual man; the lower and the upper house are the body and the head, whose powers, or their counterpart, are to grow in the "child." The pillar, the power which supports the dwelling, is said by the Upanishad to be the life-breath; but this often means the "central life," the permanent life-power of the spiritual man, which puts forth successive incarnations as the spider puts forth the web, or as the small sparks come forth from the fire. This permanent spiritual power is the energizing force in the growth of the "child." The meaning of the cord is not clear. The Upanishad describes it as "what is eaten"; but what is eaten means, in a larger sense, what is experienced, or the Karma of the individual, which *Light on the Path* describes as a rope, passing from the infinite to the infinite, and at last rising from the shadow into the shine.

We are told that he who knows "holds back the seven half-brothers." The seven half-brothers appear to be the powers of the false personality, that is, the five senses, the mind, and the lower self-consciousness, through which the man identifies himself with his body. These powers, which draw on the treasure of the life-force, are the rivals of the powers of the "child"; they must be held back if he is to come into his inheritance.

In the passage which immediately follows, the underlying thought is the thread of connection between each power of the outer man, destined to be transferred in a more spiritual form to his "child," and a great spiritual power, to which the name of one of the traditional divinities is given, as Agni, Indra, and so on. They are the seven powers of the manifested Logos, and are here called "the seven imperishable beings." While the details of the description may seem fanciful, the underlying thought is quite clear: each power in man, the microcosm, has its source in a corresponding macrocosmic power. The food of spiritual experience fails not for him who thus knows.

The powers of the microcosm are further given the names of seven famous

Seers of the Rig Veda. The seven powers are the two eyes, two ears, two nostrils and the mouth, as the location of the sense of taste concerned in the eating of food. "Voice," the eighth, communes with the Eternal. This has a twofold meaning: first, the use of the voice in prayer and invocation; second, voice as representing the creative Logos, the formative Word, of which voice in man is the representative and derivative. These seven Seers are the Seven Rishis after whom the great northern constellation is named, thus once more suggesting the heavenly origin of the powers of man.

The third section translated is simpler; it considers the world and man under two aspects: that which has form and is therefore finite, and the formless spirit, which is eternal. Since spirit is formless, it can be defined only by negatives; by setting aside the limitations of the finite, as we do, when we say "infinite," and "immortal." Therefore the Upanishad substitutes for a definition the words "Not thus! Not thus!" or, more positively, "the Real of the real." The "form of this spiritual Power" seems to be a description of the rainbow colours which correspond to the spiritual forces; the lightning-flash is again the electrical power called Fohat.

The translation of these three sections follows.

# I

Driptabalaki of the Gargya clan was a learned man. To Ajatashatru, the Raja of Benares, he said, "Let me declare to thee the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "A thousand cattle we give for teaching such as that, so that folk run and cry, 'A king like Janaka is here!'"

Then the Gargya said, "That spiritual Power in the sun, him I reverence as the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "Nay, rest not thy teaching upon him! For already I reverence him as excellent, of all beings the head and ruler. He who thus reverences him, becomes excellent, of all beings the head and ruler."

Then the Gargya said, "That spiritual Power in the moon, him I reverence as the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "Nay, rest not thy teaching upon him! For already I reverence him as the great King Soma, wrapped in his pale robe. He who thus reverences him, day by day he is nourished and sustained, nor does his food fail."

Then the Gargya said, "That spiritual Power in the lightning, him I reverence as the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "Nay, rest not thy teaching upon him! For already I reverence him as the radiant. He who thus reverences him, becomes radiant; radiant, verily, becomes his progeny."

Then the Gargya said, "That spiritual Power in the shining ether, him I reverence as the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "Nay, rest not thy teaching upon him! For already I reverence him as the full, the unchanging. He who thus reverences

him, is filled with offspring and cattle, nor does his progeny depart from this world."

Then the Gargya said, "The spiritual Power that is in the breath of the wind, him I reverence as the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "Nay, rest not thy teaching upon him! For already I reverence him as the ruler, irresistible, the invincible host. He who thus reverences him, becomes victorious, invincible, conquering his foes."

Then the Gargya said, "The spiritual Power that is in fire, him I reverence as the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "Nay, rest not thy teaching upon him! For already I reverence him as the victor. He who thus reverences him becomes a victor; his progeny also is victorious."

Then the Gargya said, "The spiritual Power that is in the waters, him I reverence as the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "Nay, rest not thy teaching upon him! For already I reverence him as the secondary form. He who thus reverences him, attains to his secondary form, not to that which is not his secondary form. Thus the secondary form is born from him."

Then the Gargya said, "The spiritual Power that is in the mirror, him I reverence as the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "Nay, rest not thy teaching upon him! For already I reverence him as possessor of the rays. He who thus reverences him is endowed with rays; his progeny is endowed with rays. His rays outshine whomsoever he encounters."

Then the Gargya said, "This breath of the word that goes after him who goes, him I reverence as the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "Nay, rest not thy teaching upon him! For already I reverence him as the breath of life. He who thus reverences him, even in this world gains the full span of life, nor before the time does life depart from him."

Then the Gargya said, "The spiritual Power that is in the spaces, him I reverence as the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "Nay, rest not thy teaching upon him! For already I reverence him as the inseparable companion. He who thus reverences him, becomes possessed of the companion, nor is his company separated from him."

Then the Gargya said, "The spiritual Power that is formed of shadow, him I reverence as the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "Nay, rest not thy teaching upon him! For already I reverence him as death. He who thus reverences him, even in this world gains the full span of life, nor does death come to him before the time."

Then the Gargya said, "The spiritual Power that is in oneself, him I reverence as the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "Nay, rest not thy teaching upon him! For already I reverence him as endowed with the Self. He who thus reverences

him, endowed with the Self, verily, he becomes and his progeny is endowed with the Self."

Then the Gargya was silent.

Then Ajatashatru said, "Only so much?"

"Only so much," he replied.

He said, "Not with so much is it known!"

Then the Gargya said, "Let me come to thee as a disciple!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "It is against the grain that a Brahman should come to a Kshatriya, with the thought, 'He will declare to me the Eternal!' But I shall cause thee to know the greater wisdom!"

Taking him by the hand, he stood up. Then they two went to a man who was asleep. With these words they called upon him, "Great one in the pale robe, King Soma!" But he did not stand up.

Then pressing him with his hand, he caused him to awake, so that he stood up. Then Ajatashatru said, "When this one was thus asleep, this man who possesses knowledge, where was he then? Whence has he thus come?"

This also the Gargya did not understand.

Then Ajatashatru said, "When this one was thus asleep, this man who possesses knowledge, then by means of his knowledge drawing in the knowledge of these life-breaths, he rests in the shining ether which is in the heart within. When he thus withdraws them, then they say that the man sleeps. Then the life-breath is withdrawn, voice is withdrawn, vision is withdrawn, hearing is withdrawn, mind is withdrawn.

"When he thus moves in the realm of dreams, those worlds are his. Then he is as a great Raja, as a great Brahman, he penetrates the high and the low. And so, as a great Raja, taking his people with him, traverses his own country according to his desire, so he, verily, withdrawing the life-breaths within his own body, traverses these realms according to his desire.

"And so, when he enters dreamlessness, so that he beholds nothing outwardly, then the two-and-seventy thousand channels, which are called 'well-disposed,' which lead from the heart to the region about it, slipping out by these, he rests in the dwelling. Then as a prince, as a great Raja, as a great Brahman, when he attains to the consummation of joy, might rest, thus, verily, he rests.

"Then, as a web-wombed spider might come forth, spinning his thread, or as small sparks come forth from a fire, so from this Self come forth all life-breaths, all worlds, all bright powers, all beings. His secret significance is, 'the Real of the real.' The life-breaths are the real; of them he is the Real."

## II

"He, verily, who knows the child, with his lower house, with his upper house, with his pillar, with his cord, he holds back the seven hostile half-brothers." This which is the central life, verily, is the child; this (body) is his lower house; this (head) is his upper house; the life-breath is the pillar; what is eaten is

the cord. These seven imperishable beings wait upon him: these red lines that are in the eye, by them Rudra is correlated with him; these waters that are in the eye, by them Parjanya is correlated with him; the pupil of the eye, by this the Sun is correlated with him; the iris of the eye, by this Agni is correlated with him; the white of the eye, by this Indra is correlated with him; by the lower eyelash Earth is correlated with him; by the upper eyelash Heaven is correlated with him. Food fails not for him who thus knows.

Then there is this verse:

“An inverted goblet, base upward;  
In it all glory is disposed;  
Seven Seers are seated on the rim;  
Voice as eighth communes with the Eternal.”

“An inverted goblet, base upward”: this, verily, is the head, for it is an inverted goblet, base upward. “In it all glory is disposed”: the life-breaths, verily, are all glory; thus he names the life-breaths. “Seven Seers are seated on the rim”: the life-breaths are the seven Seers; thus he names the life-breaths. “Voice as eighth communes with the Eternal”: for voice as eighth is in communion with the Eternal.

These two (ears) are Gotama and Bharadvaja; this is Gotama, this is Bharadvaja. These two (eyes) are Vishvamitra and Jamadagni; this is Vishvamitra, this is Jamadagni. These two (nostrils) are Vashishta and Kashyapa; this is Vashishta, this is Kashyapa. Voice, verily, is Atri, for by the mouth food is eaten; because he eats, it is called Atri. He becomes an eater of all, for him all becomes food, who thus knows.

### III

There are two forms, verily, of the Eternal: the formed and the unformed; the mortal and the immortal; the set and the moving; the actual and the beyond.

This, then, is formed: whatever is other than the Great Breath and shining ether; this is the mortal, the set, the actual. Of it, of this formed, of this mortal, of this set, of this actual, the (sun) which gives warmth is the animating essence, for he is the animating essence of the actual.

And so the unformed, the Great Breath, shining ether, that which is the immortal, that which is the moving, that which is the beyond; of this unformed, of this immortal, of this moving, of this beyond, the animating essence is the spiritual Power in this circular disk, for this is the essence of the beyond. So far with regard to the bright powers.

And so with regard to oneself: whatever is other than the life, other than the shining ether in the inner Self, is the formed; this is the mortal, the set, the actual. Of it, of this formed, of this mortal, of this set, of this actual, the animating essence is the power of vision, for this is the animating essence of the actual.

And so the unformed, that which is the life, the shining ether in the inner Self, that which is the immortal, that which is the moving, that which is the beyond; of this unformed, of this immortal, of this moving, of this beyond, the animating essence is the spiritual Power which is in the right eye, for this is the essence of the beyond.

Of him, of this spiritual Power, the form is as a saffron robe, as shining white wool, as the purple beetle's covering, as a flame of fire, as a white lotus, as a sudden lightning-flash. As a sudden lightning-flash, verily, is the splendour of him who thus knows.

And so of this there is the definition: "Not thus! Not thus!" For nothing can go farther than this "Not thus!" And so the name that is given is "the Real of the real"; for the life-breaths are the real, and of them this is the Real.

C. J.

*(To be continued)*

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*A great soul will be strong to live, as well as to think.*—EMERSON.

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*Despise not thou a small thing, either for evil or for good; for a look may work thy ruin, or a word create thy wealth: and it is but the littleness of man that seeth no greatness in a trifle.*—TUPPER.



# ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

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TWO letters, giving impressions of the Convention, fell into the Recorder's hands. Clearly, they were destined for the "Screen"; they might have been written for the "Screen": so the Recorder defied all and sundry to snatch them from him. The first was written by Colonel Knoff of Norway; the second by Mr. Box of California. Colonel Knoff headed his: "Letter from a grateful and happy partaker in the Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society, April 30th, 1927." He writes:

"As one of the lucky and highly privileged members of The Theosophical Society—a member living far away from New York, but who was suddenly and most unexpectedly put in a position to be able to be present at the important and solemn meeting when The Theosophical Society, the representative of the Great Lodge (the assembly of the Holy Ones) had its Annual Convention at New York this year—I must write a few lines to you with my heartfelt thanks for what I have received of kindness, hospitality, and spiritual gifts at this, to me, most unique occasion.

"It was the first opportunity I ever had to attend a Convention, and I came, therefore, both with some excitement and expectation. And I was not disappointed. When looking back on the deliberations and activities of the Convention, I notice especially the following most important facts:

(1). "There were assembled at this Convention a great number of delegates, representing Branches far off from New York,—perhaps a greater number than ever before. This was certainly not an accident, but the result of distinct existing causes.

(2). "Among those present at the Convention, a distinctive spirit of devotion, fervour, and harmony, was plainly notable.

(3). "Faith, happiness, and peace, were mirrored in the visage of all attendants, and the Spirit of true Brotherhood was clearly manifested.

(4). "The presence of an unseen spiritual force was—as it seems to me—evident, and it must have been felt to a certain degree by all. It was a force from the Lodge, which the Convention was able to *take* and *use* in its deliberations, and which was the source of its great success, and of all the blessings bestowed, first on all those present, and next on the different Branches of the Society through their delegates at the Convention.

"It seems to me that the Convention this year must have been perhaps the most successful one in the history of The Theosophical Society, because of the attitude of the members assembled in Convention, which made it possible for the Lodge to inspire the Convention with a great spiritual force and ability. This was made possible because of the unique high qualities displayed by the Convention as such, viz., devotion, fervour, harmony, faith, and true

brotherly feelings, accompanied by their inseparable adjuncts, 'happiness and peace.'

"This is most promising for the future of the Society;—and it must, in truth, inspire the Branches and its members with an ever increasing spiritual aspiration and love for the work. It means putting all our strength and abilities in the work for others, always acting on *right motives and principles*.

"Therefore, let us test our motives and principles *over and over again*, and see to it that they are conformable to the motives and principles of Divinity. This will help us to do that which is really good, and we shall avoid doing work that is more or less injurious to others, and to ourselves as well.

"As I feel sure that the qualities of their motives and working principles will be anxiously examined into in the future by all members of The Theosophical Society, may I suggest that Branches should send questions to the Headquarters about any case that seems doubtful to them concerning this most important matter.

"With renewed thanks for all, I am

Fraternally yours,

THS. KNOFF."

The second letter, from Mr. Box, was addressed to a friend at home. It reads:

"... As to the Convention: you will remember what you said beforehand, of a 'silent, determined pressing outward of something,' that you felt. This was more than realized.

"Yet, to me, as I now look back on the happening, and sense directly again, however little, its depths of force and meaning, what you said does not give quite the measure of what all who are here showed signs of feeling. You intuitively anticipated much as you drew nearer to it in time, but with the outer event and those whom we know so well personally, naturally in your mind, let me say that you caught no more than half, perhaps less than that, of its inner and real significance. Neither did I. Its fulness will come to you later, if it has not done so already, as it must come to all of us; to each in his own way and measure, in the light of what he is, and from where he stands. It is very necessary to remember this, when reading the Convention report, but especially when you read my interpretation, or you may miss its point for you, among so many intended for each.

"Yes, it was a silent determined pressing outward, but only in so far as that which would gather us in, must go out to meet us. As within us you know the pulsative streams of life flow from out the heart in cycles measured by moments, to nourish and bathe and cleanse each bodily cell, and to transform its elements into the food we eat, before returning to its source again; so from the greater heart of life itself, in periods of longer time, its streams flow out to nourish and cleanse our inner bodies, by still more subtle cell-transformations, thus giving to each the upward trend he needs; thus bringing us, consciously or unconsciously, nearer and nearer to life's source.

"And it was something like that in Convention,—its benignant streams of life and light, so flowing, so nourishing, so transforming, so bringing us each nearer to the source from whence these sprang, to the measured extent of each one's passion or yearning, or as he willed it so.

"It was even more than this. We are a little past midway in the Movement's century cycle, as you have learned, and in so far as I may be able to sense what is happening, and what has happened, it is, or should be in each of us, the point of outer saturation, where the purely personal longings or belongings can no longer be fed; where the Lodge life and force we have drawn so plentifully upon must no longer be wasted; where the real disciple, the Soul as yet unborn within us, must come out bodily and self-consciously into outer life, ere it become too late for him to do so. There is and will ever be, of course, infinitely more in store for the world and ourselves, that the Masters will give; but the truths they have taught us, the light and love and care so lavishly poured out upon us this far, must from now on be personally proven if we, ourselves, are to continue in the Work, and go on to the future.

"Nor need thoughts of death deter us. Should that come—from what was said by those who have never failed us, however much and often we may have pained and betrayed them by our delayed or belated responses—we can go right on unscathed, freed from death's alluring after-states, while working with as well as for the Masters,—if we will keep right on working inwardly and outwardly for this, until death comes.

"The aim in part seems to be, therefore, not so much to diffuse the Lodge life and energy, and our share of these, but to concentrate them more deeply upon the Movement's foundations; so that whatever their true form is or may become, will remain impregnable till the century's end,—impregnable as each one of ourselves must very soon be, if we are to come to real life, within or out of the body.

"Yet the marvel of it all is, we shall be for ever surrounded with every necessary thing; we have but to reach out and to take it: the vision and understanding, will and courage, faith and poise, with the incentives to love and sacrifice so necessary at this point. Or, if what we possess of these have not been heated enough, there is the 'fire from heaven' to set them ablaze. But do not be misled by former feelings; these are not the mild dynamics we have been in the habit of using. There must be a faith of fire, though not yet the kind that we shall eventually use when called upon to remove or disintegrate mountains (at least no one asked it from us; and I was grateful for this, because I never cou'd feel or understand that kind of faith,—though we were all indrawn nearer to it, none the less). It is enough now, for us, that we succeed in blasting away the strata of our own lower natures, or otherwise pulverize them to the ground.

"So for the other dynamic virtues: the vision with which to look ever more deeply into life and ourselves, as we go along; with the ability, the actual common sense to be developed along with our intuitions, sanely to use what-

ever we may find embedded there. From what was said, we shall need this most; while the more freely and fully we give from ourselves, the more we shall want and find within from which to give, with the love that must be ours to see others by. All this we felt as with piercing insight it bore down and belaboured our follies and foibles, again and again, in admonition after admonition by those who know us, till our bodies, as one speaker put it, were sore; until we felt *their* need and ours.

"Moreover, in nature's harmonious and ordered course of events and things, material or divine, we must always build from below, tier above tier, as its life rays ascend; so that each created form in rising must get its support from the one below it. I can even see this from my room window, working itself out architecturally in the pyramidal buildings in course of construction, rising higher and higher, story upon story in ordered sequence, but upon solid foundations, since they need to endure.

"And this would seem true of our Movement, in its construction this far by those who have so long stood by us and have brought us to where we are, and who were as grateful as the Masters themselves for each smallest gift of labour or love we gave them the while. Ready for work elsewhere, higher and nearer to the Masters, yet must they remain bound to the foundations—until our inner awakening frees them.

"I will tell you more when I see you.—WALTER H. BOX."

"And what did you think of the Convention?" someone asked the Philosopher.

"More than I am going to tell you!" was the reply. "But one of my delights, as I look back at it, is to realize how supreme an artist is the Spirit of man, when men work in unison,—art unpremeditated, spontaneous, utterly transcending human artifice, or the genius of the most gifted individual. In that sense it was a marvellous performance. No one 'pulled the wires'; the only advice given to anyone was, 'say what is on your heart to say': and one chord after another was struck, contrasting perfectly,—astonishing differences in style, in instrument, in method, blending and interblending, like the moving colours of a sky at dawn,—a great harmony. It was unpremeditated in any ordinary way; but back of it all was a prayer, and a sacrifice, linking the Spirit of man—when men work in unison—with Its creatures in the flesh; holding our many hearts in the divine heart of the Lodge; helping to make the sounding-board, without which, as Mr. Box suggested, the spoken word is meaningless. We do not think, perhaps, of a sounding-board as a state of expectation, which evokes and almost compels response, but so it is, especially when it consists of ears that thirst for echoes of Israfil."

"How many people do you expect to understand what you are talking about?" the Recorder questioned, perhaps somewhat tartly. "Do you realize that some will imagine you mean spooks or spirits or Adepts, using the speakers at Convention as automata?"

The Philosopher laughed. "May spooks or spirits or Adepts take posses-

sion of them then; though Heaven help them if it be Adepts, who can wring necks just as easily as save souls. Still, on general principles, I deny that there are any idiots among the readers of the *QUARTERLY*."

"Well,—among those who don't read it, there are idiots enough and to spare," the Historian commented, rather wearily. Then, by way of explanation: "My attention has been called to a recent and peculiarly vicious attack on W. Q. Judge,—absolutely uncalled for, and quite obviously written with the same old degrading motive: to show the writer's superior wisdom, superior honesty, superior self. Poor Judge! The saying is certainly true, that a man may be known by the enemies, at least as much as by the friends he makes; and when his enemies delight to slander him after he is dead, their character can be inferred from that fact alone. The truth is that when Judge's simplicity and humility came into contact with the vanity and self-seeking of some of those people at Avenue Road, after the death of H. P. B., it was more than they could tolerate. It filled them with suspicion, and with a deep and abiding resentment. His one purpose, his one idea, was to help them. When they attacked him, his concern for them only increased. They were blind, and he knew it; they were disloyal to H. P. B., and he knew that; they were jealous of his position in the Movement, and, while that amazed him (for he found his burden heavy enough), their littleness only made his bigness that much bigger. Friends of his who were in London during his visit there in July, 1894, when the so-called Judicial Committee of the T. S. was in session (its sole purpose being to condemn Judge officially in the eyes of the Society), saw and will never forget his patience with those people, his compassion, his one-pointed devotion to the future of the Masters' Work, regardless of his own feelings and interests. In long private conversations, he explained and again explained, with unfailing sympathy and gentleness, the laws governing the transmission of messages from Masters,—knowing full well that not one of those deluded people had the slightest right to an explanation, if only because they had constituted themselves his judges, and, worse than that, had already condemned him. With minds made up, and with ill-concealed hostility, they grasped at everything he said as proof of their own rightness,—twisting everything, distorting everything, to fit into the pattern of their prejudgment. And still he laboured with them, hoping against hope that his own integrity would arouse some spark of response. But 'we find what we seek'; and they found what they sought. Like H. P. B., he was utterly beyond them. The inner, silent splendour of the man, merely added to their distrust.

"Their latest outbreak, written in the spirit characteristic of all the original group, is an article published in an English magazine which describes itself as 'occult' (presumably because it advertizes astrologers, mediums, and 'talismanic jewellery'). It appears that a controversy has been carried on concerning the revision of *The Secret Doctrine* after H. P. B.'s death. The article in question, while dealing with this controversy, goes out of the way to attack Mr. Judge, basing the attack upon a conversation the author had

with him in London, in July, 1894. He speaks of himself and Judge as having been 'intimate friends,'—which, for those who knew the two men, is sufficient to account for everything that follows. Not in a hundred incarnations could that strange combination of conceit and venomous dust, have become one of Judge's intimate friends. In terms of spiritual size and age, there was a great gulf between them,—the gulf between life and death.

"The writer of the article states that when, in London, he questioned Judge 'face to face,'—

"His private defence to me was, that his forging of the numerous "Mahatmic" messages on letters written by himself, after H. P. B.'s decease, to devoted and prominent members of the Society, in the familiar red and blue chalk scripts . . . was permissible, in order to "economize power," provided that the "messages" had first been psychically received. He also more than hinted that it was entirely in keeping with precedent, and that this was his authority for what he had done."

"From the writer's own words alone, it should be evident to what lengths distortion is carried. 'His private defence to me was, that his forging of the numerous "Mahatmic" messages,' etc. It is not said: 'Judge confessed to me that he had forged those messages,' for that would have been a downright lie; and, so far as possible, the writer is careful of his words,—especially of the word 'forge,' which is used so as to convey the impression to an unenlightened reader that *in effect* Mr. Judge confessed to something which was the exact opposite of Mr. Judge's statement and intention. In his own opinion, we must assume, the writer of that article did not violate the 'letter' of common honesty; but heaven defend the rest of us from 'honesty' of that kind! We must know in any case what to think of those who use words with that sort of care, and who try to murder a dead man's honour by insinuation.

"It so happens that Judge gave the true account of this conversation within a few hours after its occurrence, saying that he had done his utmost to help this misguided individual to see the truth, but had encountered a mind full of suspicion, which had already been poisoned, and which was incapable of 'seeing anything straight.' The man with whom he had talked had treated him, Judge added, on a 'man to man' basis (and for those who know, the 'intimate friend' delusion, tells the whole story!).

"All that is needed is to read the version of the interview which I have quoted—which is superficially in agreement with Judge's account of it—but to read it with these facts in mind: Judge had high standing in the Lodge; his appraiser had none. Judge could not base his explanation on that fact, as the person to whom he was speaking had no recognition of it whatever. Judge's Master, and certain other members of the Lodge, were able to exercise their powers through him, because of the perfection of his training, which made him at times a far greater person than he was normally (this does not mean mediumship, but the reverse). There are people alive to-day who could bear witness to this, and who have borne witness often.

"But the article does not rest content with trying to prove that Judge admitted his guilt. It adduces testimony,—first, that of an unnamed medium. 'Shortly after Judge's decease,' it says, 'one of his two chief mediums came to London to see me privately. In a four hours' interview she went with painful minuteness into every detail of how it had all been done . . .'

"Some of us could name half a dozen women who claimed, *after his death*, to have been Judge's mediums; but we had heard Judge, before his death, characterize their pretensions and absurdities often enough, in his patient though humorous way, to know who and what they were. The author of this attack on Judge, while repudiating her 'message,' accepted his visitor's credentials as one of Judge's 'two chief mediums,' with the interested alacrity which alone could account for 'a four hours' interview.' Truly, the very wise in their own estimation are always the most credulous,—especially when their chief desire is to demonstrate their wisdom. I am confident that if someone were really to forge messages from Masters, containing crude misstatements, and were to pretend that these had been found among Judge's papers, his enemies would accept them with unquestioning delight as final proof of his iniquity.

"The testimony next and last adduced is presented as follows:

"'Subsequently another old friend who had been in Lansdowne Road and Avenue Road with us, and had gone to the U. S. A. to work under Judge, and who had helped him in the forging of these messages, came to London and owned up to me.'

"I suspect this 'witness' is safely dead, and can therefore no longer deny what is attributed to him,—though, on second thoughts, it would not surprise me greatly if the somewhat irresponsible Irishman I have in mind—and the poor man is dead—had deliberately 'made a fool of' his former associate, whose self-satisfaction and utter lack of humour had so often irritated him years before in London. It would have been very wrong; but I have known him to argue that when a man has proved himself a hopeless idiot, the only thing to do is to confirm him in his folly. In any case, he thoroughly enjoyed doing it,—that I know.

"Seriously to discuss such allegations as 'evidence,' however, would be folly almost as great as the making of them. Judge's reputation is founded upon a rock. 'By their fruits ye shall know them,' and twenty-four completed volumes of the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, from which no one has ever drawn a cent of profit—contributors included—and all of which are due to his initial impulse, would show, if nothing else did, the quality of the man whom so many of us love and revere, and to whom we owe an endless debt of gratitude."

# LETTERS TO STUDENTS

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March 17th, 1907.

DEAR ———

. . . I shall be very glad to correspond with you, and to answer such questions as you may care to ask.

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We grow through pain and suffering. These are the most potent instruments which the soul uses for our development, and we are wise if we learn to accept such measure of these as may be meted out to us, with the proper spirit of resignation and acceptance, *thinking of them as opportunities*, and not as afflictions to be suffered and overcome.

One thought I should like to give you. There are no limits to this Path. No one has ever exhausted its possibilities. The more we progress the further ahead it reaches, until the vista is lost in the realms of spirit. The future is entirely in our own hands, and we have unlimited possibilities of progress before us, and may accomplish our destiny as fast or as slowly as we please.

Another point is this. We are very apt to say that the conditions of our life are not suitable for spiritual progress; we will do the best we can now, but we must wait until our circumstances are more favourable before we accomplish very much. This is an error. We shall never have better conditions; and if we are not strong enough to progress now, in these, we shall have to incarnate in similar or harder conditions until we conquer them. In other words, now is our opportunity.

I suggest that you give a regular time each day to your studies . . . and that you also read a portion of one of the devotional books every day. It is wise to have one of these on your dressing table, and to read a paragraph or two the first thing on rising, and the last thing on going to bed.

I am entirely at your service, and shall be very glad to hear from you.

Fraternally yours,  
C. A. GRISCOM.

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DEAR ———

April 14th, 1907.

I have your letter and am glad to hear from you.

I do not think that it will seriously affect your habit of study to change from evening to morning. You have not been at it long enough for the habit to have much power, and there are certain advantages in doing this kind of work in the morning which will more than compensate.



For instance, we are fresher and come to the work with the invigoration of sleep and rest. Then, and this is most important, we start the day right. We begin the day by filling our minds and hearts full of high and good thoughts, which are bound to have a potent influence upon us during the day. We shall be much less likely to have evil thoughts, to give way to temptation, to surrender to anger, or envy, or any other bad influence. So I should rather favour your changing your hour for study to a morning hour.

I think you will find *Letters That Have Helped Me* a valuable devotional book. It was written by Mr. Judge, who understood just the needs which we modern people have. I suggest that you get it. Otherwise I think you are well supplied.

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

May 26th, 1907.

DEAR ———

I was very glad to get your letter of the 21st of May, and I trust you will write to me whenever you feel the impulse to do so.

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. . . I should try to keep all my studies very practical in character; should try to see how everything relates to my life, my daily life; for that, after all, is the most important thing. If we live in accord with the laws of the spiritual world, we may be confident that we shall make no bad mistake in either our action or our learning.

With kindest regards, I am,

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

July 5th, 1907.

DEAR ———

I have your letter of July 2nd, and the long one of previous date, but I have been so busy that I did not have time to reply sooner.

You must not think the delay was because you did not ask the proper kind of questions. . . . I found your letter interesting and I read it with pleasure, and I agree with your reflections upon the several points you touch on. There is a terrible amount of selfishness in the world, and it is against this that the great fight must be fought. At first, the best way of helping in this fight is to conquer the selfishness in our own natures: we all have plenty of it.

I should certainly advise you to study some of the regular theosophical

books, for we must have a fair acquaintance with the philosophy, and the only way in which this can be secured is by study. A basis of knowledge of this kind is necessary.

I have noted with interest the thoughts you jotted down one morning. I should imagine that your mind must be fairly well saturated with the fundamental ideas of the *Secret Doctrine*, as your thoughts are an elaboration thereon. It is not a bad plan to keep a little record of these thoughts, and to go over them from time to time. It shows us how we grow in mental capacity, and how our comprehension of the philosophy gets gradually bigger and wider.

You must pardon a rather disconnected letter, but I have been interrupted several times, and am still much occupied.

Faternally,

C. A. GRISCOM.

September 19th, 1907.

DEAR ———

. . . I think it an excellent plan to take for your subject something you feel you know very little about. It is said we learn more by teaching others than in any other way, and this would be an illustration of that idea.

I can also fully approve of your reliance upon the law of love, which, after all, must be the foundation stone of the universe. Unfortunately it is an expression about which there is much said that is silly and sentimental and worse, so we fight shy of it a good deal more than we should, if it had not been so much misused. I fancy that you are quite right in thinking that any one who could always express some measure of this great law in his life, would travel very rapidly on the straight and narrow path to immortal life. As a guide to conduct it would be admirable, and would keep us from most of the pitfalls into which we stumble from day to day and hour to hour. For instance, it would prevent our ever saying an unkind word of another. . . .

I trust that you continue to read your devotional books regularly and thoughtfully. They contain most of the secrets of life—as we gradually learn, as we come to understand them.

I am always glad to hear from you.

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

November 9th, 1907.

DEAR ———

I was very glad to get your letter of October 27th, and to hear of the spirit which animates the members in ———. It is such a spirit which wins

recognition, and which has more actual influence in the world than great eloquence or remarkable intellectual gifts. It is, in its degree, the spirit of Christ, or of any of the other great Teachers of humanity.

I believe that we all underrate this. We are so interested in the big questions of the world, in the application of our principles to moral and intellectual and religious matters, which are fascinating subjects for study and for contemplation, that we neglect, to a certain extent, the much more important application of our philosophy to our daily lives and conduct. Yet it is just here that we can all be teachers of enduring power. Few of us are able to preach great sermons by word of mouth, but the humblest and most ignorant among us can and should preach great sermons by example. The world does not need more books and more knowledge; it needs more simple piety, more personal devotion, more individual holiness, more kindness and charity of mind and speech.

Here then is our chance. Let a large part of the time we can give to the work be expended in learning how we may become better men and women, how we may let our light shine that our Father in Heaven may be glorified, how we may *live* Theosophy, rather than how we shall teach it. Our lives will teach it soon enough. If we look back over history and pick out the great saints, men who founded famous religious institutions, and whose influence for good is still a valuable part of the world's heritage, we shall find that they got their power and influence, not from gifts of mind and speech, but because they were personally holy; they were consecrated to the Higher Life, and no one came into contact with them without being the better for it, and no one reads of their simple lives, after hundreds of years have passed, without being elevated and sustained.

It has always seemed to me that one of the most inspiring things about our Movement is this thought of the absolutely unlimited opportunity which we, each one of us has. We may be poor, we may be old and ill, we may be uneducated, we may be unable to talk or write, we may by circumstances be unable to take any active part in the outer work; but nothing but our own wills can shut us off from the true field of theosophical labour, and that is the work which we may accomplish upon our own natures.

After all, the final standard of success for The Theosophical Society is not how many members we have, not how many books we print, not the circulation of our magazines nor the number of lectures delivered; it is the number of recruits which the Movement furnishes the Lodge. If the Movement succeed in this direction, it cannot help but succeed in everything else for which it was founded.

So I nearly always emphasize the personal aspect of Theosophy, because I believe it to be the most important of all, and I hope that you will also throw your influence on this side of the work.

With kindest regards, as always,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

January 12th, 1908.

DEAR ———

I have read your letter of the 31st with much pleasure, and I am obliged to you for writing to me so fully.

The subject of cycles is a fascinating one, and I think you do well to start early and to take a long time over your article. The best thing in our literature on the subject is a paper which Mr. Judge wrote, and read at one of the Conventions held many years ago, I think at Chicago, probably in the early nineties. It is possible that your Branch has this in its library, but not very probable. . . .

What you say about Bruno interested me very much. Doubtless you know that the *Bhagavad Gita* was a book which Emerson always kept on his table, and is said to have read daily. Certainly its influence is plain in all his writing.

Just a word with respect to faults. It is said that the best way to get rid of our faults is not to be thinking of them continually, but, on the contrary, to keep our minds full of the opposite virtue, so that we do not think of the fault at all. For instance, if we are habitually impatient, do not think of impatience and that you must stop being impatient, and so forth; but think of *patience*, what a fine quality it is, how to be patient, how to develop a fund of it in your nature. In other words, one is a positive and creative way of doing it, and the other is the negative way. The positive way is always best.

The thought you mention as being helpful, "Let the Warrior fight for thee," is from *Light on the Path*, which I think, sometimes, I like the best of all the devotional books. It has the advantage of having been written quite recently, while others are ages old. Of course they deal with the fundamental problems of human nature, which are always young, always up to date, as the saying is; but, even so, I find more that appeals to me, and that fits my actual life and environment, in *Light on the Path*, than in any of them.

In reply to your question about the italicized portions of the quotation from the *Book of Dzyan*, I have always been given to understand that it *was* done to draw special attention to them. This was a particularly favourite practice with H. P. B., who would hide some very important key to a whole section of one of her books in a little, obscure footnote, and then italicize the footnote, so that the wary would understand that it was very important.

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With kindest regards, and best wishes for the New Year and for your success in your studies, I am,

Sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM.

# T·S·ACTIVITIES

## REPORT OF THE ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

### *Morning Session*

The Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society was called to order at 64 Washington Mews, New York, on the morning of Saturday, April 30th, 1927, at 10:30. As Chairman of the Executive Committee, Mr. Charles Johnston asked that temporary organization be effected, and, on motion, he was elected as Temporary Chairman of the Convention; Miss Isabel E. Perkins as Temporary Secretary, and Miss Julia Chickering as Temporary Assistant Secretary. It was voted that a Committee on Credentials should be appointed by the Chair, with instructions to report as soon as practicable. The Committee appointed was: Professor Henry Bedinger Mitchell, Treasurer T. S.; Miss 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 always the privilege and the joy of the Temporary Chairman to welcome the delegates and members to the Convention. It ought to be, and it is, for all of us, a time of great happiness. We get a realization of universal brotherhood, of fellowship, that we have not the opportunity to feel except at these Conventions. It should be an occasion for happiness, and a great deal more. It should be an occasion for the renewal of our courage, our valour, for the enlightening of our understanding, for a resolution for the work of the future.

Two years ago we were congratulated on our fiftieth birthday. Let us not leave the matter there. This is our fifty-second birthday, and we should remember it with this purpose: there are still, until the end of the hundred year period, forty-eight years to run, and we can only adequately work during those forty-eight years if we renew our determination to carry on the work through every day of every year. It might be an excellent thing for every one of us to consider that each one of us shall, during the next forty-eight years, put in three hundred and sixty-five days and a quarter of theosophical work, and then each one of us, in 1975, will begin with the new Messenger, full of enthusiasm, full of vigour and determination for the coming centuries. That will be in effect what will happen, and we shall do well to realize it and to hearten ourselves to that effort from this very present moment. Therefore, renewed determination—such determination as was in the heart of Madame Blavatsky and of Judge, and such as was in the hearts of their Masters at the beginning of the Movement—should begin each new cycle and each new year and new day of each new year. The resolution should be renewed day by day, hour by hour, year by year. If we have that steady resolution, then we shall carry the Movement forward to 1975, and shall begin again, with the new Messenger, in our everlasting task, which is a great and terrible toil, but should be for each one of us an immense and ever-increasing delight.

I think the Committee is now ready to report.

## REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS

PROFESSOR MITCHELL: The Committee on Credentials begs to report that it has received and examined the credentials submitted, and finds that there are represented here to-day, eighteen Branches, entitled to cast one hundred and six votes. The Branches thus represented are:

Arvika, Arvika, Sweden	Newcastle, Newcastle-on-Tyne, England
Aussig, Aussig, Czecho-Slovakia	New York, New York, N. Y.
Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio	Norfolk, Norfolk, England
Gateshead, Gateshead, England	Oslo, Oslo, Norway
Hope, Providence, Rhode Island	Pacific, Los Angeles, California
Indianapolis, Indianapolis, Indiana	Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Jehoshua, Sanfernando, Venezuela	Toronto, Toronto, Canada
Krishna, South Shields, England	Venezuela, Caracas, Venezuela
Middletown, Middletown, Ohio	Virya, Denver, Colorado
Whitley Bay, Whitley Bay, England	

MR. JOHNSTON: The report of the Committee on Credentials in every way should fill us with joy. It is rarely that we have a Convention so widely represented by delegates in person—from Norway to California and from North America to South America.

The acceptance of the Report of the Committee on Credentials was moved, seconded and voted. Professor Mitchell, the President of the New York Branch, was nominated and elected as Permanent Chairman. He took the Chair, and asked first for a motion of thanks to the Temporary Chairman, which was unanimously voted.

## ADDRESS OF THE PERMANENT CHAIRMAN

THE CHAIRMAN: It is many years since you first conferred on me the privilege, which again is mine through your gift, of presiding at our Convention. Each year that privilege has become dearer to me, and more valued, as I have learned to see more of what it includes; and not least dear is the opportunity to repeat the welcome, which Mr. Johnston has just voiced, and to express something of the happiness which we all feel as we meet and greet each other.

It is significant of the source of true happiness—of a happiness of soul, in which all we are, as men, can share—that as we assemble for the work and duties with which we are charged, our first experience should be this warming and gladdening of the heart, through the welcome which we meet here from our comrades. It is to some of us, in whom memory unites the present and the past, not only the welcome of our visible fellows, but also a greeting from our predecessors, from our great living dead, through whom this Movement comes to us—the welcome of those who have laboured, age after age, as it is now our turn to labour, to carry forward the Theosophical Movement,—the welcome of war-worn veterans to old comrades and to new recruits. There may be even those who feel, vibrant within that silent greeting and salute, living in it, yet transcending it, and speaking with its own voice when all else is still, a welcome from those great Elder Brothers of mankind, the Masters, at whose bidding H. P. B. told us this Society was founded, and whom some of us seek to serve.

It is, as I said, significant of the source of happiness, that we should thus find it in the pathway of our work, but we should be belying that very significance were we to dwell too long upon it. We are here, not for our personal pleasure, not for the happiness that we have in seeing and speaking to one another again, but to carry forward the Movement; and it is to that we turn now,—the business of our Convention.

That business is a greater thing than the formal routine which will occupy a portion of our time. We shall elect officers for the Society, as we have elected officers for the Convention; and

\* Received after Convention.

perhaps whether we elected them or not would make very little difference. They would continue to work for the Society just the same, whether in or out of office. We could not prevent their doing all that in them lay for the cause of Theosophy. We shall hear their reports, and be interested and perhaps inspired by them; yet it may be that it would not greatly matter whether those reports were made or not. I am sure that the Treasurer's report will tell us nothing new. It will show us operating on our usual annual deficit, subsisting now, as in the past, not upon our dues but upon gifts of love. You already know what most of the routine business will be.

But that is only a small part of the real business of the Convention. There is something far greater than that, far more important and far more difficult, with which we are charged, and which will demand our most earnest thought. How are we to fulfil the responsibility with which we are entrusted? How are we, the delegates and members of the Society, upon whom the responsibility rests, to carry the Movement forward during the next forty-eight years? This is the question which we meet here to face, and to answer it we shall need all the wisdom and light we can command.

We shall need understanding. We shall need to bring to mind what the Society is, and the aims for which it was founded. I need not remind you, however, more than by that word, of what you all know. You know the Society's Constitution, its By-Laws, its declarations and its principles. You know that it is an open platform, no more committed to what we call Theosophy or to the writings of H. P. B., and Judge, and others of our members, than it is to Buddhism or the Zend-Avesta, to Catholic or Protestant Christianity, to Rosicrucian alchemy or to modern science. It can have no dogmas, no creed, nor can anyone commit it, in matters of opinion and belief, so as to limit the freedom of its members to seek truth where they will, and to follow it, wheresoever it may lead them. Understanding this, it rests upon us to preserve and to maintain it,—to keep the Society wholly free, as free as truth itself, open to all men of good will, inviting and welcoming to its membership all those who, "seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the path to tread in this."

Often, in seeking to explain the character of the Society, it has been likened to the central room or hall of a great library, from which open many other rooms each devoted to a special department of human knowledge and endeavour. Samples, illustrative treatises of what these special rooms contain, are spread upon the tables in the central hall, so that the relation they bear to one another is made clear, and so, also, that all, who wish to do so, may examine them and follow further whatever interest they may have. It is an inadequate and imperfect analogy, for the Society really does much more than this; but it at least suggests its open platform, its freedom, and the breadth of the invitation it extends.

We are, as I have said, bound to preserve this free character of the Society; and as no one could expect all those who use and enjoy a library, to feel personally responsible for its maintenance, or for the carrying out of the purposes of its founders, so we must be on our guard against any tacit assumption that the duty of all members is the same, or that we should all approach the Society's problems from the same point of view. That is not possible; and were it possible, it would defeat our end. But as the Society has something to offer to all who seek truth, as each of its members finds in it something that he values, so each has something to give,—his own contribution to make, his own part to play in carrying the Movement forward, even though it be an unconscious part, and his gift be made in ignorance that it is a gift,—even though he may not understand what is meant by the Movement, and be interested only in a single facet of its work. Let us think, for a moment, of what our newest members have to give, and of what may rightly be asked of them.

Let us imagine a member who knows no more of the Society than what he has gathered from a chance number of the *QUARTERLY* (and later from the Constitution and By-Laws). Let us suppose he picked up a back volume of the magazine, and read one of Mr. Griscom's articles, such as that on "Vanity," recognizing in it a picture of the way in which one side of his mind reached out for approbation, and his thought tended to shift the scenery of circumstance until he stood forth in the most favourable light. We may assume that this interested and impressed him, as a line of inquiry well worth following further, and that, on the strength of this interest in personal psychology, he wrote to the Secretary T. S., and joined the Society

when he saw how broad were its invitation and platform. What can be asked of one who knows no more of the Movement than this? Has he a gift to give, a part to play in carrying the Movement forward?

Yes, a great gift, if his interest be sincere, and if he have the honesty, courage, and consistency to be true to his own truth. He, as a new member, heretofore unidentified with the Society, can do for it what older members cannot do in the same way. He can bear impartial testimony to what he has found. He has found something that interested him, something that appealed to him as sane and true, something that helped him to clearer self-understanding. Let him say so. Let him speak of it, as he will speak of it, if he be frank, to his friends; and immediately this first-hand evidence of his own experience will tend to correct misapprehensions regarding the Society and its work. To-day Theosophy is widely misapprehended throughout the world. The name has been travestied and prostituted; and the world has not thought to distinguish between the counterfeit and the real. But there is no member of the Society, no matter how ignorant of its history he may be, who has not found in it what his own experience proves to him to be genuine and true, and by bearing testimony to this he aids it and its work in the world.

But that is only a part of the gift that he may make,—the service which he may render. We give to the Movement by responding to it, by being true to the truth that we find and recognize in it, by being true to our own truth.

Let us stop and ask ourselves again what is the significance of the fact that the Society has no dogmas, no creed, no belief to enforce upon others; that those of us who have studied Theosophy longest are the most positive in our assertions that it can be found in all religions, in all forms of belief, in all systems of thought. What is implied in our motto: "There is no religion higher than Truth"? Surely one implication is this: that every man can follow and serve Theosophy as he follows and serves his own truth, the truth of his own ideal; in being true to that he is being true to Theosophy. Theosophy lives in his truth as it lives in all truth, and in serving his own vision of it he is serving the Movement. Everyone, every member, has his own contribution, and his own kind of contribution, to make to the work,—and we need the contributions of all.

But let us make no mistake: I am not saying that because all can contribute, and because the Society must ask and depend upon such contributions from all its members,—I am not saying that therefore it asks little from each. It does not. It asks a gift that is great. Truth—courage—consistency—the will to press forward in obedience to his own vision of what is right; the honesty, the courage and the consistency to base his actions on his own ideal,—these are what are asked even of the newest member; and they are not small things, but very great. Yet the Society has a right to ask them, and, in asking them, its free character is in no way curtailed or impaired, for it is asking nothing of its members which manhood itself does not ask of them, nothing save what, in his own soul, each man asks of himself. No man can live as a *man*, and not be courageous. No man can face himself, and excuse himself from the duty of consistent living in accordance with his own beliefs. For we *do* live our beliefs; it is not a belief if we do not live it. Theories are not beliefs. The faith which we profess in words, and deny in acts, is not ours.

But if such gifts as these be rightly asked of our newest members, so much the more must they be asked of those older students who have entered more deeply into the Society's life, and who feel for it a sense of responsibility which the newer members cannot justly be asked to share. It is not a responsibility which is imposed upon us from without—which the Society, as by elective office, places upon some, to the omission of others, as in necessary clerical details of its outer organization. It is a sense of responsibility which arises from within the soul itself, and which demands of us, as of all men, that we should be true to our own truth. The more of truth we have found in the Society, the more our own truths expand toward its truth, the greater this sense of responsibility must become, that we should keep, available for others, what has been so richly given us. No man has ownership of truth; all men, in greater or less measure, are its trustees,—responsible for what has been entrusted to them.

Let us remember that though the Society is an open platform, it is not an *empty* platform. Those who founded it, as a meeting place for all honest views of life, brought to the symposium



that they invited, a view which many of us have come, in part, to share. It is not a matter of dogma to believe that, just as tinder brought in contact with a flame will blaze, so an honest heart and open mind will kindle and catch fire when brought in contact with the truth. Every member, in his own measure and degree, has known that contact and kindled to it. Each has his own faith—his own knowledge—to which he must be true; and those of us, whose faith and knowledge rest in what we call Theosophy, must be true to it. We must believe what we profess to believe. We must have the honesty, the consistency and the courage to act upon it, and the will to press forward to that greater Truth to which it points.

As we applied our motto to our newest members, let us apply it to ourselves. "There is no religion higher than Truth." What does it mean to us? Let us think of our own religions; and first, though not only, as that word is generally used in the world, to denote the outer forms in which we worship and seek to open ourselves to the Supreme. It is right that we each should have and value our own form, our own approach to divinity and truth; that we should each follow the religious exercises in which we were brought up, or which appeal to us most and help us most. Yet if we permit our use of these religious forms to degenerate into sectarianism and narrowness, so that we cannot enter sympathetically into the worship of others, and look only at the outer symbols they use, instead of to what lies behind; or if we begin to assume that our own forms contain the only expression of the truth, so that we wish everyone to worship as we worship,—then surely we fall away from our motto and from the consistent living of the truth in which we profess to believe.

But what the world calls a man's religion is something far less than, and often very different from, his actual religion. Let us think of the things we actually worship in our hearts,—of our idols as well as of our truths. Think of the things we seek, day by day. Some of them we rightly seek, rightly value and love. But have we made any one of them higher than the Truth? Do we cling to what, in our hearts, we know to be temporal and false? If so, we are failing in the courage, the consistency, the honesty to be true to our own vision of truth, and are so failing the Theosophical Movement, of which, in some measure, we are trustees.

That is my plea as I open this Convention to-day. I plead that we should learn—that we should strive more ardently to learn—to be true to our own truth; that we should meet the demands that our truths make upon us; that we should see that no one of us is in possession, as yet, of our own truth, and that we must labour ceaselessly to reach out and gain more of it, to understand it better, but above all, to live it better. If we profess belief in Theosophy, we are professing belief in something which is, as yet, but a germ in us; is as yet but a seed which must be tended, guarded and made to grow. Theosophy is not a body of opinion, a set of doctrines. Much less is it our present understanding of any doctrines. It is Truth. It is Wisdom. It is Eternal Life. It is a living thing, an infinite thing, and it is therefore for ever beyond each one of us. But to whatever extent it has come to us, to whatever extent we have entered into it, we feel its call to reach out and take more from it, to accept its gift of itself, to follow where it leads.

Let me phrase our purpose once again. It is to keep Theosophy *alive*; to keep our Movement a *living* movement. What is the difference between a living and a dead religion? Shall we perform our task if we preserve certain forms of intellectual belief, if we make known, all over the world, the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation and the existence of perfected men; if we make people think of the evolution which lies beyond us in the future, as they think to-day of the evolution which lies behind us in the past? If we fill the world with opinions, shall we have fulfilled our task? Each of us must answer, No. For intellectual belief is not in itself a living thing. It is a reflection of a truth. It differs from the truth as the moon differs from the sun. It reflects a ray, half of whose life it has killed by its own inability to respond and kindle to it. It is not itself the flaming heart and source of quickening life. We are charged with a living and a life-giving Movement; not with a dead moon. The difference between a living and a dead religion is like that between a living and a dead language. If it be a living language, there must be men who speak it, whose native tongue it is. If it be a living religion, there must be men who live it, who find in it their motive, guide and goal; whose path it is, and who walk in the way which it makes clear.

We are the servants of a life transcending ours. We are the flame bearers of a truth greater than our own, which we yet may carry forward as each one of us carries forward the truth which is his. But there is only one way to keep a flame alive, and that is to give it fuel. There is one pre-eminent need in which all life shares,—the need of food. And where, in all the wide universe, are we to find the fuel and food for the living flame of truth, if not in our own hearts and lives? We must give the wax, if the candle is to burn, and that wax is ourselves. We must have the honesty, the courage, the consistency, the ardent desire to press forward, which we so gratefully welcome in our newest member. We must find and command those qualities, and must use them, day by day and every day, if we are to fulfil our task. That is what we have gathered here to do: to consult together, that we may see clearly what we need; to inspire one another, that we may set our wills to meet our need; so that together we may carry forward the Movement as a living Movement.

It has been said that though Theosophy must for ever transcend all efforts to define it, yet it bears four hallmarks by which it may be known; manifests itself in four ways, and offers four gifts,—though in essence all four are one. Intellectually it is an attitude. Practically it is a method. Ethically it is a spirit. Religiously it is a life. These four are consecutive, the first leading on to the last. The intellectual attitude which faces truth and enables us to recognize it, leads to a practical method which, strengthening our hold upon the truth we have, clarifies our vision so that we glimpse the greater truth beyond. It is with these two that the outer work of The Theosophical Society is primarily concerned. But they are not, and cannot be, ends in themselves. They must lead on, and if they be faithfully maintained and practised, they do inevitably lead on, to the ethical spirit and the religious life,—to the spirit of love and consecration which enables us to serve what we love, and to command in ourselves the honesty and consistency and courage to live by and for it, so that it becomes in us a life.

In the last analysis, the Theosophical Movement exists to give this life to men. That is its purpose; and if it is to live, it is needful that it should fulfil its purpose. Frustrate the destiny, the purpose, of any living thing, prevent its coming to the fruition of that for which it exists, and it dies. So it must be with our Movement. In little and in big, for the youngest and for the oldest, the truth that is seen but not followed, the right that is recognized as right but not lived, must fade from our sight and become for us as though it were not. In us it must die. And unless the attitude and method, which The Theosophical Society has taught us, can be brought continuously in us and in our successors to their fruition as a spirit and a life, sooner or later the grave of our Movement must be added to the graves of the dead religions of the past. The symbols of our faith may remain,—golden symbols, truly. But to-day in Egypt, the desecrators of graves strip golden images of the truth from the mummies of its ancient priests and kings. It is in living men, in us, not in symbols, that a religion, a faith, a philosophy, a spirit or a truth can live,—that a Movement can remain a living movement, giving its gift of life. It is only as we ourselves are true to the truth we profess, that we can cause it to live in the world.

To complete the permanent organization of the Convention, the Chairman then called for nominations. Miss Perkins was duly elected Permanent Secretary, and Miss Chickering, Assistant Secretary. It was next moved, seconded and voted, that the Chair appoint the usual standing committees, and the following were appointed, with the request that the Committee on Nominations should confer early and be prepared to report before the close of the Morning Session:

*Committee on Nominations*  
Mr. K. D. Perkins, *Chairman*  
Colonel Thomas H. Knoff  
Mr. A. Gonzalez Jimenez

*Committee on Resolutions*  
Mr. E. T. Hargrove, *Chairman*  
Mr. Walter H. Box  
Miss Margaret D. Hohnstedt

*Committee on Letters of Greeting*  
Dr. Archibald Keightley, *Chairman*  
Dr. C. C. Clark  
Mrs. Bagnell

The Annual Reports of Officers being next in order, three members of the Executive Committee were asked to report for that body,—Mr. Johnston, Chairman; Colonel Knoff of Norway, and Mr. Hargrove.

#### REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MR. JOHNSTON: There is only one technical matter to be spoken of, and that will really be treated more fully by the Committee on Resolutions. There are certain other matters which it may be wise and expedient to speak about. First, the Executive Committee represents the whole Society; which implies responsibilities not only in the Executive Committee but in every member of the Society. We represent the whole Society, and no member of the Society can escape plenary responsibility for our effectiveness and the Society's effectiveness—the obligation of energy, of work, of continuity is not limited in the case of any member. It is complete in every case. Every one of us is responsible for the carrying forward of the Movement. That is why we have to elect members of these committees every year, in order to guarantee the principle of continuity. We have, since the last election, lost one of our members—Judge Robert W. McBride of Indianapolis, who was in later life a jurist, but in his earlier manhood a soldier, and who therefore represented the valour of the soldier and the detached wisdom of the judge—a splendid combination for every one of us to emulate and for his successor to keep in mind. We also cannot neglect to make special mention of the passing of George Woodbridge, who was a soldier through and through, and who splendidly manifested and manifests that warrior spirit which is the essence of our task. We have not lost the great members that have gone before. We have not lost them, but shall find them exceedingly active when the veil is withdrawn. So we should let our first deduction from the principle of continuity be that it is an all-inclusive continuity. It includes everyone, whether in this world or some other, who is working for the Theosophical Movement. Therefore we can hope to carry it forward.

The one technical matter regards the election of members to the Society. In days which go back forty-five years or so, it was the custom for each Branch to elect members to the Society,—that is to say, one was, at the same time, admitted to the Branch and to the Society by a vote of Branch members, which was then forwarded to headquarters, and one got one's diploma several months later. Then came the separation into national societies—the Theosophical Society in America, which took form in this country in 1895, succeeding the American Section of the Theosophical Society. There was another in England, another in Norway, and so on. Then members were admitted to these national societies. Then came the reunion which has only now been quite completed in the details of form. Now members are admitted to the Society by action of the Executive Committee, and therefore the whole Society has its share in the election and becomes responsible for every member. It is now a centred function, a nuclear function. That is the last piece of reorganization which we have had to tidy up,—the point being that members are not elected to the Society by Branches; they are elected by the Society as a whole, acting through the Executive Committee.

One point more, which is not technically a part of the Executive Committee's report: the principle of work, which Professor Mitchell, as our Chairman, has been so admirably and promptly laying before us. I suppose that at Convention time we all think, hope, feel on the same lines. I was thinking over the same territory as Professor Mitchell, and studying what our great leaders, H. P. B. and Judge, had had to say on these problems of the future. I was struck by the recurrence of a word which they used: that we must carry The Theosophical Society forward "undogmatic,"—without dogma. I set myself to consider what that really implied. What would it mean in fact? What is the difference between a living belief that we are working out in our daily lives, and a dogma? It is the difference between a living and a dead tree. When the time comes for us to report to the next Messenger, we shall, I hope, be able to show in each one of us, a living tree—in the case of the Society, a greater living tree. I think there is not one of us who would be willing to come to the august representative of the Lodge and say: Here is a dead trunk, and that is the best I have been able to do. That is a dogma—a dead

tree. The only way to escape is to keep our own tree growing. In each case, we are representative of the tree of life. Only as we live to the tips of our fingers our theosophical principles, our theosophical ideals, are we going to escape the ghastly exhibition of the dead tree trunk instead of the living tree.

COLONEL KNOFF: *Mr. Chairman, Fellow Members:* I must begin with making an apology, because of my lack of perfect knowledge of the English language. I cannot promise you to speak in a correct way, and therefore you must excuse mistakes. Another calamity is that because of my failings in not knowing your language, I may express myself in a way which I would not have intended, and may forget to say things which I want to say.

Having been asked to address the Convention this morning, I will begin with mentioning that, though I have been a member of the T. S. since 1893, or for 34 years, this is the first time that I have had the opportunity and privilege to be present at this yearly recurring festival of the T. S.,—its Annual Convention. And even this time the opportunity came most unexpectedly. You will, no doubt, understand my feelings on this occasion. I consider it as one of the greatest and happiest events in my life. It is an event never to be forgotten,—an event that will be a blessing not only to me, but also to the Theosophical Branch in Oslo. I shall try to illustrate the nature of one of these blessings.

Going over to the U. S. A., I thought that I should feel far away from Norway, but it was just a very wrong idea. When sitting at my writing-table in Oslo, trying to survey in one view the whole of my country, I often felt as one who views a landscape from the bottom of a valley. But looking back to Norway from New York, I can now, as it were, have a bird's-eye view of the whole country, as well as of many details that are familiar to me there. From this fact I draw the conclusion that, when I return to Oslo, I shall be able to see New York in the same way; and not only the town, but many of the places, especially those where I am now associating with you, e.g., this room where we are assembled to-day; and I shall feel more intimately connected with you than ever before,—more closely united with the Headquarters, which will again react upon the T. S. Branch in Oslo, and make its connection with the main centre of the T. S. stronger and more vividly felt.

One result of my presence at this Annual Convention is, thus, that my consciousness of all friends and brothers with whom I have associated here, will be more alive to me, and I shall feel more closely united to you. This means that I have not only widened my consciousness on the outer plane, but—what is far more important—the range of vision of the soul has also been enlarged. This is not an insignificant event.

There is a certain matter which some of us at the Oslo Branch are rejoicing over very much, and that is the organization of the T. S. You will remember that the T. S. originally was organized in sections, and that each had a President. Experience showed that this form of organization, though excellent to begin with, at a later point in the history of the T. S. involved a danger,—the danger of rivalry between the sections. It led, as you know, to great trouble, and even threatened the T. S. with disintegration. But the T. S. was saved by the American Section that resolutely reorganized it in New York. After that time the T. S. was for many years divided into self-governing national Branches—all united in purpose and objects, all working for the same end. This organization served its end for a time, but it was not suitable in the long run. New troubles arose, and again the organization had to be altered; and out of that trouble our present organization grew up, an organization founded on democratic principles, with no President, but a selected Committee for the management of the affairs of the T. S. And the most important step of all was taken later, when all national Branches were voluntarily given up, uniting as Branches of *one* universal T. S.,—a true Brotherhood, a real and single representative, in the outer world, of the Lodge. From that time, the organization of the T. S. has been based on the principle of spiritual oneness and its members began to realize themselves as souls, and as being one in the Over-Soul, who is the true vine, with Branches in many countries, each Branch consisting of its members, who are again smaller branches or twigs on the same spiritual and universal vine.

The T. S. Branch in Oslo considers these gradual changes of the organization of the T. S. as an

evolutionary necessity, and the wisdom of it seems evident. Trials are as necessary as easy times. They help to lay bare our weak points, and those parts of the Theosophical Body that are decaying, are then cut off from the stem. If this had not been done, the T. S. would have failed long ago.

One mighty question: Are we really no longer subject to the temptations of rivalry or jealousy? Why, for instance, should the Headquarters of the T. S. always be in New York? But, my friends, it has never been said that it will be there always. The Headquarters must be wherever the predominant spiritual force-centre is located. The spiritual Law will provide for that;—so we need not worry about these things. Besides, the T. S. has now developed so far on right principles that it cannot any more, I hope, be affected by narrow-minded jealousy and other childish failings. I feel sure that our beloved T. S. years ago has outgrown such petty weaknesses. We are no longer intelligent students of Theosophy only, but fellow-souls working for that common purpose, that lofty end already mentioned, namely, to realize the oneness of all souls in the Over-Soul.

May this purpose, now, and in all coming years, be our daily *watchword*. Then our T. S. will continue to be a strong spiritual centre, a real nucleus of Universal Brotherhood, up to that day when the new Messenger of the Lodge shall come, and take the management and the welfare of the Society in his strong hands.

A few words more, and then I am done. You know the answer of the Lord, when one of his disciples asked him how often he should forgive another who offended him,—if seven times were enough. The Lord's answer was: Not seven, but seventy times seven, which means endlessly, I think. This saying has been picked out and used indiscriminately, by some who want peace at any cost. They claim that all sins should be forgiven, without regard to whether the sinner repents and confesses or not; and that he should be dispensed from the natural effects of his evil-doing. If they looked at this question as God does, they would certainly come to a different conclusion. God is more anxious to forgive sins than man is to accept forgiveness. In fact, forgiveness is always there for all who will accept it. But the sinner who does not acknowledge and repent his faults, will of course not accept any pardon,—and what he does not accept is of no value to him. Suppose your neighbour has offended you. You tell him that, adding that you forgive him. He might see his fault, confess it, and make an apology. But he may also be unwilling to confess,—get angry, telling you that you are the offender because you are abusing him and thinking evil of him. He may assert that it is all a question of opinion, and that by trying to force your opinion on him, you are acting against the most elementary principle of tolerance. What are we to do in this case? Advise him to meditate upon whether his views on principles are conformable to the views of God; and leave him in the hands of Karma or Divine Law, which will deal with him in the wisest and most merciful way. Much more could be said about this important question, but what is already said may serve as suggestions, to be more closely worked out by those concerned.

MR. HARGROVE: I think it is only fair to the speakers on these occasions to explain that all of them without exception rise to their feet in a sort of agony, feeling their immense responsibility and that it is the privilege of a lifetime to speak at our Conventions; and that always they are horribly dissatisfied with themselves for what they have said. Colonel Knoff apologizes for not knowing English sufficiently well. We who are supposed to be able to speak English, sometimes envy our visitors their ability to speak a foreign tongue as they do. Theirs is an extraordinary achievement. If I tried to address you in a foreign tongue, I know what would happen to anyone here who knew it! There would be very little left of them—or of me—by the time I had finished.

Speaking as a member of the Executive Committee, and as a New York representative of the Executive Committee, I must really be allowed to say what a joy it is to us to see you here to-day, and to be permitted to welcome you to Headquarters. You have come from far and from near, seeking the Truth; some of you seeking your own ideals, as Professor Mitchell said; some of you seeking the Masters as the embodiment of your ideals. It is a joy to us to know that you have come to the right place. I happened by chance last night to pick up a magazine which

contained the expression of an ideal, not formulated by a member of the Society—formulated, as a matter of fact, by the present French Ambassador to the United States, the poet, Claudel. It is one of our privileges, as students of Theosophy, to be able to recognize and appreciate the ideals of other people, and I am going to read this to you, because I know that you will respond; I know that, though not formulated by a student of Theosophy, it will meet at least part of your own need, will explain one of the reasons why you are present here to-day:

"Every day younger, and every day stronger, and every day more firm in faith, and every day more ardent, and every day less satisfied and more joyful,—

"Like Crusoe leaving behind him his heritage and his home for the sake of a Great Adventure, "Without reserving anything he sets sail with all the resources of his intelligence and his imagination,—

"And then, at last, there where his spent body bends and where his will hesitates and ebbs,—sinks his ship beneath him, and passes onward, on the wings of passion and desire."

He sinks his own ship beneath him; he hurls himself at his goal: even in that formulation, those of you, if there be any present to-day, who have not as yet acquired a belief in Masters, but who come here in search of your own ideal, in search of your own truth, will find the clue to that which you seek. We always do find that which we seek. We get that which we want. The truth of the matter is that The Theosophical Society is a door, is the outer door leading to others through which men may pass to the Lodge if they wish to do so. The outer door to the Lodge,—and in that sense it is understood by some of us, and we believe it was for that purpose it was founded. No one is obliged to pass through any further door that they may discover or that may be opened to them. No one requires of any member of the Society, either that he shall believe in Masters or in the Lodge; but those of us who have been members for many years and who may have discovered that this is not mere talk, mere theory, but that, in terms of actual experience, it is a fact,—have the privilege, Convention after Convention, of affirming that which experience has demonstrated: that those who want the Lodge may find it, thanks to The Theosophical Society. It is only another way of saying that membership in the Society is a development; it is not a static thing; it is a living thing, and our understanding of it necessarily develops from year to year. The purpose of our membership develops from year to year, and *should* develop.

So with the three objects of the Society: there is no harm done by seeing them as ends in themselves. I admit freely that there was a time when I thought of them as ends in themselves. Perhaps it is necessary to see them in that light in order to discover the further light which they reveal; because the longer we live and work for the Society, the more likely we are to discover that these three objects—splendid in themselves—may also be regarded as preparation for chelaship, for discipleship, by those who want it. I am not suggesting that all members of the Society ought to want chelaship; yet I believe that after sufficient study of Theosophy even those members who may say that to-day they do not want it, probably would say that some day they *may* want it, and therefore are quite willing to hear about it in case, in some future incarnation, when they have satisfied themselves with the experiences of to-day and have become a trifle bored,—they may then be interested to experiment a little, at a safe distance, with chelaship. So no harm is done by our speaking of it, even at a Convention of the Society! Naturally, this is not the time or place to speak of it in detail, but I am tempted to speak for a moment of what chelaship is not. It is impossible to cover the ground even under that head, because it would take hours to do so; but I remember a time, at Avenue Road in London, many years ago, when there were some startling misconceptions about chelaship—misconceptions which many of us shared, in spite of H. P. B.'s thundered warnings. There was a tendency to take the exoteric books of Hinduism and to regard them as gospel truth, and to try to act upon them. One of the suggestions in those books was that, really to become a chela, it was necessary to learn how to meditate while sitting on the floor, cross-legged. If you could do that for a sufficient time, you were very near the door of everlasting life and of the Lodge. Similarly—though this was a contemporary gloss—if you could concentrate on the face of your watch

for five minutes without a flicker, you were moving toward chéliship. Those misconceptions disappeared,—because we concentrated on the watch for five minutes and realized, fortunately, that we had not become chélas. Ultimately light comes; but please accelerate its arrival by doing what you can to remove misconceptions of all kinds concerning not only chéliship but The Theosophical Society and Theosophy. Make it evident that instead of being a cranky, queer philosophy, it is above all things sane. Some enemies of the Society have intimated that H. P. B. invented Theosophy. That is not true,—if only because no human mind or imagination could possibly conceive of anything so magnificent, so sublime, so transparently a revelation of the Truth itself. It could not have been invented, and of course it was not invented.

And now, what are the dangers that confront the Society in the future? We cannot foresee them all; that is impossible. Both Professor Mitchell and Mr. Johnston have already referred to Theosophy as being undogmatic. There is no tendency anywhere in the Society to-day, that I know of, to be dogmatic,—though I should not like to say to what extent that condition of things is due to the attitude of the younger members, or to the attitude of the older members! This much I do know, however,—that if any of the older members hear a dogmatic statement made by a younger member, they may be relied upon to tumble on that younger member with all the weight they still possess—because we older members detest dogmatism. As to the future, I can only speak of what we do not want to happen. I know of one or two who are still sufficiently young in years to have speculated as to how long they will have to live in order to meet the next Lodge Messenger. But I begin to worry if I imagine them sitting there with long white beards, very old and very wise. Perhaps the Lodge Messenger will be modest—he should be—and some question will come up—a question regarding the Manasa Putras or Manas—and the Lodge Messenger will make some statement, and immediately the oldest of old members says: “Dr. Keightley used to say that the Manasa Putras were the Masters.” Another pipes up and says, “Mr. Johnston used to say that we were the Pitris.” I have not asked Dr. Keightley, but it may be that the only thing he ever heard H. P. B. say about the Manasa Putras was, “Bother the Manasa Putras! Stop fidgeting in your chair.” Seriously, what Dr. Keightley, Mr. Johnston or anybody else had to say about the Manasa Putras may have been suggestive, but it could not have been final—the truth being that we shall never *know* anything about the Manasa Putras or anything else, until we discover them within ourselves.

I had hoped to say much more under the head of dogmatism and about the nature of mysticism, but this much, perhaps, may be said now. Let us see if we can agree upon certain eternal and changeless propositions regarding the truth. I have jotted down one or two suggestions:

1. That no statement of the Truth is final.
2. Every statement is incomplete.
3. What I see to-day as the truth, I shall see as a distortion of the truth when I move one plane higher up.
4. Such general statements as “God is love,” which are widely accepted, without much thought, as eternal and changeless truths, are, at best, symbols of a truth, seeing that both terms remain undefined, and seeing that our understanding of love, and especially of divine love, cannot be complete until we become at one with it.

5. The attitude of the mystic toward all things is wide open; that of the theologian, and of philosophic or scientific dogmatism, is shut. The mystic knows that the Truth cannot be defined, seeing that it is infinite.

The purpose of these statements is to try to make dogmatism as difficult as possible,—because when those two old gentlemen with the long white beards begin to quote people, I am going to rely upon a third to quote these statements from this Convention report!

At the same time, it is equally important to remember that tradition should be treated with the utmost respect; above all, the *spirit* of the past. Take for instance, the growth of The Theosophical Society. I am not speaking now of outer growth, but of its intellectual and spiritual growth. Those who have been responsible for its development have been faithful absolutely to the traditions of the past, to the spirit of H. P. B. and Mr. Judge; but they have not slavishly followed the *methods* of 1875, or even those of 1890. It would be folly to suppose that because H. P. B. used certain methods then, she would be using the same methods to-day.

Times change. Individuals change. Cycles change. Methods must change. The same basic principles are applied in action. The spirit remains the same; the objective remains the same, but the methods and the interpretations necessarily differ unless we are to remain stagnant and die. Therefore it would be fatal if, twenty years from now, someone were to say: That is what they used to do in 1927 and therefore we ought to do it to-day. Take the spirit of what is done to-day. Respect the traditions of the past, just as a modern physician, if he had sense, would go back to the writings of Paracelsus and find truth in them.

Tradition is half of the battle, but the other half is fire from heaven, and that fire from heaven must reach us day by day if we are to remain true to the purposes of Theosophy. Mysticism is not vagueness. Theosophical mysticism is not vague—far from it. Among the churches, the greater the breadth the less the height, the less the fervour; or the greater the fervour, the narrower the outlook. Personally, I believe it is The Theosophical Society and The Theosophical Society alone which, broader than any church, also gives opportunity for a greater fervour than any religious organization in the world. Why is that? Our platform, as Professor Mitchell explained, is as wide as the universe itself; but because of the revelation to which Theosophy leads, namely, the reality of Masters, it is possible for the student of Theosophy to be absolutely one-pointed in his purposes, with one devotion, one direction to his life, doing all things for that one end: and we must surely know that only as the result of that intensity of fervour, of that passion of devotion, which one-pointedness alone gives,—does first hand experience of the spiritual world become possible. If we merely had tolerance, where should we arrive, what should we accomplish? Tolerance, of course, is vitally necessary, but not as an end in itself; merely as a means to an end.

It is because of this rare combination of breadth and fervour that in the Conventions of the Society we are able to meet as we do,—at one in heart and purpose. I do not mean that all of us would agree in the definition of our purpose, in the mere wording of our purpose; but whether you are seeking your own ideal, or whether you are seeking Masters as the embodiment of your ideal, the purpose *is* the same; the result therefore being that in this room this morning, there is one heart and one mind, turned in one direction, with love and great longing. That and that only is the power that can draw from heaven, like Prometheus of old, the fire which gives our words a living force, which makes our efforts, as members, eternal in the heavens, and which confers upon us this supreme favour—as Mr. Johnston has suggested—that if we do our part now, we shall be able to go on with the work we have undertaken, on the other side of death without break. Working with devotion to-day, working with understanding to-day, we shall really be working on the plane of the soul; and, therefore, instead of entering into some state of dream after death, into some Devachan of oblivion, we shall be permitted to continue as soldiers under the banner of the Lodge. What a reward! What a gain!—because surely that is what we desire: to serve; not to live for our personal concerns, no matter how innocent these may be; but each one of us to give what we are, without reserve,—as Claudel said, to set sail from this day forth, with all our resources, with all of our intelligence and imagination; to set sail on the Great Adventure, that we may share in the greater life of the Lodge itself, even though it be on its circumference; and then, at last, not fall into blissful slumber, but, as he said, sink our ship beneath us, and pass onwards on the wings of passion and desire,—to our home.

Upon motion, duly seconded, it was voted that the Report of the Executive Committee, as presented by three of its members, be accepted with the thanks of the Convention. The Chairman then called for the Report of the Secretary T. S.

#### REPORT OF THE SECRETARY T. S. FOR THE YEAR ENDING APRIL 29TH, 1927

This Annual Report, which our By-Laws require the Secretary to present to each Convention, recently has served two purposes: first, to outline the main activities carried on by our various Branches, and at Headquarters; and second, to provide a safety valve for the Secretary, who sometimes gets explosively concerned over work that might be done, particularly by Members-at-Large. This year, it seems proper to condense the account of Branch



activities, because it is our good fortune to have here delegations from an unusual number of distant Branches—representative of the spirit of our Branch work. In general, all the Branches have rendered their reports for the year, and these have been considered most appreciatively. They indicate that, almost without exception, the outer work has been markedly deepened; also that all are looking forward eagerly to this Convention, as sounding the key-note for the coming year. No new Branches have been organized, as the Executive Committee deemed it wiser that newly admitted members should, wherever possible, either connect themselves with some established Branch, as corresponding members, or else form a study class in which they may gain experience essential to productive Branch work. All who receive the reports of the New York Branch meetings, especially the foreign Branches for which they are prepared, speak of them as affording a highly prized link with what they term "the centre in New York."

Before passing to the special work done from Headquarters, mention should be made of the death, since last Convention, of Judge Robert W. McBride, one of our oldest members, and for many years a member of our Executive Committee,—“a man whom Mr. Judge loved and trusted,” as was said of him in the notice of his death in the *QUARTERLY*. We last saw him at the Convention of 1915; but his inability to attend Conventions, owing to advancing years and uncertain health, in no way diminished the keenness of his interest in all that concerned the work of the Society.

#### *The Theosophical Quarterly*

We all know that the Society is deeply indebted to the Editors of our magazine, who build, with their labour on it, a loving memorial to its founder, Mr. Griscom. His "Letters to Students," compiled from letters contributed by those who received them, is one of the departments upon which members and subscribers continually comment. A recent tribute is typical of many others: "After reading what he says, I find that things seem, not easy, but simple none the less; he brings you face to face with the immediate problem to be worked out, and indicates the direct lines on which a solution may be reached."

Through the death of Mr. George Woodbridge, we have lost a faithful and greatly beloved member, who was a constant contributor to the magazine, sometimes using his own signature, more often a *nom de plume*, but always striking a distinctive note of buoyant humility and joy in service.

There is a constant increase in the number of subscribers to the *QUARTERLY*, from outside our own ranks; and this is highly gratifying, even though each copy costs us much more than the subscription price. Fortunately, there is the Propaganda Fund,—and the generous support which our members give to it compensates for the loss on subscriptions, and also makes it possible to offer "paid-up" subscriptions, when desirable. Thanks to the very active assistance of a special committee, the circulation of the *QUARTERLY* among libraries has been nearly doubled this year. One result, already becoming evident, is that readers who once believed in H. P. B. and her message, but did not know of the continued existence of the Society which she founded, are finding in the *QUARTERLY* that to which their hearts respond.

#### *The Book Department*

It is a pleasure to announce that the Upanishad texts and commentary which Mr. Johnston has contributed to the *QUARTERLY*, are now to appear in book form. The series is entitled *The Great Upanishads*, and the first volume is published to-day; it will be on sale to-morrow, at the time of the Convention Lecture.

It may be worth while to note that one of our problems arises from the desire of other organizations to use our books in their classes. Thus those books, stamped with the reality that emanates from this Society and from all that inspires it, would be made to support teachings and practices to which they are diametrically opposed. It seems necessary, therefore, to restrict the sale of our books to individuals, declining to permit their purchase by other organizations, for re-sale. This much, at least, we can do to safeguard the seeker for truth. Every shopkeeper knows that one genuine article placed among imitations can be used to make the imitations seem desirable.

*Suggestions for the Coming Year*

1. Why should not each member consider carefully by what means the QUARTERLY, the carrier of our message, may be brought before thoughtful people in all walks of life? This office would be pleased to receive suggestions. There is no difficulty in arousing among worldly people animated discussions of such a hypothetical problem as—how a man could give away \$10,000,000 in a month: they like to plan for that. Why should not we interest ourselves in devising the means for making a more lasting gift?

2. Why should not every member delightedly co-operate with those who give so much time to our magazine? Not all are gifted with the ability to write articles, but every one of us must have a talent in some direction that could be contributed. To sit back and admire the magazine, hardly fills the measure of complete co-operation. Just to sketch a few out of the many possible ways of assisting:

(a) A letter to the Secretary's office, saying that such and such an article has been particularly helpful, for such and such reasons.

(b) A letter mentioning some point in an article that seems obscure.

(c) A letter stating that the Branch has found certain topics of special interest, and giving the reasons why; or mentioning some phase of our philosophy that seems to need increased emphasis, stating why.

(d) The names of persons, as possible subscribers, to whom a sample copy of the QUARTERLY might be sent; or a request for a certain issue which deals with some personal problem which a friend has discussed with the writer of the letter.

(e) Positive and definite preparation, on the part of our younger members, for larger participation in the Work. Did not Marshal Foch devote years to equipping himself to take part in the Great War? His account of this might be stimulating to those who now very genuinely "regret" that they are not experts in the editing of manuscripts, the reading of proof, the answering of individual questions, stenography, typewriting etc. How would Marshal Foch, if situated just as we are, make himself an expert in such matters?

*Acknowledgments*

As one looks back over the year's work, there are innumerable radiant threads shot through it, by the generosity of members who seize every opportunity to assist in this office. To the older members of the T. S., your Secretary is deeply indebted for constant advice and assistance. Many who are younger in the Society also give valued help,—there are those who read proof, wrap book packages, check our mailing lists, and attend to numerous details: all with a quiet disregard for their own convenience which is beyond praise. The Assistant Secretary is not only always within call, but also takes and transcribes the notes of every New York Branch meeting, from which another member prepares a condensed report, while a third makes a sufficient number of typewritten copies for distribution. Again, as for several years, grateful mention should be made of the fact that one of our members has paid the salary of a stenographic assistant in the Secretary's office—a non-member, and our only salaried worker.

You must permit me to add a word of gratitude for the privilege you have given me, year after year, of taking part in this work. Perhaps it is not fitting that I should undertake to tell you how frequently credit is given to me for decisions or counsel that did not originate with me, but came from our elders. Fortunately, they always see our individual limitations, not as permanent barriers to service, but as the raw material out of which better instruments may be forged, for use in the service of the Masters.

Respectfully submitted,

ISABEL E. PERKINS,  
Secretary, T. S.

It was moved and voted that the Report of the Secretary T. S. be accepted with the very sincere thanks of the Convention. The next business being the Report of the Treasurer of the Society, Mr. Johnston was asked to take the Chair.

# T. S. ACTIVITIES

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## REPORT OF THE TREASURER, T. S.

PROFESSOR MITCHELL: You all know that the detail of the work of the Treasurer's Office is done by the Assistant Treasurer, Miss Youngs, to whom the Treasurer and the entire Society are greatly indebted for her labours throughout the year.

The itemized statement will show what the income of the Society has been, and how the money received was spent. Again, it is the same surprising story of expenditures in excess of receipts,—with a credit balance in the bank, on which to start another year! It may be interesting to compare the figures of this year with those of last year. The current dues amount to practically the same figure, this year showing an increase of \$35.00 (in round numbers). The general contributions amounted to \$100.00 more than for the corresponding period last year. In the Propaganda Fund there has been an increase of about \$400.00. This fund, as was explained in the Secretary's Report, was started chiefly to enable us to continue to supply the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY at the ridiculously low price of twenty-five cents a copy, and also to circulate the magazine where we think it will be appreciated and will serve to help the Movement. In the amount received for subscriptions to the QUARTERLY there appears to be a slight falling off, but that is incident to details of bookkeeping, and not to a shrinkage in subscribers. As you will see, the subscriptions and the membership dues are a small part of our income—our work is carried on, thanks to contributions from our members. I must add that we really live on contributions,—on the moral and spiritual gifts that are made to us. Speaking of dues, I should like to say that it has never been intended that financial difficulties should keep any member from receiving the benefits of participation in the Movement. Our total receipts for the past year were just short of \$3500.00, some \$400.00 more than those of last year, and we begin the year with a balance in the bank of some \$500.00.

Turning next to our disbursements, first comes the expense of printing and mailing the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY. This falls just short of \$3000.00, which by an extraordinary coincidence is within 37 cents of the cost of the magazine during the previous year. Those who know something of the present cost of printing, and the way in which author's corrections quickly run to a large sum, will not be surprised to learn that the reason why our printing bill is so small is because of the work done by the Editors on the contributed articles. I think I am speaking to a number who contribute to the magazine, and they will agree with me that this result is not due to the accuracy and care with which contributions are prepared.

The total disbursements amount to \$3475.00, that is, we have spent this year \$35.00 more than the year's receipts. It is, therefore, the usual report, and I think you might accept it with thanks. If you do, I shall pass them on to the Assistant Treasurer, and should also like to make mention of assistance from the Secretary's Office.

### APRIL 25, 1926-APRIL 30, 1927

<i>Receipts</i>		<i>Disbursements</i>	
Current Dues.....	\$ 667.54	Printing and mailing THEO- SOPHICAL QUARTERLY (4 num- bers).....	\$2983.40
General Contributions and Don- ations to the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY.....	590.22	Stationery and supplies.....	125.80
Propaganda Fund.....	1698.70	Postage.....	142.59
Subscriptions to THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY.....	488.52	Rent.....	150.00
	<u>\$3444.98</u>	Miscellaneous:	
1928 Dues, prepaid.....	52.00	Telephone.....	56.35
Total Receipts.....	<u>3496.98</u>	Books and Foreign	
Balance April 25, 1926.....	508.10	Magazine Subscrip- tions donated to mem- bers.....	17.25
	<u>\$4005.08</u>		<u>73.60</u>
		Total Disbursements.....	3475.39
		Balance April 30, 1927.....	529.69
			<u>\$4005.08</u>

## THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY

*Assets*

On deposit Corn Exchange Bank,  
 April 30, 1927. . . . . \$ 529.69

*Liabilities*

1928 dues, prepaid . . . . . \$ 52.00  
 Excess of assets over liabilities . . . . . 477.69  
\$529.69

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

April 30, 1927.

Upon motion duly seconded, it was voted that the report of the Treasurer be accepted with the thanks of the Convention to the Treasurer, the Assistant Treasurer, and the Secretary's office. Professor Mitchell then resumed the Chair and called for the report of the Committee on Nominations.

## REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS

MR. PERKINS: The Committee on Nominations recommends the following nominations: To the Executive Committee, to succeed themselves, Mr. Hargrove and Mr. Johnston. There is a vacant place on the Executive Committee, due to the death of Judge McBride. To fill that, your Committee recommends Mr. J. F. B. Mitchell. For the other offices in the Society, for the coming year, your Committee recommends: as Treasurer, Professor Mitchell; Assistant Treasurer, Miss Youngs; Secretary, Miss Perkins; Assistant Secretary, Miss Chickering.

It was voted that the report of the Committee be adopted, and that the Secretary be instructed to cast one ballot for the nominees. This was done, and the nominees were declared elected. It was then suggested that the Convention should hear from the newly elected member of the Executive Committee.

MR. MITCHELL: *Mr. Chairman, Fellow Members:* The newly elected member is so very newly elected that he has not had time to recollect what he would *like* to say. I can only echo what Mr. Hargrove has already said regarding the great inadequacy of anything we can say. I thank you, and express my great desire to be worthy of what is one of the greatest honours that could be conferred. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Before we adjourn for the luncheon recess, I should like to point out to you that a vase of flowers was brought to us, with this card from Mrs. Gordon, a member of the Middletown Branch of Ohio, who, for some years, has been resident here in New York, taking part in our New York Branch activities and usually present at these Conventions. This year she is not well and cannot be here. She sends us these flowers, "To give you my warmest greetings and best wishes for the Convention. I am with you in spirit, but the flesh is weak." I thought you would all like to know from whom they came and with what message.

After various announcements, a motion to adjourn until 2.30 p.m. was made and voted.

*Afternoon Session*

At the opening of the afternoon session, the Chairman called for the report of the Committee on Letters of Greeting.

## REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LETTERS OF GREETING

DR. KEIGHTLEY: Your Committee was handed a large number of letters from all parts of the world. Norway is here to speak for itself; so also is Venezuela—and we have letters from Czecho-Slovakia, England, Italy, Canada, and Germany, as well as from America. I shall ask leave to read to you excerpts from these letters which your Committee hopes may, as in previous years, be appended in full to the Convention Report in the *QUARTERLY*. In the midst of all this material, my only difficulty is to locate the starting-point so carefully prepared for me

by Dr. Clark, who really has done all the work of the Committee, as I gratefully and unhesitatingly declare,—after all we heard this morning about officers whose work was being done by someone else! It is a pleasure to tell you first of a cable received from Mrs. Graves in England: "Greetings and best wishes for Convention." (Dr. Keightley then read from the letters.)

DR. CLARK: If I may, I should like to read a short extract from a personal letter that I received from Dr. Woodworth, who writes: "To say that I have missed the T. S. meetings this year, would be to state the situation too mildly. They were as an anchor which held my cable pointed rather constantly toward it. My heart goes out to all assembled, and I am going to try to be *en rapport* with the Convention at the time of meeting."

THE CHAIRMAN: Many of us probably have received messages of good-will to this Convention, and assurances that absent members participate in it. In my own experience, this Convention is unique, because to-day we have present here all of the members of the Executive Committee. We have also an unusually wide representation from distant Branches. Perhaps for that very reason, these Letters of Greeting mean even more than usual to us. As Treasurer, I constantly receive letters, of which the one I hold in my hand, from the Treasurer of the Branch in Czecho-Slovakia, is a sample,—touching and moving letters, speaking of the closeness with which our deliberations are followed, of the gratitude of our distant members for the QUARTERLY which brings them the news of our Movement; of their own efforts (very successful and fruitful efforts) to contribute toward the work. Therefore, I am very sure that in acting upon the motion that has been put before us (to accept the Report of the Committee on Letters of Greeting, and to discharge the Committee with thanks) our thanks will go out also to the senders of those letters.

The motion was unanimously voted, and the Chairman then called upon the Committee on Resolutions to report.

#### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS

MR. HARGROVE: There are two resolutions—dealing with the same subject, however—which this Committee desires to submit for your approval. The need for these resolutions was explained by the Chairman of the Executive Committee this morning. The wording of the By-Laws, as they stand, is not as clear as it might be, and these amendments are intended to clarify their meaning. The invariable practice has been, when a Branch votes on the admission of a new member, to forward that recommendation to Headquarters in New York for action by the Executive Committee or by the Chairman of the Executive Committee. The wording of the By-Laws has left it open to question—to quibbling, in any case—as to whether election by a Branch is sufficient to constitute membership in the Society as a whole,—which of course was never intended. In order to clear that up, it is suggested that you should approve, if you will, the following resolutions:

RESOLVED: that By-Law 18 (formerly By-Law 17) be amended to read: "Before an applicant can be admitted to membership in the Society or any Branch thereof, his application must have been filed at the Headquarters of the Society in New York, and must have received the approval of the Executive Committee, either by majority vote or acting through its Chairman."

RESOLVED: that Section (b) of By-Law 21, (formerly By-Law 20) be amended by adding thereto the following sentence: "If the vote be favourable and if the applicant have not previously been admitted to the Society, his application shall then be forwarded to the Headquarters in New York for the approval of the Executive Committee, as prescribed in By-Law 18."

Are there any questions in your minds arising out of these suggested amendments, the purpose of which is to clarify the meaning of the By-Laws as they now stand? It does not mean any change in what you have always done. You have always voted on applications for membership, and have then forwarded them to New York. Exactly the same procedure will be

followed, but—if you pass these resolutions—no one hereafter will have any ground for claiming that merely because he has been voted on with approval by a Branch, he is, *ipso facto*, a member of the Society. He is not a member of the Society until his diploma has been signed by the Executive Committee; nor can he be a member of a Branch until he is a member of the Society.

After this Resolution had been duly moved and seconded, the Chairman put it to vote and it was unanimously passed.

MR. HARGROVE: For several years past, it has been the privilege of the Committee on Resolutions, through its Chairman, to make certain suggestions, which, years ago, we used occasionally to put in the form of resolutions. We declared ourselves with considerable firmness at one time, on your behalf, endeavouring, in the form of a resolution, to express your convictions about the war. That was objected to by Mr. Raatz and some other German members who, later on, resigned from the Society. It is so easy for someone to object that any resolution passed here commits the Society, that, from experience, your Committee has found it more agreeable not to express itself in terms of a resolution, unless it be absolutely necessary, but to formulate certain suggestions for your consideration—suggestions derived more or less from the year's scrap book, at hazard; thoughts that have arisen during the twelve months since we last assembled. Really at haphazard, from that scrap book, comes the first suggestion,—because it was taken out of this morning's paper. It was on the front page of "The New York Times." It is headed, dramatically as usual, "Man Never an Ape, Dr. Osborn Asserts—His family sprang from stock neither human nor ape-like." It continues: they "did not start in a forest; dawn man belonged to the open country, Museum President declares at Philadelphia." Dr. Osborn's conclusions are noteworthy in themselves, but, incidentally, I am convinced in my own mind that their announcement in to-day's newspaper, on the day of the Convention, was a compliment handed to one Adept by another! Dr. Osborn's statements are worth reading, even on this occasion, because of the way in which they endorse, almost to the letter, the teachings of the *Secret Doctrine*,—one of the points for which H. P. B. fought as few could fight. Dr. Osborn, who is, I understand, one of the leading anthropologists in the world to-day, says,

"First—The antiquity of man is now to be reckoned, not in thousands, but in hundreds of thousands of years, and we foresee the soon approaching period when it will be reckoned in millions of years.

"Second—The Age of Man, or Pleistocene, can no longer be regarded as Act I of the pre-historic human drama, but rather as the final act, because at the very beginning of the Pleistocene we find the human race well established and widely distributed over the earth. Act I of the Age of Man is during Tertiary, in what may be known as the 'dawn man' stage and the 'pro human' stage.

"Third—While still supported by very able anatomists, such as Gregory, the ape-human ancestry theory is, in my opinion, greatly weakened by recent evidence, and I am inclined to advocate an independent line of dawn-man ancestors, springing from an Oligocene neutral stock, which also gave rise independently to the anthropoid apes.

"Fourth—The dawn-man line belongs to a distinct family, the hominidæ, ground living, cursorial, alert, capable of tool-making, and living in a relatively open country on the high plateaus and plains of Northern Asia."

This is exactly what Madame Blavatsky taught. This latest scientific proclamation confirms what she declared to be true, and which, when she declared it, ran counter to all scientific thought. Dr. Osborn makes it clear that Haeckel and Virchow twisted the facts into a weapon with which to materialize still further the scientific thought of their day,—which again is exactly what H. P. B. accused them of doing.

Reference was made this morning to dogmatism, to materialism, though under an entirely different head from the one just touched on. There is something on the same subject that seems to us to be of very great importance—and I hope that Mr. Box and Miss Hohnstedt,

my associates on the Resolutions Committee, will bear me out in this—and that is the risk which we necessarily run, from the mere fact of incarnation, of judging things by externals. It is what the world invariably does. The world tests success by outer success. We, as The Theosophical Society, have no competitors in the ordinary sense of the word—not as business understands competition—but we all know that there are those who are misusing the word Theosophy in a deplorable way; who are dragging it through the mud; and who are materializing it to the best of their ability (that is to say, materializing the doctrine originally promulgated by H. P. B.). Therefore, inevitably, they are paying the utmost attention to such external things as buildings, temples of learning, temples for this purpose and the other purpose, temples even in honour of their new “Messiah”! It is tragic; but we must be careful, in our turn, to learn whatever lessons we can from the errors of these other people. It is not sufficient merely to recognize those errors. We must be watchful of ourselves because of their errors, and must cling to the everlasting truths, to the spiritual truths, which Theosophy has revealed to us. We must test ourselves constantly, to see whether we are still being true to those great truths.

Outer success: we are a small gathering here; the room is full, almost crowded, but we are a small gathering. I think, however, that we have thoroughly outgrown the illusion of numbers—which of course is one of the illusions under which practically all religious organizations are working. But do we see as clearly as we ought to see, in our daily lives, in our study of world conditions, that it is indeed the spirit that gives life and the letter that kills? Do we thoroughly understand the principles involved? Perhaps you will allow me to use a rough and ready illustration: the illustration of singing. Let us assume that two or three church choirs, one after the other, are singing a hymn, with the refrain “O Paradise, O Paradise.” Let us suppose that in the first case it is a highly paid, well organized, well groomed choir which outwardly behaves to perfection—without a hint of the gross irreverence that you naturally associate with church choirs. They sing “O Paradise,” and bring it out to “perfection”: the time is perfect, the enunciation is perfect, the technique everything you could desire. Now by way of contrast, imagine the almost incredible: that a church choir could consist of those who have just had a vision of Paradise, who have just been there and are full to overflowing with the realization of what Paradise is; and imagine that, without the finish of the other choir, they were to sing “O Paradise” as if it were an experience they could no longer contain. Can we not feel the difference, and can we not see for ourselves, from that simple illustration, that what really counts is the spirit and the life that lie behind external words and acts? “O Paradise” may be used as an exclamatory oath, with a good deal of oath back of it; but if it be the expression either of an actual experience or of an inexpressible yearning, into what is that word converted? It becomes the vehicle of Paradise itself. It becomes a projection into physical space of the soul's uttermost desire. In comparison, what does the form, the technique, matter? What does anything matter in comparison with the magical achievement of bringing a realization of that which the Lodge means, to human hearts and minds, and of lifting them upwards to the place from which the immortal spirit descends. If we would but take that principle to heart, judging our actions, morning, noon and night, in the light of that eternal truth; if we would but test all things by the light of that truth and ask ourselves what *is* the spirit that we are bringing into the world, day by day as we live,—we should become very different creatures. Are we calling down fire from heaven in the simplest tasks of daily life, or are we simply pleasing ourselves? If in all things we could desire to serve the Masters, instead of acting in the spirit of the world—testing ourselves by that touchstone—we, as ordinary members of this Society, should carry that into the world, which the Lodge longs to see there,—creating, by every breath we breathe, a link in the chain that is going to carry the Movement through the years into Eternity.

We must not judge success by outer results. We must not remain satisfied merely by externals. We must look behind externals—first and foremost in ourselves, examining the spirit that prompts the word and the action, and comparing that with the highest ideal of which we can conceive. How else can we acquire that which we really long to have? A distinction was drawn this morning—and a most important distinction, in a way—between those who have

come here as members in search of their own ideal, not having yet quite decided, perhaps, in some respects, what that ideal is, but having responded to the objects of The Theosophical Society, having responded to their present understanding of Theosophy, and making, in that sense, a most welcome and valuable contribution to the Society; and, on the other hand, those who have, as a result of their thinking, of their longer membership perhaps, arrived at the conclusion that the ideal for which they have been seeking is embodied in the Masters. To whichever category you belong, you know that what you need and long for is a greater love of your own ideal. You would give more if you could. You want to give more, but you say to yourself, once in a while: "I seem to be giving all I can—I should like to be able to give more—would to God that I had more to give!" How can you acquire that "more" to give? It is in large measure along the line that I have already suggested: refuse to be satisfied with externals, but above all, *think* about these things. We are obliged to live in the world, to fight our way in the world, maybe are terribly oppressed, almost saturated, with worldly concerns. We must counteract that, deliberately, consciously, by filling our minds and hearts with better, nobler things, reading, studying, thinking, feeding our souls—with at least as much care and thought as we give to the feeding of our bodies, and I hope a great deal more.

I also suggested this morning that when people have a broad base for their thought, there is often a tendency to lose something in depth and in height; that the so-called broad minded people very often lack force and fervour and the gift of indignation. They are so tolerant that they will put up with anything. That is not the spirit of the Lodge. The Lodge will put up with nothing within its own borders that does not conform absolutely to its own spirit. That must be the test of truth. How can truth wed a lie? The Lodge is intolerant in the real and deep and high sense of that word. Yet it is not intolerance that I am advocating; it is the realization that the breadth of our attitude as students of Theosophy does not bar us from the divine gift of love. Many of you will remember a prayer in the *Vishnu Purana*: "O my Lord! O imperishable One! In whatever thousands of births I may wander, may my undying love be always in thee." There is breadth, but also how great a longing—intense, one pointed, one souled. Is not that what we want, what every one of us desires? It is within our reach and we may have it. It is not something just to stand aloof from and to pray for. It is something to be put into everything that we do, and by putting it into the least of our actions we can put it into all of our actions, until at last, as Claudel said, when it comes to dying, we shall not curl up like withered leaves, but shall go forth with passion and desire.

It has been so splendidly said—not by a Hindu this time, but by a Sufi, speaking of the man who loves, who desires, the man who has caught at least some glimpse of Masters—that what to us is a wall, to him is a wide open door, leading forth to Paradise and beyond. That is the way that we ought to treat the obstacles that Colonel Knoff was talking about when he said that troubles, instead of swamping us, should be seen as means to our end,—instead of as a wall, should be seen as a door, or as a stepping stone to our goal.

Another subject: picking up something that Mr. Johnston brought out this morning, I added that if we are faithful to-day, if we continue to the end, working with at least something of love in our hearts, then instead of death meaning a break, death will be an approach to better and more perfect service. I want to ask you this: do you believe, *can* you believe, that members like Clement Griscom and General Ludlow and Julia Keightley—it would be easy to add other names—do you believe that those old friends of ours, our comrades, are no longer with us? I do not. I am just as sure that they are here at this minute as I am sure that you are. There are misunderstandings about death and the after-death states. Much has been given out, but much more could be given out, and perhaps some day will be given out, under this head. Yet there is no mystery about it. In the early days of the Movement, it was necessary for H. P. B., as we all know, to attack and destroy superstition, for superstition was rampant. When you died, if you belonged to one church, there was everlasting Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven; or Hell and Heaven only, if you went to another church. H. P. B. came along, and in one big explosion swept these aside as "Bosh!", and then told us about Kama Loka and Devachan,—and of course told us the truth. There is no doubt that the large majority of good people, who have had spiritual aspirations, go to Devachan and dream beautiful and improving dreams.



They reap their reward. Others who may be more materially minded go to one of the higher planes of Kama Loka. Let us assume that these are not so bad, and are just about what most people want. Some man, let us say, has been a very earnest worker in the Y. M. C. A. He dies, and then wakes up in the upper strata of Kama Loka. What does he do? Of course, in the nature of things, he goes on working for the Y. M. C. A. He gets what he wants. And we do get what we want. If we seek reality in this life, we shall find reality and live reality in the other world. We find what we seek.

To what did men like Clement Griscom give their lives and their hearts? To Theosophy and The Theosophical Society. You know that just as well as I do, most of you. Therefore, in the nature of things, they are working for it to-day, working for it probably far more effectively than the limitations of the body made it possible for them to work during incarnation. What is it that you would really wish as your heaven? I am not speaking of what you would like to wish, unfortunately—I wish I were! It is a question of what we really wish, and the trouble is that what we really want is proved by what we do from hour to hour. But let us assume that what we really want is to acquire knowledge of the Lodge and of our own Master; to be nearer to him, consciously. Let us assume that what we really want is renewed association, closer and truer association, with our comrades and beloved friends of the past—those who have gone before us. Let us assume that what we really want from the depths of our hearts is to do more for the Masters' Cause. If that be our desire, there is no power in the universe that can keep it from us; because we find what we seek, we get what we want, both in this life and in the next. We should not only carry that truth into our understanding of Theosophy, but should use it as one of the motives that is going to supply us with the divine power that we lack but that is obtainable. What do we want to happen to us when we die? Some of us are not going to live for ever, and we ought to be thinking about these things occasionally. It is not an academic subject. It is immensely practical and should stimulate our interest and effort, because, thanks to Theosophy, we have learned that man is the maker of his own destiny, is the master of his own fate, and that therefore we have the control of the situation in our own hands, able, to an appalling extent, to do what we will with the universe around us, with both earth and heaven, day by day. Whether we like it or not, we are building our own future. If that be true—and it *is* true—then why not do it deliberately instead of leaving it to chance, or to the mercy of our passing moods.

Your Committee is very grateful to you for having listened to its various suggestions. It has some more notes in its scrap book, but I think our greatest opportunity this afternoon is to hear from the many delegates, both from this country and from abroad, whom we have the immense pleasure to welcome. . . .

I am reminded that there are certain other resolutions that ought to be brought up, the first of which needs a word of explanation.

Some people think that the age of miracles has passed, but it has not. There is this horrible building going up next door—thirty stories high and an eighty foot tower on top of that. The noise of steel riveting goes on all day long, and ought by rights to have been going on this morning. Professor Mitchell volunteered for the task of asking that a miracle might be performed,—and it was. Two gangs of men, forty in all, were engaged for this morning's work, up to twelve o'clock. The contractor and engineer were told frankly that a Convention of The Theosophical Society was going to take place, and that distinguished guests were to be present, from Norway and Venezuela and elsewhere. The man was so impressed that when Professor Mitchell handed him a cheque covering expenses, he returned the cheque and would not accept it because they were glad to oblige The Theosophical Society! Therefore your Committee asks you to approve the following resolution:

*Resolved:* That the thanks of The Theosophical Society, its Members and Delegates in Convention assembled, be extended to the Hedden Iron Construction Co., and in particular to its President, Mr. A. M. Conneen, Jr., and its Chief Engineer, Mr. H. M. Ward, for the great courtesy and consideration they have extended to the Society, in suspending, during the sessions of the Convention, the erection and riveting of structural steel at No. 1, Fifth Avenue, so that the proceedings of the Convention might be undisturbed;

*And be it further resolved:* That a copy of these resolutions be sent to Mr. Conneen and to Mr. Ward.

(This resolution was adopted unanimously.)

(Mr. Hargrove, continuing) The other resolutions read as follows: First: that Mr. Johnston be authorized to reply to letters of greeting. Second: that the Convention authorizes visits of officers of the Society to Branches. Third: that the thanks of the Convention be extended to the New York Branch for the hospitality extended during the Convention. (Carried unanimously.)

THE CHAIRMAN: We come now to the very enjoyable part of the Convention when we may hear from visiting delegates and members. I shall call first upon Colonel Knoff of Norway, to speak to us on behalf of the Branch in Oslo.

COLONEL KNOFF: As a delegate of the T. S. Branch in Oslo, I have to bring you a heartfelt greeting from this Branch, whose members are with us to-day, in mind, heart, and soul. They were all very happy and thankful because this year the Branch is represented at Convention by one of its own members.

As to the details of our work in Oslo, our Secretary has reported to Headquarters. I shall, therefore, only make some general remarks concerning the prospects for our work in Norway. The difficulties are great. We have, at the present time, not less than five competing movements in Oslo. There are two very active associations, one representing the society in Adyar, the other the Anthroposophical Society in Germany, both having attracted some clever speakers. And recently we have also got three religious movements which are new in Oslo. One is the Sufi Order, which is the best of them, and then we have Die Christengemeinschaft, which is an offshoot of the Anthroposophical Society in Germany, and finally, the announcement of Krishnamurti as the coming Christ.

At the same time, there is a great stir in the minds of many educated people, a strong wish for religious and spiritual enlightenment; but this seems still to be of an emotional nature. In the Lutheran Church, children have, up till later times, always been told never to think for themselves about religious questions. They should only believe what their teachers and the priests were telling them about Christ; then they were saved. But at the present time a great many people revolt against these teachings. Some have turned away from religion, leaving such serious questions to a more convenient time; others have an emotional longing for religion; and others, again, are searching for truth, but, affected by the psychic bewilderment of the time, they are running after all that is new, sensational, or mysterious. They cling to what appeals to their psychic minds, and are often changing teachers, hoping thereby to find the truth without any exertion of their own thinking faculty. The uneducated crowd has to a considerable extent turned away from religion. They are materialists, the better of them socialists, and the greater part are at the present time communists, under the sway of Moscow.

There are, however, also people with a real spiritual aspiration and with tolerant religious views. I have, therefore, good hopes for the future of the Norwegian nation. After the present, more or less partial soul-eclipse, there will come a new time, with real spiritual sunshine. The main thing is to have patience, faith, and perseverance; and to work unremittingly for the Lodge. It is true that the workers are few and frail; but in due time the Husbandman will send new and more able labourers into his field, and then his work will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.

MR. HARGROVE: It has been suggested that it would not be right to let this occasion pass without speaking of what Colonel Knoff has accomplished in Norway. I do not believe that those of us who live in New York can have the slightest idea of what it means to live a long way off—as in Norway—and to work alone, without encouragement, with comparatively little support, carrying the burden of the work for considerably over thirty years. It would be impossible for me to express sufficient respect, sufficient admiration, for that wonderful achievement. I am, of course, only endeavouring to speak, once more, on your

behalf,—but also on behalf of the Society; because we owe it to ourselves and to the Society, with the facts before us, to do what little we can to convey directly to Colonel Knoff some sense of our appreciation and admiration for the work he has achieved in Norway for Theosophy and the Lodge.

THE CHAIRMAN: We hope next to hear from Mrs. Bagnell, the representative of the Norfolk Branch in England.

MRS. BAGNELL: When I found that it was going to be possible for me to come to this Convention, and so to fulfil a wish which has been the dearest wish of my heart for twenty-one years, I cannot tell you how glad I was. But I was much more glad when I realized that I was coming, not as myself, but as England,—because it is not only as the delegate from the little Norfolk Branch. When I happened to let other Branches know that I was coming over here, the letters that I received were of such a nature that, if I had not before realized the wonderful spiritual truth of Brotherhood which membership in The Theosophical Society implies, it would have been made absolutely clear to me.

When I came, I came with wonderful anticipations, and for the first time in my life my anticipations have been exceeded in a way that it is impossible to express. I am certain that others must feel this—certain because here we meet with something which is unique in the world: with reality. I do not mean to say that there is not reality elsewhere, but here we contact it directly. My hope is that we may be able to carry it away.

I felt so much the generosity of members who were glad that I should come, that I feel I am speaking not only of Norfolk but of England. We are only seven members in Norfolk, and we are never all together. Three are together. Two, I have never met at all. We study, month by month; this year it has been the *Ocean of Theosophy*. In August we study the Convention Report. I always find that that is the most important study of the year. The comments of the members, I have often been tempted to send to America. During the winter and spring months, we study the reports of meetings of the New York Branch. It would be difficult for me to put into words the great appreciation and gratitude of members to those who enable us to receive these splendid reports, and so bring us into connection with Headquarters here in America; for what every member values most is our direct connection with the Headquarters in New York. Without that, we should not feel that we were alive at all, and anything that adds to the vitality that flows between Branches in England and Headquarters is a cause of gratitude. In the autumn, I receive letters asking, "Do you think we are going to have the reports this year?" I always say I do not know. In the name, not only of members of our little Branch in Norfolk, but of other Branches in England, I should like most gratefully and warmly to thank you.

In England we sometimes feel that we have a difficult time. We are rather lonely, and are very few. Some of us feel that we are a diminishing number; but we have outgrown the illusion of numbers. However, we feel that we do so little in our little Branch. All we do is to follow a monthly study plan, write comments on that study, circulate the notes. Questions are asked and answered. We naturally try to live as members of The Theosophical Society would wish to live, and to bring that light and life into contact with those around us, but we have a discouraging sense that we do nothing. But the mere fact that we do study and report during the month, and at a given date write our comments and post them, and send them on to the next member, and answer questions, is not such a small thing as it appears at first sight.

Another difficult thing is that we are isolated. Sometimes the northern Branches meet—members and their fellow members. We, in Norfolk, are like a little blockhouse in the Sahara, surrounded by hostile tribes,—because, as Professor Mitchell said this morning, Theosophy is greatly misapprehended to-day. I believe there is no country in which it is more misapprehended than in England, because in England Theosophy has come to mean everything that is the negation of Theosophy. It means there something which is inexpressibly bad. If you mention to people in England that you are a theosophist, if they are kind, they will smile and think you are a sort of crank. If not polite, they gather their garments together in order that they may not be polluted by your touch. (That is not an exaggeration.)

It is an inexpressible pleasure to be here to-day. I come here with a great hope, first to bear a real greeting from our own Branch and other Branches in England. Newcastle wrote that as I

was coming here, they felt they were coming themselves. They said, "As you are going, we are going also. Will you bear our warm greetings to the members in Convention?" Another Branch wrote about the same thing. As I have come as a representative of England, I may be able to carry something back to England. I am so filled with the wonder and delight and privilege of being here that I feel it is impossible for me to go back and not take something with me. A two foot channel is nothing in itself—it may be only a blot on the landscape—but if it be connected with a lake or a river or a big canal, it can carry a certain amount of water to the fields at a distance and irrigate them; and I hope I may not be a blot on the landscape!

MR. GONZÁLEZ JIMÉNEZ (speaking in French): This year, there is not much to say regarding the visible work of the Venezuela Branch. A recital of outer activities, is not, I think, necessarily of interest. Our meetings have continued as usual, and the publication of our magazine follows the same initial plan and purpose. This morning, Mr. Johnston gave a brief survey of the history of the Movement, and in this respect we can say that *El Teosofo* has made that history known in our language: the Spanish-speaking world knows that The Theosophical Society exists—that our real Theosophical Society exists. This is a work of preparation for the future.

During the past year, the Venezuela Branch has occupied itself with special interest in the study of Christianity—a truly significant point—at the same time making a comparison with Buddhism.

Our Branch is, in effect, a corporate body in which there has always been a strong foreign contingent. Therefore, we think that this fraternal characteristic will be maintained, perhaps the more readily to deliver the work into the hands of future and better workers when the hour for the new outpouring shall arrive.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. González Jiménez is very modest about speaking to us in English, and yet we may recall that four times a year the magazine, *El Teosofo*, appears, filled largely with translations that he himself has made for the benefit of his Spanish speaking brothers,—translations not only of articles in the QUARTERLY, but from *Five Years of Theosophy* and the standard literature of the past. The work that he has done in making articles and books known, which otherwise would have remained inaccessible except in English—the labour of it—fills some of us with very sincere admiration. It is to him and his brothers of the Venezuela Branch that we are indebted to-day for these beautiful white roses (pointing to a vase on the Chairman's table).

We want next to hear from Mr. Box of Los Angeles. Some of us remember with great pleasure the last time—though it was years ago—that we had the privilege of having Mr. Box with us at a Convention.

MR. BOX: Naturally there is much that I should like to say but that there is not time to say, even had I the ability to say it. There are one or two things that I should like to condense, and in doing so, partly put my own feelings into words. From the very beginning, this morning, we have had admonition after admonition poured out upon us, so, if I speak personally, for myself, my whole body is bruised and aches, every inch of it, from these admonitions. But it is good for us! In trying to give a clear idea to myself of what they should mean to us, I recall the days before industry had reached the heights of productivity and the means for getting at resources and processes that it has now. In these days, the quality of the steel with which the automobiles, we now so luxuriously ride in, are built, is chemically determined. It passes through laboratory refining processes until a certain degree of perfection, of durability, strength, elasticity, and so on is obtained. Years ago, I can remember quite well, in the very early days of industry, when a good piece of tempered steel was wanted, the blacksmith would take a bar of inferior steel—presumably steel that felt something like we have felt at times. He would put it in a fire and very calmly blow the bellows, and sparks would stream up. After a while he would pull the bar out from the fire and smash and smash away at it on the anvil, and then return it to the fire again; and he would do this repeatedly until he got the right temper and texture in that steel, so that he could give it a cutting edge. For the process was a long one. He had to repeat and repeat it. When the steel got sufficiently cool on the anvil, so that it could no longer be beaten, he would put it in the fire again, then take it out and pound and

pound until finally it was ready to use for his purpose. It was a single article, not the mass production you get to-day. When finished, it was perfect steel.

These Conventions remind me of that process. As I listened to the speakers this morning pouring out these admonitions upon us, I could well imagine steel going into the fire and being hammered and hammered away. I saw one of the older members get up and pound away at us and sit down calmly; during the interval, if there was one, the steel was put into the fire and warmed up again. That is the process—between Conventions is the time when the steel is lying in the fire getting gradually warmed up, and then we come here and are beaten out. I imagined the Executive Committee, with those nearest to them, calmly waiting between Conventions, as the blacksmith did for the steel to heat. If only they could be so sure as he that we ever should get heated,—so finely tempered, so pliant, so willing but unbreakable, so fit for the Masters' use! . . . That is why I came from Los Angeles,—to go through that process.

In speaking this way, perhaps I echo the feelings of other delegates here. Mine is a very commonplace illustration, but it is forceful. Calling up the image of a blacksmith makes my illustration all the more forceful. There is another side to it: I have come all this way, to get the keynote of the Convention three months ahead. Of course, we do not really hear the Convention at the time. We have to listen inwardly to get the keynote. Sometimes we get a half tone, sufficient to awaken overtones or to get undertones, and by the time the QUARTERLY is out, we are ready to take it in better. But we do not hear the full tone until the QUARTERLY is published.

I should like to say what the keynote has been to me, because I have to take it back. We need it in our Branch work. It is one of the responsibilities I assumed when I left Los Angeles. I have to take it back with your help. All the morning, the speeches that the older members have made have been striking that keynote on us as an instrument. Without us as an instrument, that keynote would not be sounded. So we are all necessary to this keynote, every one of us. To go back to what the keynote has seemed to me to be: several days before I started, I visited the group of Spanish members that are now assembled in Los Angeles, forming a study centre of their own. I told them where I was going, what my intention was. Of course they had little idea of what Convention is—such a Convention as this—and so I had to give them some idea, some impression of what a Convention is or should be. I appealed to them in this way: most of you will be familiar, even though you do not attend church, with the Lenten season and with what should take place during the Lenten season, and what should take place when the Lenten season has ended. It should be the natural time of preparation for the inner life to come anew to each one of us on Easter morning, if we are ready to receive it. In the same way, our Conventions are an actual living expression of nature's own Easter. So I tried to make them feel from that illustration what the Convention is and should be to all of us here, and to them when I go back; and what should be the spirit that I would carry back to them.

This morning, you noticed the trend of the different speakers—the message that Mr. Johnston gave us about the door opening at the end of fifty years, a door, a way, practically to immortal life, open to us. It seemed to me that the Easter and Lenten meaning of the Convention was complete. The keynote seems to me to be the rolling away of the stone. There are its other overtones. One is faith; another is courage; another is sacrifice. Those three, we cannot do without. With those three, we shall do what we were enjoined to do,—call down "fire from heaven."

I should like to say something in regard to Branch work—the Branch work of the past. Doubtless there are some of the delegates who, during the past decade or less, have seen their membership dwindle down and down, until perhaps there are only one or two left, and it has seemed as though the end of things is coming,—and you went on and found that it was not so. You may not have picked yourselves up completely. You may not be where you wish to be; but let me tell you, if you are only one, there are two chélas there, maybe three, so that the Masters can be with you. If there were two there, there must have been a chéla there to make the third—"Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." That you are here is proof positive that you have been cared for. Let us never forget that, that we are being cared for.

Another point is the difficulty of Branch work in the conflict of outside life that is trying to

pour itself in upon us at the present time. That is particularly so in Los Angeles. As to myself personally, very much disinclined to preside in meetings, very sensitive in the Chair (I would rather be anywhere else), I may say that in such moments I have learned something that I should never have learned in any other place and circumstances. We are told that what we are, counts. The work that we are enabled to do will depend upon how we go about our work in our daily life, upon how we conduct ourselves. Sometimes that is not apparent, but in Branch work it may become very clear to us in this way: we have members of other organizations coming to us; they had been used to being fed psychically in various ways, by various forms of psychic stimulus. They are apt, when they come in touch with us, to try to make their own glamour,—make the thing that they want, because they fail to see at the moment the real thing. The impact upon the Branch is the thing we feel. That is the test for myself and for my fellow workers in Los Angeles (say for Mr. Leonard, who works perhaps harder than any other member in our centre)—the great test for us—a common test—you may have felt it: such tests come! We were warned against dogmatism this morning, warned against many things that outsiders coming to us, bear with them. If we have any trace of dogmatism in our nature, it will respond to it. It is almost inevitable that in our efforts to deal with the situation we shall become dogmatic. The great work for us to do in Branch is so to purify our own lives that anything that comes from the outside in that way, falls dead at our feet. That is the source of strength in Branch work,—I may say the only source of strength in Branch work.

I should like to thank, if I possibly could, the older members in New York, and to let them feel, if only ever so little—I think they do feel it—they *must* feel it—our gratitude toward them. It is not that we feel lonely—they have looked after that. They do not often write us letters, but that does not make any difference; we do not feel lonely. As a delegate on behalf of Los Angeles, I should like to say this: Of course, I am supposed to carry something with me to give to you, and I am supposed to take something back. The only thing that I can think of to do and to give, is to renew our allegiance to those older members for all that we may be worth, all that we have in us, even our failures to live up to their expectations. And I want to carry back something of the love that stood back of the admonitions that we heard this morning; something of the fire that brought temper to the steel,—because that is what it should do to us before we break up.

THE CHAIRMAN: I trust that among the things that Mr. Box takes back to his Branch and is able to give to them from us, is our sincere gratitude for what he has brought to us at this Convention, from himself and from them. May we hear from Miss Evans?

MISS EVANS: I bring the very cordial and sincere greetings of the Denver Branch to the Convention. We have very little to report. We are holding our meetings steadily, fortnightly. We are a very small Branch, but we feel that our meetings are a great benefit to those who attend them. I think Mr. Box has spoken quite as much for us as for the Los Angeles Branch, and I shall try to take back exactly what he has mentioned. One thing has not been mentioned, and that is that from the small Branch meetings, we all go forth to a rather diversified field of activity, and while we do not get a great accession of members to our circle, we do get a great response and awakening to whatever of the theosophical thought and spirit we are able to assimilate and carry out in practice.

MISS McCORMACK: I am pleased to say a few words on behalf of the Cincinnati Branch. We are endeavouring to hold together in the ranks assigned to us, and to carry forward the work of the Masters. We have public meetings and also a *Secret Doctrine* Study Class. The Study Class is conducted by Miss Hohnstedt's brother, and as Miss Hohnstedt is associated with her brother very closely in that study, I am going to ask you to call on her for that phase of the work.

For myself personally: I was talking to someone not allied with our Society, and was overjoyed to receive a tribute to H. P. B. A man I know had been reading the *Secret Doctrine*, and when he got through, said to a friend that from what he had read, H. P. B. was, in his opinion, the most wonderful woman the ages had produced.

MISS HOHNSTEDT: I think I shall have to start from where we left off last year,—the *Secret Doctrine* Class. We went on with it this year, and got as far as the fourth Sloka of the sixth

Stanza. One idea that we had in mind in having the classes was to impress those who came, with the idea of discipleship—really to live the life. We have not succeeded as well as we should have liked, but people tell us how much they get from our explanations of the Stanzas. We are so grateful to be able to do it—so grateful that the members want it. They do not want us to stop. We were supposed to adjourn next Tuesday, but three or four want to keep it up this summer, so I suppose we shall do so. I want to say how much the talks to-day have impressed me. Convention has always been a red letter day in my life. It means so much to me to be here.

MR. LYONS: I am afraid that Professor Mitchell calls on me simply out of his abundant charity—no one, however small, is to be forgotten. I was a member of the Cincinnati Branch, and what little I have learned of Theosophy I have learned largely from Professor Mitchell and Mr. Johnston. I also want to say that I had a great deal of quiet assistance from Miss Hohnstedt. I do not think you know what Theosophy owes to her, in her quiet way,—doing her duty every day and doing it as a matter of course,—seeing the thing that ought to be done and seeing that it is done. Up where I am now living, in the foothills of the Catskills, the few who have heard of Theosophy have an idea that it is a sort of spiritualist arrangement, with a Hindu fakir attachment. I try to remove that impression. I am heartily glad that circumstances made it possible for me to be here to-day.

MR. WAFFENSMITH: I can hardly add to what Miss Hohnstedt and Miss McCormack have said about our work in Cincinnati. I am certainly grateful that Mrs. Waffensmith and I were able to attend this Convention; it is our first, and I hope there may be many more. I am filled with joy to overflowing; it feels like a boy coming home. The members of the Cincinnati Branch are earnest workers. We have tried hard with the *Secret Doctrine* Study Class, and we are going to keep it up this summer. It has given us a better understanding.

MRS. ROSE: I wish I knew a foreign language, because English is inadequate—I want to say how happy we all are; and then I am dumb. Hope Branch is holding its own. We have our meetings twice a month, in the evening; and our Study Class; and we have the reports of the New York Branch meetings. Sometimes we feel that we understand them, at other times we are sure we do not; but we try hard and are grateful. There is an old hymn with a couple of lines that go, "The trivial round, the common task, will furnish all we need to ask." There was a time when I wondered what stupid, uninteresting, disagreeable person wrote those words, but in the light of Theosophy there is much in them that I need to learn, and I am glad I realize it.

MRS. LAKE: I want simply to reinforce all that Mrs. Rose has said—that we are trying to do what little we can in Providence, for to every one of us the Branch means the greatest thing in our lives. We come down here for the enlightening of our understanding, for courage to go on; and I am sure we are all going back with increased courage and with a better understanding, and with a feeling that, in a way, perhaps it is not so hard,—because it is just the living, in the light of Theosophy, of the little things that come to us every day. I feel that every one of us is trying to do it.

MRS. WAFFENSMITH: I am grateful for the courage I have received to-day, to go on and try to live the life, doing the best I understand.

MRS. REGAN: I really do not know what would happen if I could not come to Convention.

MR. DANNER: As I came into the room this morning, I saw that it was just about full; and someone said, "The family is all here." Then I thought of something that I heard just a short time ago, in an address: "There are lots of houses, there are lots of families, but there are very few homes." It helped me to realize that this is a real home. I look forward to the Convention as one of the happiest days in every year. It has been made doubly happy to-day by the presence of delegates from across the seas and from the West. We have known them by name, but now we may look them in the face and shake their hands.

I have asked myself, what is the Convention held for; why do the older members and the New York Branch take so much time to prepare for our home-coming? I feel that the thing to which they give most careful consideration must be,—what they are going to put into our hearts; how they can give us some personal contact with that reality which the Society in Convention wants to broadcast to those who are not privileged to come here. So, as delegates, we come,

first of all, to be strengthened, that we may more lovingly, consistently serve the Masters; second, to gain the strength to go back and support the Society in every way that we possibly can; third, to receive such inspiration as will make us think rightly, speak rightly, and act rightly at all times,—a trinity of interest.

MRS. DANNER: Our Branch has been going on, slowly and steadily, every week. I was thinking to-day that I do not see anything to be encouraged about particularly. Then I thought back a year, and it seemed like the growth of a little baby. You cannot see it from day to day, but if you look back a year, there is quite a growth.

MR. DOWER: When the Syracuse Branch was organized, some 30 years ago, it ranked as one of the strongest Branches, and did valiant work for Theosophy. Since then, its most active workers have either died or moved away, and it becomes increasingly difficult to maintain any outer work. But one can still try to be of help to the individuals with whom one comes in contact—thus making Theosophy a power in life. It is encouraging that people with whom one first discussed our philosophy many years ago are now beginning to wake up to the meaning of its teachings. As isolated members, we have to realize that there is no such thing as failure,—taking to heart those words attributed to H. P. B.: Hang on, with a bull-dog grip.

MR. BRYANT: When Mr. Box sat down, I lost myself for a while in contemplation of what it might mean to be a bit of metal, adjudged worthy of the ministrations of these blacksmiths of whom he spoke! I have not yet progressed far enough with my study of Theosophy to be able to discuss it glibly,—or at all, as a matter of fact; but I should like to register, along with Mr. Danner, my appreciation of the welcome one receives here. I was here only once before, and now, having been away for several years, I am made to feel as if I had not been away at all, but had been accustomed to come from infancy.

DR. TORREY: Sometime ago I was talking with one of the grand old men of science—an anthropologist and an authority on the Swiss Lake Dwellers—who remarked: "In my day we thought Huxley and Tyndall and Haeckel had got it all worked out; we knew the atoms were little hard billiard-balls tumbling around, and that before long the scientists would clear up all the dark places. And now you youngsters are smashing it all in pieces again. Good, good, something big will come out of it." There spoke a living man—one of those green trees to which reference was made this morning.

Yes, something will come out of it, but we must not make the mistake of thinking that science is ready to take the attitude toward the world which we consider so desirable and so necessary. Materialism is a state of mind, and the "materialistic complex" is not removed by reducing the universe to a finer and finer basis.

From time to time the QUARTERLY, in masterly editorials, points out among the "signs of the times" the advances which bring modern science into closer accord with the teachings of the *Secret Doctrine*. Yet the scientific mind which sees a vibrating billiard-ball atom as dead, is not going to see a solar-system atom as living,—an interesting analogy to the sun and its planets perhaps, but merely a curious coincidence and without significance. Science can speak calmly of the neutron which results from the contact of proton and electron; it can admit that such a neutron, having no properties, is a purely metaphysical concept, and it can still remain blind to the significance of the *crux ansata* which stands in the centre of our seal. Truly, as we have been told, it is possible to go through the universe and "see but the covers of a closed book."

It is just such scientists who occupy most of our college chairs. They make everything unreal, and they bring up "a bunch of deadheads" after their own pattern. They are probably honest men, honestly convinced that they are extirpating superstition and guiding society toward a paradise of refined, sensuous indulgence.

This spring we have been shocked by an epidemic of suicide among college youth. What is it but the natural response to this doctrine of death—youth's wild defiance of such a godless, hopeless creed. Youth comes to us still trailing its clouds of glory, and it listens eagerly to voices which remind it of its recent home. It is from this youth of superior endowment that we must try to develop a teaching corps of living trees, so that, as the dead trunks fall, these sturdy saplings may take their place in the academic world.

DR. CLARK: Dr. Torrey did not tell the Convention of a second study class that has started up in a nearby University, as a result of the study class which he conducts.



MISS RICHMOND: I want to add my note of gratitude for the immense privilege of being here to-day. We have a great deal to take away with us from this Convention. The fruits of the Convention are not for ourselves alone, but for all men.

MRS. FIELD: I want to express appreciation of the work that has been and is being carried on at Headquarters. It is the great central power house of spiritual energy, the great broadcasting station for the Masters' message, and I believe that there are many individuals scattered hither and yon over the world who are receiving according to the measure of their capacity, the glad message that is sent, not only through the QUARTERLY, but through the lives and consciousness of members.

MR. ARMSTRONG: It certainly is a pleasure to attend another Convention of The Theosophical Society. As one of the younger members of the New York Branch, it is a great privilege to be here. I think it was Mr. Box who spoke about the refining of steel, and it seemed to me an admirable illustration, which perhaps might be carried even further, in a different way. The method of refining steel by which it was put into the fire and drawn out and hammered, was a method of removing carbon and some other impurities from crude iron. The removal of that carbon converted the crude iron into steel. Modern industry does exactly the same thing, but much more expeditiously and in larger quantity. Perhaps some of you have seen a Bessemer converter. It is a pot into which they put many tons of molten iron. Then they put in air, under pressure, which bubbles up through the molten iron; flames spurt out at the top, thirty or forty feet, and burn out the carbon and other impurities. Troubles and trials, which some have spoken of, are a way in which human nature is refined—by burning out the impurities—and it seems to me that we might also consider these Conventions of The Theosophical Society as a means to burn out impurities, but more rapidly than by the experiences of every day.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the Convention will wish to hear from the Chairman of the New York Branch, Mr. Perkins.

MR. PERKINS: There has been in my mind the picture of a great mountain range, over across a valley, far away. I could see, on the mountain slopes, a great many trails, all leading up to a single point where they came together; and that single point was a high pass between snow-clad peaks, that led away through the distance to something beyond. That picture seemed to represent something of what has been given us to-day in this Convention. We came to it over those individual trails, and here we have been brought together and led, one day's journey, along that high path which goes on over the pass. We have been told, and we know, that ahead of us on that trail, leading into the future from this Convention, are the footsteps of those of our own number who have gone before; and ahead of them, the footsteps of those great Ones who have called us and called our fellows to that trail. As we go out from this Convention, with the call that we have heard ringing in our hearts, I am sure that we may feel and ought to feel that it is the call to adventurers. We know, and the whole world of men has always known, that a trail which leads straight from where a man is, to his heart's desire—to the heart of life itself, if he be bold enough to travel that trail—is going to be a path of difficulties, obstacles and hardships. We, of this Convention, know that it is also a trail of fellowship, and we know that beside the fellowship that we gain from each other and from the older students in the Movement, we have the fellowship, the guidance, the inspiration, the help, in hard and dangerous moments, of the Masters,—yes; and also of H. P. B. and Mr. Judge and Mr. Giscorn, and all those others who have gone over that trail and have helped to make it plain for us, who have given of their life substance to make it safer for us, and who are calling us to move forward.

MRS. DANNER then expressed regret that no direct mention had been made during the Convention of that great Theosophist, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and quoted his poem, beginning, "Be of good cheer, brave spirit; steadfastly—"

MR. MITCHELL: Before the Convention adjourns, may I move the thanks of the Convention and the thanks of The Theosophical Society to the Editors of the QUARTERLY? It is not necessary to say anything about that motion. I know we are all saying it in our own hearts.

MR. BOX: If it is not too late, I should like to make a motion that thanks be extended also to the writers for the QUARTERLY. When I started out from Los Angeles, I thought (even if it were

not literally expressed) that I was coming to the atmosphere where Cavé writes, and to where the writers of the "Letters to Friends" are. All that feeling is behind my desire to thank the writers of the QUARTERLY.

A motion to discharge, with the thanks of the Convention, the Committee on Credentials and the Committee on Resolutions, was made, seconded, and carried. The Convention was then adjourned.

ISABEL E. PERKINS,  
*Secretary of Convention.*  
 JULIA CHICKERING,  
*Assistant Secretary of Convention.*

### LETTERS OF GREETING

OCUMARE DEL FUY, VENEZUELA.

*To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled, New York:* Dear Fellow-Members: The members of the "Altagracia de Orituco" Branch have the pleasure to send to you the most cordial congratulations on the great occasion of your meeting. We are pleased to reiterate our loyal and firm adhesion to the Masters and their Cause, and request the Masters' blessings may descend upon your hearts.

Fraternally and sincerely yours,  
 ACISCLO VALEDON,  
*Secretary.*

AUSSIG, CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.

*To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:* Responding to the summons, "Let us all make a new beginning," we contemplate ourselves and the tasks with which we are confronted in consequence of the circumstances of our environment, the latter having received a demoralizing tendency by the unhappy conclusion of the treaty of peace of Versailles. Being members of the German nation we became aware of the bearing of our responsibility to recognize the truth about our nation, about the war and its issues, and to wear out the consequences of our failure in the beginning of the Great War.

Anew we begin to prepare ourselves for the next run, which will be the final one in that cycle. We recognize with increasing plainness the generous and enduring support and readiness of our far advanced American fellow-members to help us in that battle, to provide us with power and force and to widen our consciousness, and we thank our leaders for that from the depth of our hearts. We bow down before the Masters—that well of power and energy—and we beseech and pray to them, as the custodians of that spiritual treasure, that they may incite our will to incandescence and may help us to embody their will into all our acts, to coalesce and to unite our will with their will.

Fifty-two years of The Theosophical Society! Entertaining that thought, we feel genuine thankfulness and stand in awe before our privilege. The summons of the last Convention, "Let us all make a new beginning," has an inspiring and an irresistible virtue. During the whole year we have drawn force, stimulus and encouragement from that watchword. We believe that when that summons shall be embodied from day to day, the vision of our loved H. P. B. will find consummation, i.e. that earth will be a heaven in the twenty-first century in comparison with what it is now!

With best wishes from all Branch members, I am,

Fraternally yours,  
 HERMANN ZERNDT,  
*President, Aussig Branch T. S.*

## WHITLEY BAY, ENGLAND.

*To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled*, the members of the Whitley Bay Branch send fraternal greetings. The date of the Convention marks the progress of time, but, what is more important, it marks the progress of modern thought towards the ideals and aims of The Theosophical Society. Slowly but very surely, the teachings of Theosophy are permeating the literature of our time, and minds seem more ready to understand and grasp the significance of that teaching. The past sowing of the seeds can be seen in the widening and broadening of many minds in their search for truth.

Let us therefore, as active members of The Theosophical Society, continue to sow, with our ideals held firmly before us. No member who holds these ideals firmly can fail to grow, and each having grown even in a small degree, all men can ultimately be lifted up, towards that ever present ideal of Universal Brotherhood. May the deliberations of the members be a step towards that end, is the sincere desire of the members of the Whitley Bay Branch.

Yours fraternally,

FREDK. A. ROSS,  
*President, Blavatsky Lodge.*

## CINCINNATI, OHIO.

*To the Members in Convention Assembled at New York*: Dear Fellow-Members:—With great pleasure I extend to you the sincere greetings of Cincinnati Theosophists. I consider the Convention a fitting expression of that great symbol,—the statue of Liberty, in New York harbour, holding aloft the Torch of Enlightenment to the World. "The enlightenment of Truth will set you free."

With kind regards, I remain

Fraternally,

GUY MANNING,  
*President.*

## GATESHEAD-ON-TYNE, ENGLAND.

*To the Members in Convention Assembled*, the Gateshead members send their greetings and wish you a good and fruitful meeting. We send our best wishes, and our thoughts will be with you during the time of Convention and you will have of our best.

Fraternally yours,

P. W. WARD,  
*Secretary, W. Q. Judge Lodge.*

## INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA.

*Dear Miss Perkins*, We hold no meetings but are as firm in our faith as ever and wish to be represented in the meeting on April 30th. . . . Wishing you a profitable and most successful Convention, I am,

Yours fraternally,

MAHLON D. BUTLER,  
*Secretary.*

## INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA.

*Miss Perkins, Secretary*: Good wishes to all attending the Convention. I hope they may carry sweet memories away with them that will be lasting.

F. W. BRINKER.

SANFERNANDO DE APURE, VENEZUELA.

*To the T. S. in Convention Assembled:* The members of the "Jehoshua" Branch send fraternal greetings. We are sure that your deliberations will be a flood of blessings coming through the hands of the Masters, and that these blessings will reach each one of us.

Sincerely and fraternally yours,

D. SALAS BAÍZ,  
President.

*To the Members of the T. S. in Convention Assembled:* The Members of the Krishna Branch, South Shields, England, send greetings and earnest wishes for the success of the Convention.

Yours fraternally,

HANNAH MAUGHAN,  
Secretary.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.

*To the Officers and Members, Theosophical Society, in Annual Convention Assembled:* The officers and members of Pacific Branch, Theosophical Society, extend to you a cordial greeting, with the pledge of faithful service in the Cause of the Masters.

There is a tide just once in human life, when willingness to accept the Truth gives the opportunity, before the tide ebbs,—when some again will not care to hear it. All men are rising up or falling down, are building up or tearing down, and if one is not garnering the Truth, he is throwing it away. An opportunity has gone, and he must wait until the ages roll again before the fires of life are fanned into a living flame, when the door is opened again to him. Perchance he may again and again slight the opportunity which confronts him, for which he has waited for ages, and yet "seeing he does not see, and hearing he does not understand," blinded and deluded by his illusive tree of life, nurtured with dews of self and mists of carnal things,—with its generous crop of leaves and hanging boughs of fruit, which are fair to look upon: his thoughts the leaves, his deeds the fruit. Those who have plucked the fruit have found it full of bitterness, with decay at the core; and in time the tree will wither and die, but to resurrect again, if one does not seize his opportunity now, when the door is open and the living flame before him!

Sincerely and fraternally yours,

ALFRED L. LEONARD,  
Secretary of Pacific Branch.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.

*To the Members of The Theosophical Society at the Annual Convention in New York City,—* with our very best wishes. It is with the greatest of pleasure that we address you these few lines of greeting,—we, a group of a small Spanish class, formed under the good auspices of the Pacific Branch in Los Angeles. Allow us to convey by the means of our Mr. Box, all our sincere wishes for the great cause with which we feel proud to be affiliated. Spanish-America offers an extensive field for spiritual work. What we need, it appears, is to foment these sentiments in the proper way, and of course we are obliged to throw this burden upon our elder fellow-members.

The majority of the writings concerning Theosophy have not been translated into Spanish, and some that have, are without the true interpretation of the subject; again others are from authors that are not a credit to the cause. Mr. González Jiménez of Caracas, Venezuela, has placed himself in a distinguished position, and we all hope he may continue to give us more writings and fine translations. Believe us when we speak of our pride to belong to a Society where bombastic methods and extravagant theories are not taken into consideration, and to

the one that with perseverance and tenacity without interruption, has continued to follow the delineations so well marked by our beloved H. P. B.

Yours fraternally,

FRANCISCO NARANJO,  
G. FIGUEROA DEL VALLE,  
F. CONTRERAS,  
MAURICIO MORALES,

RAF. G. SANCHEZ FACIO,  
SALVADOR VIASQUEZ,  
TERESA RODRIGUEZ,  
R. CARTU.

MIDDLETOWN, OHIO.

*To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:* Please accept our heartiest and sincerest wishes for this, another year's Convention. It seems but a short time back, in fact only a few days, since we were planning for the last Convention. Owing to present circumstances, we are unable to be present at this wonderful assembly, except in spirit; and indeed the members of the Middletown Branch will be with you in spirit throughout the session. Without a doubt our own dear Mrs. Gordon will be unable to attend in body, this time.

We know that the Great Masters will be ever present, and they will see and be able to make known to us the very best things for the good of all of us.

Yours fraternally,

ROSSIE JANE WHITTLE,  
*Secretary, Middletown Branch.*

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, ENGLAND.

*To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:* It is a great pleasure to the members of our Branch to have a personal ambassador or representative, in Mrs. Bagnell, to convey our message of greeting and goodwill to you on this occasion. We feel that personal contact is a great deal, and we are sure that Mrs. Bagnell will convey to you more at first hand, as it were—something of our life and work here in England, and of our eager participation in each Convention as it comes round—than we are able to do by the written word. Let it suffice then for me to say that the seeds we have tried to sow have not altogether fallen on stony ground, and that the right spirit and the right attitude, arising out of individual preparation and growth, have given us vision and strength to carry on the Work more efficiently. We therefore joyfully greet you, being sure that this present gathering will be one of inspiration and delight.

On behalf of the Members of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Branch,

Yours fraternally,

E. HOWARD LINCOLN,  
*President.*

NORFOLK, ENGLAND.

*Dear Miss Perkins,* I feel that I need say very little about our year's work, as our President, Mrs. Bagnell, is going to New York for the Convention, and will be able to report in person. Though our Branch is small in numbers, I think we grow in understanding and in sympathy, year by year, and our teachings, both those we derive from our own study, and from the QUARTERLY, enable us to observe, and to understand the meaning of life, better than we have done formerly. We have recognized in those around us, especially recently, much of a true Theosophical spirit, and this gives us great hope for the future.

It is a great sorrow to me to be unable to be with you in person, but I shall be there in spirit, and my thoughts will be with you all on the 30th.

With my sincere regards, and my best wishes,

Yours fraternally,

ALICE GRAVES,  
*Secretary, Norfolk Branch.*

(Mrs. Graves also cabled: "Greetings and best wishes for Convention.")

TORONTO, CANADA.

*To the Secretary T. S.:* Toronto Branch sends greetings and all good wishes to fellow-members in Convention assembled. While circumstances here prevent the holding of regular meetings, still a good deal of effective work is done, first by the effort to live the life and thus act as pioneers of Theosophic living in the different activities of daily life to which duty calls us; and then by suggestions as to where a satisfactory answer may be found to the problems of daily life, and by the distribution of the *QUARTERLY*. The *QUARTERLY* is splendid; we are proud of it, and know it must be very helpful to all who read it. If a suggestion may be permitted, some of us think it would be well if each number contained at least one article dealing with the elementary philosophical teachings of Theosophy, of which the article on "Karma and Reincarnation; A beginner's view," printed in the last issue, is an excellent example.

It appears to us that there is no better way of combating the present trend towards Socialism and such mistaken notions, than by placing before the people some satisfactory solution of the many apparent injustices from which they think they suffer. However mistaken the attempt to right things from the outside, we must realize that often good intentions underlie the effort—good intentions going to waste. There is so much strife and often bitterness among the churches, to say nothing of different opinions, that many are becoming indifferent to ordinary religious teaching and there is a marked interest being shown in any so-called new theories. Foremost among these is the idea of Reincarnation, the mention of which is to be found so often in newspapers and magazines, and generally in a sympathetic manner. The teaching of Karma follows naturally, and it would seem that members have much opportunity to encourage thought along these lines. It appears to us that a stranger, or one but little acquainted with Theosophy, looking through the *QUARTERLY* in a Public Library, would almost surely be attracted first to such an article as the above mentioned, and would thereby get some good food for thought.

With kindest regards,  
Fraternally yours,  
ALBERT J. HARRIS.

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*Dear Miss Perkins:* Please extend very hearty greetings to the Convention for me, as I shall be unable to attend.

With best wishes,  
Sincerely,  
M. T. GORDON.

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RAPALLO, ITALY.

*To The Theosophical Society in Annual Convention in New York City:* Greeting and renewed thanks for the knowledge and inspiration you have given me. Some months ago, I found and bought a book recommended warmly in the pages of the *QUARTERLY*—*An Introduction to the Devout Life*, by St. Francis de Sales—and find it a perfect treasure-house of divine wisdom. In reading it, I am reminded of the saying, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

Fraternally yours,  
FLORA J. HENRY.

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LA GUAYRA, VENEZUELA.

*To the Convention of The Theosophical Society,* Honoured companions: I write these lines in order to send to you my most cordial and fervent salutations, on the occasion of your meeting in solemn Convention on April 30, 1927, in New York City.

In order to share in your coöperative labours for the spiritual welfare and elevation of the world, I express my most sincere wish that Divine Providence may guide and illumine our

minds, in order that a more perfect and effective true coöperation for the ideals of The Theosophical Society may be happily carried out and maintained without relaxation.

Sincerely and fraternally yours,

J. MELITÓN QUINTANA.

BERLIN-WILMERSDORF, GERMANY.

*To the Members of the T. S. in Convention Assembled:* We send our brotherly greetings and our sincerest wishes for a successful Convention.

The Convention of last year had most valuable things to teach us, and but recently did we finish the study of its record in the *QUARTERLY*. We are deeply impressed by its vivifying spirit, and feel thankful that by heaven's mercy we, as Germans, may so serve (as suggested by Mr. Woodbridge) that the world may follow the way pointed out by the Convention. We pray to the Master for wisdom and strength in order to meet the events of the future in the right spirit.

Our work here during the past year was chiefly built upon the study of older and more recent articles from the *QUARTERLY*. It has, as we believe, strengthened and illumined the consciousness of our responsibility towards the T. S. and our own nation. We are thankful for every help which enables us to see more clearly the situation of our nation and of ourselves, and we express therefore once more our grateful feelings for the unanimous resolution of the last Convention which can so well serve as a finger-post, and is built upon adherence to spiritual principles. With grateful reminiscence may be mentioned a very agreeable event of last year, i.e. the private visit of Colonel Knoff who has given us fresh suggestions and answers to our questions.

As in preceding years we will again unite in our efforts to identify ourselves with the Convention, to share as much as we possibly can in its spirit, its work and its light.

Fraternally yours,

OSKAR STOLL,

ALFRED FRIEDEWALD.

BERLIN, GERMANY.

*To the Members of the T. S. in Convention Assembled:* We convey our hearty greetings and good wishes for the successful working of the Annual Convention. We express our thanks for the help that we were given last year by the *QUARTERLY*, the articles of which, from recent and also more remote times, were our subject of study during the expiring year. We feel deeply in debt because of many warnings in wartime, and regret the attitude of the German Branch of old, but see in the circumstances of to-day the serious duty and great opportunity of working in life for the victory of the cause of the Lodge. We shall try our best to realize the facts of history and to study the Bryce report which is commemorated in the *QUARTERLY*.

The fight is against materialism in moral, practical and theoretical fields. We wish to become by our efforts more useful instruments as privates of the great Commander, the Lord Jesus Christ.

With cordial greetings, we are faithfully yours,

OTTO IHRKE,

RICHARD WALTHER,

OTTO BETHGE.

BERLIN, GERMANY.

*Miss Isabel E. Perkins, Secretary, The Theosophical Society, New York:* With heartiest greetings to all present at the Convention: I hope and believe, that in the trials which I have gone through during the past twelve months, I have served in the Master's Work, and I shall not cease to use in our mutual labour the assistance which I have received.

With my whole heart I am with you in your Convention, although, unfortunately, not in person, as my projected journey to your city has become impossible.

Very truly yours,

F. WEBER.

BERLIN, GERMANY.

*To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:* Warriors for Theosophy, for divine Truth, for divine Right, make no compromise with counterfeit saints and hypocrites; for altogether without doubt Germany is the breeding place of Evil: the form has changed; the spirit, unfortunately, is still the same. The few in Germany are too weak, and are further threatened by the danger of this same demoniac, self-seeking spirit, infecting them without their suspecting it.

May the blessing of the Masters give strength and knowledge to all; this is the heartfelt wish of

IDA SCHEERER,

OTTO SCHEERER.

TRIESTE, ITALY.

*To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled at New York:* Our little circle of only three members-at-large (Mr. Todini has been transferred to Turin) sends its fraternal greetings and best good wishes to all the dear fellow-members in Convention assembled.

We are still very few, but hope that this little seed may not be completely lost in the course of time. We thank especially our dear corresponding comrades for the spiritual help and encouragement they give us. May the Master's blessing bring us the necessary strength to keep faithful in his Way in our loneliness and in these dark times.

Fraternally and sincerely yours,

ALBERTO PLISNIER,

TERESA PLISNIER,

JENNY MUSSAFIA.

RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL.

*To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:* Dear Comrades: Please accept our heartiest greetings and best wishes for the success of the present Convention.

Sincerely and fraternally yours,

ELISABETH SCHOCH,

LEO SCHOCH.



# REVIEWS

*The Great Upanishads*, Volume I, translated by Charles Johnston; The Quarterly Book Department, New York; price \$1.50.

We may surmise that the motive which inspired this translation of the Great Upanishads is to be found in certain statements, given on the authority of a Master of Wisdom, in *The Secret Doctrine*. We are there told that the Upanishads "contain the beginning and the end of all human knowledge, but they have ceased to reveal it, since the days of Buddha. . . . They were complete in those days, and were used for the instruction of the Chêlas who were preparing for Initiation" (Volume I, pages 290-292). We are further told that a master-key is required to enable the student to get at their full meaning.

*The Secret Doctrine* itself is such a master-key, and it is evident that the translator has made use of its teachings throughout, in interpreting the symbolism of the Upanishads, and has also had in mind the declaration just quoted, that the Upanishads were used for the instruction of Chêlas who were preparing for Initiation. This is notably the case in the very full introductions to the earlier Upanishads, where the translator seeks to shed light on the intellectual and practical problems of disciples.

As a result of this method of interpretation, two things become clear: first, that the Upanishads contain a luminous, consistent and inspiring spiritual teaching, which is in all essentials the same as the occult teaching set forth in *The Secret Doctrine*, on the authority of Masters of Wisdom; and, second, that without the aid of *The Secret Doctrine*, much of the teaching of the Upanishads would remain obscure, enigmatic, perhaps unintelligible.

Rightly interpreted, the Great Upanishads thus give a twofold support to *The Secret Doctrine*. They vindicate its effectiveness as a master-key to unlock the most mystical of ancient Oriental scriptures; and they show that the same occult teaching in all essentials is set forth in these authentic Sanskrit texts, which are without question several thousand years old.

The order followed in this translation is that which was established or accepted by the great Shankara Acharya, who was, according to *The Secret Doctrine*, "the greatest Initiate living in the historical ages"; and in many difficult passages the translator refers to the traditional interpretation handed down by the disciples of that great Initiate, in the commentaries and separate works attributed to him, but more probably the work of his disciples, written under his direction.

S. A. S.

*A Chinese Mirror*, by Florence Ayscough; Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston and New York, 1926; price, \$5.00.

Perhaps it would be a fair criticism of this charmingly printed and illustrated book to say that in stormy China, Florence Ayscough sees the rainbow but does not feel the rain. The book is idyllic, picturesque, breathing the autumnal fragrance of chrysanthemums; but it gives no insight into contemporary China, hardly an inkling that the smooth surface of the big sea of humanity is disturbed even by a ripple. Commenting on her title, the author tells us that a mirror in China is no mere sheet of glass. Even a modern plate-glass reflector is supposed to transform evil influences into good, and its metal predecessor was expected to reveal from the depth the reality behind any image projected upon its surface; "and so it is

that in the pages of this book I have tried to show certain realities of Chinese life as they have been manifested to me during the last quarter of a century."

The author is chiefly interested in the symbolism of buildings and their adornments, and the light which this symbolism throws on the cosmic conceptions of the Chinese; and, if we consent to forget the distresses of modern China, we may, as students of Oriental religions, find much of interest and value in the symbolism. Thus we are told that, according to the Chinese traditional view, the universe is based on, and subsists by, an ultimate Entity, the name of which rendered literally means the Grand Extreme. This Grand Extreme is absolutely immaterial, and as it operates in the process by which the material universe is produced in an invariable way, yet without intelligence and without will, it may be viewed as Law, as a fixed Order in which all the multifold and varied phenomena of the universe take place. This Ultimate Principle has operated from eternity, and now ceaselessly works, by a dynamic process in virtue of which animate and inanimate nature has existed from all eternity. This process is represented as pulsative, as a succession of active-expansive, and passive-intensive states; which succession never had a beginning. The Ultimate Principle, in its "active-expansive" operation, constitutes and produces the Yang or Positive Essence; in its "passive-intensive" operation, constitutes and produces the Yin or Negative Essence. This is very like the conception of Parabrahm in the Vedanta, with the eternal alternation of Manvantara and Pralaya.

Then there is a reflection of the Seven Principles: as in the region of cosmogony the Two Essences and the Five Elements are the source of all things, so in the region of psychology the Two Essences and the Five Virtues are the sources of all activities.

There are also traces of the teaching concerning Masters of Wisdom: "He who is enlightened, whose greatness we cannot fully know, is said to be filled with spiritual influences, which reveal to man all things transcendent." These are echoes of the past; the grim realities of the present are but faintly reflected in *A Chinese Mirror*; its author is a votary of "the godness of coloured clouds."

C. J.

*Concerning the Nature of Things*, by Sir William Bragg; published by G. Bell and Sons, London, 1925; price 7s. 6d.; also by Harper Brothers, New York; price \$3.00.

Sir William Bragg has published, in this book, the substance of six lectures delivered at the Royal Institution, concerning the latest investigations into the atomic theory. The lectures were not intended for experts, but rather for those with little previous knowledge of physics. The subject-matter is of intense interest to a wide audience, comprising many grades of intelligence, from children to expert scientists, who are keenly alive to the value of bringing the results of recent research within the comprehension of all. Sir William Bragg excels as a lecturer, by his clearness of exposition, and by a method of demonstration which is all his own. He has realized the difficulty of making scientific phenomena clear by means of drawings, in a two-dimensional plane; he has preferred to illustrate his theories by three-dimensional models, in which large round balls represent atoms. The advantage of such demonstration is seen in the fact that a great number of arrangements is possible, with his models, provided that his audience realizes that the question of relative size does not enter into the demonstration. By means of these models, and by illustration from every-day experience, the lecturer has opened up new avenues of knowledge for many who had not previously enquired into the "nature of things." He represents Nature as the builder, working by ordered array, to produce an infinite variety of structure. Recent discoveries in the use of X-rays and Radio-activity have changed the method of study, and made it possible to investigate the inner structure of substances; and the knowledge thus gained, from within, is more accurate than the observation of outer appearance.

Sir William Bragg refers to Lucretius, as an early exponent of the atomic theory; but Lucretius was not an original genius, as he owed his knowledge to the investigations of the Greek physicists of the fifth century B.C. They, in their turn, perhaps had access to far older sources of knowledge; modern scientific research is but a rediscovery of ancient truth, and, in all ages, scientists have attained, by intuition, to knowledge which is now being proved by scientific

experiment. The atomic theory, when its significance is first grasped, sometimes astounds the intelligence by its sheer simplicity. The different atoms differ from one another in the number of their attendant electrons, and "the immense variety of Nature can be resolved into a series of numbers." There is modern science reinforcing a profound and fundamental dictum of Pythagoras! The atoms are acted upon by the force of attraction, which causes them to cling together, and the force of motion, which keeps them in constant movement. This two-fold aspect of the atomic theory is illustrated by Sir William Bragg in his series of lectures, in which he presents his subject-matter in the most delightful and varied manner, with a keen appreciation of the beauty and wonder of Nature, and with a sense of humour that cannot fail to attract the attention and sympathy of his readers. Recent investigations into the nature of elements, simple experiments from every-day experience, observations of common objects, at rest or in motion, all serve to demonstrate his fundamental propositions.

The last three lectures are concerned with the nature of crystals, a subject which is fascinating in itself, and rendered intelligible to the non-expert by the profound knowledge and brilliant exposition of the lecturer. X-rays have shown the actual formation of crystals, though scientists are not experienced, as yet, in this method of analysis. But it is a marvellous conception that the structure of crystals is based on a regular geometrical pattern, and with a symmetry of arrangement which is capable of a definite number of variations. The beauty of the different crystals, and their variety of arrangement, which has appealed to scientists in all ages, was the subject recently of some delightful articles in the *QUARTERLY*.

Sir William Bragg concludes his lectures by showing that, though much has been discovered, there is yet a whole world of unexplored material, awaiting research and investigation. That idea must prove an incentive to many who have scarcely begun their scientific career. Perhaps the two initial qualities necessary to successful study are enthusiasm and a spirit of inquiry, and it is just those qualities which are aroused and stimulated by reading these lectures on the "Nature of Things."

S. C.

*The Story of Philosophy*, by Will Durant; Simon and Shuster; price, \$5.00.

This book has attained an extraordinary popularity during the few months since its publication. Its sale proves that Mr. Durant has successfully responded to a public demand for a readable history of philosophy. It is interesting that such a demand should exist.

A rare collection of qualities must be present to ensure an *enduring* success in so redoubtable an enterprise. Some of these Mr. Durant possesses in good measure; but much is required to write a great history of philosophy, whether it be popular or not. History is the science of discovering and recording certain facts, but it is also the art of revealing the meanings beneath the surfaces of the facts. Thus every philosopher worthy of the name has been a true historian, in so far as he meditated upon the thoughts within the words of his predecessors, seeking to discover what they meant by what they said. Through meditation the philosopher gains the power to rephrase thoughts that are as old as the human race, to cast them in new and unique forms manifesting unsuspected aspects of old truths. This is that vital assimilation of the past which Bergson calls organic memory and identifies with the creative principle.

Mr. Durant has written many interesting pages, but in the opinion of one reader his book lacks the *élan vital* which alone can give it "survival value." He describes surfaces and not depths. Too often he seems merely to reflect the general views of "modernists" and "intellectuals." What he transmits is less the thoughts of the philosophers than the current opinions of the intelligentsia about those thoughts.

In other words, one feels that Mr. Durant has left philosophy not much richer than he found it. At the same time it must be added that his book may stimulate many to reflect upon problems of life and death which had never before occurred to them.

S. L.

# QUESTIONS OF LAMENESS ANSWERS

QUESTION NO. 331.—*We are told repeatedly in the Christian Scriptures—the only ones with which I am familiar—of our duty to help others. What is the most theosophical way of going about this duty, so as to avoid the dangers of indiscriminate charity?*

ANSWER.—A moment's thought will serve to remind us that, like ourselves, the needy individual must be in exactly those circumstances which he has deserved, as a result of past lives. In other words, he is surrounded by those very conditions which supply his opportunities for growth. Clearly, therefore, we could not help him by forcibly removing him from his environment, nor afford him permanent relief by giving him everything which he, or someone else, thought he needed. This does not imply that we should not give material assistance when hunger, or illness, or lack of clothes and shelter are factors in the situation. On the contrary. Nor does it mean that we should preach to the sufferer, telling him how fortunate he is to have all those afflictions. It is rather a question of taking long views,—regarding the material relief as merely the first step, and taking the time and trouble to study the individual's position, until we can help him to help himself.

It is clear that an unusual degree of insight and understanding is required before we can be of help to others, even in the most elementary ways. Until we gain this, we can only try to help, for we must *be* that which we wish to give; we can only know through our own inner experience. To the extent to which we habitually see and think in terms of theosophical principles, embodying them in our daily life,—to that extent only shall we have the vision and the power really to help.

C. R. A.

ANSWER.—Indiscriminate and injudicious charity is the result of those mistaken and perverted ideas of brotherhood, so prevalent to-day. Theosophy teaches what true brotherhood is, and that to help others, in any real sense, we must act from the standpoint of the soul, and not of the personality. A sincere desire to help others is a prerequisite to discipleship, enjoined by all great religious teachers; but they also teach that a good motive is not enough,—right action must result. *Light on the Path* says: "It is impossible to help others till you have obtained some certainty of your own." We should endeavour to obtain some measure of certainty of our own by rigid self-discipline, in order to fit ourselves to be of help to others.

M.

ANSWER.—While there are many forms of giving help to others, none of them appears to be made *easy* by the application of theosophical principles, for they demand far more of the would-be benefactor than do the standards of the world. To some measure, he sets himself to co-operate with the Lords of Karma; and while this aim disposes of "indiscriminate charity," it also demands a high degree of fellow-feeling, insight into the springs of action that move the human heart, and an ardent desire to help and heal, for love's sake. It disposes completely of wholesale giving, and of those mistaken ministrations that are, in the last analysis, for the relief of the giver. Railroad tracks that crossed the public highway used to be marked with a huge sign reading: "Stop. Look. Listen." This suggests a good motto for those who are about to hazard crossing over into the life of another individual; the application of it would depend upon one's temperament. *Stop*: the impulsive giving of money; the impulsive refusal to give; ill-considered interference with the lives and wishes of others. *Look*:

at the real conditions and needs; at what the other person believes his position to be; both at what might be given and at what he is ready to accept. *Listen*: to the troubles he wants to pour out; to the demands of his soul; to the dictates of heart, experience and common-sense, fused by a keen wishfulness to offer whatever Masters would wish given.

A. B.

ANSWER.—Students of Theosophy see others as souls, as fellow pilgrims, "wending—through unknown country—home," but often with no idea that they have a home or that there is a road they ought to be travelling. The best of help is to set them forward on their journey. To do this effectively we must ourselves know what the goal is, and at least be familiar with the earliest stages of the road thither, by having travelled it. So the first essential is study and right action on our own part. Life designs our duties with the special purpose of showing us our road and teaching us the lessons we need to learn,—understanding, faithfulness, perseverance, cheerfulness, courage, or whatever it may be. True growth is growth in consciousness and character. We learn by becoming. As we become more, we are able to give more, for we can only give what we are. We are mistaken if we think that helpfulness requires only energy and good intention. Unless we give from our own experience—gained by sacrifice, by right thought and right action—we are likely to do harm instead of good.

"The power to help must be won. It is the great prize of the universe." The Masters have given up eternal bliss for themselves to gain that power. Each step toward unity with them is a step toward it. All self-development should have as its goal the power of greater and more selfless service.

J. F. B. M.

QUESTION NO. 332.—*The practical use of right self-identification is said to be the only way of coming to a realization that there is only one real self. For many years I have thought of the personality as real, how can I force it to acknowledge that its belief in itself is all wrong?*

ANSWER.—One method is to *insist*, in season and out of season, that the real self is not the body, the mind, the emotional or psychic nature,—and to *assert* that it is the Higher Self. This does not mean that we are to run around like jibbering idiots, saying, "I am the Higher Self," and doing the works of the lower self. To begin with, it is necessary to gain a certain degree of freedom from the meshes of the psychic nature,—and to that end, we need some understanding of it and how it binds us.

M. E.

ANSWER.—Why bother to force the personality to acknowledge anything at all? Is not this deferring too much to the views of the personality, continuing the same old habit of many years? Right self-identification should enable us in time to give orders to the personality, to use it as a servant. The personality never will acknowledge that its belief in itself is all wrong, but it can be forced into its proper place in the scheme of things in spite of its protestations.

C. R. A.

ANSWER.—Each individual must discover for himself the yoga best adapted to his present nature. The scriptures of the world exist to aid him, but he must find their meaning by his own efforts and make a particular application of their general instruction. For example, one person may be stimulated by metaphysical demonstration of the identity of all souls with the Oversoul; whereas, for another, the motive power may be a revelation of beauty, or some sentiment of compassion, or some perception of the achieved union of divinity and humanity in the nature of a Master. The wise experimenter will try first one method and then another, until he discovers the one that fits *for the time being*. One must add this qualification, that every method becomes a hindrance if it be regarded as all-sufficient. No one road, says *Light on the Path*, can take the disciple more than one step onwards. However, the parents rejoice, if an infant can take even one step when that step is the first.

S. L.

QUESTION NO. 333.—*By what method can the Secret Doctrine be studied most profitably? When I try to follow up a subject by the use of the Index, I quickly find myself confused. Is there a better way?*

ANSWER.—“All excellent things are as difficult as they are rare.” But the difficulty and the rarity should be stimulating rather than discouraging. To study the *Secret Doctrine* is a great adventure, and like all romantic undertakings, it involves a long probation of confusion and apparent defeat.

One who is still a probationer can hardly presume to answer the above question in any specific way. But surely there is a general principle which applies to all our reading. We understand a subject by virtue of our previous understanding of it or of what is analogous to it. In other words, knowledge is a growing thing. If we be really interested in the Kabbalah, for example, and have a general idea of its main features, we shall inevitably find some illumination in the pages of the *Secret Doctrine* which refer to the Kabbalah. If we come to those same passages with despairing ignorance, we shall depart without much increase of wisdom.

Fortunately there is at least one reference in the *Secret Doctrine* to almost every subject known to man. Who of us is so desperate that he contains within himself no germ of interest or knowledge concerning anything? L.

ANSWER.—In reading any theosophical book, it is helpful to ask ourselves: “What do I know, from my own experience, of that which is being discussed here?” “What analogy can I find?” The universe is one, governed by one set of laws. Whether we are dealing with solar systems, atoms, or people, the same laws apply. When, therefore, we read in the *Secret Doctrine* about the creation of worlds, let us ask ourselves: “What, from my own experience, do I know,—not about the creation of worlds, but about Creation? What have I ever created, and what happened when I did it?” Many have had the experience of creating, that is building, a house. First a desire arises. Then it is seen that a house will satisfy that desire. A plan of it is made in the mind, which gives it form in the psychic world. Perhaps many plans are made and discarded, until one is chosen that seems best to express the purpose of its creator. Finally the plan is given form in the physical world, given a physical body of bricks, mortar, etc. When, after thus making a vivid picture from our own experience, we return to the pages of the *Secret Doctrine*, we shall find that light has been shed on what we are trying to understand. J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—The student must expect to use *all* of his faculties in studying the *Secret Doctrine*, and particularly he must try to develop the faculty of intuition. The use of the Index is as necessary as it is in any other topical study; and if at times it seem to lead the student to information other than that sought at the moment, it nevertheless is certain to uncover valuable treasure. G. M. W. K.

ANSWER.—To some extent, the best method would depend upon the student; his experience in the study of scientific and metaphysical subjects, his habits of study—and the keenness of his desire to discover the light which ancient wisdom can shed on his problems. Eagerness and confident expectation go far toward compensating for a lack of scholarly facility in the use of books.

It is well to approach the *Secret Doctrine* with a sense of humour: little me, standing before one expression of the wisdom of the ages. Clearly I shall need to stand on tip-toe and to stretch up; clearly I must expect to proceed slowly, taking a bit, here and there, which I can make my own, and thus prepare myself to understand more. The Index might be more serviceable were it divided into two parts: Part I, a few major references, for those who want only the general outline; Part II, complete. As far as that goes, we could make our own simple Index, as we study, by underlining the page references that lead us to the general discussion of our topic—quietly refusing to be confused by other references that give abundant sidelights, turning away from these until we have partly mastered the abc's of the subject.

Some might profit by using Mr. Judge's *Ocean of Theosophy*, as an introduction to the *Secret Doctrine*. A. B.

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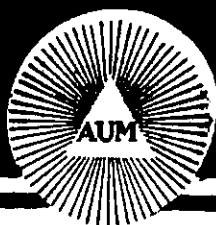
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#### KSHATRIYA AND BRAHMAN

IN the Pali Suttas the teachings of the Buddha are conveyed, not in philosophical abstractions, but in lively narratives with a picturesque background of Indian life with its cities and fields and forests. The characters of those to whom the Buddha addresses his teaching are vividly depicted, each in his proper setting, whether prince or peasant, and always with delightful touches of humour and irony, so characteristic of the Buddha and some of his greatest disciples.

Among these varied characters the Brahmans hold a conspicuous place. In the older Upanishads, the Brahmans, possessors of the magical hymns of the Rig Veda, and ministrants of the system of rites and sacrifices which gradually grew up around these hymns, are shown receiving the teaching of the Greater Mysteries, with the twin doctrines of Liberation and Reincarnation, for the first time from the Kshatriyas, who are also called Rajaputras or Rajputs. In the days of the Mahabharata war, traditionally dated over five thousand years ago, the Brahmans are represented as a very influential class, but not yet in possession of despotic power, not yet held to be sacrosanct and exclusively privileged, as they became during the centuries following that great war. The change in their position since the period of the older Upanishads is striking. It is evident that long centuries, perhaps millenniums, must have passed, much consolidation of Brahmanical power must have taken place, between the days of the older Upanishads, when "the Brahman sat at the feet of the Kshatriya," and the time of the momentous conflict between the Pandus and Kurus, when the Brahmans had attained to great, but not yet overwhelming power.

Twenty-five centuries after the traditional date of the great war, and therefore twenty-five centuries ago, came the birth and teaching of Prince Siddhartha, known as Gotama Buddha, the Awakened One of the Gotama clan.

The graphic sketches of life in India at that day, which are the setting of his

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### THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a  
Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex,  
The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern

teachings in the Suttas, show at once that the power of the Brahmins, throughout the principalities of Northern India, had passed through a long period of development and concentration since the great war, and had, in some directions at least, reached an advanced stage of degeneration. The Brahmins of the Buddha's day claimed to be sole possessors of the spiritual wisdom, which they had received in the beginning from the Kshatriyas, and, in virtue of this exclusive claim, they exercised a spiritual tyranny which the Buddha, teaching men and women of all classes equally, constantly sought to break down.

From this conflict of ideals and purposes many dramatic incidents arose. They are faithfully, humorously and often ironically recorded in the Suttas, as for example in the narrative concerning the youthful Brahmin Ambattha, who, like his remote predecessor Shvetaketu, was "conceited, vain of his learning and proud."

We are told that, once upon a time, the Master was journeying through the land of the Kosalas, with a great company of disciples, with five hundred disciples, and that he came to a Brahmin village, by name Ichanakala. There, indeed, the Master halted, and dwelt with his disciples among the groves of Ichanakala. At that time Pasenadi, king of the Kosalas, had given authority over Ukkatha, a district rich in meadows and wood and water and corn, to the Brahmin Pokkharasadi, who heard the news of the Buddha's coming, and of his dwelling with his disciples among the groves of Ichanakala. It had been reported also that the Master was an Arhat, perfectly awakened and illuminated, rich in wisdom and righteousness, a knower of the worlds, unequalled in leading men to the law of righteousness, a teacher of radiant beings and of the sons of men, one who had seen and known the universe face to face. And the Brahmin Pokkharasadi bethought him that it was right to visit such an Arhat.

At that time it happened that the Brahmin Pokkharasadi had a disciple, the young man Ambattha, who had learned the sacred verses, who had mastered the three Vedas with their subsidiary studies, one who had made such progress that his teacher could say, "What I know, that thou knowest, and what thou knowest, I know."

So the Brahmin Pokkharasadi addressed the young man Ambattha, saying, "Ambattha, beloved, Gotama of the Sakyas has come among the Kosalas, and is dwelling among the groves of Ichanakala, he whom they declare to be a Master, an Arhat, perfectly awakened and illuminated. It is right to visit such an Arhat. Go then, Ambattha, beloved, to the place where Gotama is dwelling, and learn whether Gotama is what report declares or not. Thus we shall know the truth concerning the worthy Gotama."

"How am I to know whether the worthy Gotama is such as report declares or not?"

"There are, Ambattha, beloved, thirty-two distinctive marks of a great man. He who possesses these distinctive marks will either become a universal monarch, ruling the wide world surrounded by the ocean, or, if he

make the great renunciation, he will become an Arhat, perfectly awakened and illuminated, a Buddha, unveiling the eyes of the world. I have given thee, Ambattha, beloved, the sacred verses; from me thou hast received the sacred verses."

"So be it!" said the young man Ambattha, obedient to the Brahman Pokkharasadi, and, rising from his seat, and showing reverence to the Brahman Pokkharasadi, he mounted a chariot drawn by mares and, with a number of young men accompanying him, drove to the groves of Ichanakala. Driving to the end of the carriage road, he descended from the chariot and went on foot through the garden.

At that time many of the disciples were walking up and down, taking the air. So the young man Ambattha, coming to where these disciples were, said, "Where may the worthy Gotama dwell? We have come hither to see the worthy Gotama."

So those disciples thought, "This young man Ambattha is of distinguished family, and a disciple of the distinguished Brahman Pokkharasadi. There is no difficulty in the way of the Master's talking with such well-born youths." They said to the young man Ambattha, "That is his dwelling, Ambattha, where the door is shut; go thither, making little noise, quietly across the veranda, cough discreetly and knock on the bar of the door. The Master will open the door for you."

So the young man Ambattha did as he was bidden, and the Master opened the door, so that the young man Ambattha entered. The other young men who accompanied him also entered, and, exchanging with the Master the salute and the greeting which were befitting, sat down at one side. But the young man Ambattha, walking up and down while the Master was seated, saluted him carelessly and, standing while the Master sat, gave him a careless greeting.

Thereupon the Master said to the young man Ambattha, "Is it in this way, Ambattha, that you carry on a conversation with Brahmans, old and full of years, masters of disciples, as you do now with me, walking about while I am seated, and giving me a careless greeting?"

"No, indeed, Sir Gotama! Walking, Sir Gotama, a Brahman should speak with a Brahman who is walking; standing, Sir Gotama, a Brahman should speak with a Brahman who is standing; seated, Sir Gotama, a Brahman should speak with a Brahman who is seated; resting, Sir Gotama, a Brahman should speak with a Brahman who is resting. But, Sir Gotama, when it is a question of shavelings, ascetic fellows, servile, black men, offspring of the feet of Brahma, why, with such folk one talks as I am talking with you, Sir Gotama!"

"But you must have had some purpose, Ambattha, in coming here; concentrate on your purpose in coming! The young man Ambattha is ill-bred, though he highly esteems good breeding; how else than because he was ill taught?"

Then the young man Ambattha, thus spoken of as ill-bred, was angry and displeased, and, sneering at the Master, and thinking to himself, "The ascetic

Sir Gotama has lost his temper!" he spoke thus to the Master, "Coarse, Sir Gotama, is the Sakya tribe! Rough, Sir Gotama, is the Sakya tribe! Harsh, Sir Gotama, is the Sakya tribe! Violent, Sir Gotama, is the Sakya tribe! Servile, of servile nature, they do not honour Brahmans, they do not venerate Brahmans, they do not esteem Brahmans, they do not make obeisance to Brahmans, they do not pay due deference to Brahmans. This is unseemly, Sir Gotama, this is improper!" Thus did the young man Ambattha lay the epithet of servile upon the Sakyas for the first time.

"In what, Ambattha, have the Sakyas offended you?"

"On a certain occasion, Sir Gotama, I had to go to Kapilavastu on business for my master, the Brahman Pokkharasadi. I entered the Sakya meeting hall. There were many of the Sakyas there, and young men of the Sakyas, sitting on high seats. They nudged each other and laughed, and I think they were laughing at me. And no one offered me a seat. This, Sir Gotama, was unseemly, this was improper, that these servile Sakyas should not honour, venerate, esteem, salute and pay due deference to Brahmans." Thus did the young man Ambattha lay the epithet of servile upon the Sakyas for the second time.

"A quail, Ambattha, even though a little bird, may in its own nest say what it pleases. These Sakyas, Ambattha, were in their own Kapilavastu. You should not take offence at a little thing like that."

"There are the four colours, Sir Gotama, Kshatriyas, Brahmans, Vaishyas, Shudras. Of these four colours, Sir Gotama, the Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras are nothing but the servants of the Brahmans. Therefore, Sir Gotama, it is not seemly, it is not proper, that these servile Sakyas should not honour, venerate, esteem, salute and pay due deference to Brahmans." Thus did the young man Ambattha lay the epithet of servile on the Sakyas for the third time.

Then the Master thought, "This young man Ambattha comes down heavily upon the Sakyas with his epithet of servile. Let me ask him about his own family." So that Master said to the young man Ambattha, "Of what family are you, Ambattha?"

"I, Sir Gotama, am of the Kanha family!" (That is, the "Black" family.)

"Verily so, Ambattha, but should one call to mind your ancient name and family on the mother's and father's side, it would be seen that the Sakyas are sons of your masters, and that you are descended from a slave girl. For the Sakyas point to King Okkaka as their great father. And King Okkaka, Ambattha, had a slave girl, Disa by name, who gave birth to a little black. As soon as he was born, the little black said, 'Wash me, mamma, bathe me, mamma, so shall I be profitable to you!' Just as at the present time, Ambattha, people call an evil spirit an evil spirit, so at that time they called an evil spirit a blackie. So they said, 'This new-born babe has spoken! A blackie has come to birth, an evil spirit has come to birth!' And this, Ambattha, is the origin of the Kanhayana, the 'Black' family. This was the first man, the founder, of the 'Black' family. So, Ambattha, should one

call to mind your ancient family on the mother's side and father's side, it would be seen that the Sakyas are sons of your masters, and that you are descended from a slave girl."

Then said the young men, his companions, to the Master, "Let not the worthy Gotama come down so heavily upon the young man Ambattha, with the reproach that he is descended from a slave girl. For the young man Ambattha is well born, Sir Gotama, he is of good family, he has studied the scriptures, he recites the sacred verses beautifully, the young man Ambattha is a pundit. He is able to answer the worthy Gotama effectively in this matter!"

Then the Master said to the young men, "If, indeed, you thought that the young man Ambattha was ill born, of no family, unlearned, unable to recite the sacred verses beautifully, ignorant, not able to answer the ascetic Gotama effectively in this matter, then it would be for you to take up the discussion. But, since you think so well of the young man Ambattha, let him answer me himself!"

"We do think well of the young man Ambattha. Therefore let him speak with the worthy Gotama himself!"

So the Master said to the young man Ambattha, "This, Ambattha, is a fair and lawful question, which you should answer even though you are unwilling. Should you not answer clearly, should you try to change the subject, should you remain silent or go away, your head will be split in seven pieces. How then do you think, Ambattha? What have you heard from Brahmans, old and full of years, masters of disciples, when they were speaking of the origin of the Kanhayana, and who was the founder of this 'Black' family?"

Thus addressed, the young man Ambattha remained silent. Then the Master repeated his question, using the same words. A second time the young man Ambattha remained silent.

Then the Master spoke thus to the young man Ambattha, "Answer now, Ambattha, this is not the time for silence. For should anyone not answer a fair and lawful question, when it is asked him a third time by a Tathagata, his head will surely be split in seven pieces!"

Now at that time the spirit Vajrapani, taking a great mass of iron, blazing, throwing out flames and sparks, held it in the air above the head of the young man Ambattha, ready to split his head in seven pieces if he should not answer. The Master saw the spirit Vajrapani, and the young man Ambattha saw him. And the young man Ambattha was so startled and terrified that his hair stood on end, so that he sought refuge and safety and protection at the Master's feet, saying to the Master, "What was that the worthy Gotama said? Will the worthy Gotama kindly say it again?"

"How do you think, Ambattha? What have you heard from Brahmans, old and full of years, masters of disciples, when they were speaking of the origin of the Kanhayana, and who was the founder of this 'Black' family?"

"I heard, Sir Gotama, exactly what the worthy Gotama has said; such is the origin of the Kanhayana, such is the founder of the 'Black' family!"

Then the young men who were with him cried out, and raised their voices, and made a great noise, saying, "Ill born is the young man Ambattha, of no family is the young man Ambattha, the young man Ambattha is descended from a slave girl of the Sakyas, the Sakyas are descended from the masters of the young man Ambattha. We were certain that the ascetic Gotama, a speaker of righteousness, was not to be gainsaid."

Then the Master thought, "These young men are bearing too heavily on the young man Ambattha with their reproach that he is descended from a slave girl. Let me come to his rescue." So the Master said to those young men, "Young men, do not bear too heavily on the young man Ambattha with the reproach that he is descended from a slave girl. For that Kanha, that 'Black,' was a noble Rishi!"

And the Buddha proceeded to relate an exceedingly entertaining story of how the strange, dusky infant grew to man's estate, travelled through South-ern India, which is to this day the home of black races, and there learned magical arts and incantations of such potency that, on his return, he was able to compel the aged King Okkaka to give him in marriage the royal princess Slender-form, his daughter. So it appeared that the young man Ambattha, like the Sakyas themselves, was descended from King Okkaka. "For Kanha was a noble Rishi!"

But there remained the question of superiority, as between Kshatriya and Brahman, and the Buddha did not intend to leave it open. He proceeded to put to the young man Ambattha a series of questions involving the relations of Kshatriyas and Brahmans, and, on the basis of the young man's answers, he held it proven "that the Kshatriyas are best and that the Brahmans are inferior."

Finally, he quoted an authority of overwhelming weight, no less than the Brahma Sanatkumara, the divine Mind-born, profoundly venerated by the Brahmans themselves, to this effect:

"The Kshatriya is best in the estimation of those who attach importance to lineage. He who is perfect in wisdom and righteousness is best among bright powers and men."

So far the meeting between the Buddha and the young man Ambattha with his companions. There is one small but significant point in this spirited recital, which is worth noting, because it is the single case in which the pious Buddhist narrator has swerved from perfect dramatic propriety. It will be noted that, when he speaks of the four "colours," the young man Ambattha names them in this order, "Kshatriya, Brahman, Vaishya, Shudra." But it is quite certain that he, not only a Brahman, but even then maintaining the divine superiority of the Brahmans, would have named them thus, "Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra," as they stand in the Brahmanical books. So it would seem that the Buddhist scribe, keenly alert as he is to every shade of literary art, could not bring himself to put the Brahmans first, even in the speech of a Brahman. He prefers to follow the unvarying practice of the Buddhist books.

It happens that there is a second Sutta in which the Buddha again takes up this question of Kshatriya and Brahman, and again cites the divine Sanatkumara as a final authority. It is in many ways an exceptionally interesting scripture, for the reason that in it the Buddha departs from his general practice of making his discourse immediately practical, and of setting aside all problems of cosmology and origins, as being of secondary importance, as compared with the great and immediate problem of salvation, of release from sin and bondage. In this Sutta the Buddha gives what we may recognize as a somewhat vague and general outline of the cosmology which we find in *The Secret Doctrine*, and especially that part of Anthropogenesis which is concerned with our own planet in the present period: of necessity vague, since it involved teachings of Initiation, which it was not lawful to divulge in detail. Yet the parallelism is undeniable, and of immense interest, particularly because it represents a departure from the Buddha's general rule.

As always, there is a vividly presented story in a concrete setting. We are told that, once upon a time, the Master was dwelling in Savatthi, in the stately dwelling built by the mother of Migara. At that time there were two Brahmins, bearing the high traditional names of Vasishtha, or, in Pali, Vasettha, and Bharadvaja, probationers, seeking admission to the Order. In the evening the Master, coming forth from meditation, descended from the dwelling and began to walk up and down in the shade of the dwelling, taking the air. Vasettha noticed the Master and said to Bharadvaja, "Friend Bharadvaja, the Master has descended and is taking the air. Let us go, friend Bharadvaja, to where the Master is. Perhaps we may hear from the Master some speech concerning righteousness." Bharadvaja assented, and they went to where the Master was. So the Master said to Vasettha, "You, Vasettha, have come forth, being of Brahman birth, of a Brahman family, leaving the household life for the homeless life. Do not the Brahmins reproach and abuse you, Vasettha?"

"Certainly, Sire, the Brahmins reproach and blame us with marked abuse, not limited but unlimited."

"In what terms, Vasettha, do the Brahmins thus abuse you?"

"The Brahmins, Sire, speak thus, 'Brahmins are the best colour, inferior are the other colours; Brahmins are pure, not those who are not Brahmins; Brahmins are Brahma's own sons, born from the mouth of Brahma, Brahma-born, Brahma-caused, Brahma's heirs. But you have deserted this most excellent colour, and have betaken yourselves to an inferior colour, to these shavelings, ascetic fellows, servile, black men, offspring of the feet of Brahma.' In these terms, Sire, do the Brahmins reproach and abuse us, with marked abuse, not limited but unlimited!"

"Certainly, Vasettha, you Brahmins forget the ancient teaching, when you say this, that Brahmins are born from the mouth of Brahma. For the Brahmins themselves see that their wives are fruitful and bear children and nurse them. Yet they say they are Brahma-born! They are bearing false witness, telling lies, making demerit.



"There are these four colours, Vasettha: Kshatriyas, Brahmans, Vaishyas, Shudras. It may happen, Vasettha, that a Kshatriya should be guilty of murder, theft, impurity, lying, slandering, evil speaking, garrulity, covetousness, malevolence, defence of false views. Such qualities, evil, blameworthy, immoral, un-Aryan, black, reprobated by the wise, may sometimes be found in a Kshatriya. Exactly the same with the Brahman, the Vaishya, the Shudra.

"On the other hand, Vasettha, a Kshatriya may be found who refrains from all such evils, whose qualities are noble, beyond reproach, admirable, Aryan, luminous, admired by the wise. So likewise, Vasettha, in the case of Brahmans, Vaishyas, Shudras. So among the four colours both good and bad qualities are distributed. How then can the Brahmans say that they are best, sons of Brahma, Brahma-born? The wise do not endorse this. Why? Among the four colours, Vasettha, he who is a disciple, an Arhat, who has purged himself of the poisons, who has fulfilled all righteousness, who has laid aside the burden, who has attained salvation, who has broken the bonds of rebirth, perfect in wisdom, liberated, he is esteemed the most excellent of these, rightly, not unrightly. For righteousness, Vasettha, is most excellent, both in this world and in the great Beyond.

"This is to be known, Vasettha, by this example. King Pasenadi of the Kosalas knows that the ascetic Gotama has gone forth from a Sakya family. Now the Sakyas are dependents of King Pasenadi. But as the Sakyas honour King Pasenadi, so King Pasenadi honours the Tathagata.

"You, Vasettha, who have gone forth from the household life to the homeless life, are of varying birth, varying names, varying tribes, varying families. But, when you are asked who you are, you reply, 'We are sons of the Sakya sage!' It is right for each of you to say, 'I am the Master's own son, born from his mouth, born of his righteous law, heir of his law.' Why is this? Because this is the appellation of the Tathagata, 'He who has the body of the law of righteousness, the body of Brahma, who has become righteousness, who has become Brahma.'

"There was a time, Vasettha, very long ago, when this world passed out of manifestation. When the world passed out of manifestation, the beings that were in it were for the most part reborn in the world of radiant shining. There they were formed of mind, feasting on delight, self-shining, traversing the ether, dwelling in happiness, and so they remained for a very long time. Then came the time, Vasettha, after a very long interval, for this world to be manifested again. And when the world came again into manifestation, those beings descended from the world of radiance and entered this world. Here, they remained mind-formed, feasting on delight, self-shining, traversing the ether, dwelling in happiness for a very long time.

"At that time, Vasettha, all was watery, wrapped in darkness, shrouded in darkness. Neither moon nor sun appeared, nor the constellations formed of stars, nor did night and day appear, nor the half-month, nor the month, nor the seasons of the year, nor was there yet any division into women and men.

Beings then were all counted equally as beings. Then, after the passage of a long time, the flavour of earth became manifest among the waters. It was as when on milk boiled in rice and set to cool, a film forms on its surface, so was this manifested. It was rich in colour, rich in odour, rich in flavour; in colour it was like butter clarified by melting, or like fresh butter, and its flavour was like fine honey.

"So, Vasettha, one or other of these beings, incited by greed, and saying, 'How now, what will this be?' began to taste this earth-flavour with his finger. When he had tasted the earth-flavour thus with his finger, thirst for it overcame him. And others of those beings, Vasettha, seeing him and following his example, tasted the earth-flavour with their fingers. When they had so tasted, thirst for it overcame them also. And so those beings began to take pieces of the earth-flavour with their hands and to feast on it. And, as they began to feast on the earth-flavour, their self-shining disappeared. When their self-shining was thus withdrawn, the moon and sun became manifest to them. Then came the constellations of the stars. Then night and day began, with the half-months and months, the seasons and the years. So, Vasettha, this world came once more into manifestation.

"So for a long time these beings feasted on the earth-flavour, eating it, making it their food. And, in measure as they so feasted, solidity began to develop in their bodies, and difference of colour began to appear. Some of these beings were comely, some were ill-favoured. Then those who were comely despised the ill-favoured, saying, 'We are comelier, but these are ill-favoured.' When, through pride in their comeliness, vanity and conceit arose among them, that earth-flavour was withdrawn. When the earth-flavour was withdrawn, they gathered together and fell into lamentation, saying, 'Alas for the flavour! Alas for the flavour!'

"When the earth-flavour was withdrawn, a mushroom-like growth began to appear on the ground. It possessed colour, odour and flavour. The colour was like fresh butter, the taste was like fine honey. Then those beings began to feast on this growth. They feasted on it, eating it, making it their food. As they so feasted, the solidity of their bodies increased, and difference in colour became more marked among them. As before, those who were comely despised the ill-favoured. And when vanity and conceit thereupon increased, the mushroom-like growth was withdrawn, and vegetation, like a small herb, appeared. This also was possessed of colour, odour and taste. The colour was like fresh butter, and the taste like fine honey.

"So they began to feast on this vegetation, eating it and making it their food for a long time. As they so feasted, their bodies became yet more solid, and differences of colour became still more marked among them. Once again vanity and conceit increased. Then that vegetation disappeared.

"When that vegetation had disappeared, rice began to grow, ripening without tillage, bearing clean grain without dust or chaff. When they plucked rice for the evening meal, it grew again and was ripe in the morning. So it grew continually. So, Vasettha, these beings thus feasted on the rice for a

long time. As they so feasted, their bodies became yet more solid, difference of colour increased, and they grew in vanity and conceit as before. At this time also the sexes began to be separated, those who had been women (in an earlier cycle) taking the form of women, and those who had been men, taking the form of men."

As has been suggested, there is a general correspondence between this picturesque cosmology or anthropology and the account, in *The Secret Doctrine*, of the appearance of the early ethereal races of mankind, their gradual consolidation as the world also grew more solid, and the division of the sexes in the second half of the Third Race. In carrying the story forward, the Buddha sketches the sociological history of the later races. On the one hand, there was a gradual development of agriculture, which led to the demarcation of fields and the growth of property in land. On the other hand, following the separation of the sexes and the beginning of family life, houses came to be built. With property came the violation of property rights, and general disorder inevitably followed. Then the Buddha comes to the point which he had in mind from the beginning.

"Then, Vasettha, these beings came together, bewailing what had happened, and said, 'Sinful deeds, verily, have appeared among beings, theft and contumely and lying. Let us then choose from among us a being who will be angry when it is right to be angry, who will censure when it is right to censure, who will expel when it is right to expel. And we shall bestow on him in return a portion of our rice.' So they chose from among them the most comely, the best looking, the most gracious, the most eminent, and said to him, 'Thou being! When it is right to be angry, be thou angry, when it right to censure, do thou censure, when it is right to expel, do thou expel. We shall bestow on thee in return a portion of our rice.' 'So be it!' said that being, complying with their desire." This was the first of the Kshatriyas, therefore it follows that the Kshatriyas are more ancient, more venerable, than the Brahmans. The first Brahman was later chosen, to establish wise customs among mankind. In the course of time, they compiled the three Vedas and taught the recitation of the sacred verses. Then, with the development of trade, came the Vaishyas. "Then those who practised hunting and other mean pursuits became the first Shudras."

So that all colours and classes arose in similar ways from among originally homogeneous mankind, and the Brahmans make false claims, when they say they are born of Brahma. All have a like origin.

And all have a like destiny. A Kshatriya who sins in body, in speech, in thought, will journey, when he departs from the body, on the bad way to a state of punishment. So also a Brahman, a Vaishya, a Shudra. And a Kshatriya who is righteous in body, in speech, in thought, will journey, when he departs from the body, on the good way to a state of reward. So also a Brahman, a Vaishya, a Shudra.

"The Kshatriya who is controlled in body, controlled in speech, controlled in thought, who follows after the seven forms of righteousness which are the

wings of wisdom, is set free in wisdom and righteousness. So likewise the Brahman, the Vaishya, the Shudra.

"Of these four colours, Vasettha, he who becomes a disciple, an Arhat, who has purged himself of the poisons, who has fulfilled all righteousness, who has laid aside the burden, who has attained salvation, who has broken the bonds of rebirth, perfect in wisdom, liberated, he is esteemed most excellent of these, rightly, not unrightly. For righteousness, Vasettha, is most excellent, both in this world and in the great Beyond.

"So it was declared, Vasettha, by the Brahma Sanatkumara: 'The Kshatriya is best in the estimation of those who attach importance to lineage. He who is perfect in wisdom and righteousness is best among bright powers and men.'"

It is well to remember that this was said to two Brahman disciples, of whom there were many in the Order, side by side with many Kshatriyas and a few men and women of the other classes. Not all Brahmans, therefore, opposed the establishment of the Order, which was open equally to all, on the sole condition that they practised the needed virtues. But many Brahmans did oppose the Order, and, as the centuries passed, this opposition increased and became more determined, until the followers of the Buddha were driven forth from Brahmanical India. To this selfishness, exclusiveness and obscurantism, must be attributed the progressive degeneration of the Buddha's land, a degradation which must await the turn of the life-cycle before it can be overcome. Then once again, perhaps, the teaching of the Buddhas of compassion will become universal from the Himalayas to the uplands of Ceylon.

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*The debt which the man of liberal education owes to the great minds of former ages is incalculable. They have guided him to truth; they have stood by him in all vicissitudes—comforters in sorrow, nurses in sickness, companions in solitude.*

—MACAULAY.

But to other readers it may well appear that the logic proves a great deal too much, and that, were the risk what the theory indicates, we could not so persistently escape its consequences. Instead of jogging along in our daily rut, we should be constantly tumbling out of our known world and beyond the domain of its laws. The direct argument on one side is confronted by the apparent *reductio ad absurdum* on the other; and while common sense is willing to admit a modicum of doubt as to the eternal verity of our notions of time and space, it is inclined to insist that to make them so fragile and evanescent as to be dependent upon our concentrated interest and attention, is decidedly overdoing it. Not even the most docile of readers can be expected easily to believe that he will jeopardize the traditional foundations of his intellectual life, if he dare to exercise his inalienable right to be bored.

Nevertheless the theory stands; and the appeal to experience, which at first seems to refute it, needs only to be carried one step further in order to establish it beyond all dispute. What happens when we are bored?

We yawn; our mind wanders off into the by-paths of its memory-chains; we sink into a reverie, or fall asleep. What laws of time and space control our reveries and dreams?

They are certainly not the same laws that limit the spacial movements of our physical bodies. We can be first in one place and then in another, without having traversed the space between. Locked doors need be no obstacle to us. Time passes with incomprehensible rapidity, or may seem almost to have ceased. The scene may be of to-day, or of thousands of years ago. Past, present and future interblend and exchange their content. We ourselves often appear to ourselves as dual or even triple, at once the author and observer and actor in a drama where one self foresees (or even plans) what another breathlessly awaits to be revealed, and which a third presses blindly forward to encounter. Sometimes (as when the waking consciousness stirs and intervenes) it seems queer to us, even as we experience it; but usually it appears natural enough, and in accord with a logic of its own. What is that logic? We do not know; nor, when we wake, do we trouble ourselves to inquire. Our interest and attention snap back to their habitual focus in the material world; and with our consciousness pinned there, the old logic reasserts itself, and the old laws of time and space resume their sway.

It is clear, therefore, that not only is it theoretically possible for us to stumble out of what we ordinarily call time and space, but that we do constantly so stumble; and that it is only because we are so used to stumbling, and because the realm into which we fall seems (in our waking hours) of such different stuff, and so without effect upon our absorbing interests, that we have come to regard our sojourn in this other world as a mere interlude—a rest—and the realm itself as without reality. We are content merely to label it; to say we dreamed; and to turn away without facing our own experience and the mystery which it presents.

It may well be objected here that the dream world *is* without reality—a world of empty forms, of mere reflections and shadowed after-images from

the "real" world of waking consciousness: that to dream is to let memory and imagination loose to play at will over fragments of the past—pieces from a picture puzzle, poured haphazard as from a box, which they rearrange to suit their own conscious or subconscious desires—careless of gaps or broken lines. Dreams, in this view, are but stories which we tell ourselves; and nobody ever asserted that *we* could not tell lies. It is no breach in the law of gravity for us to *imagine* a man floating up, because repelled by the earth, rather than falling down, because attracted by it. Our imaginations, and our stories, leave the real world quite unchanged, still ruled by the same laws, still ordered in the same sequences of time.

This is undoubtedly the way in which dreams are usually regarded, but it is a view which analysis does not support, and there is a great mass of recorded evidence which flatly contradicts it. Suppose that when we gave careful attention to our own dreams, we found that, instead of being woven merely from fancies and images of the past, they contained what were indubitably verified as *images of the future*. Suppose we dreamt on Monday night of an event (which common-sense must regard as quite unpredictable, like a fire or an earthquake), which nevertheless proceeds to *happen* on Tuesday or Wednesday.

The ordinary theory of dreams can scarcely be stretched to cover such a case. How can we *remember* what has *not yet* happened? Yet there are thousands of such cases on record, and the only new thing we have supposed is that, occurring to ourselves, we were forced to face the questions they raise. We should probably try to avoid facing them, and to persuade ourselves that it was only an odd coincidence. But if we found that dream after dream contained such elements from the future, pictured with a minutia of identifiable detail which, however jumbled, marked them unmistakably for what they were, then the bounds of coincidence would have been overpassed. We should be left facing the stark fact that, be the dream world what it may, it reflects the future as well as the past, and that, through it, the ordinary time sequence of experience can be reversed, and effects be encountered before the "occurrence" of their cause.

It is to be noted, moreover, that this reversal is not merely psychological, confined to the order of our own perceptions and sensations, and leaving the succession of outer events unchanged. The reversal of the psychological order carries with it the power to alter the physical order,—as may be illustrated by merely writing the dream down. We then have this sequence:

1. Monday night: We dream of a fire involving certain extraordinary incidents.
  2. Tuesday morning: We write down on paper the memory of this dream, including a description of the extraordinary incidents.
  3. Wednesday: A fire occurs involving these extraordinary incidents (though in other incidents, perhaps, differing from the dream).
  4. Thursday morning: We learn of this through the daily paper.
- It is of no help now to adopt a materialistic attitude and call the dream

itself "unreal," insisting that we are only concerned with the time sequence of outer events in the physical world. The writing down of the extraordinary incidents we had observed and remembered (no matter where observed or how remembered), is an outer event in the physical world, and is of a nature which common sense insists should require it to follow and not to precede the "occurrence" of the incidents it describes. Therefore, though the materialist may disregard (1) the dream itself,—he cannot disregard (2), (3) and (4), nor escape the question how (2) came to precede (3) and (4). How can we describe events before they occur? How can time get mixed?

This is the question to which Mr. J. W. Dunne addresses himself in the book<sup>1</sup> to which this article is due and whose title we have borrowed. The author had, extending over many years, a series of dreams of the kind we have been considering, and he passed through the ordinary human reactions which they might be expected to prompt, including at first (before he began to keep written records and to enlist the service of others in his experiment) the unpleasant fear that he might be an occasional victim of "Identifying Paramnesia." After a preliminary section, designed to bring about agreement as to the way in which certain terms are to be used, he devotes the first part of his book to setting forth all the evidence in the case. He leads us step by step along the path he himself had to follow in trying to isolate the significant elements of the problem from the mass of rubbish in which they were embedded, and to find a clue to the baffling contradictions with which he was faced. The book reads here like what it in fact is—a "mystery story," but of science and not fiction, and where the mystery to be explained is not the presence of a corpse, but of life in an unstudied dimension. The style is fresh, vigorous and direct, and always clear.

Mr. Dunne is inclined to apologize for "the regrettably dramatic and extremely misleading incidents" which he has to relate in this first part of the volume. He points out that they "mimicked to perfection many classical examples of alleged 'clairvoyance,' 'astral-wandering,' and 'messages from the dead or dying,'" but assures us that this need cause no misgivings, as the fact which finally emerges from them "is precisely what, on theoretical grounds, we should have expected to find. It fits very nicely into its little niche in the system of knowledge; and it seems, moreover, to possess the attribute against which nothing can permanently contend—the attribute of being clearly and directly observable by everyone interested."

Now, though the author does not tell us so, and is at pains to suggest the opposite, the "fact" which "emerges" will be recognized clearly and unmistakably, by all students of Theosophy, as the fact of the Astral Light; and the reason why these dreams "mimicked to perfection" classical examples of psychic phenomena, is that they are all of one kind, dependent upon the same laws and properties of the lower psychic plane. We do not in the least blame Mr. Dunne for wishing to dissociate his serious and very valuable

<sup>1</sup> *An Experiment with Time*, by J. W. Dunne; A. & C. Black, Ltd., 4 Soho Square, London, W 1, 1927.

study from the great mass of conscious and unconscious deception, and from the still greater mass of sheer nonsense, which to-day masquerade as "occultism" (or even as Theosophy) and are the real (because the false) "mimics," not of occultism itself, for that is beyond their reach, but of genuine psychic phenomena. We confess to having welcomed the statement, in the opening sentence of the book, that it was "not a book about 'occultism,' and not a book about what is called 'psycho-analysis.'" We have rarely read a book about "psycho-analysis" that we did not put down with the conviction that it was equally deplorable in its revelation of the analyst and in its obscuration of the field; and the self-evident proposition that the only "occultism" that can be written about, is that which is not occult, has been given too frequent illustration for us to desire another. Yet we are not at all sure but that the best way to describe the value of Mr. Dunne's work is to say that instead of writing *about* psycho-analysis and occultism, he has rediscovered for himself, and recorded for the reader, certain truths that pertain to both. Perhaps, had he been familiar with Theosophy, his book would have lost much of the freshness and originality that are due to his having approached his experiences from a point of view that offered no explanation of them; and students of Theosophy may find as much interest in the departure of his theories from their own, as where his thought runs parallel to theirs.

But let us return to the "facts" (for there are really more than one) which "emerged" from his experiments, and see how they emerged.

The first fact is that which we have already noted: prophetic dreams, dreams containing reflections of *future* events, do indisputably occur. This is no new discovery. The record of the author's own experience only reinforces, and calls attention to, the mass of similar testimony recorded by others. But this evidence has been very generally ignored, and when it is faced and accepted, we have also to face and accept the inevitable conclusion it compels: that the future must in some way already exist, to be capable of being reflected in the present. To this first "fact," therefore, attaches a primary question: How can future events (like an earthquake or a fire) "exist" and be reflected into consciousness before they occur?

The second fact established, is that dreams of future events bear exactly the same relation to those events, as our dreams of past happenings bear to their actual past occurrence. There is the same kind of imagery, the same interblending and integration of images, and we can no more depend upon the accuracy of the picture in the one case than in the other. The author thus records his first coming to this conclusion:

"Now it seemed to me that from this incident one thing was abundantly clear. These dreams were not *percepts* (impressions) of distant or future events. They were the usual commonplace dreams composed of distorted *images* of waking experience, built together in the usual half-senseless fashion peculiar to dreams. That is to say, *if they had happened on the nights after the corresponding events*, they would have exhibited nothing in the smallest degree unusual, and would have yielded just as much true, and just as much



false information regarding the waking experiences which had given rise to them as does any ordinary dream—which is very little.

"They were the ordinary, appropriate, expectable dreams; but they were occurring on the *wrong nights*" (p. 43).

There is, again, nothing new in this. There is much evidence to show it.

The third "fact," however, will be wholly new to most people, though theoretically it is what we should expect. It is that such dreams of the future, instead of being unusual to the point of abnormality, are, on the contrary, constant and *normal*; "that dreams—dreams in general, all dreams, everybody's dreams—were composed of *images of past experience and images of future experience blended together in approximately equal proportions*" (p. 54).

We have quoted here the author's conclusion in the form in which it first occurred to him as a question, so that it is followed by a question mark on the page from which it is taken. The thought immediately suggests the familiar concept of life being laid out along time as along an added dimension of space, and the author continues:

"That the universe was, after all, really stretched out in Time, and that the lop-sided view we had of it—a view with the 'future' part unaccountably missing, cut off from the growing 'past' part by a travelling 'present moment'—was due to a purely mentally imposed barrier which existed only when we were awake? So that, in reality, the associational network stretched, not merely this way and that way in Space, but also backwards and forwards in Time; and the dreamer's attention, following in natural, unhindered fashion the easiest pathway among the ramifications, would be continually crossing and recrossing that properly non-existent equator which we, waking, ruled quite arbitrarily athwart the whole.

"The foregoing supposition was not, be it noted, perceived as a possible *explanation*. The mixture in the order of actual experience—viz., dream, memory of dream, corresponding waking impression, and memory thereof—would still have to be accounted for. But it would put the problem on an entirely different footing. There would be no longer any question as to why a man should be able to observe his own future mental states; that would be normal and habitual. On the contrary, the initial puzzle would be: What was the *barrier* which, in certain circumstances, debarred him from that proper and comprehensive view?

"All this was seen in, so to say, a single flash of thought, almost too rapid for analysis.

"It was rejected with even greater swiftness. It was absolutely inconceivable that a thing of this sort, if true, could have managed to escape, through all these centuries, universal perception and recognition" (pp. 54, 55).

A little later on, however, the author perceives "that this abrupt recoil had been illogical," and that the same kind of inhibitions which he had already observed in the effort to remember dreams, might so interfere with the recollection of images drawn from the future, as to make their identification dependent upon a closer attention than was often accorded them. He sets

himself to test this theory, and enlists the service of his friends. The details of each night's dreams are recorded each morning, and the events of the following days are compared with these written records. Each person who tries it, becomes convinced that in his own commonplace dreams, there appear images which his subsequent waking experience unmistakably identifies as reflecting events which "happened" after the dream. From the totality of these experiments the third fact emerges, as stated above.

The fourth fact is an important link in the chain of the author's thought, and verifies the theory, indicated earlier in this article, that it is only our absorbed attention to the material interests of the present, that prevents our transcending the ordinary limitations of time. But in itself this fourth fact, like the first, is a mere commonplace in the experience of those who are so unfortunate (as it seems that Mr. Dunne is not) as to be naturally psychic, or so negative as to become susceptible to psychic impressions.

Having reached the third "fact" in his experiment, the author finds his progress blocked by the question as to why reflections from the future should occur *only in dreams*.

"Every solution which could reduce Time to something wholly present ruled that the pre-images should be just as observable when one was awake as they were when one slept. So, why only in dreams?

"I should be ashamed to confess how long a period elapsed before I saw that in framing that question, I was *begging the question*. The moment, however, that I did realize this, I proceeded to put the matter to the test" (p. 83).

The result, of course, was the discovery that it was *not* only in dreams; that one had, in fact, only to loose consciousness from its focus in the material present, and by act of will to refuse to let it follow associational trains back into the past, in order to find it swaying forward along the trains which stretched into the future. Images of the future could come in some measure while we were awake, as well as while asleep.

With the establishment of these four facts, the problem becomes that of finding a theory of time and of consciousness which, while in no way based upon them (for that would be only to argue in a circle), will serve to explain them; and to this Mr. Dunne devotes the second half of his book.

His starting point is the theory of time as a fourth dimension of space which, as we have seen, was forced into the foreground of his thought by the emergence of his third "fact." For years, students of Theosophy stood almost alone in the Western world in thinking of man as a many-dimensional being living in a many-dimensional universe, and in seeking, through these deeper dimensions, an understanding of life which its mere surface could not give. Recently their isolation here, as elsewhere, has lessened,—for the whole progress of scientific thought has been in the direction indicated by Theosophy,—and to-day this "fourth-dimensional" or "time-dimensional" theory has been made fashionable by the Relativitists, whose doctrine has been based upon it. Mr. Dunne sets forth the essential elements of this theory with his invariable clarity, but, instead of following him through this section

of his book, we may gain both in brevity and in depth, by quoting a single paragraph from *The Secret Doctrine*, written by Madame Blavatsky more than forty years ago. 'Our readers will recognize it as a comment upon the Stanza, "Time was not, for it lay asleep in the infinite bosom of duration."

"Time is only an illusion produced by the succession of our states of consciousness as we travel through eternal duration, and it does not exist where no consciousness exists in which the illusion can be produced; but 'lies asleep.' The present is only a mathematical line which divides that part of eternal duration which we call the future, from that part which we call the past. Nothing on earth has real duration, for nothing remains without change—or the same—for the billionth part of a second; and the sensation we have of the actuality of the division of 'time' known as the present, comes from the blurring of that momentary glimpse, or succession of glimpses, of things that our senses give us, as those things pass from the region of ideals which we call the future, to the region of memories that we name the past. In the same way we experience a sensation of duration in the case of the instantaneous electric spark, by reason of the blurred and continuing impression on the retina. The real person or thing does not consist solely of what is seen at any particular moment, but is composed of the sum of all its various and changing conditions from its appearance in the material form to its disappearance from the earth. It is these 'sum totals' that exist from eternity in the 'future' and pass by degrees through matter, to exist for eternity in the 'past.' No one could say that a bar of metal dropped into the sea came into existence as it left the air, and ceased to exist as it entered the water, and that the bar itself consisted only of that cross-section thereof which at any given moment coincided with the mathematical plane that separates, and, at the same time, joins, the atmosphere and the ocean. Even so of persons and things, which, dropping out of the to-be into the has-been, out of the future into the past—present momentarily to our senses a cross-section, as it were, of their total selves, as they pass through time and space (as matter) on their way from one eternity to another: and these two constitute that 'duration' in which alone anything has true existence, were our senses but able to cognize it there" (*The Secret Doctrine*, Ed. 1888, p. 37).

Though modern thought has become familiar with this concept of real being as extending along time as along a fourth dimension, it has failed to reach (and therefore differs from) the theosophical conception in at least two important particulars. This failure is largely due to the habit of substituting in thought, colourless symbols or charts of reality for reality itself, in all its richness of hue and tone. The time-dimensional picture, or model of being, has been studied in its purely geometrical aspects, as though it were a mere configuration of lines and planes and "solids" constructed in empty space, or filled with a homogeneous substance, in which all directions had the same significance and could be distinguished only in their relations to each other. This has revealed much, but it has obscured more; and it is just this "more" which marks the difference between the theosophical reading of time-dimen-

sional symbols, and the interpretation given to their bare mathematics by modern philosophic thought. Our "momentary glimpses" of reality, its "present" intersections with the three-dimensional world of matter, "blurred" though they be so as to give the sensation of duration, still reveal within that very blur the property of change which inheres in all we see. Behind the illusion of time, therefore, is the *reality of motion*, and of *that which produces motion*—a principle of growth, a law of causality; and whatever represents time must also represent this, which time itself represents. The student of Theosophy, therefore, can never confuse his symbol with reality, nor think of the time-dimension as interchangeable (save in the bare mathematics of the symbol) with the space-dimensions. They are of different orders, deriving from opposite poles of being; the one positive and dynamic, the other negative and (could it exist without the other) static. The dimensions of space concern substance, the field of movement, and the objects of consciousness. The dimensions of time concern causality, movement, and consciousness itself. Geometry cannot create motion, nor alone explain it.

Perceiving clearly and struck with the force of this last truth, Mr. Dunne uses it first to criticize, and then to extend, the ordinarily accepted time-dimensional theory. He shows us that if we think of our "present" consciousness as only a cross-section of reality, which stretches out in time like a bar (time being thus represented along the length of the bar as a line in space), we have also to think of this cross-section as *moving* along the bar. The "present" is a "travelling present," and the *road* along which it travels is, in our symbol, called "time." But, as we have just seen, the concept of *motion* requires something more than a *road* or path of motion. It requires (though this is not the way in which Mr. Dunne puts it) all those dynamic potencies which lie behind the illusion of time,—and these are not contained in any mere spatial line. To represent them (in purely geometric thought) we need a *new dimension*, another aspect of time. There must be something, beside the road itself, to show that we are travelling along the road, and the rate at which we travel. But let us follow Mr. Dunne's own argument a little more closely.

"Now, our first stage, again, has left us with a new Time problem to consider. For the observing entity with its field CD [the travelling present above], is travelling neither so slowly as to be stationary, nor so rapidly as to be in all places at once; and every condition between those two extremes must be describable in terms of Time taken per distance traversed. But the distance traversed is along our first considered Time dimension [the length of the bar]; so the time which is taken must be a Time which is not shown anywhere in the diagram." Therefore the first Time, along the length of the bar, is marked as T<sub>1</sub> in the diagram "to show that it is not the ultimate Time which times the movement. . . . That ultimate Time we may call Time 2."

Thus, in order to get the concept of *motion* back into the picture of reality—from which it was omitted when time was represented merely as a dimension of *space*—we have to conceive of time as having not one dimension but *two*,

and this second dimension has to be drawn in the diagram at right angles to the first, that is, at right angles to the length of the bar.

This brings us to the point where the author's theory, in its diagrammatic form, shows us how past and future can be reflected to consciousness in dreams, and be jumbled together. While we are absorbed in outer affairs (as we usually are when awake), we are confined to the "bar" itself, and can only travel along it continuously with the "travelling present" in "Time 1." But when we are not thus absorbed, we can slip into "Time 2," and it takes us out, at right angles to the bar, where we can see the whole extent of it at once, and look at past, present and future in any order we choose.

We can illustrate this roughly with a pencil to represent the "bar" of real being, conceived as stretched out in "Time 1." Any arbitrary cross-section of the pencil would stand for the "present," our "momentary glimpse" of reality; and the central line or lead of the pencil would represent the "Time 1" dimension. The "Time 2" dimension would have to be thought of as at right angles to the pencil. When we look at the pencil from the end—along its length in the "Time 1" direction—we see only a single round cross-section of the pencil. In this case it is the round end, because we are not really in the pencil, but we can suppose the end to stand for the particular cross-section representing the "present." When, however, we change our point of view, and look at the pencil from the side, at right angles to its length, as we would be looking were we looking in "Time 2," we can see the whole extent of the pencil, and can focus our attention on any cross-section we choose, first here and then there, on either side of the section which represents the "present," and thus look equally at past and future.

This is, of course, a very crude extraction, from the author's carefully developed theme, of the first rudiments of the notion of the multi-dimensionality of time, and of its application in explaining the "facts" of the earlier portion of his book. It turns out, as was to be expected, that the same difficulty arises with regard to "Time 2" as was encountered with "Time 1." A new time, "Time 3," has to be postulated, and so on "to infinity." Moreover, not only time, but the "observer"—you and I and everyone else—has to share this same quality of infinite dimensionality, if the observer of motion is to be a self-conscious observer. This will in no way alarm students of Theosophy; and indeed it is only necessary to put any definition of self-consciousness side by side with the mathematical definition of infinity—a totality that can be represented in a part of itself—to see that the two definitions are the same, and that true self-consciousness can pertain only to what is inherently infinite.

So Mr. Dunne brings us, through a series of successively deeper and higher dimensioned selves, packed like Chinese boxes one within the other, to the "observer at infinity," the infinite self of each of us, from whom, the theory indicates, all lesser selves derive their consciousness, and who alone has, in his own right, the power to "intervene" and alter the course of events,—though this power may be exercised on any plane, through the agency of

any lower self. We might perhaps point out that to the mathematician, made wary of the risk of taking the name of the infinite in vain, there is nothing in the author's argument to show that his expanding diagram really becomes more accurate as it expands. The error, due to the omission of the essential element of motion, is pushed back further and further into deeper dimensions of time and of consciousness, but there is nothing to prove that the error becomes thereby any the less serious. Indeed it might well be expected that this omission should be more violently wrong in the higher dimensions than in the lower, so that, for example, were we to stop at the seventh term of our series, we might be further from an accurate representation than we were at the first. This is a common characteristic of series that diverge rather than converge, and the mathematician might feel constrained to examine the question it raises. But when a philosopher takes his errors to infinity, as when a sinner takes his sins to his Master, and leaves them there, somehow or other they become less pernicious than they were. There is—to put it mildly—a certain largeness about infinity, and this large magnanimity seems able to absorb and resolve error within itself, without being noticeably disturbed by it, and to give back in its stead, something of serene confidence and truth.

Perhaps there is a difference here between the mathematician and the philosopher, a difference which their names suggest. The mathematician looks to the construction of the roadbed, which is doubtful; the philosopher, the lover of wisdom, looks to the goal, which is true. Perhaps Love may reach its goal by a road which Caution could not travel. Mr. Dunne, pursuing the reality of motion, and refusing to be daunted by the infinitude of terms in each of which it must inevitably escape him, succeeds, by that very refusal, in capturing something of the truth he seeks. In its light he sees that it is only the first, the "Time 1 observer," who is under any necessity of death; the other selves are not so limited. He sees these other selves as unawakened to their own powers, untrained in the use of the instruments that lie ready to their hands, and that it is through the outer self, the self which dies, that they must gain that training. He is misled, however, when he infers, from the evidence of dreams, that the "thinking" of these inner selves of ours is "of an extraordinarily feeble kind" (p. 171). It seems to us that this is one of several places where his argument is faulty, and that he is, in fact, judging of this evidence from the standpoint of his waking, three-dimensional consciousness; while the "thinking" in the dream itself was of a four-dimensional kind. We may grant at once that the efforts of our inner selves to convey their vision and their thought to the consciousness of the outer self, have very feeble results; but this may primarily be due to the limitations of the outer self rather than of the inner. It is like trying to map a sphere on a plane, a higher dimension on a lower one, and this is, literally, an undertaking of "transcendent" difficulty.

It is beyond our present purpose, however, to enter upon a critical discussion of Mr. Dunne's philosophy of "Serialism," as outlined in the second

half of his book, and we must resist the temptation to proceed further in that direction. We have, instead, to turn back and to pick up a point toward which we glanced in passing, but had then to leave aside.

Commenting upon the time-dimensional theories of to-day, we said that they fell short of the conception presented in *The Secret Doctrine* in at least *two* particulars. We saw that the reason for this failure lay in ignoring those real properties of (1) *motion* and (2) *that which causes motion*, which lie behind the "illusion" of time and which must, therefore, be inseparable from any "time-dimension." Mr. Dunne's work (in its theoretical section) is the effort so to extend the ordinary theory as to include in it what *motion* demands. The measure of his success is the measure also in which his resulting view of the universe and of man has drawn nearer to the teachings of Theosophy. But there is still omitted from the picture *that which causes motion*, the principle of change and growth, *the law of causality*. As it is this which creates the illusion of time, so it is also this which enables us to penetrate behind its veil, and see the way in which the past and future are contained within the present. Were there no principle of change, there would be no time, no division of the future from the past, such as now we know; and were this principle of change not also a law of causality, there would be no bridging of these divisions. It is through the dual action of Purpose and of *Karma*, the universal law of cause and effect, that the future "exists" in the present and may there be read. This is the essential element which is still lacking in Mr. Dunne's picture, and which must be supplied before all of its gaps can be closed and all its contradictions reconciled.

The Karmic records are written in the Astral Light, open, in its ascending series of levels, to the vision of our ascending "serial selves" (which, let us not forget, are all no more than aspects of our one self). In that Light, causes are seen, and the effects, contained in the causes, are *foreseen*; and something of that foreseeing is reflected down, in images and pictures, however broken and refracted, into the consciousness of the "serial self" that dreams. There is nothing extraordinary in such foreseeing. It is a commonplace of waking life. We see a friend in his car slowing down to cross a railway track. Halfway across, his motor stalls. We look up, and see a train approaching. Before us flashes a picture of the "future,"—a rending crash, a hurtling through space, a frightful mangling. Our friend's self-starter works in time; he escapes; the train roars harmlessly by. But that night we dream of a motor wreck,—exactly as though we had witnessed it in the past. Not only do we dream of "future" events *before* they happen; we dream also of "future" events that *never* happen,—and the same law explains them both, "were our senses but able to cognize it there."

HENRY BEDINGER MITCHELL.

## IN DEFENCE OF HOBBIES

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UNTIL quite recently, it had not occurred to me that they were in need of defence. Indeed, I had always looked upon them as a wholesome and familiar part of life, natural and indispensable, calling for no explanation; much less had I thought it necessary to justify them. Evidently I have been mistaken, however, for I was taken to task the other day by a well-intentioned but somewhat critical friend, who accused me of wasting valuable time and energy on a special hobby of mine to which I happened at that moment to be giving my undivided attention. I was reminded of all the priceless theosophical reading which I might accomplish if my energies were set in that direction. I was reminded also (and this was quite true) that there were theosophical books on my shelves which had never even been opened. Then, as a parting shot: "And here you are, peering at that drab stone through a magnifying glass, as though you expected to find a bit of heaven hidden away there."

As a matter of fact that is exactly what I *did* expect; it is exactly what I was looking for in the rough piece of labradorite which I held in my hand—what is there astonishing in that? Anyone who knows labradorite knows also the delightful surprises which it has in store; that like many another thing, whether it be a natural object or whether it be an idea, there is a drab angle and there is a luminous angle, and you may choose whichever one you please. You may, for instance, call a piece of labradorite dull, because you prefer to look at it, let us say, from the left; but change your position, go over to the right, and look at it with the light shining on it from *that* direction, and you will see such a play of lovely colour as you might consider yourself fortunate to catch even on a sunny day in the Mediterranean—sapphire and emerald shot through with gold; a bit of heaven, indeed! So I am sure that heaven must be anywhere and everywhere, and that all we need is the eyes to see it. We may glimpse it in a mountain lake or in a butterfly's wing, or in any other beautiful object—and in what appear to be ugly ones too sometimes, though I think it is generally beauty of some sort which reveals it to us. It must be wherever we look for it—but then, we *must look*.

However, after my critic had left, I began to ask myself wherein lies the fascination of hobbies in general; why certain hobbies in particular attract us more than others; and at last I said to myself: "What *is* a hobby, anyway?"

It seems to me that a hobby, like anything else, is exactly what one elects to make it, and this, I contend, is the very essence of good Theosophy. A hobby may and should be but another name for something very big, or at least for that which is capable of leading to great results; and just where a hobby ends and that which is usually considered to be of more importance



begins, I have never been able to discover. Even the Hierarchical System itself need not shut out the hobby idea: why make limitations because of a mere name? For, looked at from the point of view of our human conceptions, the Hierarchical System may be thought of as actually founded on the very kind of hobby which I have in mind. Hobbies are not just passing whims, as some of us incorrectly think. If a hobby is *real* it has become a part of us, and, as a part of us, the heart of the hobby, its substance, be it slum work or be it the cult of Olympian Jove, is a beloved object which we pursue with intense fervour and joy. In doing so we exercise cosmic qualities; for are we not told that the Universe was created with unimaginable fervour and joy? The whole fabric of social evolution, as I see it, is woven from the raw material of "hobby mania," and a study of life in olden days will show us this; for, to the peasant, his over-lord, living in his palace on the hillside, or in his castle perched high on its inaccessible rock, was the most vital hobby in the world, of supreme importance, revered, not-to-be-lived-without. Yes, and it was when the peasant began to lose this particular kind of sanity, when he no longer felt that his superior lord was the most engrossing interest (or hobby) in his life, to be worked for, to be sacrificed for, that the first symptoms of the modern scourge, democracy, began to show themselves.

Of course there are many kinds as well as many degrees of hobbies; but what a pity that we are prone to treat them all, whether big or little, with such slight respect that they cease to be flesh and blood to us. Now that we have become students of Theosophy, we are half ashamed of them; yet life would be unbearably solemn to many of us who are theosophical infants, were it not for these very hobbies of ours. That is what is the matter with some of us—we have not enough, or what is worse, we are not sufficiently serious about those we have; we do not see their possibilities. "Poetry?" protests someone, raising eyebrows of astonishment. "Do you mean to say that you give any of your time to poetry when you might be reading *The Secret Doctrine*?" "Why not?" I ask, with a stare, and trying to raise my own eyebrows even higher. "It so happens that I find myself better able to understand many parts of *The Secret Doctrine* because of a predilection for poetry—for really *good* poetry, of course." A certain kind of silence follows, a silence which may be construed in various ways, so I drop the matter—what more is there to say? Why do we persist in thinking that our hobbies are childish folly? They may be the sanest element in our lives, for the simple reason that we choose our particular hobbies because we have a natural affinity for those particular subjects. These subjects are not arbitrarily imposed upon us, as though part of a curriculum; there appears to have been already established a kind of subtle, inner connection. This arouses all our latent sympathies, and we thus run a fair chance of arriving at a better understanding of Theosophy itself. Indeed, I think we may get a wholly unexpected and perhaps a relatively extensive view of Theosophy solely because of the light which a really cherished hobby is able to throw. For after all, it is not the *subject* of the hobby which matters; it is the *powers* which are awakened. I believe

a real hobby is capable of intensifying many of the "qualifications" for chéla-ship which may be lying latent within us—unbounded enthusiasm, which is so easily awakened into love; painstaking investigation, which needs the utmost concentration; faith, that we can with patience and insight get to the very heart of our subject; endurance—for who ever thinks of fatigue or discouragement when he is in hot pursuit? All the "qualifications" must be there, at least in embryo, or we should never have conceived a real desire for our hobby. I wonder, for instance, if anyone would know how to throw himself heart and soul into a Cause, if he had never experienced, in this life or some other, what it was to lose track of time, of locality, of home and of friends, because he was entirely engrossed in his so-called hobby?

It is almost self-evident that many, if not all of the greatest achievements in science or in art must have started at what we choose to call the hobby stage—though, as I have said, I never quite know where the sharp line of cleavage comes in, or at what point a hobby ceases to be a hobby and ripens into a serious and legitimate occupation. If Galileo had not been "star-cracked" as a boy, either in this life or some former one, would he, as a man, have been able to make that new chart of the heavens which extended the limited field of the visible universe into the vast, illimitable space beyond? If Sir Isaac Newton had not delighted, when young, to lie in the grass under the spreading apple trees of the home farm at Woolsthorpe, indulging his intense love of nature, and thus wearing thin the mists which veiled his inner senses, apples would most certainly have remained "just apples" to him—nothing more. Could Piero della Francesca have painted that crystal-clear, smooth-running water—those waters which look as though they had their source in some far-off, etheric wonder-land—had he not, in his youth, spent hours and days, prone on the edge of his Umbrian streams, gazing with understanding eyes into their limpid depths? Did Turner just look at a sunset once, and then paint it? He must have lived sunsets, and breathed sunsets from his earliest days.

A hobby is not a thing which we find growing on bushes, all ready for immediate consumption, though this may appear to be so at times. That, however, is because in reality we have laid a foundation for it in former lives. The evolving of a hobby means devoted work of one sort or another; time gladly given, and energy and patience and sympathy. But we have to arouse our own love and understanding; nobody can do it for us. The heart of our hobby is hidden away in the inner world, and it is for us to uncover it, to bring it into outer expression; and if we care enough for it we shall do this. Hobbies are founded on basic laws,—the law of attraction and repulsion, to mention only one. That is why a hobby is so indicative of the individual. You will never find a person indulging in a hobby which necessitates the study of something which is antipathetic to him. I should never be able myself, for example, to make a close and sympathetic study of the habits of spiders, because I do not like spiders; they make my flesh creep. Therefore I have always had a special admiration for The Bruce, because he was able to watch,

apparently without a qualm, the activities of that indomitable spinner—the spider which cast such a powerful spell, that it moulded the fortunes of Ban-nockburn. Perhaps, however, spiders were less symbolic to The Bruce than history would have us believe. They may, in reality, have been one of his hobbies, and he may have watched the making of that memorable web with the eyes of a naturalist, pure and simple.

Then again, think of all the nice astral moulds of our hobbies, those which are lying just beyond our physical sight; for an intense interest surely implies an etheric counterpart tucked away somewhere. Imagine too, how nice it will be to come upon these astral moulds once more; to find them all ready and waiting when we return "next time"—that is, if we have moulded well and with durable intent. It seems to me that there should be whole libraries of them, like books on a shelf. We should be able to take them down as we want them, one by one, or an armful at a time. And even while durable, think how beautifully plastic these moulds must be, and how they will be capable of growing and expanding as our sympathy and interest and understanding increase and deepen. And think how we (though we may not always be conscious of it) will go on fashioning our visible hobbies around our invisible hobby moulds; and, as our mould grows, fed by our delight in the subject, so will the outer expression of our hobby flower eventually into real achievement—a new avenue of service in the Masters' Cause.

Evidently the Masters themselves have, or have had, their hobbies; so what further encouragement do we need? In *Old Diary Leaves* we are told of a Mahatma, one of H. P. B.'s "several Somebodies," helping in the writing of *Isis Unveiled*, who "had a fine artistic talent and a passionate fondness for mechanical invention." There was another who "would now and then sit there, scrawling something with a pencil and reeling off for me dozens of poetical stanzas which embodied now sublime, now humorous ideas." In *The Mahatma Letters* the Master K. H. is said to have been fond at one time of quoting poetry, and in a letter attributed to the Master M. there is a reference to "musick pieces in K. H.'s old portmanteau." Has anyone made a practice of carrying music about if he has been indifferent to it? When we read of that magnificent "skill in horsemanship," which is perhaps more indicated than described in "How a Chêla Found His Guru," one feels that the Mahatma must have had a special love of horses, and so a special understanding of them—I, at least, have always had that impression; and I am sure that if we looked for the sign-posts, we should find in our theosophical books many indications that individual Masters have their individual interests.

One of the most delightful and therefore one of the most useful people I have ever met (useful in a kind of every-day sense) was a man who had so many hobbies that he could produce an appropriate one for almost any chance acquaintance who crossed his path. He seemed to have his very pockets full of hobbies. This makes him sound rather encyclopedic, but he was nothing of the sort. He did not cultivate hobbies because of a wish to appear well-informed, but because he really cared for them, he had a genuine

affection for them; and for that reason he had the great gift of discovering without any apparent effort, the interests or hobbies of the person to whom he was talking. Quite naturally these mutual interests would be drawn to the surface during the chance conversation, and a tie of sympathy would be established immediately. If the chance acquaintance happened to say that he had, that very morning, found the first aconite or snowdrop in his garden, peeping out of the moist brown earth; or if he had just read something of importance about Uranus, and wanted to speak of that, this "hobby ridden" friend of mine was quick to show an intelligent interest in either, because he too, year after year, watched eagerly for the first spring flowers, and he had himself thought much about Uranus.

Now imagine this person as a member of the T. S.—what a "fisher of men" he would be! Without seeming to have any ulterior object, without mentioning Theosophy, and so without shock of any sort to possible prejudice, he would be able to make that chance acquaintance see something in a snow-drop which he had never seen before, and Uranus would no longer appear to him as a remote planet hung in space, but as part and parcel of himself. Our very human hearts, in our early stages of growth at least, respond quickest to such things as we can readily understand; they lie open at those points where our love and our sympathies are stored. Time enough to explore the Unknown when our widening interests have made us dissatisfied with our old, limited, outworn horizons. Few people in the world to-day are ready for Manasaputras; most will not accept them at any price. What a pity, therefore, if we who are members of the T. S. limit our possible usefulness because we lack a good equipment of hobbies, or, what is worse, because we do not recognize the value of those which we already have. It is almost inevitable that in going about the world we touch but superficially the greater number of people whom we meet, finding it impossible to penetrate their frivolities or their preoccupations in our search for what may be of real value underneath. Yet, armed with a contagious hobby or two, we ought to find this task far easier than it would otherwise be, and what, at first, had appeared as an impassable gulf between us and a chance travelling companion, would probably be bridged without difficulty. *Then*, if we were very fortunate, we, might be able to take the first step toward winning a new recruit for the service of the Lodge.

J.

# STUDIES IN PARACELSUS

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## V

IN the Argument which begins the *Philosophia Sagax*, Paracelsus declares that God has conferred on man and granted to him all arts and whatsoever belongs to nature, by way of the Firmament, so that the Firmament is the Light of Nature, and from the Firmament man may quaff what belongs to nature. Paracelsus attaches the greatest importance to what he calls Astronomy, which he separates into a number of divisions for consideration. From their character it is clear that, for Paracelsus, Astronomy was not limited to the observation of the planets and stars and the calculation of their movements. For him, Astronomy was the *nomos*, the Law, of the *Astra*; and by *Astra* he meant those seeds of action and stored up tendencies which are one aspect of the Law of Karma. Thus Paracelsus considers Astronomy under four main divisions: the Natural, the Superior, that of the New Olympus (in its description surprisingly like Devachan), and the Satanistic. Of these four he makes nine subdivisions, which cover the manifestations and methods of the laws of the *Astra*. These subdivisions are: Magic, Nigromancy, Nectromancy (clairvoyance), Astrology, the science of Signatures, the "uncertain" arts, Adept Physic, Adept Philosophy, and Adept Mathematics.

Paracelsus declares that knowledge of Astronomy produces and discloses the arcana, the secret things of the heart, and he lays emphasis on the meaning of the heart, as compared with the external *animus* and *intellectus*. These books are declared to be the effort to expound those arcana, whatever of good or evil there be, to which Nature has given birth. "Man, enkindled from the Macrocosm, savours of its nature, and thus, since there is one nature derived from earth and firmament, and one derived from heaven, the distinction of each of these two is an important matter."

A study of the universe which imparts the Light of Nature to man, teaches that this light flows from the nature of the *astra*. Everyone should be convinced that all natural sciences and wisdom are conferred on man by the *astra*, and that without exception there is nothing which does not flow forth from them. We are the disciples of the *astra*; they are our teachers, and it was "ordained by God that we should learn from the Light of Nature, as from our father from whom we are built and fashioned." The rejection of this teaching means that those who reject it have no knowledge of what the Light of Nature teaches, nor from what either the mortal or the immortal arises. Thought and belief, as also knowledge and power, are "discerned" by means of art; this art Astronomy teaches. Whatsoever belongs to the divine order is learned from God, but that which concerns the transitory is

learned from the firmament. Where the Astronomer ends, the true physician, the true philosopher, begins, studying justice, eternal Sapience, and finally the Sciences of the Universe. Where Astronomy ends, the noble religions begin, for without Astronomy no art can attain perfection. After it, begins divine Sapience, and after it, the Light of Nature. Thus the Light of Nature is to be accurately cognized; thereafter we shall be fitted for the cognition of all things which God carries into effect through man.

Paracelsus goes on to say that there are many arts, each of which is to be perfected, and which God demands shall be related to the base, which is Himself. "For though there be one wisdom, one science, yet it is to be treated and exercised in many ways." For God desires to be regarded and to become visibly wonderful among His Divi, that is, His disciples. As regards the arts, this is so; but as regards God in relation to eternal life, the computation is not the same: there is one doctrine, one method, one reckoning, one dwelling, one guardianship, one God. On the other hand, as regards the Light of Nature, there are many methods of treating and dealing with that Light. To this end there are many craftsmen, many artificers and faculties, and many moral obligations. Each should be perfected in his own art, and "noble is he who has collected and distributed all knowledge of origins in one brain. That man knows the Magnalia, the great secrets, of God." Wisdom in this world is twofold: one eternal, one transitory. The eternal comes from the Light of the Holy Spirit, the transitory from the Light of Nature. The Light of Nature contains in itself two kinds: there is a good sapience and a bad sapience. The good cleaves to the eternal, the bad to the damned.

Astronomy points out the reason why God repented that He had made man after His own likeness and did not "ordain him in the world." It is evident that He repented because it was destined that His likeness should not live in Paradise, but corruptibly, in the world. "For if man had remained in Paradise, philosophy would deduce that God intended to create another race in the world. Now, if man be born from the Light of Nature, it follows that man knew good and evil, not indeed from flesh and blood, but from the *astra*, in flesh and blood." "Is not this a most noble treasure, if man be able to discern the eternal sapience from the transitory in this, because man is himself in the likeness of God? For by this he understands that the natural in no way conforms to the eternal. Hence he understands that, in relation to this likeness, he should seek to divide transitory sapience in good and evil. Thus he has the power to choose either good or evil, while almost certainly knowing whither evil leads, and with what result. He has the power to choose what is good, first, of course, the eternal sapience, then the temporal; of the temporal, the good is to be retained, the evil is to be rejected. For none of these constrain you, but you constrain yourself."

The Light of Nature is created, through God the Father, by the power of the Holy Spirit; thus, if men learn and live from the Light of Nature, they receive this from the Holy Spirit. A new creature is created by the Holy Spirit

in relation to the Eternal Light; that is, the likeness of God is brought back thither, whence it came. Now the body cannot be nourished by the food of the soul, nor the soul by the food of the body, but to each its proper food must be given.

The natural light is not the eternal light; we must be made safe (*fac salvum*) and eternal by means of the eternal light. Should I, then, venture to connect the mortal light of the *anima* with the eternal light? Since body and soul dwell together, is it not right to take cognizance of the two lights together? For God has brought together the two natures in man, the earthly and the eternal, and these two will remain united until the day of the resurrection, when the earthly will return to the earth, but the eternal will go to the kingdom of God. Of these two lights, "the eternal fulfils its office in the soul, but the mortal in the body. The mortal is active in the Light of Nature, the eternal in the Eternal Light." "For thus Divine Providence has ordained that to the mortal body its own task is assigned, that it should spend its time in this world in such fashion that vain thoughts shall be banished, and that, according to the will of God, we shall dwell in the natural light, employing the natural light for the natural body, dealing with the natural sciences, and cognizing the Magnalia of God throughout nature. For verily, we must not rejoice in that light, but in another light which pertains to the likeness of God."

In the first chapter of the *Philosophia Sagax*, Paracelsus sets forth the order by which creation proceeded. He describes the creation of the upper and nether spheres as taking place in such a way "that the firmament received corporeal substance and likewise the Elements in heaven and earth." After this body, was created the living spirit, perfecting its working through and from the body, destined thereto by God. Thus were accomplished the "days" of creation and the arrangement of all things created. After all these, man himself was made by God according to His likeness. There are four Rectors, or rulers: first, the Rector governing the body; then "the body of the senses," with its Rector; the "ruler governing himself"; and finally the Rector governing man. Thus it is to be understood "of what kind is the spirit ruling creatures, and of what kind is the spirit governing man." In the beginning, the Elements were created, and these are nothing but a basis by means of which something may be accomplished; that is, they are something into which is to be infused that which is alive. Thus there is a Rector, or ruler, in the Elements, making manifest, or driving out of them, that which is in them. These various Rectors work harmoniously together to carry out the direction of the Divine Mind. We may note that this is strongly reminiscent of the various classes of Cosmocratores and Hierarchies of Being and Consciousness described in *The Secret Doctrine*, the Purusha and Prakriti of the manifested Logos; the Matter, Force and Consciousness, with the Hierarchies guiding and building from within.

Between man and creatures this difference appears: since man was made in the image of God, it follows that he is a living being, because, having been

formed from substance, he was thereafter endowed with divine reason. Hence there are, for man, but not for the animal, a third and fourth Rector. For that which pertains to the *intellectus* in the image of God, distinguished man from the rest of created beings. All beings must manifest that to which they were predestined. Therefore man, created last by God, and endowed with the Rector, is led and compelled to the natural operation which God requires to be done from within man. For the Rector incites this from within himself.

The Astronomer has the power to make declarations regarding the natural spirit in the body, for the body is formed of the Elements. But the higher spirit, conferred by the firmament itself, is added to the elemental body. Therefore philosophy has two divisions: one is concerned with the nature of this higher spirit; the other is concerned with the nature of the body. Thence is to be known what the heavenly powers bring to perfection; that is, what the ethereal spirits fashion and work out. Thus there are: the body of the elements, the body of the animals, the body of man, and also the bodies of metals, of plants and of other created things. The body of the elements is divided into four genera (fire, air, water, earth); the body of the animals into many genera; but the body of man is one. Thus in the body of man is one thing only, one nature, one condition. But, in accordance with the human *intellectus*, it is divided into as many aspects as there are aspects of animals in all the genera: thus there are serpent-men, toad-men, swine-men, lion-men, and so on. From the elements, various bodies come forth; from the firmament, various spirits. Now, if the firmament enters anyone with the habit and character of a pig, just as if the body were a pig, then will that man be, not a man, but an animal. All this is subject to a Moderator, and the *astra* supply this Moderator. Thus Paracelsus declares that an animal-like man has a Rector like an animal; and that a man who is the image of God has a Rector which is the image of God.

Man has two bodies: one formed from the Elements; the other formed from the *astra*. Paracelsus carefully distinguishes between them as regards their life and destination, as we shall see later on, when he comes to deal with them specifically, under the head of Nigromancy.

The mechanism of the Mundus, the universe, is divided and fashioned into two parts: the sensible and tangible, and the invisible and impalpable. The sensible part is the body; the invisible includes the *astra*. The sensible part consists of three principles, which he calls Sulphur, Mercury and Salt. The invisible part also consists of three principles, which he calls *Anima*, *Sapientia* and *Scientia*. In life, all are conjoined.

It will be seen that, here and later, Paracelsus carefully distinguishes between the body formed of the Elements, the firmament and the *astra*, with the *sensus* derived from the *astra*, on the one hand; and, on the other, the *intellectus* and *animus*. All these are united to form the outer man, the elemental body being at the same time conjoined with and directly influenced by the *astra* of the firmament. In addition to this, it will be seen that the external



man is needed for the manifestation, the "working," of the spiritual man. So it is clear that Paracelsus is in full accord with Emerson's rendering of the Oriental teaching that "the universe *ex-ists* for the purposes of Soul." Throughout this book, Paracelsus consistently develops the teaching that beyond *intellectus* and *animus* is the *anima* "seated in the heart"; and that, while the natural processes of the external body, the instrument, are illumined by the Light of Nature, the *anima* is an instrument derived from the "image of God" and illumined by the Light of Heaven. Thus, there are various "spirits" linked with and inspiring corresponding vehicles; some of these are transitory, namely, the vehicles formed of the Elements and the firmament, with the *sensus*, *animus* and *intellectus*; others are eternal, namely, the *anima* and the "image of God," with their vehicles.

Paracelsus speaks of the elementary body, the firmamental body, and the astral body, which he distinguishes from the first two. Then, in Book II, he speaks of the Body of Regeneration, the Body of Justice, the Body of Mercy, all derived from the "image of God," and synthesized by the Creative Power, God, through the Son, activated by the Holy Spirit. Emphasis is laid on the creative power of the *imaginatio*, working through the Word, which is carried out by the various Rectors mentioned above; so that we are presented with a united plan, operative through all nature; the Universal Mind working from within outwards, and all working together in the evolutionary plan, for the purposes of Soul. There may be more, which the present writer has not discovered; but enough has been given not only to support these statements, but also to show that, as Mme. Blavatsky wrote, "Paracelsus was cautious and did not tell all he knew."

His carefully made subdivisions of what he calls Astronomy would indicate that he undertook the analysis of external man in order to show that, in the unity of nature, there must be a concordance and correspondence of the exterior man with an interior man, and that similar but not identical laws govern both, with the consequent obligation that the exterior man must be guided and governed by the laws of the interior. As will be seen later, man is the microcosm of the Macrocosm: "As above, so below." Paracelsus urges the necessity of understanding the powers dwelling in the *astra*, since the *astra* occupy the place of a natural Pedagogue, so that we may understand and know that *intellectus* and science flow from the *astra* into us. As the *astra* dwell in heaven, so does the *sidus*, the "star," hold its place in man. The *sidus* of man is a Pedagogue, and man is the disciple of the *sidus*, receiving from it the Light of Nature. The cognition of the "image" is of the same kind. The spiritual power of the "image" gives the cognition of eternal life. Just as, because of this, we drink divine sapience through the spirit of the "image," so "through the ethereal spirit we understand earthly things, and through the spirit of the Elements we explore the arcana of the Elements. He who is not endowed with the corresponding spirit, knows nothing of the divine, the firmamental, or the elemental. Thus everyone speaks from that from which he is. All are, in truth, conjoined, the natural and the eternal,

which is concealed by the natural. We have received both the natural light and the eternal light."

Discourse of any kind proceeds from the principle which is operative in the speaker. Those things which proceed from the cognition of the natural life, are derived from the *astra*. Whatever light of understanding there is in man, proceeds from the *astra*; what concerns flesh and blood is derived from the Elements. It follows that there are in man operations of two kinds: one, derived from the firmamental light, the natural sapience, art and *intellectus*,—God having created a medium in the Light of Nature; the other elemental, such as are licentiousness, luxuriousness, hunger and thirst, which pertain to flesh and blood. For whatever is produced in flesh and blood should not be ascribed to the *astra*, for Heaven makes no one licentious or greedy, but sapience and art proceed from Heaven. Just as natural fire comes forth from the flint, in which, however, it is invisible, so intellectual fire comes from the *astra* into flesh and blood, as it were into tinder, not producing carnal things, but giving birth to intellectual things like the sciences and the sapiences. What is of flesh and blood is animal and cleaves to the animal; what is of the *astra* is human; what is of the spirit of God is in accordance with the "image."

By the operation of the superior *astra* on man, we are to understand that in the *astra* are builded all arts, faculties, sciences, crafts, sapiences, faculties of understanding, as also follies and things of that kind. Therefore it follows that there can be nothing in man which is not given to him by the Light of Nature. But where man is a slave to the flesh, and lives in the elemental nature, heaven can achieve nothing in him, but leaves him rude and rough, so long as he lives in the flesh.

What God activates directly, is unknown to the Light of Nature, but at the same time not all the *astra* have perfected their operation or imparted their influences; therefore the discovery of the arts is not yet complete. Thus no one should be hindered in the process of discovery, for the *astra* co-operate with man in the enquiry. The saying of Christ, "Seek and ye shall find," is no less true of the natural than of the heavenly light. Therefore let everyone search daily for something new, for this, whatever it be, proceeds from the Light of Nature, and its science and basis is assuredly put forth from Heaven.

At this point, Paracelsus discusses the question whether the Light of Nature and its methods were superseded by the teaching of Christ. He further develops this line of inquiry in the second book of *Philosophia Sagax*. He holds that, in the natural world, the Light of Nature was the medium given by God, and that what he calls Astronomy was obliterated by erroneous conclusions regarding the natural light. Christ taught of the Eternal Wisdom to his disciples, with a more sure divination from the Holy Spirit, which rendered the operations of the natural light unnecessary. But, though Christ and also his prophets are above nature, Astronomy is not on this account annulled. This false view gives sciolists the opportunity to destroy the Eternal Light and the Light of Nature at the same time.

As has already been said, the *astra* are the source of all mortal *intellectus*,

sapience and science, and, without these, man cannot exist. For just as body and *anima* are at one together, and as, because of the creation operated by Christ, the one cannot exist on this earth without the other, in the same way natural reason and eternal sapience can exist together; yet the natural reason can act without the eternal sapience, manifesting then what is in accord with the natural, not the eternal. Verily, then, the eternal reason must not be separated from the natural sapience, precisely because man ought to discern the eternal from the natural. Whence it is that each of the two shines forth before all things in the man who lives in accord with God. The two lights are then united, nor is one opposed to the other. One concerns the mortal; the other, the eternal.

Paracelsus says that it was known to him that man is dust; that the Elements from which man is produced are likewise dust; and, finally the *astra* themselves, from which human sapience arises. With this dust, all arts and sciences perish. But the works of man, together with the works of the "image," return to God, from whence they came forth. Thus for man the Light of Nature is a subject for inquiry, in order that the mortal body may walk in the path of the Lord, and not go astray into the purposes of destruction; and that the regenerate body may follow that which has been its duty from the beginning, before the manifestation of the Light of Nature; that is, that we seek first the Kingdom of God. So in succession will all things be revealed in the Light of Nature. In this way is composed the strife between the mortal and the eternal; those who hunger will be abundantly filled with good light, but the slothful will be deprived of it. It is as though it were said: Since ye have the Son, in whom is cognized light eternal, you must turn to Christ, and not to nature. Yet the natural will also be given to us. For if before all things we seek Christ, whatever things are in nature will thereafter be given to us. Our first care should be for the eternal, that we may thus seek the Kingdom of God. When we have done this, then will be added to us all things which we may be seeking in the Light of Nature, for the completion of the natural state in the Mundus. Thus we nourish two bodies: one from the earth, the other from Christ; one from the Father, the other from the Son; yet each in one spirit. In this spirit, whatsoever there may be, moves in the path of the Lord. The former light is dust and shadow, but the new light remains eternal.

In the second chapter, Paracelsus describes what he calls the "slime of the earth," and that from which it is made, as also the properties of this "mass of clay,"—the clay being composed of the dust previously spoken of. The "slime" is to be cognized from what man is; that is, from all created things which describe man as he was made. For "all created things are documents and books to describe the origin of man." Man was created last of all, and his properties can be cognized from those that preceded him.

In the Kosmos there was at first nothing, not even an element. Then came the Logos, the Word. Through the Word, the body and its spirit were made: from this body thereafter all created things were produced. Last of all,

man was made, not from nothing, but from some "mass." Holy Scripture testifies that God took the "slime," or "mass," of earth, and from it formed man; elsewhere, Scripture shows that man is ashes, dust and earth. The "slime of the earth" is the Macrocosm. Thus man is made from heaven and earth; that is, from previous creatures.

The "slime of the earth" is a something extracted from the firmament and all the elements, an extract from all bodies and created things. Man, being made from it, was created last of all. Paracelsus draws a curious deduction from the fact that Adam was placed first in Paradise, and then in Eden; this was in order that he might understand all created things and put them to their proper uses, that through him the sapience of the *astra* might be produced, thus leading to the development of all sciences and arts. Had he remained in Paradise, in which he was originally placed, he could easily have dispensed with the whole sapience of the Kosmos, which proceeds from the *astra* and the Elements. He was placed in Eden that he might there live in accord with the firmament and the Elements. Paracelsus makes mention of other races, who live in "secret isles" and are there concealed. No one would credit that such are the posterity of Adam; they would be thought to descend from another Adam. It is probable, he says, that just as there are many species of animals, so there may be other Adams in the islands!

Man consists of the slime of the earth, and from this slime draws all that is mortal. Just as we have received the eternal sapience sent by the Holy Spirit through Christ, from the Father, so also is natural sapience given to us in natural fashion through the *astra*, from the Father. This sapience and science were given in order that they might be perfected, and thus the Magalia of God be brought forth. For this purpose were men fashioned.

Adam was placed in Paradise, and was afterwards expelled that he might test experience, because the life of the Mundus must be lived relatively to the Mundus; exactly as regeneration must have its refuge in the sapience of Christ, and take its sustenance from Christ, in the same way, man, taken from the earth, feeds on the fruits of the earth, and the birds of the air, and the fishes of the sea, and has rule over serpents and basilisks. When such a man was produced, he was formed from the slime, and placed in Paradise. When he violated God's command, he was reduced to the dust of the earth, that he might experience the conditions of the Mundus and the properties of nature.

After God had made all creatures, all Elements, the *astra* and all the rest, and had set it before Him for consideration, he undertook last of all the formation of man. From the four Elements, He drew out the essences into one mass. He also extracted from the *astra* the essence of the arts of sapience and reason. He thus brought together these essences into one mass, which mass Scripture has called the "slime of the earth." From that mass two bodies were formed: the *corpus sidereum* (sidereal body) and the elementary body. According to the Light of Nature these are called the Quintessence (the "fifth essence" in addition to the four Elements), that is, the mass was

extracted, and into it, as into one, were brought together the firmament and the Elements. Thus that which is an extract of the four is made the fifth. The fifth is the nucleus and strength of all the essences and properties in the Mundus. All such things God held in His hand, and from them formed man according to His image, from a certain mass extracted from all creatures. The universal slime is that from which man was made, and the entire universe was co-opted into the Quintessence, namely, of things visible and invisible.

From that slime, the Creator built the Mundus Parvus (the little world), the microcosm, or man. Thus man was made a microcosm, and contains all the natures and properties of the Mundus. Hence the microcosm is the quintessence of the Elements, of the *astra* or firmament, in the upper sphere and the nether globe. The Macrocosm is the parent of the microcosm; and thus in the microcosm is also found the nature of dragons, vipers, serpents, wolves, sheep, and also all Elements and the origin of all health and disease.

"A son repeats his parent." But, in order that the microcosm may be different in substance, form and figure from the Macrocosm, he has been so constituted by the Creator as to possess flesh and blood, and the impulses added thereto, for the pursuit of all those things to which he inclines from natural conception. This was so also, that he might be man and be tried by thirst and hunger, that he might enjoy the fruits of the Elements, and draw sustenance from the body of his parent, from whose body he is nourished and fed and takes drink. Just as those who are regenerated through Christ, receive food and drink from Christ, and are buried in Christ and blessed, in the same way the microcosm lives from the Macrocosm, receives from it food and drink, dies in it and is buried.

Thus, then, the natural man, the microcosm, is a man of the senses. God has also established this, that man contains within himself a Magnet: one power derived from the Elements, by which he draws the same things back again; and a second power derived from the *astra*, by which he attracts the microcosmical *sensus* also from the *astra*.

A twofold *persona* (mask) must be described, each part of which is transitory. The Mundus has two bodies, one visible, the other invisible. The bodies of the Elements are visible; the invisible parts of the Elements are four: earth and its fruits, water and its fruits, air and its fruits, and heaven and its fruits. (In many places, Paracelsus makes "heaven" do duty for the element fire, and also applies it to celestial conditions.) The *astra* are "heaven" only; the stars are visible, but are not "heaven."

Through hunger and thirst, food and drink are supplied to flesh and blood; so also, through the hunger and thirst of the senses and thoughts, the *animus* is fed with the natural sciences and sapiences, by means of a Magnet (Magnes), just as in the case of the Elements. (It will be remembered that the properties of the Magnet and the Alkahest were described in a previous article, THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, page 159, Volume XXIV.)

We men eat and drink, and derive our flesh and blood from our elemental and

our firmamental father. To this end, because we are made out of the Mundus, like infants, we are nourished from the Mundus. In the same way, when we are regenerated, we are fed from God, and are granted to drink sapience and *intellectus* from Him, from Whom we are.

In regard to the "image" of man, we are taught that it is supernatural, for nothing of this can be conferred by Elements or *astra*. The "image" is eternal; the Elements and *astra* are temporary and dust. The "image" is not in the least attributable to the Elements and *astra*, because it is eternal; the elements and *astra* are temporary and mortal, and, as it were, dust, although they do not appear like dust, but like flesh and blood. In that "image" inheres the true sapience of man. His animal nature is that which is temporary, consisting of flesh and blood in man, who is the quintessence, the microcosm, and is brought together out of the Mundus, and contains the Mundus in himself.

Therefore he who follows the Mundus, and emulates his earthly father, is the son of the Mundus, remains in the Mundus, and does not have regard to the divine "image" or its sapience, which, however, it is man's duty to regard. Now the animal is nothing but the image of the earth, which perishes; but the image of God does not perish, for God is eternal. Therefore a wise man, that is, a man who lives in accord with the sapience of the "image,"—such a man rules the astral and elemental body. Yet man should give satisfaction to both images, so bearing himself that he be found walking in the law of the Lord, in nature, in the will and spirit of God, not placing the sapience of the mortal body before the eternal image, and not rejecting the eternal image, nor causing it to reject the sapience of the mortal. A wise man lives in accordance with the image, not according to the Mundus. And he who lives according to the image, conquers and rules the *astra*.

Paracelsus in this chapter draws the comparison between seed cast into the ground, which must be dissolved that it may grow, and the seed of the Quintessence, to be thrown into the matrix of the *astra*. We may gain much valuable information from this, if we read it in the light of the *Elixir of Life*. It is especially valuable in relation to his later teaching with regard to the Body of Regeneration. His conception of the seed, containing the "privation," the model, of all the qualities of the *astra* and the Quintessence, shows that he anticipated in part the theories of Pangenesis of the Darwinians, and of the germ-plasm of Weismann (Compare *The Secret Doctrine*, Volume I, page 243; Volume II, page 751).

A. KEIGHTLEY.

# LODGE DIALOGUES

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## VI

"PARDON, Haru, but may I —"

Firmly but quietly he answered, without looking up, "I am busy at present."

"But, Haru," the young chéla stammered.

"I have told you," he said, this time a decided note of displeasure in his voice.

"But, Haru, I *must*," the other began again, heart in mouth, closing his eyes instinctively, as though already seeing the lightning bolt that was descending upon him.

There was nothing but silence. As much as for anything else, to discover if he were still alive, he opened his eyes. Haru was standing before him, smiling, with much amusement in his face.

"You are persistent," he said, "a swarm of gnats indeed. What is the matter?"

It was not easy to recover, under that searching glance, from the impact of the encounter; but the chéla rallied as well as he could, while Haru waited, giving him his chance, but prepared to find his excuse inadequate.

It seemed flimsy enough to the chéla in the light of his trepidation; but as it was all he had, there was nothing save to produce it.

"I heard last night that F——, who has been away so long, had started to come home; but he has met with mishap after mishap, failed in his business, lost all his money, and so most of his friends—a long series of disasters. Now he is disheartened to the point of bitterness; says he is a fool, and should have remained where he was,—that he never was cut out for this kind of thing anyhow. Every indication of complete collapse."

"F—— is no concern of mine," said Haru.

"Yes, I know that, but what am I to do! The Big Brother is away on that urgent affair; Master is at Convention with the others."

"Attend to him yourself."

"O! I am not fit to do it, not capable. I should put the finishing touch to the mischief."

"Make yourself so, then."

"That concerns my welfare," the chéla cried. "As a reproach, I know its justice; but for the moment think of him,—think of Master's joy if on his return he found that F—— were really on the way home. Concern of yours or not, surely you can find something to do, and there is no time to be lost. How long every one has waited for this turning!"

Haru laid his hand on the boy's shoulder. "Do not you lose the lesson of

this, my child. Consider how simple it all would be if you were ready for the situation,—if you had acquired the wisdom and skill that enabled you to do what is necessary now. It will not be easy, in the circumstances, for me to interfere, but I will see what can be done. After all, I never thought much of F——: he has substituted conceit for sense, and closed his mind securely against any opinion or idea that is not an endorsement of his own. In such a frame, what use in his coming home? He cannot convert us, which would probably be his effort, and such an effort would again exile him. It would be a repetition of the past,—time and energy thrown into the same investment, where so much has already gone. How many talents have been wrapped up in that napkin! Will they bear interest, think you, before Judgment Day?"

"I am not going to think of Judgment Day until it comes," the chëla answered, heartened by the promise given. "My own experience then is not likely to be happy, save as Master's infinite mercy blots my record. I leave all that to him, since it is all his already: but such capital of thought or feeling or life as I possess, I offer now for F——. If he came back he would be worth far more than I. I gladly stake upon that gamble. Take it, Haru; pitifully little it is, I am sure; you know, as I do not, what it amounts to."

As he spoke, the Master stood there:—"It is enough," he said to Haru; "F—— is coming home." Then turning:—"My son, come with me."

And the tears of joy stood in Haru's eyes, for he knew that two had won through. M.

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*Less time than courage is required to make a saint.*—OLIVAINT.



# BRIHAD ARANYAKA UPANISHAD

## PART II, SECTIONS 4-5

### THE SECRET OF IMMORTALITY

THE great Upanishads, we are told, contain instructions for disciples preparing for Initiation. And, since some of the disciples began their studies when they were not more than seven years old, it is natural that we should find much of the teaching taking the form of stories, full of the gentle humour of the Orient, vivid and charming.

The story here told possesses this charm. It is further interesting because the pupil, the candidate for immortality, is a woman with the heart of a child and with a child's simple faith. The great sage, Yajnavalkya, who plays so large a part in the stories of the Upanishads, has completed the years allotted to the life of a householder, and is about to enter on the next stage, the life of a solitary student in the forest. It is worth recalling here that Brihad Aranyaka, the name of this Upanishad, means the "great forest teaching." When this period of solitary study, or study in company with other forest dwellers, is completed, it is followed by the fourth stage, or Ashrama, that of a teacher of disciples. So ran the fourfold life of these ancient seekers after wisdom: disciple, householder, forest dweller, teacher of disciples.

Leaving the household life, Yajnavalkya prepares to divide his possessions, his dwelling, lands, flocks and herds, whatever he may have received as gifts, between Maitreyi and Katyayani. The last has no part in the story beyond the mention of her name. But Maitreyi is a clearly drawn, living figure; the lessons designed for the young disciples are embodied in the answers to her questions.

The most vital lesson is taught in her first question, and its answer by Yajnavalkya: "If this whole earth should be full of wealth for me, may I thereby be immortal?" "No. There is no hope of immortality through wealth!"

The second essential lesson comes in the reply to her request that she may be given, not wealth, but wisdom: "While I am speaking, do thou meditate deeply!" Then comes the teaching of wisdom, and it is notable that the wise teacher begins at the point where the disciple stands; in this case, the love of the wife for her husband, the devoted love which fills Maitreyi's heart: "Not for love of husband is the husband dear, but for love of the divine Self is the husband dear." Only the presence of the third element, the divine, immortal Spirit, gives the union its reality and sanctity.

Maitreyi, listening, and meditating deeply, intuitively recognizes this divine Spirit, the One within the two, in the relation which she knows best, her own

loving devotion, thus gaining insight into the supreme Self. Then Yajnavalkya carries the teaching forward: it is the presence of this divine Spirit, this supreme Self, which alone lends, not only value, but existence itself, to all things that are held dear. Without the divine Self, these things would have no being at all. They exist only in virtue of the divine Self, the one Reality.

This greatest truth is taught in simple words addressed to the intuition of a childlike heart. Then, through illustrations equally simple, Yajnavalkya tells how the great, manifold world comes forth from the divine Self, the Eternal. The worlds come forth from the Self, from Atma, as the sounds come forth from a drum, a conch shell, a lute; as the smoke comes forth from a fire kindled with damp fuel; illustrations with all of which Maitreyi, or the youngest disciple, is familiar.

And, as the sound of drum or lute cannot be caught by the hands, so the manifested worlds cannot be comprehended by the mind. There is always the mystery of diversity, of separation, the chasm between the knower and what is known, between consciousness and what is cognized, between spirit and matter. The mystery is solved, the chasm is bridged, by the divine Self, since both spirit and matter, both consciousness and things cognized, are in essence that divine Self, in which the wall of partition is broken down and the twain are made one.

Other illustrations, equally simple, follow: as rivers, flowing from East and West and North and South, all become one in the ocean; as all sounds are gathered together in the ear; as all wisdoms are united in the understanding heart, so all beings are one in the divine Self.

Then, solving the perplexed question of Maitreyi, comes an answer of splendid eloquence: "Where there is duality, one sees the other, one knows the other, but where all has become the divine Self, by what and whom could he see, by what and whom could he know? By what could he perceive That, by which he perceives all that is? By what could he perceive the Perceiver?"

A striking keynote for the passage which follows may be taken from one of the Buddhist scriptures, where we are told that, as the bee seeks honey with eager, intuitive certainty, so the soul should seek and find wisdom. This graphic symbol is here broadened and made universal: "honey" is made to represent the natural, inevitable object of any sense or faculty or power; that with which each power is by its very nature correlated. Thus, the body is correlated with the element called "earth," the sense of vision is correlated with the sun, and so on. In each instance, the relation is that of the bee, going with intuitive certainty to the honey.

The lesson is carried further. The correlation does not exist by accident; it is due to the presence in both, in the knower and the known, of the same divine essence, the same immortal Spirit. Thus the divine Self bridges the chasm. One or two points may be made clearer by teachings drawn from other Upanishad passages or their commentaries. Thus we are told that the "waters" are the symbol of the currents of "works," of Karma, which carry to a new life the seeds of past tendencies, impulses and insights gained in

former lives. Therefore the "seed-formed" Spirit is correlated with the waters. In the same way, voice is correlated with the element, "fire"; there is a suggestion of the magical power of "voice," like the pentecostal tongues of flame, bringing the gift of tongues, or the majestic potency of the Logos, the creative Word. Breath is the element, "air," but it is also the breath of life; the wind that blows where it lists, and also the regenerating spirit of life. The moon, as so often, is the symbol of mind, not of the higher intelligence, but of the mental and emotional nature, which ebbs and flows as the moon waxes and wanes, and which, like the moon, shines by reflected light. So the ladder of symbols leads us up to the divine Self, where duality disappears.

Then comes the story of Dadhyanch and the two Ashvins, with its strange refrain. The story is taken from the earlier hymns of the Rig Veda. Indra, the divine Lord, had imparted spiritual wisdom to Dadhyanch, but under the penalty that, if Dadhyanch imparted it to mankind, Indra would cut his head off. The two Ashvins, who represent, we are told, the Kumara-egos incarnating as mankind, with man's dual potencies, sought instruction from Dadhyanch. But, because of Indra's threat, they took the precaution of cutting his head off, and putting in its place the head of a horse. When Dadhyanch imparted wisdom to them and Indra carried out his threat, the Ashvins replaced the head of Dadhyanch. It is probable that we have here an allusion to those perplexing personages, the Manasa Putras. It is probable that there is also a reference to the sacrifice which the Master inevitably makes, when he imparts spiritual wisdom to a disciple; a sacrifice which the disciple may redeem, when he wins the great battle and attains immortal life.

#### YAJNAVALKYA AND MAITREYI

"Maitreyi!" said Yajnavalkya, "I am about to enter on a higher stage of life, leaving this stage. Come then, let me make a final division with thee and Katyayani here!"

Then Maitreyi said, "Sire, if this whole earth should be full of wealth for me, may I thereby be immortal?"

"No!" said Yajnavalkya. "As is the life of those endowed with possessions, such would thy life be. But there is no hope of immortality through wealth!"

Then Maitreyi said, "What should I do with that, whereby I may not be immortal? But what my lord possesses of wisdom, that, verily, tell to me!"

Then Yajnavalkya said, "As dear, indeed, as thou art to us, so dear is what thou speakest. Come, then, be seated, and I shall tell thee fully. But, while I am speaking, do thou meditate deeply!"

He said, "Not, verily, for love of husband is the husband dear, but for love of the divine Self is the husband dear!

"Not, verily, for love of wife is the wife dear, but for love of the divine Self is the wife dear!

"Not, verily, for love of sons are sons dear, but for love of the divine Self are the sons dear!

"Not, verily, for love of wealth is the wealth dear, but for love of the divine Self is the wealth dear!

"Not, verily, for love of spiritual knowledge is the spiritual knowledge of the Brahman dear, but for love of the divine Self is the spiritual knowledge dear!

"Not, verily, for love of power is the power of the Kshatriya dear, but for love of the divine Self is the power dear!

"Not, verily, for love of worlds are the worlds dear, but for love of the divine Self are the worlds dear!

"Not, verily, for love of Bright Powers are the Bright Powers dear, but for love of the divine Self are the Bright Powers dear!

"Not, verily, for love of beings are the beings dear, but for love of the divine Self are the beings dear!

"Not, verily, for love of all that is, is all this dear, but for love of the divine Self is all that is dear!

"This divine Self, verily, is what we should seek to see, what we should seek to hear, what we should think upon, what we should meditate on deeply, Maitreyi! When, verily, we behold, hear, think upon, meditate deeply on the divine Self, then all is known.

"The spiritual knowledge of the Brahman departs from him who sees spiritual knowledge elsewhere than in the divine Self. The power of the Kshatriya departs from him who sees power elsewhere than in the divine Self. The worlds depart from him who sees the worlds elsewhere than in the divine Self. The Bright Powers depart from him who sees the Bright Powers elsewhere than in the divine Self. Beings depart from him who sees beings elsewhere than in the divine Self. All that is departs from him who sees all that is elsewhere than in the divine Self. The spiritual knowledge of the Brahman, the power of the Kshatriya, the worlds, the Bright Powers, these beings, all that is,—are what this divine Self is.

"This is as, when a drum is being beaten, one would not be able to lay hold on the sounds that come forth, but, by laying hold on the drum or on him who beats the drum, the sound is held.

"This is as, when a conch is being blown, one would not be able to lay hold on the sounds that come forth, but by laying hold on the conch or on him who blows the conch, the sound is held.

"This is as, when a lute is being played, one would not be able to lay hold on the sounds that come forth, but by laying hold on the lute or on him who plays the lute, the sound is held.

"This is as, when a fire has been built with damp fuel, wreaths of smoke arise and spread,—so, verily, from the Great Being is breathed forth that which becomes Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, Atharva Veda, history, tradition, science, secret teaching, poems, memorial verses, explanations, commentaries; from That all these are breathed forth.

"This is as the ocean, receptive of all waters; as the skin, with the sense of touch, receptive of all contacts; as the nostrils, receptive of all odours; as the

tongue, receptive of all flavours; as the eye, receptive of all forms; as the ear, receptive of all sounds, as the mind, receptive of all concepts; as the heart, receptive of all wisdoms; as the hands, receptive of all acts; as the power of generation, receptive of all engenderings; as the power which puts forth, receptive of all eliminations; as the feet, receptive of all journeyings; as the voice, receptive of all Vedas.

"This is as a piece of salt, thrown into water, would dissolve into the water, nor would it be possible to lay hold on it, but wherever one may take it, it is salt, so, verily, is this Great Being infinite, boundless, a cloud of perception. From these elements arising, into them, verily, one returns at dissolution. Nor, after going forth, is there any perceptive consciousness. Thus, verily, I declare it to thee!" Thus spoke Yajnavalkya.

Then Maitreyi said, "In this my lord perplexes me, saying that, after going forth, there is no perceptive consciousness!"

But Yajnavalkya said, "I say, verily, nothing perplexing, for this suffices for right perception. For where there is duality, verily, there one smells the other, one sees the other, one hears the other, one addresses the other, one thinks the other, one perceives the other. But where all of this has become the divine Self, then by what and whom could he smell, by what and whom could he see, by what and whom could he hear, by what and whom could he address, by what and whom could he think, by what and whom could he perceive? By what could he perceive That, by which he perceives all that is? By what, verily, could he perceive the Perceiver?"

"This earth is honey for all beings, and all beings are honey for this earth. And this, in the earth, the radiant, immortal Spirit, and this, in oneself, the embodied, radiant, immortal Spirit, this is he, verily, who is the divine Self, this is the immortal, this is the Eternal, this is the All.

"These waters are honey for all beings, and all beings are honey for these waters. And this, in the waters, the radiant, immortal Spirit, and this, in oneself, the seed-formed, radiant, immortal Spirit, this is he, verily, who is the divine Self, this is the immortal, this is the Eternal, this is the All.

"This fire is honey for all beings, and all beings are honey for this fire. And this, in the fire, the radiant, immortal Spirit, and this, in oneself, the voice-formed, radiant, immortal Spirit, this is he, verily, who is the divine Self, this is the immortal, this is the Eternal, this is the All.

"This breath is honey for all beings, and all beings are honey for this breath. And this, in breath, the radiant, immortal Spirit, and this, in oneself, the breath-formed, radiant, Immortal Spirit, this is he, verily, who is the divine Self, this is the immortal, this is the Eternal, this is the All.

"This sun is honey for all beings, and all beings are honey for this sun. And this, in the sun, the radiant, immortal Spirit, and this, in oneself, the seeing, radiant, immortal Spirit, this is he, verily, who is the divine Self, this is the immortal, this is the Eternal, this is the All.

"These spaces are honey for all beings, and all beings are honey for these

spaces. And this, in these spaces, the radiant, immortal Spirit, and this, in oneself, in hearing and in echo, the radiant, immortal Spirit, this is he, verily, who is the divine Self, this is the immortal, this is the Eternal, this is the All.

"This moon is honey for all beings, and all beings are honey for this moon. And this, in the moon, the radiant, immortal Spirit, and this, in oneself, the mind-formed, radiant, immortal Spirit, this is he, verily, who is the divine Self, this is the immortal, this is the Eternal, this is the All.

"This lightning is honey for all beings, and all beings are honey for this lightning. And this, in the lightning, the radiant, immortal Spirit, and this, in oneself, the radiance-formed, radiant, immortal Spirit, this is he, verily, who is the divine Self, this is the immortal, this is the Eternal, this is the All.

"This thunder is honey for all beings, and all beings are honey for this thunder. And this, in the thunder, the radiant, immortal Spirit, and this, in oneself, the sound-formed, tone-formed, radiant immortal Spirit, this is he, verily, who is the divine Self, this is the immortal, this is the Eternal, this is the All.

"This shining ether is honey for all beings, and all beings are honey for this shining ether. And this, in the shining ether, the radiant, immortal Spirit, and this, in oneself, the shining ether in the heart, the radiant, immortal Spirit, this is he, verily, who is the divine Self, this is the immortal, this is the Eternal, this is the All.

"This righteous law is honey for all beings, and all beings are honey for this righteous law. And this, in the righteous law, the radiant, immortal Spirit, and this, in oneself, the righteous, radiant, immortal Spirit, this is he, verily, who is the divine Self, this is the immortal, this is the Eternal, this is the All.

"This truth is honey for all beings, and all beings are honey for this truth. And this, in the truth, the radiant, immortal Spirit, and this, in oneself, the truth-formed, radiant, immortal Spirit, this is he, verily, who is the divine Self, this is the immortal, this is the Eternal, this is the All.

"This mankind is honey for all beings, and all beings are honey for this mankind. And this, in mankind, the radiant, immortal Spirit, and this, in oneself, the man-formed, radiant, immortal Spirit, this is he, verily, who is the divine Self, this is the immortal, this is the Eternal, this is the All.

"This divine Self is honey for all beings, and all beings are honey for this divine Self. And this, in the divine Self, the radiant, immortal Spirit, and this divine Self, radiant, immortal Spirit, this is he who is the divine Self, this is the immortal, this is the Eternal, this is the All.

"This divine Self, verily, is of all beings the Lord, of all beings the King. Like as in the wheel of a chariot, the spokes are set firm in the nave and in the fellow, so, verily, in this divine Self are set firm all beings, all Bright Powers, all worlds, all lives, all selves."

This, verily, is the honey that Dadhyanch Atharvana declared to the two Ashvins. This the Rishi, the Seer, declared:

"Heroes, this terrible deed of yours, done for gain, I reveal to you, as the Thunder-lord reveals the rain; this honey which Dadhyanch Atharvana declared through the head of a horse."

This, verily, is the honey that Dadhyanch Atharvana declared to the two Ashvins. This the Rishi, the Seer, declared:

"On Dadhyanch Atharvana, O Ashvins, ye did put as a substitute the head of a horse. He, fulfilling righteousness, declared to you the honey of Tvashtri, the divine Architect, to be your secret, ye wonder-workers."

This, verily, is the honey that Dadhyanch Atharvana declared to the two Ashvins. This the Rishi, the Seer, declared:

"Two-footed strongholds he made, four-footed strongholds he made. Taking wings, he entered the strongholds as Spirit."

He, verily, is the Spirit in all strongholds. His name is Purusha, that is, Puri-shaya, "he who dwells in the stronghold." There is naught that is not enveloped by him, naught that is not penetrated by him.

This, verily, is the honey that Dadhyanch Atharvana declared to the two Ashvins. This the Rishi, the Seer, declared:

"To each form this Spirit conformed himself, that he might be manifested. Indra, the Lord, through his magical powers, through Maya, goes forth in many forms; for yoked are his steeds, numbering ten hundred."

This Spirit, verily, is the steeds, tens, thousands, many, endless. This Eternal has no earlier, no later, no within, no without. This divine Self is the Eternal, experiencing all things. So far, the teaching handed down.

C. J.

*(To be continued)*

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*Great graces are the mountain-chains thrown up by the subterranean heavings of pain.—FABER.*

# DOUBT

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THAT ancient scripture, the *Bhagavad Gita*, tells us: "Neither this world, nor the world beyond, nor happiness, are for him who is full of doubt"—a sentence which many, perhaps, have read light-heartedly, and then have entirely forgotten. Let us rather pause a moment. One: "Neither this world"; two: "nor the world beyond"; three: "nor happiness"—comprehensive, is it not?—"are for him who is full of doubt." Mr. Judge renders this: "The man of doubtful mind hath no happiness, either in this world, or in the next, or in any other,"—if possible, a shade more comprehensive. Yet who can cheerfully claim freedom from all doubt? and if we be sometimes given to doubting, then it would appear that our happiness, our future life, by so much are in jeopardy. What man is there that does not, in some way, follow in the footsteps of an august forerunner named Thomas? It may, or may not, be doubt of the existence of Masters that troubles us: but there will be other doubts; prosaic doubts, about our own powers and accomplishment; about the meaning and purpose of life, and of our particular life; about the character and motives of our fellows; about science, its obvious achievements, yet unsatisfying limitations; about religion, and conflicting religious claims; about phenomena; about the future life; about the reasons for the misery and squalor around us; about thought, and what it is; about our heart, what it really is, and wants, and is made for; about the things we have read or have heard or have been taught,—yes, about the future of the Theosophical Movement. Stop to analyse the experience of even a single day, and we shall see it too often sicklied o'er with a pale cast of *doubt*. And then, if we pick up our *Gita* once more and light upon that fortieth verse of the Fourth Book, terror may well enter our souls.

The fact is that to-day we are passing through an age of peculiar doubt and uncertainty in the West, as it is a time of upheaval everywhere. When seventeenth and eighteenth century philosophers, reacting against the blind credulity and bigotry of a decadent "Middle Age," took as their new principle of inquiry a "philosophic doubt," they started currents which have seeped down into the masses, and have destroyed much true faith along with its counterfeits. It was St. Bernard who said in effect: "In order to think, one must believe"; and Abelard, forerunner of the modern spirit, who countered, "In order to think, I must doubt." "Education," wrote Master K. H. in the *Occult World*, "enthrones skepticism, but imprisons spirituality"; and as a result by no means all have the mentality or the experience to reconstruct *de novo* a sound philosophy of life. Where a Descartes might only partially succeed, the plain man would almost inevitably fail. Yet, the spirit of the day demands that each individual of the rising generation should largely discard the past, should be taught openly to challenge the tried faith—or the



faiths—of preceding generations, and should work out for himself what he is to believe, and what to do.

The result, when not actually disastrous, is too often pitifully negative. The young men and women of to-day frankly do not know what to believe, and too often are unable to arrive at any vital conclusions. To the serious-minded, this is a source of disquietude and weakness; in others, it leads to flippancy, flagrant disregard of an elder's opinion or experience, and irreverence,—a composite attitude not conducive to happiness, to say the least of it. Emancipation of thought—the great gift of Protestantism—in conjunction with what is still fundamentally an agnostic science, has not supplied men individually with either the ability or the incentive to think out their own religion. Hence, some stop thinking at all, and still accept their religion ready-made; while the majority, taught to question or even to resent authority, and to doubt everything, as a safe-guard against dogmatism and credulity, are without anchorage in a vast sea of thought, drifting with currents set in motion by the latest book or magazine article or popular lecturer, and utterly devoid of judgment in matters of religion and philosophy.

In the face of this modern attitude, it is a striking fact that most great religions and religious teachers have warned against the danger of doubt. To doubt is to court fear, which follows hard upon it. Remove doubt—doubt of the issue, doubt of one's powers—and nine-tenths of fear will vanish. To doubt is to reveal a lack of faith. "And Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, it shall be done" (Matt. XXI, 21). The Master Christ's great reproach to Peter "beginning to sink," was, "O thou of little faith, wherefore did'st thou doubt?" (Matt. XIV, 31); and we are told that active doubt—lack of faith—actually impeded the beneficent works of his ministry.

Students of Theosophy must surely have noticed that Mr. Judge's writings, and our entire literature, are full of warnings against doubt. This is particularly directed against that commonest form of it,—doubt of our own capacities. So often is this repeated, and emphasized, that a consideration of the subject would seem obviously to be wise, and self-examination under this head almost a duty. How many have recognized, for example, the practical wisdom of that Hindu maxim quoted by Mr. Judge in the *Letters That Have Helped Me* (Vol. I, p. 36): "Regret nothing; never be sorry; and cut all doubts with the sword of spiritual knowledge"—and have then tried to make it their own? Many have dismissed it as a counsel of perfection, directed rather to Oriental placidity than to Western "temperament" and "nerves."

First of all, What is Doubt? Here, the very dictionary definitions give us a clue, not merely to its surface meaning, but to its essential nature and origin. To doubt comes from the Latin *dubitare*, which is composed of *duo*—two—and *habeo*—have; or, to have two opinions. This in turn comes from the Greek *δοιάζω* (*doiazō*), from *duo* and *doioi*, "to be at two." Now to

be at two with yourself is to be divided against yourself, and a house divided against itself cannot stand. Such a condition of mind is of the very essence of lower nature; proves the active presence of lower nature, and suggests also that a doubting man has no synthetic Buddhic quality enlightening his Manas, or mind. Moreover, a man who deliberately entertains doubts, excludes the higher, unitive and creative-active faculty of Buddhi, and holds himself thereby in the essentially dual existence of Kama-Manas. A philosopher who takes doubt as a "principle" to safeguard him from error, by his very attitude forfeits the attainment of truth; for if the Logos himself spoke, lower Manas would still doubt such echoes as might reach its consciousness.

To doubt, then, is to reveal, at best, a conflict between the higher and lower natures; and, at worst, is complete submergence in the oscillations of Kama-Manas. Doubt is never a characteristic of the higher nature. It should not be confused with caution or questioning, however. To doubt is to suspend decision; to question is actually to demand further facts or proofs in order to assist us in deciding. The doubting man, even if he overcome his doubts, and proceed finally to action, will do so with a loss of initiative, *élan*, and power. Not so can one hope to win through the Gates of Gold. "The lukewarm man," writes Mr. Judge, "goes neither to heaven nor hell. [Cf. Dante's 'Inferno,' III.] Nature spues him out of her mouth. Positive conditions, objective or subjective, are only reached through positive impulsion" (*Echoes From the Orient*, p. 56); and one receives the impression that even chélas are rather positive people, let alone Masters. Indeed, "a little serious thought shows us that man does not exist at all except by exercise of his positive qualities" (*Through the Gates of Gold*, p. 66); therefore, if someone takes the very faculty of deciding and judging, and pits it against itself in a maze of mental gyration, partial or complete self-stultification is sure to follow.

In Volume I of *Letters That Have Helped Me*, there are more than a dozen direct references to doubt. It might surprise anyone to see how emphatic and impressive these are, when brought together. Mr. Judge begins by direct exhortation: "Cast all doubt, all fear, all regret aside" (p. 25). Jasper Niemand comments on this: "By anxiety we exert the constrictive power of egoism, which densifies and perturbs our magnetic sphere, rendering us less permeable to the efflux from above." In Letter X, characterizing the difficulties of the aspirant, Mr. Judge writes at length: "As he is in a mortal body, he is affected by doubts which will spring up. When they do arise, it is because he is ignorant about something. He should therefore be able to disperse doubt 'by the sword of knowledge.' For if he has a ready answer to some doubt, he disperses that much. All doubts come from the lower nature, and *never* in any case from the higher nature" (pp. 48-9). We should like to underscore this concluding sentence; it would seem to take away completely the last support from those who might seek to defend a doubting attitude. Mr. Judge then quotes the verse from the *Gita* with which we opened, "to destroy the idea that if there is in us this higher self, it will, even if we are indolent and doubtful, triumph over the necessity for knowledge,

and lead us to final beatitude in common with the whole stream of man." Jasper Niemand comments that doubt, like despondency, fear, vanity, pride, and self-satisfaction, are powers "used by Nature as traps to detain us."

In the next Letter, Mr. Judge strikes at the very stronghold of doubt—doubt of our own capacities and ability to succeed. There would seem to be a stage reached in our growth when we become ashamed to admit a doubt as to the teaching we receive, or as to the actual reality of life's goal consisting in Lodge membership and Mahatmaship. So we take refuge in doubting ourselves, and say that these things are not yet for us. We feel impelled to do so out of very humility, and a knowledge of our own past weaknesses and failures. Masters may know a great deal—*do* know a great deal—but they do not yet know how bad we are, and how very long it is going to take before we can ever hope to amount to something or get anywhere in the life of discipleship! Mr. Judge writes: "The doubt which you now feel as to success is morbid. Please destroy it. Better a false hope with no doubt, than much knowledge with doubts of your own chances. 'He that doubteth is like the waves of the sea, driven by the wind and tossed.' Doubt is not to be solely guarded against when applied to Masters (whom I know you doubt not). It is most to be guarded against and repelled in relation to oneself. Any idea that one cannot succeed, or had better die than live because an injured body seems to make success unattainable, is *doubt*."

Could anything be more plainly spoken than this? Mr. Judge goes on: "If you accuse or doubt yourself, you then give the enemy a rest; he has nothing to do, for you do it all yourself for him, and, leaving you to your fate, he seeks other victims."

Doubt, then, appears when, and because, a man is in a "mortal body"; and "All doubts come from the lower nature, and *never* in any case from the higher nature." They arise because of ignorance about something, or because there is darkness in the nature instead of light. "Some too have doubt and darkness, the doubt mostly as to themselves. This should not be harboured for it is a wile of the lower man striving to keep you back among the mediocre of the race" (Vol. II, p. 12). The Higher Self, however, or Spirit of man, will not automatically triumph if we are "indolent and doubtful," bringing us for the asking, "the necessary knowledge"; but we must "destroy" doubts by an active campaign with "the sword of spiritual knowledge." "Increase your confidence," says Mr. Judge at the end, "not in your abilities, but in the great All being thyself."

In other words, if we have doubts about anything, and particularly if we doubt ourselves and our own capacities, we must not hope that patient waiting will dissolve them, or that we can shake them off without positive effort. "If the present is full of doubt or vacillation, so will be the future; if full of confidence, calmness, hope, courage and intelligence, thus also will be the future" (Vol. II, p. 16). We leave doubts behind when we succeed in identifying ourselves with our higher nature.

For all the calmness and simplicity of Mr. Judge's statements, he did not

fail to sympathize with the difficulties and sufferings which come from doubting. "What despair and agony of doubt exist to-day in all places," he said, characterizing Kali Yuga; and again, that because "we know the dreadful power that despair and doubt and violated conscience have, we prefer to prepare wisely and carefully, and not rush in like fools where angels do not pass uninvited" (pp. 60, 87). One remembers Doubting Castle in *Pilgrim's Progress*, where Giant Despair imprisoned Christian and Hopeful, until they seized the Key of Promise.

One might suppose from the foregoing that there would be sufficient incentive to force oneself to overcome doubt. But there is a further phase of the subject which should strengthen any resolution we may make, and that is, the effect of our doubts upon others. The very first of Cavé's *Fragment*s deals with this. "Regret not what is done and cannot be undone. Lo! while you sit brooding here, gray shapes of doubt, fear and disappointment fly from your brain and lay their weight of care on other minds, and so increase the sorrow of the world." Perhaps we think too little of our responsibility under this head, and of the pain and suffering we cause others. Mr. Griscom wrote of Mr. Judge: "Day after day he would come back from the office utterly exhausted in mind and body, and night after night he would lie awake fighting the arrows of suspicion and doubt that would come at him from all the world. He said they were like shafts of fire piercing him, and in the morning he would come downstairs wan and pale and unrested, and one step nearer the limit of his strength, but still with the same gentle and forgiving spirit" (*Letters That Have Helped Me*, Vol. II, p. 112). No wonder that Master K. H. wrote, "Once fairly started on the way to the great Knowledge, to doubt is to risk insanity."

Of doubts in general we may say with Lord Bacon, "Suspensions are among thoughts as bats among birds: they come out in the twilight." Doubts arise in the dark seasons of the soul, and during the darkness they startle and terrify the consciousness and shake the will. Doubt is the child of little knowledge—therefore, let it know more; it is the twilight of the soul—then, let it look for the sun to arise and dispel the gloom; it sees through a glass darkly, not with open face—so, let it fling wide the door, with the key of promise, or at least of blind courage and faith, to bid the dark and lowering foe begone. Ignorance of Masters and of Theosophy is calculated to promote doubt; knowledge of Masters and of Theosophy, dissipates it. Doubts are in truth but ghosts; they come out at midnight, but when they hear the cock crowing, and catch the sharp, biting air of the morning, as honest folk go forth to labour, they are chased away to their hiding places. Doubt is a miasma rising from a swamp of lower nature, only needing the sun of knowledge to shine in its clear noon-day power, to dissipate the unwholesome mists and mysteries. Be bold to touch them with a realizing hand, and they are gone!

# EVOLUTION AND INDIVIDUALITY

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*The Lord of beings was desirous of offspring. He brooded with fervour. Brooding with fervour, he produces a pair, Matter and Life. These two will make beings manifold for me, said he.*

PRASHNA UPANISHAD.

*The One Ruler, the Inner Self of all beings, who makes one form manifold: the wise who recognize Him dwelling within them, theirs is joy everlasting, but not of others.*

KATHA UPANISHAD.

THE mystical philosopher must be a master of paradox, inasmuch as the language of ordinary men, which is the vehicle of his exposition, has been devised for physical, not for metaphysical, purposes. He cannot describe the One in terms of itself, for the One is manifested to the human mind only as the Many; the indivisible Monad assumes the appearance of division into an infinite number of individual Monads, in each of which the full nature of the One "contrives to integrate itself." The task of the mystic is to reconcile the appearance of multiplicity with the reality of unity, and further to show how the appearance symbolizes the reality. We find the repeated assertion in mystical literature that the most universal being is also the most individual.

There is this magnificent passage of Plotinus: "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. . . . 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" (*Enneads*, 5.8.4).

Obviously, such are not the usual ideas of men when they think of individuality. For most of us, individuality is apt to be synonymous with an intense sense of separateness. Since the two concepts—individuality and separateness—are as wide apart as truth and illusion, it should be part of our mental duty to readjust and to clarify our understanding of them. For that purpose let us turn to the teaching of *The Secret Doctrine* concerning the Monad.

Before we begin, however, the author wishes to come to a definite understanding with the reader. The reader is requested not to hold *The Secret Doctrine* responsible for the eccentricities of the commentator. The author has found certain philosophical conceptions outlined in *The Secret Doctrine*, which seem to him to illumine the mystery of individual self-consciousness,

in so far as that mystery can be given an intellectual expression. But only the quotations represent certainly the real thought of *The Secret Doctrine*. The commentary contains the opinions of the commentator and makes no pretension to authority.

It is an excellent exercise to recall, from time to time, the three fundamental propositions of *The Secret Doctrine*,—(a) “an Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, and Immutable Principle, on which all speculation is impossible”; (b) “the absolute universality of that law of periodicity, of flux and reflux, . . . which physical science has observed and recorded in all departments of nature”; (c) “the fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Oversoul, the latter being itself an aspect of the unknown Root” (ed. 1888, I, 14-18).<sup>1</sup>

The Immutable Principle, the Absolute of metaphysics, is the essence of all that is; all of us are That, nor can we conceivably be or become anything other than That. But the Absolute is known only through its periodical manifestations which reveal the two basic attributes of That which is in itself unknowable. These attributes are consciousness and matter. “Spirit (or Consciousness) and Matter [as Mulaprakriti, undifferentiated and eternal; as Vyakta, when differentiated and conditioned] are, however, to be regarded, not as independent realities, but as the two facets or aspects of the Absolute (Parabrahm), which constitute the basis of conditioned Being, whether subjective or objective” (I, 15; cf. I, 10, note).

Matter is like a mirror held continually before the countenance of Spirit, reflecting the least change of expression there; nor can Spirit become self-conscious otherwise than through the perception and recognition of its reflection in the mirror of Matter. The six-pointed star, within the circle of Eternity, is the venerable symbol of this association, the higher triangle (Spirit) casting its reflection in the lower triangle (Matter).

“As the spiritual Monad is One, Universal, Boundless and Impartite, whose rays, nevertheless, form what we, in our ignorance, call the ‘Individual Monads’ of men, so the Mineral Monad—being at the opposite point of the circle—is also One—and from it proceed the countless physical atoms” (I, 177-178).

At the beginning of a period of manifestation, the apex of the spiritual triangle reflects itself in the inverted apex of the material triangle. Pure Spirit clothes itself with a vesture of pure Matter—a “seamless garment,” indeed, of a texture so fine that even the interplanetary ether is described as gross by comparison. Of such a subtilty were apparently the first three of the “seven creations” to which the *Puranas* refer. “These three were the Prākṛita creations, the *developments of indiscrete nature* preceded by indiscrete principle” (I, 446). The correspondence of this primordial existence on our actual Earth is, perhaps, the existing mineral kingdom, the atom being “a concrete manifestation of the Universal Energy which itself has not yet become individualized” (I, 178).

<sup>1</sup> All quotations unless otherwise indicated are from *The Secret Doctrine* (ed. 1888).

From the apex, the Light of Spirit begins, as it were, to extend downwards over the plane of the higher triangle, and this process is mirrored, point for point, upon the plane of the inverted triangle of Matter. "The 'Monad' Essence' begins to imperceptibly differentiate towards individual consciousness in the Vegetable Kingdom." "The tendency towards segregation into individual Monads is gradual, and in the higher animals comes almost to the point." But "the ocean (of matter) does not divide into its potential and constituent drops until the sweep of the life-impulse reaches the evolutionary stage of man-birth" (I, 178, 179). "The atom's involution and evolution, its external and internal growth and development, have all one and the same object—man; man, as the highest physical and ultimate form on this earth; the MONAD, in its absolute totality and awakened condition—as the culmination of the divine incarnations on Earth" (I, 183). With the production of man, we may correlate the moment of the perfect reflection of the base of the upper triangle in the base of the lower triangle: Spirit sees and knows itself in the mirror of Matter.

However, what is man? We have the habit of calling ourselves human beings, but the above definition of man suggests certain states of consciousness which are not within our ordinary personal experience. One need only ask himself these questions: "Am I the Monad in its absolute totality and awakened condition? Am I the culmination of the divine incarnations on Earth?"

The man who is the goal of evolution is the Master, the Mahatma, in whose real individuality one aspect of the Eternal "is prominent above the rest, but who also shows forth all." However, the process which culminates in Mahatmaship, must have a beginning, "the evolutionary stage of man-birth." We may admit without cavil that we are not Mahatmas, but we are still apt to insist that we have passed the stage of man-birth. Nevertheless, if one may venture to interpret the occult definition of man, we have not even been born as infant human beings until we have earned recognition as Disciples, as *Chêlas* or *children* of the Masters.

When we shall have earned that recognition, it is to be presumed that we shall know it. Until that time we may be approaching the stage of man-birth, but we shall have no right—in the presence of real human beings, at least—to the title of *man*. Fortunately, it is within our power to take steps at any moment towards being born. In that respect, we differ radically from the animals. Our natures reflect to some slight degree the Monadic attributes of individualized, self-conscious intelligence and free-will. We habitually use this reflected self-consciousness to lend savour and intensity to the functions of our minds and bodies, thereby creating hosts of psychic elementals with which we identify ourselves. But the same power which enables us to think of ourselves as merely physical entities, can be used to reveal to us the real source of the sense of selfhood which we now know only as a reflection. We are on the border of the true human kingdom and can cross into it when we are ready to make the effort.

At the beginning of the first half of the great cycle, when Spirit descends

towards Matter, the spiritual and material phases of Being seem to interpenetrate, but to be little conscious of each other. As the cycle proceeds, this consciousness, the one of the other, develops. Like a stone mirrored in water, the Monad appears, at first, not to perceive its reflection. That does not mean, of course, that either the Monad or its reflection is unconscious in itself, but that their fields of perception are distinct. The stone is very possibly, as some poets have divined, a symbol and an embodiment of some abstract angelic nature, but there can hardly be any question here of individual self-consciousness.

Yet the consciousness of the stone must still be an undivided part of the angelic nature, for it is an emanation of Spirit and belongs to Spirit. "The Monad is impersonal and a god *per se*, albeit unconscious on this plane"; nevertheless, "the highest sees through the eyes of the lowest in the manifested world" (II, 123). The experience of life in the lower kingdoms is somehow stored in the memory, or what corresponds to the memory, of the Monad. It is a permanent acquisition of the Spirit, even though the Spirit may not yet self-consciously recognize this acquisition as its own.

We may represent the two poles of the One Being—Spirit and Matter—as drawing progressively nearer to each other. As the lower kingdoms of Nature evolve, differentiation appears to proceed through the creation of hosts and hierarchies in the spiritual world, and of species and genera on Earth. Thus, animals are more differentiated than plants and minerals, though it is doubtful whether we can properly speak of an individual animal as being overshadowed by an individual Monad, for the essential life of the animal, its *instinct*, is the life of its species, which is in turn—we may believe—the reflection of a host of Monads. The Monadic hosts do not finally individualize themselves until the base of the spiritual triangle perceives itself—so to speak—reflected as the base of the material triangle; only then can true individual self-consciousness begin. "Divorced from its third (often called fifth) principle, Manas, which is the horizontal line of the first manifested triangle or trinity, it [the Monad] can have no consciousness or perception of things on this earthly plane" (II, 123).

In one sense, since the Monad is an undivided essence, the whole of its nature, including its attribute of individuality, must be reflected even in the humblest atom, and must be increasingly apparent, as the organization of matter proceeds through the lower kingdoms. Therefore, the races of elemental or animal man, to which most of us belong, have a measure of reflected individuality and self-consciousness which correspond to their highly evolved physical natures. But before the object of evolution can be attained, this reflected self-consciousness must be replaced by real self-consciousness. The emanated spark of the Monad must leap across the intervening "space" between Matter and Spirit and rejoin its Divine Parent. Thereafter, the Monad and its ray will be one, and the sense of selfhood, which now inheres as a reflection in the lower triangle, will inhere as a reality in the upper.

"On the descending arc [of the great cycle] it is the spiritual which is gradu-



ally transformed into the material" (II, 180). The centre of consciousness moves below the "diameter" separating Spirit from Matter. The Monad emanates itself into a succession of material forms—mineral, vegetable, animal—until the fourth principle (Kama) is sufficiently developed to provide a fit vehicle for the fifth (Manas), and self-consciousness becomes a possibility (II, 161, 162).

In the minerals and plants the occultation of Spirit by Matter seems to be less complete than in the animal kingdom. Is it wholly an illusion that we sometimes feel a brooding and impersonal spiritual consciousness above and within the outer nature of a crystal or of a flower? In the animals, the outer nature is both more active and more opaque, as if it were the synthesis of many "elementals," little centres or "atoms" of physical sensation, which almost achieve a kind of personality. The Monadic essence of the animal is nearly eclipsed sometimes by the vesture of its emanation, which reflects far more vividly the "colours" of Matter than those of Spirit.

Perhaps, such a hardening and concentration of physical particles is necessary to provide a surface in which the Monad can begin to mirror its attributes of intelligence and free-will; and it is natural that these attributes, when first reflected in the animal man, should be turned to the creation and reinforcement of mind-images which are almost wholly concerned with the habits and occurrences of bodily life. Evil becomes a positive factor only when the animal man halts at this point, repeating these images and thereby distorting their purpose and stultifying growth.

However, the animal man is actuated by human as well as by animal desires, and if he is to make any progress towards self-consciousness, a sense of duty will come to supplant his habit of heedless response to organic and racial cravings and aversions. He becomes aware of the presence within himself of a transforming power which is manifested as the faculty of perceiving and obeying an ideal, though his obedience implies certain sacrifice and possible death. If he steadfastly attach his sense of identity to that transforming power, he will sooner or later reach the real goal for which the aeons have been working, "the evolutionary stage of man-birth."

Unless we attain this objective, unless we become truly and invariably human, we cannot hope to keep any sense of real identity. Only as real human beings can we begin to know ourselves as "the Monad in its absolute totality and awakened condition," and the Monadic Self knows itself as universal and eternal Being.

It is bold, not to say reckless, to speculate concerning the nature of a liberated human soul. What lies beyond the birth of self-consciousness in the Monad is at present beyond our ken; it is part of the Great Unknown. One can only assume that all the forces poured forth by the Monad during the aeons of evolution are reabsorbed by it during aeons of involution. These forces drawn from all the kingdoms of physical and psychic Nature, must be reintegrated in the Monadic Being, partaking of its acquired individuality, transformed into *saktis*, so as to become agencies for the creation, preserva-

tion and destruction of the worlds. So one may interpret certain symbols which men have associated with the Divine,—the lyre of Apollo, the wand of Hermes, the thunderbolt of Zeus.

One can imagine a pessimist coming forward with a question. If spiritual self-consciousness be the object of manifestation, why does the Good Law so ordain events that material and mortal self-consciousness is in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, so far as one can ascertain, all that is actually attained?

The occult tradition preserved in *The Secret Doctrine* suggests an answer. As Karma, the law of cause and effect, explains the good and the evil of a particular life, so also it explains universal good and evil.

"It becomes apparent how perfect is the analogy between the process of Nature in the Kosmos and in the individual man. The latter lives through his life-cycle and dies. His 'higher principles,' corresponding in the development of a planetary chain to the cycling Monads, pass into Devachan, which corresponds to the 'Nirvana' and states of rest intervening between two chains. The Man's lower 'principles' are disintegrated in time and are used by Nature again for the formation of new human principles, and the same process takes place in the disintegration and formation of worlds. Analogy is thus the surest guide to the comprehension of the Occult teachings" (I, 173).

The Monad *per se* is eternal, and it is, therefore, inconceivable that there can be any beginning or ending of its manifestations. The cyclic procession from *Avidya* to *Vidya*, from unwisdom to enlightenment, from the unknown to the known, is the expression throughout the eternities of the Monad's inexhaustible essence.

Although ultimate progress towards enlightenment is doubtless a certainty, there is much evidence—derived, in the first place, from our own personal experience—that the Monad may be delayed, perhaps for aeons, in the execution of some portion of its plan. This is the risk—so to speak—which the Monad must assume when it tries to individualize itself. The individual self cannot really separate itself from the Universal Self, but it seems to be an indispensable condition for the formation of real self-consciousness, that the individual—or rather its personal reflection—should be free to delude itself, to fancy that it is separate from all other selves. Otherwise, responsibility would be only a word.

It is traditional that the truth of the Mysteries could be revealed only to the Initiate who had proved his loyalty to the principle of union in spite of every glamour which could possibly be suggested to his mind. The temptation of Christ in the wilderness, the trials of Nachiketas in the House of Death, the tribulations of Job, appear to be representations of the ancient ritual, symbolizing the triumph of the soul over the illusion of separateness, and its firm foundation in the sense of its unity with the essence of all souls. It is stated that when this victory is gained, it is, in a sense, final and absolute. When the "Human Monad" has once acquired real or divine self-consciousness, it need never again incarnate as an animal (I, 185).

However, the difficulty of the initiation of divine individuality is so great

that the Monad may labour for countless Manvantaras before it is accomplished. We return again and again to the bondage of illusion. It is next to impossible to use words consistently in the treatment of such a problem. Thus, one may well ask how "we" can have returned again and again, if by "we" is meant the particular mortal congeries of elementals with which we are at this moment, to our sorrow, identifying ourselves. But another and less intimate meaning may be given to the personal pronoun. Our present natures must have grown from *skandhas* or seeds planted in other existences, and the responsibility for the planting, for the good and the evil, must rest somewhere. Why should it not rest upon the single and continuous stream of life, the emanation of the Monad, flowing through the whole series of those existences? And is not that continuous stream our Karma? Is it not, mysteriously, ourselves, our individual Monads, in so far as they have been alive and self-conscious in their emanations?

Thus, the Matter, in which the Monad reflects itself, seems to be, in one aspect, the crystallization of the "experience" of the Monad. Has not someone called Matter the "memory of Nature"? It is the destiny of the Monad to assimilate to its essence the whole of that experience, and the task would, indeed, be unthinkable, if there were not Eternity in which to accomplish it.

The differentiation of Matter during the first half of a Manvantara might be compared to the recovery of memory. The evolution of the macrocosmic kingdoms—mineral, vegetable and animal—would be analogous to the growth of the microcosmic, human personality out of the *skandhas* left by previous personalities overshadowed by the same Ego. The individualized Monad is, of course, scarcely involved directly in these stages. Presumably, the most impersonal, the most "mineral" of the *skandhas*, universal and particular, exist only as primordial tendencies to follow certain lines of evolution rather than others, and reflect only the impersonal aspect of Spirit. But one surmises that, whenever it is possible, Nature prefers to keep the more developed *skandhas* intact, for a complete dissolution into their primitive elements undoes the good as well as the evil. So we find among the higher animals qualities which approximate closely to the "human" virtues and vices—gentleness and cruelty, loyalty and treachery, trust and suspicion. The genesis of these qualities is not explained by modern biology. May we not think of them as products of the *skandhas* of past Manvantaras, as revived particles of spiritual force long since emanated by Spirit and still unredeemed? When the sense of self-consciousness departs from a dynamic mind-image, a certain life remains in the image, preserving its form and imparting to it a subconscious tendency or desire to regain the self-consciousness which it has lost. Similarly, the life-force may be imagined as moving through Matter towards self-consciousness, re-vitalizing the successive strata of the "subconscious" nature inherited by the Earth from a previous aeon of manifestation.

One recalls the statement that "the man of this Manvantara . . . has passed through all the kingdoms of nature, that he was 'a stone, a plant, an animal,'" as well as this other assertion, the converse of the preceding, that

"the animals . . . all are either directly or indirectly the mutual and correlative product (physically) of man" (II, 186).

A suggested answer, then, to the problem of the origin of evil is that evil never had an origin, that evil as "beginningless unwisdom" has always existed. Evil might be defined, in one sense, as the cumulative effect of all the failures of the Monad to reclaim the force which it has emanated during the eternities, this force remaining in the world as a tendency to repeat the forms of experience through which it gained its measure of material consciousness in the past. The acquisition of self-consciousness by the Monad seems of necessity to involve the risk and even the probability of error and illusion. Why this should be so and why the Monad should seek self-consciousness in the first place, are questions which logically follow, but they are absolutely unanswerable in terms of our powers of apprehension.

However, there is a question which we are entitled to ask with some expectation of an answer: how does man escape from the delusions which are the inheritance of an immeasurable past? Much of Volume I and practically the whole of Volume II of *The Secret Doctrine* are devoted to this question, perhaps the most fascinating of all the problems which can exercise the human intellect and will.

The central factor of the occult hypothesis appears to be suggested in the idea of the threefold nature of evolution. "There exists in Nature a triple evolutionary scheme, for the formation of the three *periodical Upadhis*, or rather three separate schemes of evolution, which in our system are inextricably interwoven and interblended at every point . . . the Monadic (or spiritual), the intellectual, and the physical evolutions. . . .

"1. The Monadic is . . . concerned with the growth and development into still higher phases of activity of the Monad in conjunction with:—

"2. The Intellectual, represented by the Mânasa-Dhyânis (the Solar Devas, or the Agnishwâtta Pitris) the 'givers of intelligence and consciousness' to man and:—

"3. The Physical, represented by the Chhâyâs of the Lunar Pitris, round which Nature has concreted the present physical body. This body serves as the vehicle for the 'growth' (to use a misleading word) and the transformations through Manas and—owing to the accumulation of experiences—of the finite into the Infinite. . . .

"'Nature,' the physical evolutionary power, could never evolve intelligence unaided—she can only create 'senseless forms.' . . . The 'Lunar Monads' cannot progress, for they have not yet had sufficient touch with the forms created by 'Nature' to allow of their accumulating experiences through its means. It is the Mânasa-Dhyânis who fill up the gap, and they represent the evolutionary power of Intelligence and Mind, the link between 'Spirit' and 'Matter'—in this Round" (I, 181, 182).

So far we have referred only to two of these evolutionary schemes. There is the descent of Light through the Monadic Essence and the ascent of its reflection through Matter. In specific terms, as related to this Earth, there

are the "Lunar Monads," the prototypes of living things on the Moon, who passed on to become the prototypes of living things on the Earth; and there are the materialized *skandhas* of the lunar life-cycles, the Chhâyâs of the Lunar Pitris, which are reformed into elemental or astral shapes when the life-stream renews itself upon this planet, that has been named "the child of the Moon."

It is clear that if there were only these two orders involved—the "Lunar Monads" and the lunar elementals—progress towards higher levels of self-consciousness would be inconceivable. The subconscious elemental nature would assimilate the force of the descending spiritual ray and would thereby assume the appearance of personality and individuality; but after the in-drawal of Spirit, the sense of selfhood would vanish once more. Only a "complex" of imprisoned, latent forces would remain as a "laya-centre" upon which another repetition of the same formative process would be based in the next life-cycle, and so on *ad infinitum*.

Nature must provide against this danger of sterile repetition. No planet—according to the Eastern tradition—is brought into existence upon exactly the same plane as its parent, since it receives at its birth a new gift of life emanating from a host of Monads which have already passed through a higher stage of planetary evolution. These superior Monads have attained, to some degree, the individualized self-consciousness which is the objective of all Monads. It seems to be the law of Nature that when a Monad achieves a definite measure of real self-knowledge, it gains the power to form a creative "ray"—a microcosmic counterpart of the macrocosmic ray of the Universal Spirit. This "ray" may be said to join the *actual* perfection of the self-conscious Monad at its head with the *potential* perfection of the less developed Monads which belong to its area of attraction. The higher blends its consciousness with the consciousness of the lower, and so the lower can grow into the form of the higher and become perfect in its turn. Sooner or later, under the continuing pressure from above, the transmutation of all material consciousness into its spiritual archetype will be accomplished.

It is said that this new gift of life involves a sacrifice of transcendent grandeur. The planet receives a gift or loan which, according to one standard of justice, it does not deserve and which its elemental nature does not desire. Is it remarkable that in the garbled exoteric accounts which have come down to us, the higher Monads, the Manasaputras, "the givers of intelligence and consciousness" to man, are represented as Titans in torment and at war with the "Gods," as Rebel Angels and Demons? But in the more generous version of the Wisdom-Religion, Prometheus-Lucifer disobeyed the law of mechanical conformity, the law of the elementals whom men have deified, because he was obedient to a higher law of compassion.

We cannot at present venture far upon the troubled waters of this subject. Without doubt there is opportunity here for endless polemics, since it is no light matter to endow any creature with intelligence and therefore with responsibility. Our immediate object is merely to emphasize the beauty and power in this conception of the Manasaputras as the living bridge between

Spirit and Matter. Because they intervened and still intervene in terrestrial evolution, the possibility of liberation is preserved for the men of this planet. Because of the gift of their life, the whole level of existence has been higher on the Earth than on the Moon; the minerals are more shapely, the flowers more lovely, the animals of finer instinct. They are the manifested Logos of the Earth.

We must take advantage of the treasure so freely given. If we fail, another and still more heroic effort may be made to save us in another aeon, or perhaps Nature in disgust will dissolve utterly our *skandhas*, restoring the *prakriti* of the Earth to a basic mineral state from which a wholly distinct series of evolutions can begin.

"The Monad of every living being, unless his moral turpitude breaks the connection and runs loose and 'astray into the lunar path'—to use the occult expression—is *an individual Dhyan Chohan, distinct from others, a kind of spiritual individuality of its own*, during one special Manvantara. Its Primary, the Spirit (Atman) is one, of course, with Paramâtma (the one Universal Spirit), but the vehicle (Vahan) it is enshrined in, the *Buddhi*, is part and parcel of that Dhyan-Chohan Essence; and it is in this that lies the mystery of that *ubiquity*. . . . 'My Father, that is in Heaven, and I—are one'" (I, 265).

Certain conclusions suggested above may be re-emphasized.

The "personal self" of the average mortal is not a true individual, nor is it the culmination of evolution. In its lower aspect, it is not even a reflected human nature, but is only a cunning and perverse animal, an association of elementals, an assemblage of memory-images which clothe themselves again and again with substance by virtue of the force and consciousness poured into them.

Real humanity begins with Chêlaship, which involves the transfer of the sense of identity from the vehicle in which the Monad is reflected, to the Monad itself. That transfer is made easier for us by those who have already accomplished it, and who remain in contact with our lower world, in order to illumine our understanding of our goal and to strengthen our resolve to reach it.

# THE WORLD'S NEED<sup>1</sup>

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**A**T one time it would have seemed presumptuous for a layman to attempt to prescribe for a nation's health or spiritual well-being, but it is not so now. There are forums existing to-day where a courteous and tolerant hearing is given to the humblest writer or speaker; and so at this particular forum I am venturing to put before you a few thoughts that have occurred to me on this all important subject; at the present day what subject is more important?

To go straight to the point, it seems to me that the world's greatest need is "Obedience to Spiritual Law." We know well enough that it is wise to observe physical law in its various bearings, but how often do we think of observing spiritual law? It is not because such knowledge or teaching has never been put before us. I have in my mind at the moment three verses of the Christian scriptures, which will be quite familiar and which will have considerable bearing upon the matter. They are:—"But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt. 6. 33. "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed." John 8. 31. "And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." John 8. 32.

Referring for a moment to the first of these verses, for I wish to dwell mainly on the other two this evening, it strikes me very forcibly that people generally do not regard this verse in a practical way at all—if they stop to consider it. They think the material necessities of life come first and the spiritual second or third or nowhere. It is true that there are material necessities, as life in a material world implies, but they are not the aim and object of life. Man has a higher and nobler destiny than merely eating and drinking, than self-indulgence in whatever form it may take. So it is only as we see the beauty and significance of this verse that we realize the right use and place of material things. Yes! there is a beauty and significance about this verse, for its application removes the anxiety and worry that play so large a part in the struggle for life to-day. It is not that we have to sit down and wait, like the well known character, Mr. Micawber, for something to turn up, but to do our best in whatever station of life we are, and to leave the results of our efforts in the hands of the Good Law, which will unfold in proper sequence and order the circumstances and events of our life, as is fitting for us. And these will be in strict accord with the most rigid justice and for our highest good; they may be hard and difficult, for the steel must be tempered to be of service, but, if we spiritually benefit, how much is it not worth while?

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<sup>1</sup> A lecture by E. Howard Lincoln, on October 13, 1926, at the Whitley Bay Branch (England) of The Theosophical Society.

It reminds us of a part of one of those wonderful *Fragments* where it says:—"The circumstances really do not matter, since in any we can accomplish our destiny."

There may be those who think that the test of adversity is great, and so it is, for it requires endurance and patience and faith to survive misfortune; but the test of prosperity is greater, for it requires a balance and detachment that few are prepared to exercise. When a Master says:—"Lovest thou these things more than Me?" what is our answer? May be we can catch a glimmer of the wisdom of the injunction that we should place our lives on a spiritual basis, which we should make the dominating factor, accepting our circumstances, whether materially rich or otherwise, with a detachment essential for spiritual growth and service.

In considering the other two verses, it would seem fairly obvious at the outset that the attainment of freedom is not to be gained without conditions, or compliance with a certain kind of life. To be a disciple necessitates continuing in the Master's word, which I take to mean following or carrying out his teachings or instructions. The Master meant the same thing, I think, when he said:—"I am the vine, ye are the branches. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in Me." It is evident, then, that continuing in the Master's word constituted discipleship, and that discipleship brought in its train knowledge of man and the universe which had a far reaching effect on the disciple's life—even to the extent of eventually making him free. I say eventually making the disciple free, because there is much to eliminate, on the one hand, from the negative aspect of growth, and much to cultivate and build up, on the other hand, from the positive aspect. We are told that the Masters are the embodiment of spiritual law and are entirely emancipated from the trammels of this world. But not so those of lesser stature; and these lesser ones have to aspire and strive after purification that the Master in them, in due course, may be fully manifested. Yet, in comparison with mankind generally, these lesser ones, representing all the different degrees of growth below the Master state, right down through discipleship, are emblems of purity and light.

We are now beginning to see something of the road mankind must travel if the daily intercourse of life is to be an ennobling and enriching thing. That road, as I have previously stated, is along the line of obedience to spiritual law, and doubtless this way seems hard and unattractive, seems binding and restricting. But it is so in seeming only; just as the teaching "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for my yoke is easy and my burden is light," is not understood or realized to-day. How many people believe that the yoke of a spiritual Being is easy and his burden light? So obedience is looked upon as stern and exacting and quite the opposite of the freedom for which they long. As we think over the problem of life we shall find ourselves brought to the conclusion that we can take up only one of two positions, viz., one, that the world is governed by law and order, or the other that the world is a victim of chance and chaos. If we decide that the former is the more reason-



able and hopeful standpoint, we shall find as time goes on and our effort with it, that we are more able to confirm that view. It is a matter of observation that there are words to-day, whose meanings are mistaken and whose applications are accordingly erroneous; we have a prominent instance of this in the word freedom; many people have the idea that to be free they must not be bound in any way but quite at liberty to do as they like regardless of others. A remarkable instance of this was referred to only recently in the daily press—that of a boy or youth who had as his motto:—"What I want I take, what I have I hold."

To be really free is to be detached from the likes and dislikes, low desires and passions of the personality; and so far from being free from the toils of the lower nature, man is largely its slave. It is certainly a delusion, and one which must be removed, that the so-called pleasures of life are the desirable experiences, and that without them life would be drab and colourless, and altogether a meaningless existence. This gives some idea of the effort required to attain the detachment, without which it is impossible for the aspirant to enter the wonderful Gates of Gold. To be really free is to be detached, and to be detached requires obedience. To what then must our obedience be given? Our obedience must be given to that higher and immortal part of us—the Soul, which may be said to be synonymous with spiritual law. The Chinese have a saying that, "the highest form of law is absence of law," that is when a man is a law unto himself. As we are obedient to spiritual law we learn truth, and thus free ourselves from error, from ignorance and self-indulgence. It seems to me, therefore, that the world's great need to-day is a definite turning of the heart, and an application to life of those spiritual principles whose guidance is ever clear, and is irrespective of mental capacity. With all due respect to education and intellectual training, it does not require a university education to understand something of the Sermon on the Mount, nor the Golden Rule, "What ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

As we begin to be obedient to spiritual law we learn many things. We awaken to the realization that all the aspects of spiritual law are based upon unity, and consequently all observations of spiritual law are steps to unite mankind and draw them together,—not into the oneness of a creed or sect, but into oneness of heart, oneness of purpose. This obedience to what is really our higher being can be expressed or manifested in a variety of directions. First and foremost we seek the good of the whole—the real spiritual welfare of mankind—and we do it most effectively by the example of our own lives. We strive to act in a courteous and kindly manner throughout each day, and is this easy? But the choice is ours and does not depend upon circumstances, otherwise all situations and conditions would need to be pleasant and plain sailing, and would present no difficulty. From another point of view the circumstances in which we are placed do not affect the issue at all. We are born into certain surroundings in accordance with law, and proceed from one environment to another in the same way. But such things in no

way interfere with the will, and we can rise above, and be master of, our circumstances at all times. We must realize that "the sin and shame of the world are our sin and shame," and determine that we will "front the evil in our own hearts" that we may no longer contribute to the force of the Black Lodge, but that we may on the other hand be a source of light and life for many souls—humble but steadfast supporters of the Powers of Light, devotees of the great White Lodge, who work only for suffering humanity.

To take a definite stand against one's lower nature is not an easy task, but the more obedient we are to the higher nature, the stronger is the power for good in the world. To illustrate the point, we might liken the world to a thousand coins which we have placed on one side of a pair of scales. For every person who definitely allies himself with the forces for good, we transfer a coin to the other side. Every contribution in this way increases the weight on the one hand and lessens it on the other. As one by one the coins are transferred, the subsequent power and force is increased until the five hundred, or the balance, is reached. It then only needs one more coin to turn the scale definitely in favour of spiritual things. Whilst we know that the 501st coin would turn the scale, it has been said that if half the world were positive for good the influence would be strong enough to affect and turn the other half. The spiritual forces are stronger on inner planes—let us see to it that we do our part to make them stronger on the outer.

The world as a whole probably does not know much about spiritual law as expressed in certain terms or words, but along some lines there can be no doubt of its understanding. Man has a heart and a conscience, and as these are used, light and guidance are gained which pave the way for further development. As we acquire knowledge, love and consideration for others, loyalty and courage, emanate from the heart, and the sense of right and wrong, of duty, comes from the inner monitor. The world needs to follow the dictates of these aspects of being, for they lead to a more definite obedience to spiritual law. The world needs obedience, because it is only as we control the lower nature by the higher, that spiritual qualities can predominate. We only love goodness as we hate evil. Is it not said in the Bible: "Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good"? So the world needs to turn from self-seeking, from sensual desires and cravings, from perverted tastes and appetites, to the opposites of these things. After we have done so much there is still more to do; but good will and kindly consideration towards one another go a long way towards making this earth a fairer place to live in. To be positive for good is difficult, for we know the strength of habit and custom in ourselves and in mankind generally. If we have cultivated selfishness, self-indulgence in one form or another, hasty temper, unkindly retort and worldly pride and vanity—to say nothing of envy, hatred and malice and all uncharitableness—we cannot by any means break away from them all at once, any more than a herring barrel, saturated with its drippings, can be cleansed and purified and made fit for other uses in a moment. But we must not forget, as Madame Blavatsky, or H. P. B. as she liked to be called, points out in that wonderful translation of

hers, *The Voice of the Silence*, "that no effort is lost" and that so long as we never fail to try we are bound to succeed.

We have heard, or read of it being advocated, that there is need for a new Messiah, but we can already follow in the direction of Spiritual Teachers if we so wish. In fact it seems to me that the more we do so now, the better we are preparing the ground for the advent of those Teachers and Messengers who come to the world only in accordance with cyclic law. Real growth only comes from within, and to reform the world man must first reform himself. We can admire a Teacher, but it requires the exercise of the will to follow in his footsteps. The world needs obedience to spiritual law, because only through such observance can it gain the understanding and clearness of vision so essential to-day. We need Brotherhood, but the true kind; and recent years have shown that there is considerable misconception under this head. A Brotherhood that does not take its stand on righteousness and honour, and that condones wrong by forgetting about it and making friends before there is any sign of repentance and amendment, is no Brotherhood at all. Obedience to spiritual law is a guarantee against physical violence, resort to which the world has by no means outgrown. We remember that the Law will act and bring to account those who transgress the Divine Will. It is therefore not our concern what other people do to us, but it is our concern what we do to them, as also our attitude towards them. In this, as in other things, discrimination has to be used; there is always the hair line of duty. When we realize that feelings of revenge and retaliation can have no part in our lives, that we must "abstain because it is right to abstain—not that yourself shall be kept clean," we shall also feel the truth of the teaching, "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

It should now be clear that the world does not need more teaching or instruction, but more application of what it already has; by obedience to spiritual law it will replace the transitory and fleeting for the permanent and imperishable, and will find a joy and beauty in things divine that before were never realized. Life, instead of being drab and colourless, composed, apparently, of more shadows than sunshine, from which men try to escape by way of outward pleasures and distractions, by the tumult of the social whirl—will be transformed into a purposeful existence, vibrant with force and power, working to the end that Unity, Peace and Concord may prevail; not the Unity that is confining and narrowing but that which is widening and deepening; not the Peace at any price, nor the Peace resulting from old age and the giving up of the fight, but the Peace of Victory—the triumph of the Spiritual Man; not the Concord that is mere surface agreement, but that deeper rhythm and harmony which is part of the Divine Life itself. A grand conception and a grand ideal, reaching up to that great objective—the perfectibility of man. As part of the world, but as those who have seen something of the light, let us "go through our appointed work in life" with love and understanding, and then we shall not have lived in vain. If we need any spur, any further incentive to effort, we may surely with profit turn to those soul-stirring words of Cavé's:—

"I watched the mighty mass of souls sweep onward without ceasing. A roaring filled my ears as of endless torrents, rent by sharp shrieks and curses.

"A sulphurous smoke arose; an awful stench. Across the darkness, black and terrible, shot now and then a lurid glare that made the moving horror plainly visible.

"My brain reeled. Sick and faint I cried: 'Lo, Master, what is this thou showest me?'

"He of the radiant face and anguished eyes replied: 'This is the stream of human life; study it well.'

"I caught the faces swiftly passing. Pain and sorrow on each one I read; an awful tragedy. But heart-breaking as these suffering ones appeared, I found a deeper sorrow in the ones that spoke of joy.

"'This is the maelstrom of man's life,' the Master said, 'in which he lives, from which he fears to die, to which he hungers to return. Here lies our task: to show a way out of this hell, to make men wish to walk in it when shown.'

"'Appalling is the work!' I cried aghast.

"'Yea, verily,' the clear voice answered me, 'but verily it must be done.'

"I looked above to the deep vault of heaven, gemmed with its myriad stars. A cool air blew, as from some snow-clad mountain's summit, laden with fragrance and with peace. But knowing what must be, and nerved by the Master's smile of tenderest compassion, I plunged into the maelstrom far below."

E. HOWARD LINCOLN.

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*For though we could become learned by other men's learning, a man can never be wise but by his own wisdom.*—MONTAIGNE.

# WHY I JOINED THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

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**I**T was suggested that I might find it helpful, in writing this account, to read some of the articles on "Why I Joined," in the back numbers of the QUARTERLY. I did so, and found them of unusual interest. What impressed me chiefly was that most people appeared to have discovered the Society in response to a conscious search for a higher ideal than they had yet found. How much courage they have had, to face that which life brought them, always hoping to find what they sought, so often disappointed; until at last an apparently chance word let fall by a friend, or perhaps the reading of a book, has led them to our doors! I have nothing of this sort to tell. Mine is no tale of obstacles met and overcome, yet because it is so different it may be of interest.

Some men are born into Theosophy, some achieve Theosophy, and some have Theosophy thrust upon them. It seems to me that I have done everything except achieve it by my own effort. I was almost born into it, as my parents joined the Society while I was still very young; and it has been thrust upon me ever since in the atmosphere of my home and in the lives of my parents and their friends. At first I did not care for it; it sounded too much like "being good"; and when Theosophical principles were mentioned I kept quiet, thinking obstinately that I knew far better. Oh, the stubborn superiority with which I have often met the gentle wisdom so untiringly offered! What patience and prayers at last won me over, no one but the ones who prayed are likely ever to know.

Besides the example of my parents, there was the influence of their friends, who came to our home, and who always brought Theosophy with them. Differing widely in their expression of it, they all made me sense a deep purpose, an unflinching devotion to a cause. This gave me the feeling as of a rock on which to stand. They were always kind and helpful, and they took great pains to interest me. Not having been to school, except as a small child, I had few friends of my age, which was much criticized by our relatives. Occasionally I went to parties, and always with great anticipations. They proved, however, to be dreadful affairs where the noise and wildness of the children made me scarcely less miserable than the attitude of the elders. These seemed to take delight in insinuating that my parents had queer notions and that I was to be pitied, which naturally made me furious. What a relief to return from such entertainments to the quiet atmosphere of home, to listen to beautiful stories read aloud by my mother the last thing before going to sleep!

Theosophy was always presented to me as opposed to the world. There

could be no middle course. On the one hand stood parties (which I thought I wanted in spite of experience), gaiety, and many friends—on the other stood Theosophy and Mother. These two were always inseparably connected in my mind. Mother used to say that although she could not force me into the Movement against my will, she would never rest until the desire to follow the Path had been awakened in me. The parties glittered and beckoned, but eventually the other force was stronger. The prospect of a life in the world did not look so very bright either, if Mother were always going to pull the other way, because I knew, in spite of myself, that my heart was on her side.

Then sometimes came the thought: What would I do without Theosophy? I tried to picture myself in an entirely different home, with many friends and with a mother such as I had seen other children have. The idea became more appalling the more I thought about it, and gradually, by drawing this contrast, Theosophy began to seem less undesirable. As I turned more definitely toward it, my parents' friends became my friends, their interests began to interest me, and so I grew into a companionship I could never have had in any other way. It is remarkable how little one realizes the value of a thing that one lives with constantly; and I believe that it is only by experiencing or imagining some totally different condition that a true appreciation is possible.

I soon discovered that "being good" was only part of the business—that there were fascinating books to read and subjects to be studied; and that there was always plenty to do—one of my horrors being lack of occupation. Must there not always be plenty to do in a society where "every scrap of information on every conceivable subject is bound to prove of use in the course of time"? Later experience has taught me, moreover, that no matter what subject a beginner may wish to approach, there is always an older student who is an expert in it. These older members are wonderfully kind, and spare themselves no trouble to help and encourage those who have had less experience than themselves.

I suppose that the real reason I joined was because it was the line of least resistance. Not joining would have meant a struggle; it would also have meant hardship and loneliness, and with what reward? Joining meant happiness, companionship, effort, of course, but with endless radiant vistas ahead. Had I been placed where the line of least resistance would have led me away from Theosophy, I have little doubt but that I should have followed it just the same, so it is with all my heart that I thank the compassionate Lords of Karma for placing me here. To think that there was a time when I would willingly have sold my birthright for a mess of pottage—and what a mess!

"Children, we cry for tinsel; but God will not mock us with tinsel: he gives pure gold. Slowly experience teaches us, slowly we learn trust. We ask for stones, God gives us bread; we ask for life, God gives us immortality; we ask for love, God gives us Paradise; we ask for knowledge, and God gives himself!"

# ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

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THEY were late in arriving, most of them; and the Recorder became fidgety. "Time and tide and the everlasting 'Screen,' wait for no man," he said; "one or the other of you must volunteer"; and he looked, first at the Philosopher, and then at the Orientalist, who, for the moment, with the Younger Member and a Visitor, were his only support. "The 'Screen' reflects all things; to what has your attention particularly been drawn?"

It was the Philosopher who responded. "I have two things in mind," he said; "both of them articles in magazines, which I found intensely interesting, and which I believe would interest many of our readers. One is an article which appeared in the July issue of the English 'Quarterly Review', on the subject of Greek Science, by Professor Carleton Stanley. He declares that the achievements of the Greek scientists have been greatly under-estimated. He shows that the period covered by Greek mathematics, including in that, written records only, amounts to about nine hundred years. He points out that Pythagoras gave geometry a numerical content, which was of the greatest importance; and that he investigated the physics of sound and formulated the laws of musical harmony. We are reminded that the Pythagoreans anticipated modern thought in their doctrine that number, though not indeed the explanation of the matter of the universe, might well prove to be the key to its structure.

"Professor Stanley writes: 'It is sometimes said that for all their mathematical lore the Greeks were unable to use their knowledge in a mechanical way. This is a flat contradiction of history. Their use of the compound pulley, of the siphon, and dozens of other mechanical appliances, is well attested, and their skilful engineering, for purposes of war and peace, can be learned from reading their literature and from their archæological remains. They applied their knowledge of optics to elaborate uses of mirrors, and there are references, other than the story of Archimedes' exploit, to burning glasses. The Greeks drove tunnels accurately. Archimedes made practical use of his knowledge of statics; at the same time Ctesibius in Alexandria was making practical use of his study of pneumatics, in water-engines, and so forth. The skill of Greek clock-makers is, comparatively speaking, well known. Just as Greek military engineers used torsion in making engines of destruction, so Greek physicians used it in reducing difficult dislocations. What more practical use could be made of knowledge than to give Europe an accurate calendar? About 125 B.C. Hipparchus calculated the lunar month as 29 days, 12 hours, 44 minutes,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  seconds. Sir Thomas Heath says that this differs from the present accepted length by less than one second!'

"Anaximander of Miletus, born about four centuries before the death of

Archimedes, taught evolution, and the possibility of change from species to species.

"Anaxagoras explained the inundations of the Nile; he described in modern fashion the nature of the sun, the phases of the moon and the source of its light, as well as the rotations of the universe; and he hinted at something like the atomic theory. He was soon followed by Leucippus, and then by the great Democritus, whose atomic theory was most comprehensive.

"Heraclides of Pontus, a pupil of Plato, discovered (or rediscovered?) that the earth rotates daily on its axis, and that Venus and Mercury revolve around the sun as a centre.

"Aristarchus of Samos went the whole length of Copernicus, to whom the ideas of Aristarchus were well known.

"Professor Stanley concludes by saying that the Greeks insisted upon an understanding of fundamental principles. 'They would not have allowed a student to use logarithms unless he understood the principles underlying them. Further, their science had a morality and a code of honour, as the rules of the Pythagoreans and the oath of Hippocrates attest. . . . They followed truth to the end; but were unselfish to a degree in sharing it, unself-seeking in the way they used it. Finally, Greek science and Greek imagination were intertwined.'

"Madame Blavatsky said exactly the same things, and cited almost exactly the same facts, in *Isis Unveiled* in 1877; but the world knew her not. It is delightful to find in a conservative review like the English 'Quarterly,' a vindication both of Greek Science and—though unconsciously—of H. P. B.'s anticipation of the best and latest in modern thought. Fortunate the scientist with faith enough in her mission, to look in *Isis* and *The Secret Doctrine* for clues to the discoveries of the next fifty years; for they are there.

"The other article, which also would have delighted her, is in 'Blackwood's Magazine' of last May, and is entitled 'The Savage as Scientist.' It is unsigned, except as by 'Fulahn,' but seems to have been written by a doctor who must have lived in Africa for many years. He speaks of native magic with considerable respect, having seen its actual achievements. Further,—but I must first remind you, as he does, of one of the latest 'discoveries' in the practice of medicine: that general paralysis, hitherto regarded as incurable by 'regular' practitioners, can be cured by inoculating sufferers with malaria. This cure was practised in Tanganyika, more than four hundred years ago, and is employed there to this day. Says the author: 'Harley Street' (the best-known 'doctors' street' in London), 'having no malarial swamp at its door, brings mosquitoes to its patients. The witch-doctors of the Iramba send their patients to the mosquitoes. Otherwise the treatment does not vary a hair's-breadth! In practice, mosquitoes, infective of malaria, are allowed to bite the patient, injecting the germs or trypanosomes of malaria into his system. Then, in the words of Sir Ronald Ross, "the paralysis germs and the malaria germs fight to the death, and the patient recovers from malaria with a few doses of quinine.'"



"Those words, the contributor to 'Blackwood's' continues, are nearly an exact translation of what a savage, one of the medicine-men attendant upon the chief of the Iramba tribe of Tanganyika, said to him: 'The vidudu of paralysis must fight with the pilintu of malaria so that the pilintu' (perhaps this ought to be vidudu,—unless the latter die, as the result of devouring their enemies!) 'may be devoured: then must the sick man eat of the nzizi chungu (bitter roots), and he will be strengthened.'

"Not only practice, but theory—centuries before it was known by white people that malaria is caused by the bite of mosquitoes! For 'vidudu' and 'pilintu' are Iramba names for those mysterious causes of disease which get into a man's blood; they are the savage's equivalent of the civilized pathologist's trypanosomes and bacilli. And the savage discovered both the cause of malaria, and its cure: quinine had long been employed by the savage forest-dwellers of Peru before its use was borrowed from them by white people; while in Africa, where the cinchona bark does not grow wild, the natives found out centuries ago (how?) that the roots of various species of aconite possess curative powers in cases of malarial poisoning.

"When, oh when, will doctors of medicine acquire sufficient humility, not to speak of common sense, to enable them to turn to savages, folk-lore, and 'old wives' tales,' for instruction in the art of healing! When will they realize the inestimable value of tradition as the accumulated experience of thousands upon thousands of years, and often derived originally from the primal Instructors of the race! Medical schools to-day, so far as I know anything about them, are the most hopelessly materialistic, mechanistic institutions on earth, while those that are not orthodox are usually the abode of cranks with one-track minds and one-track methods. Reformers, in most cases, are worse than those they would reform; for all they tell you to do is to walk twenty miles a day regardless of weather, and to live on raw cabbages and nuts. Obviously, anyone who could survive that, would never be ill. But suppose you are ill already! Try horse exercise, and raw onions in place of cabbages, say the Reformers. Your only chance is to tell them that Buddha did not approve of eating onions, because then they give you up as hopeless."

By this time several of the others had come in. The Recorder had noticed that the Younger Member paid very little attention to the Philosopher's observations; and the reason for it now became clear. Out of the blue, as if brushing aside all else but his engrossment, our young friend blurted (and 'friend' is not lightly used): "If only I could break through; if only I could find Reality! One day I seem to be near it, and then, the next, I find myself outcast,—a thousand ages from my goal."

"You never will find Reality until you learn to recognize the extent to which you have already found it," an elderly student volunteered. "There is an old-fashioned Grace after meals, which we used at home when I was a boy,—perhaps favouring it for its brevity: 'For what we have received, may the Lord make us truly thankful. Amen.' Not a bad idea to say a Grace like that, after meditation and after such meetings as we are privileged to

attend. In any case, if I were to flatter myself that I have a message-from-on-high to deliver to younger members, it would be: 'Never begin by saying to yourself, I do not know; begin always by asking yourself, What do I know?' In other words, always assume that your own experience necessarily must furnish you with some clue to the solution of your problem, with some point of contact with your objective. You want to find your Master: good. But do not begin by thinking of him as infinitely remote,—as if you had to jump out of your skin, or force your consciousness through leagues of darkness in order to reach him; for if you do that, you will never reach him. Turn round on yourself and ask yourself what you know of him already. May it not be that you have read or heard things about him as an objective being? If so, such things should have given you some conception of his spirit. Then ask yourself what you know about him from actual inner experience. This is the stumbling block. Many would answer that they know nothing. Others would think of all the soft feelings they have had during their times of prayer, and would be inclined to think that they know a great deal. You, if you are wise, will recognize in your own desire to know him and to serve him, proof of his life in you; of his very existence in you. As unaided personalities we are constitutionally incapable of spiritual aspiration. Therefore, wherever, and whenever we have sacrificed personal inclination for love of him, or for love of what we have believed to be his will, at that point we have knowledge of him, and of Reality. This morning when you meditated, and longed to give yourself to him, you already possessed him: your longing was himself. The whole of him is in each spark of his being; but if that thought be too remote, or should seem so, use the spot where his ray touches you, and follow the ray to its source, as a thread let down from heaven.

"You have read Jami, I suppose; but I suspect you read him as poetry, not as meaning literally what he said. You will discover, I hope, in the course of time, that true mystics are very literal people. 'Longing for Him, the soul *hath* victory.'

"Beware! say not, "He is All-Beautiful,  
And we His lovers." Thou art but the glass,  
And He the Face confronting it, which casts  
Its image on the mirror. . . ."

"I am not talking metaphysics; I am speaking of inner action,—of something that you should *do*, and that you ought to have done long ago. Gently, quietly, turn your attention to that within yourself which you have already experienced a thousand times, but which you have never appreciated for what it is: and then rejoice! Be thankful for what you have, before asking for more. Gratitude, perhaps, will carry you on its wings to fuller, deeper recognition. Where the heart goes, consciousness follows.

"One word more, however: the personality, which is a creature of time and space, is subject to physical laws, and one of those laws is that action and reac-

tion are equal and opposite. So long as you persist in identifying yourself with the personality—with 'the veil,' to use Jami's term—you will make it impossible for any Master to give you more than a brief and unsatisfying glimpse of reality, for the simple reason that he is obliged to calculate the effect of the reaction upon you. Until you attain a certain degree of poise, of inner stability—that is to say, of detachment from the personality—and can be trusted to maintain that, in spite of clamour in your mind and emotions, you oblige him to protect you from the risk of 'breaking through.' You oblige him, in other words, to hold you at arms' length for your own safety,—the last thing in the world he wants to do. You must learn to regard your personality, permanently and invariably, as an irresponsible idiot, identifying yourself, instead, with that thread of continuing aspiration which you know to be real,—before you can be trusted with a real experience of a more vivid kind."

After an interval of silence, punctuated by some vicious jabs at mosquitoes (for Jains we are not!) the Historian remarked: "We Americans are a queer people,—so juvenile that it is only too easy to believe we are the nursery of a new race. A nursery without a nursemaid, I should add. Impatience is characteristic of youth, which expects to 'get there' as soon as it starts. A journey of months, seems like an eternity. I don't believe in mixed marriages—in fact, I abhor them—but we need some Chinese blood in our veins, or its equivalent. Do you remember the story of Hiuen-Tsiang, who travelled from China to India in the seventh century, seeking copies of the Buddhist scriptures? He faced death a hundred times, but pursued his way with indomitable courage and patience and sweetness, finally returning to China, after an absence of sixteen years, to spend the rest of his life translating his beloved manuscripts. A little journey of twenty thousand miles, lasting sixteen years,—because his people lacked the authentic record of the Buddha's sayings!"

"You give me my chance," said the Student at this point. "I want to offer a reward, through the 'Screen,' for the complete poem which ends with this verse:

"But the patient mild Hindu,  
In far distant Rajputana,  
Smiles to think how very few  
Will ever reach Nirvana.'

"Judge loved that poem. It ridiculed the antics of certain Western would-be chélas. It must have been published between the years 1889 and 1894,—I think in England. You will see why I am reminded of it now, though I have been hunting it for years. Someone told me that it appeared originally in the London 'Referee,' commonly known as 'The Pink'un.'"

"I feel quite sure you have been misinformed," the Doctor remarked. "That poem appeared originally in 'The World,' a London society weekly

edited by Edmund Yates. It was in May or June of 1884, during the London 'season,' when H. P. B. and Theosophy were fashionable; and the verses filled a page and a half of a good-sized sheet. I think, too, that you have misquoted the first line of that verse, which read, if I remember rightly, 'While to himself, the mild Hindu.'"

"Splendid!" exclaimed the Student, "If you are right, you'll deserve a second prize; but I want the entire poem, accurately copied."

"What is to be the reward?" the Recorder asked.

"Suppose we say a copy of Mr. Judge's *Ocean of Theosophy* and of his *Bhagavad Gita*, or a choice between those two books and a year's subscription to the QUARTERLY. Answers should be sent to the Editors, P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York. But I did not mean to interrupt you,"—turning to the Historian.

"I don't see how anyone can question the immaturity of Americans as a people," the Historian resumed. "Take, for instance, these headlines in a recent morning paper: 'Giants take two as 40,000 go wild. Straw hats clutter field when fans vent enthusiasm over first victory. Even women throw in headgear as gallant Giants forge ahead of Reds in ninth.' Can you imagine anything more childish!"

"If that be evidence of immaturity, there is nothing to choose between America and England," said the Engineer. "Here it is baseball; there, it is football. Otherwise it is the same.

"My own diagnosis is different. It seems to me that in all countries, mob-consciousness is boy-consciousness,—for usually there are more men than women in a crowd, and such women as are in it, are not feminine. I think this explains the unthinking and terrible cruelty of crowds, as, for instance, during the French revolution, and, in our own country, during the anti-Chinese riots of years ago. Boys, as all of us know, can be and often are, wantonly, dreadfully cruel; but we know, too, that this is 'boy' at his worst, and that much of his irresponsible energy is spent in harmless though wild enthusiasms over games. Now newspapers necessarily are dependent upon mob patronage. Large circulation is the result, in many cases, of appeals to mob psychology,—to its prejudices, passions, 'thrills.' Newspapers 'feature' events that are likely to appeal to the mob. Therefore, in all countries, they are representative of the mob—the *demos*—and not of the average individual. It is one of the penalties of democratic forms of government; one of its inevitable outcomes. You begin with representative government; you end with newspaper government. In the same way, you begin with the jury system; you end with trial by newspaper clamour."

"Yes," interrupted the Student; "and in many cases by organized clamour,—the vast majority of people entirely indifferent, with a small but compact group making so much noise that the result is completely misrepresentative of public opinion. Sacco and Vanzetti were found guilty after due trial. I do not know if they were guilty actually or not. I did not study the evidence, and I doubt if many people did. All I can say is that if I were charged with a

serious offence, I could not ask for a fairer hearing than the President of Harvard University, the President of the Institute of Technology, and a former Judge of the Probate Court, undoubtedly gave the accused in that case at the request of the Governor of Massachusetts. It is monstrous to suppose that those four men would, in effect, have re-affirmed the death penalty, unless they had been convinced that Sacco and Vanzetti were guilty. However, that is not my point. A multitude of newspapers all over the world, lent themselves to the ravings of a radical clique,—and not one of those newspapers, so far as I am aware, asked those same radicals this obvious question: Even assuming, as you do, that Sacco and Vanzetti were innocent, how is it that you, who protested so passionately against their execution, allowed the murder of the Czar, his wife and daughters and little son, to pass without any protest whatsoever?

"Instead of asking that question, one of the most conservative newspapers in New York, commenting editorially on the conclusion of the case, sought and found a way once more to flatter itself, and the mob, by declaring that: 'From the whole tragic affair one compensating fact emerges. We have had a great and consoling proof that a love of justice is still a powerful motive in this country.' Bosh! is all I can say to that."

"It is disgusting," the Engineer agreed; "and it certainly tends to confirm, at least in my opinion, what I have ventured to suggest as a diagnosis of present world 'symptoms'; and I repeat that, so far as I can see, those symptoms are no more acute in the United States than in most European countries. In fact, I believe they are less acute here; though I do not deny that our participation in the Great War—especially the part played by President Wilson—is largely responsible for the present demoralization of Europe."

"I don't follow you," said our Visitor.

"Originally," the Engineer replied, "the war was fought on a basis of right and wrong. There was no thought, either in France, England, Russia, or Belgium, of a struggle between democratic and autocratic institutions. The German nation had once more set forth on a marauding expedition—an old story—and Justice demanded her repulse and her punishment. This country remained neutral. More than that, neutrality was presented as a virtue. Later, when the situation became more critical, and when our Government at last decided that it must participate, a reason for doing so had to be invented. That we had been wrong in the first place, could not be admitted (the Federal Government, on principle, never admits a mistake); so it was discovered that the Allies had not seen into the deeper significance of the conflict, and that the war was really being fought 'to make the world safe for Democracy.' Europe was flooded with American propaganda,—millions of dollars were spent. Self-determination and similar Democratic panaceas were advertized with all the art of the world's greatest advertizers. Europe was more than half persuaded that there must be something in it: for otherwise, where did the money come from? (Europe did not realize that the people who had made the money, had made it because they excelled as autocrats.) The mob, in all

nations, was flattered and reinforced. Experience was discredited, as men were urged to expect an impossible millennium of peace: a war to end war! A world designed by newspapers,—that it might be governed for ever by newspapers, with circulations mounting to millions of copies a day! All of which means that whatever of wisdom and of maturity exists in any country governed by newspaper-ridden mobs, must of necessity remain unreported and almost undiscoverable. Democratic government is based upon the assertion of rights; in other words, upon the assertion of self. The higher self recognizes only its duties; the lower self recognizes only its rights. The higher self is wisdom; the lower self is folly. Democratic government means the rule of folly and the banishment of wisdom.

"I have heard it said that hope for this country lies in the fact that it is democratic in name only; that we are governed by Money, and that it takes some brains to make, and more brains to keep, money,—while it takes no brains at all to make a noise. It would be nearer the truth to say that the factor which controls our government is the desire for money; is envy, with money as the thing envied. There have been times in the history of democratic government when direct bribery was the controlling factor; but nowadays, in the United States, promises have taken the place of cash,—especially the promise to *tax money*; the demagogue vows that if the mob will elect him, he will see to it that wealth shall be 'distributed'; that graduated Income, Inheritance and Corporation taxes shall bring the poor man his due. Very often that same man, once elected, will do some private taxing on his own account, so that direct bribery is not eliminated. But whichever method predominates, the fact that money is the objective, remains, because money is regarded, almost universally, as the guarantee of happiness."

"It is a pity, in any case," the Student remarked, "that Europe takes America so seriously, instead of seeing it as a joke, as a huge joke. Its advertised achievements are nothing but glamour; its real achievements are utterly unknown."

"All the same," the Historian persisted, "I think there is something unique about the youthfulness of the American people, or, if you choose, about the youthfulness of the American mob. Let me say at once that I think the highest and best types of the white race are to be found here; but I am not speaking of the few—of the flower; I am speaking of the many. I was immensely interested the other day in the report of a sermon—a very brief report, of course—preached by the Rev. Dr. Albert Parker Fitch of Carleton College. He declared that 'the trouble with us is that we are born in a democracy and we are a middle-class people. We lack the ability to see reality as the men who are either at the top or bottom of the social scale see it. We accept second-class things, and we are carried away by passing fads.' Leaders, he said, whether from the cultured or the peasant class, have owed their positions to their ability to recognize facts. 'In America, we are neither educated nor illiterate, neither cultured nor unrefined—we are mediocre,' he asserted.

"I think there is much to be said for that view. We have no aristocracy and no peasantry. The peasant deals with simple facts, and his mind is not confused with a lot of theories about those facts. He accepts them because he must—earth and weather, life and death; and he deals with them as best he can, from day to day, uncomplainingly, as his fathers did before him. His patience is immense,—the city or small town tradesman, might call it bovine, although it would be none the less admirable on that account (Carducci, on that subject, was quoted not long ago in *THE QUARTERLY*). The peasant is patient, persevering, persistent: otherwise he would starve. The real aristocrat, on the other hand, while often impatient about little things—things which he knows are controllable—naturally works for the future in the light of the past. Like the peasant, he deals with facts objectively, as his forebears dealt with them; not in the light of theory, but in that of tradition and experience. He values history, if it be only that of his own family, as a record of past success or failure, and as a guide to the present and future. His education has been classical, rather than scientific or 'practical,' because it was designed to *educate* him, and not merely to turn him into a money-maker; so he is likely to remember something of the history of Greece and Rome, and of the great authors of antiquity,—his tutors having bored him, perhaps, by their reiterated reminders that lessons drawn from the past should aid him in the right performance of his duty to his station, family and country. And as patience—or, rather, our national impatience—is the point from which our discussion started, there can be no doubt that the real aristocrat has an immense advantage over the middle classes. Circumstances almost compel him to take long views. As a simple instance: he will plant slow-growing trees for the benefit of his great-grandchildren, sacrificing his immediate pleasure and profit for their sakes, not looking for quick results, but content that his distant successors shall benefit. The middle-class man looks for results next year, and works for wife and children at best. It is curious, but true, that in this country it is only the biggest of our corporations, such as U. S. Steel and the General Electric, which share to that extent the aristocratic attitude, by working patiently for future generations, prepared to wait for many years before reaping what to-day they sow."

"I suppose that another way of expressing your idea," the Philosopher suggested, "would be to say that both the aristocrat and the peasant are more detached than your tradesman or middle-class man; the aristocrat for the reasons you have intimated, and the peasant because his unending struggle with Nature's vagaries has made him a good deal of a fatalist, 'under God.'"

"All very interesting," the Student now said; "but we should remember, I think, that generalizations about racial and class differences, are likely to prove dangerous. There are too many exceptions. It was an Irishman who fastened a tongue of leather over the keyhole of his door to keep the draught out!"

We enjoyed this; and at least one of those present, if the Recorder is not mistaken, decided to remember the Irishman, for use against a friend or two, in the future.

"I want to put in a word for the Younger Member," said the Objector at this point. "I sympathize with his impatience and believe it to be much healthier—much less likely to end in stagnation—than the so-called resignation or acceptance of most students. Furthermore, I think there is good ground for impatience, not to say for exasperation. Sometimes it seems to me that it takes a million years to make over a man into something radically better, and that to suppose it can be done in one lifetime is the height of folly. What else is reincarnation for? Unpleasant enough, isn't it, to suggest necessity?"

"It is astonishing how little our natures change in the course of a single life. People who seem really to change, usually are many-sided, and manifest one group of qualities in youth, and another group in maturity. In other cases, when change seems most evident, there is no change whatever. A woman, for instance, who was a dreadful flirt in her youth, in an innocuous sort of way, becomes religious in later life; and her friends say, 'What a change in Lucy!' Actually, she has merely changed her looking-glass. Her prayers, her meditations, are flirtations with God,—or with Masters, as the case may be. She makes eyes at them, quite innocently, and feels a response which is eminently self-satisfying. Mentally she classifies her acquaintances as 'spiritual' or the reverse, just as she used to rate them in terms of social importance or personal attractiveness; and to-day, when she meets someone whom she regards as her spiritual peer, her eyes will utter unutterable things, as if to say,—"*I do understand; you cannot speak: but if only you and I could exchange soul-confidences! What peace!*" And the Objector acted every word of it.

We laughed. Then the Ancient spoke. "I too sympathize with the desire to 'break through,'" he said. "Surely, it is a right desire. But the event itself can happen in many ways; sometimes suddenly; sometimes very slowly and almost imperceptibly,—though there can never be any doubt about it when the process is complete. A man then *knows*. There are those who have had wonderful inner experience, just as striking as that of Paul the apostle of Christ. In some cases it has lasted for months, and even for years. Ultimately, however, with few exceptions, the disciple has been told: 'You have received enough. Now work it permanently into your will.' It is the same, on a lower plane, as, 'It is not well, thou hast reaped, now thou must sow,' of *Light on the Path*. Gradual illumination is better, I think, and certainly safer, than any sudden light. Physical and nervous reactions are very real. Human nature craves for something objective, tangible, tremendous; and we are told that the Lord did speak to Job out of a whirlwind; but to Elijah it was different, for the Lord was not in the wind nor in the earthquake, but in a still small voice, and, when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle.

"However that may be, we should remember that the purpose of every spiritual revelation is the transformation of character; and I doubt if any of us could say honestly that so far his experience has failed to warrant as much as he is capable of, in that direction!"

Then, with deep feeling, he added: "Masters are dreamers of dreams; and



their dreams are real. They love those splendid visions, which, in our souls, we are. Can we for ever deny them their hearts' desire and child,—our spiritual rebirth?"

Perhaps Visitor No. 2 found himself out of his depth; there was a suggestion of coming to the surface again, in his manner of asking the Historian,—“Did you really mean that it is wrong for people to shout and cheer at a game of baseball? I cannot for the life of me see what harm it can do.”

“Thank you for asking the question,” the Historian replied. “I certainly did not mean that it is wrong for people of a certain kind to behave like that; I said it is childish. For children and school-boys it would be natural; for grown men and women it is natural only on the supposition that, in spite of years, they have not ceased to be children; and even so, when I stop to think of my own childhood, I can assure you that if I had thrown away my straw-hat in my excitement, it would *not* have been regarded either as ‘natural’ or excusable, but as ‘wicked waste,’ which, I had been told, spelt ‘woeful want’—and other more immediate woes also, for that matter!”

“Please don’t imagine, however, that I have so misunderstood Theosophy as to wish to turn men into Puritans, with blinds drawn on Sundays; or that I agree with the American ‘intellectual’ who declared not long ago that a ‘politely cynical attitude is the only civilized attitude towards life.’ Theosophy—”

“Pardon me,” the Student interrupted; “but did you see Chesterton’s rejoinder? He quoted Claudel, who, commenting on a remark by Renan—‘Perhaps, after all, the truth is depressing’—had said in effect: ‘When I read that, I was not even a Christian myself; but I knew such divine documents as the Ninth Symphony and the Choruses of Sophocles; and I knew that a positive, passionate, living, and everlasting joy is the only reality.’”

“Thanks,” the Historian resumed. “That is very much to the point. I was only going to add that Theosophy proves to us that gloom, depression, discouragement, spring only from the lower nature; never from the higher. Joy inheres in the life of the spirit,—though not as the world knows or gives joy. In fact, just as one of the tests of maturity lies in the character of the things that please—toys and noise, or worth while things; so one of the tests of spiritual development lies in the ability to extract real joy, even from toys!”

The Recorder suddenly noticed that the Wanderer had joined us. It seemed long since we had seen him. He picked up the thread of our discussion from a few words whispered to him by his neighbour, who then said aloud: “I have been asking him to speak out. It is not often that he is here, and I don’t want him to waste time over some polite preamble.”

The Wanderer smiled. “Very well,” he said; “I will try not to waste your time. You were speaking of discipleship, either directly or by implication; and my neighbour and old friend has just whispered a request that I talk on that subject, regardless of the ground you have already covered, and that I say whatever I particularly feel like saying. It so happens that I have some-

thing on my mind. The subject is not understood as by this time it ought to be.

"Discipleship is not the fruit of self-denial alone, nor even of self-denial and right aspiration. Discipleship is impossible without right understanding, and to acquire this is painful. The truth affects the lower personality like deadly poison which, once swallowed (to use a Chinese expression), causes 'such violent pain as to make one's intestines wriggle nine times and more.' It cannot be too often repeated that the way to discipleship is a battle; the path of discipleship is a battle; the aim and goal of discipleship is a battle.

"Right understanding must be gained one step at a time. We must begin where we are. The first rule is to look beneath or behind the appearance of things, remembering that all appearances are veils. Perhaps it would be clearer to say: look *above*,—not trying to see the highest at once, but always determined to see the higher. This does not mean that when you see a fault in a friend, you should turn your eyes to the contemplation of his soul (the probability is that you can no more see his soul than you can see the tops of the Himalayas), but that, after recognizing his fault, and the existence of exactly the same fault or tendency in yourself, you should strive to discover the value of that fault, and the spiritual quality or power of which it is a perversion."

"What do you mean by the value of a fault?" someone asked.

"I mean that there are very few faults which cannot be used constructively and helpfully on the earlier stages of the path. Vanity, for instance, though a truly deplorable weakness, and, in itself, a stone wall between the aspirant and his goal, can be turned against the commission of other faults, such as loss of temper. It can even be turned against itself, once its effect on other people is perceived."

"And what do you mean when saying that a fault is a perversion of a spiritual quality or power?"

"Perhaps the best illustration of that, is self-love, which clearly is a perversion of unselfish and real love. Lust is the quintessence of self-love; that is why it is the exact opposite of love.

"But the simplest things of daily life, which most people accept unthinkingly, must be examined, and re-examined, until their deeper significances are perceived. We eat; but why do we eat, what do we eat, what do we accomplish by eating, with what does the process of eating correspond in the inner world, can we accomplish more by eating than the mere sustenance of the body?—and fifty other questions along the same lines. In this case, as in all other commonplace doings, we must proceed with the conviction that we have mistaken the unreal for the real; that we have seen a rope and have imagined it was a snake; that we have confused a symbol with a fact. Above all, of course, we must employ this method to free ourselves from wrong self-identification. Intellectually we must disintegrate the personality in order to acquire a personality.

"At each stage, that which is found must be seen in its turn as veil, so that

the search for the Real, the Ultimate, is perpetually renewed. Fray Juan said: 'I use the creatures as instruments and means whereby we may find God.' At another time he wrote," (the Wanderer has a prodigious memory): "'Thou wilt find some that say mysteriously, as though none should understand them, that music is a heavenly thing and uplifts the spirit; and that, when they hear it, they experience (so it seems to them) feelings most spiritual. But the truth is that all this is no more than sensuality, wherein they feel this manner of joy, devotion or pleasure. And this is clear and evident, because the same effects are caused in those that know not what is meant by "spirit," nor have aught to do therewith. Quite other are the effects of music upon true contemplatives, who, when they hear the music of the organ or of other instruments, put from them the pleasure, outward and physical, which is caused by the sounds, and pass to the contemplation of interior matters, and to the spirituality which corresponds with the harmonic accords that strike the ear.'

"Of course, like every other statement, Fray Juan's is open to misunderstanding. 'Put from them' may suggest rejection; and that is not the idea. Penetration is not quite right either. The process is rather that of following a stream to its source, which, for us, is our Master.

"This question was once asked: 'What kind of man is he who does not keep company with any thing?' And that question has been described as 'the most serious question one can ever raise in the history of thought.'

"Ch'ing-yüan Wei-hsin once said: 'Before a man studies Zen, to him mountains are mountains and waters are waters; after he gets an insight into the truth of Zen through the instruction of a good master, mountains to him are not mountains and waters are not waters; but after this, when he really attains to the abode of rest, mountains are once more mountains and waters are waters.' Do you see the point?"

"I can see one point," declared the Student; "when all these horrible earth-worms known as Chinese Student Reformers, are buried and forgotten, the sages of old China may at last come into their own!"

"You are not quite fair," the Orientalist amended. "I should prefer to say that when the Young Men's Christian Association is converted to Christianity, and ceases to be a destructive and disruptive and corrupting influence, the Chinese Student Reformer may throw his youthful energies into reforming his country backwards, immensely to the advantage of China."

There was a pause. We looked at the Wanderer for more. "I came to listen," he said; "not to talk. I was entrusted with something to leave with you."

# LETTERS TO STUDENTS

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February 9th, 1908.

DEAR ———

\* \* \* \* \*

I have your letter of the 17th January, and would have replied before, but have been much driven. . . . .

You ask about group life. I do not profess to understand the matter very well, but it seems to me that we can get the idea through a physical analogy. Every human being is a battery, a reservoir of force. Most of us have not very much force, but we all have a little. Now just as when, in electricity, you want a strong current, you combine several batteries together, or several cells together, to make a big battery; so spiritually by combining several individuals together, you get a spiritual current which is capable of doing a great deal of actual work. But, just as with the battery, the different cells must be very closely connected by wires,—so those who work together must be closely connected by love and sympathy. The slightest disharmony, jealousy, or other ignoble feeling, will destroy the spiritual current as quickly as cutting a wire will, in the physical battery.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Theosophical teaching does not represent particularly that of the Orient. It is above and beyond race or age or any special kind of culture. It represents the Spiritual Life in its widest sense, and is suitable for all kinds and races of men. I suppose, in the last analysis, that its actual purpose is to train people to become members of the Great Lodge, for if they do that, they will accomplish all else that could possibly be desired.

I have considered what you have said in one or two of your letters about hearing voices, and other similar psychic experiences. These are quite common among our new members, for their aspiration, and the practices which are enjoined, have a tendency to open up the inner nature. There is considerable danger that the doors which we so open will lead into the psychic realms instead of the spiritual realms, and it is one of the things which we have been warned against, and one reason why the things we are told to do are so simple, and so spiritual in their effects.

Anyone naturally psychic, as many people in this country are now, must be very careful about all this side of their development. Mr. Judge used to say that the best thing to do was to note what happened, for purposes of study and reference and experience, but to pass it immediately by, and to pay no attention to it. That is to say, never seek such experiences, never dwell with the mind upon those which may happen in spite of ourselves, never be curious about them; simply note them and pass on to the real things, to our meditation, our devotional reading, our study, etc. I certainly should

never speak of them to others. They may increase, and may become quite annoying for a time, but I hope this will not be your experience.

Just remember that the spiritual forces never operate in such ways, and that when you do have a real experience there will not be the slightest doubt in your mind about it, for by then you will have learned how to discriminate between the different planes. . . . I think that the word "weight" in the quotation sent you, means every conceivable barrier which the world, and our own nature, and our environment, seem to place in our Path. We have all the inherited weaknesses of our own to overcome, as well as all the things which most people call the "troubles of life" and which have a tendency to drag us down. It is better not to fight these, but to lay them aside, ignore them. If we want to conquer a fault, stop thinking about the fault, and cultivate and think about the opposite virtue. It is much more effective.

Now I must stop. With best wishes in all ways, I am,

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

DEAR ———

July 12th, 1908.

I have not replied to your letter of May 25th, as there did not appear to be anything very definite requiring an answer, but I do not like too long a time to go by without an exchange of letters.

The Western mind has no natural power of concentration such as would appear to exist in the East, and it is said that to acquire that power is one of the most difficult of all pursuits. So you must not be discouraged because you find it difficult. I have been at it for twenty years, and while I know that I must have made some progress, I still have to work at it as hard as I did twenty years ago.

We have to overcome thousands of years of heredity; and, furthermore, the methods which we pursue in our ordinary, daily lives, are weakening and not strengthening to the acquirement of the power. The real accomplishment is when we learn to be concentrated always, in every moment of our lives. You will note that I do not say "waking" lives, for when concentration is perfect, it continues to and from the other side of sleep. It is possible to go to sleep fully conscious, and to remain so, and wake up next morning, without for a single second having lost the continuity. But this is difficult, and only comes after long practice of lesser forms of concentration. It, concentration, is the secret of occult power on all the planes, and must come before we can meditate properly, or do anything just as it should be done.

I hope that you will write to me before very long.

With kindest regards, I am,

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

August 2nd, 1908.

DEAR ———

Many thanks for your new address and for your letter of the 14th. You seem to be getting along very well, and there is nothing very much that your letter suggested to me to say in reply. Perhaps after more study you will have specific questions, although here again it is my experience that the best students ask fewest questions. There is an Eastern proverb, however, which says, to this effect: He who asks a question is wise. He who asks seven is wiser still; while he who asks fourteen is already far along on the road to Enlightenment, so be it they be questions from the heart and not from the mind.

As a matter of fact it is not easy to ask real questions. Most of those which jump into the mind when we sit down for the purpose, we can answer ourselves. It is also said that we never should ask a question until we have earnestly tried to find the answer within ourselves.

It is of course entirely true that our higher consciousness is but little affected by death. It is stunned for a while by the shock of it, but when it wakes, it is as from a sleep, and we go on as before, remembering all the accumulated experience of many lifetimes. But of course this applies to an individual who has an awakened higher consciousness, and what most of us are trying to do is to awake our higher consciousness. . . . There are still higher forms of consciousness which are not affected by death at all, but we are still too far away from any realization of these kinds to make speculation about them worth while.

Of course we must have patience, unlimited patience; but have we not all Eternity before us? To work a complete revolution in the whole nature is no light task, and may take many lifetimes. What we may be sure of, however, is that mental work of any kind will have but a small effect on this, and that we shall always know all, and more, than it is necessary for us to know, to take the next step forward.

The question of losing interest in Theosophy and Theosophical studies and work is simple enough. We have two natures; one which longs for physical life and sensation, and the other, just beginning with most of us, which longs for the things of the Spirit. There is a constant warfare between these two, which goes on until the physical nature is finally conquered; but in the course of the battle it may often be that the physical nature is temporarily too strong for the other, and will come to the top and dominate the life. In such a case, of course, the person loses interest. I have stated this crudely, but you will realize that the actual domination may be in some very subtle way. It may not seem to the individual that his lower nature is on top at all, but close analysis would show that vanity or some form of egotism had temporarily gained possession of the consciousness. We must guard against all these more subtle forms of error, for the path of the disciple is very difficult, and we must have the faith of little children; the hearts of little children too.

With kindest regards,

I am sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

October 4th, 1908.

DEAR ———

\* \* \* \* \*

It seems to me that you are doing just what I hoped you would do when I suggested that you try to make your studies practical. There are many persons who are fascinated by the immense vista which our philosophy opens up to them: the rounds and races; cycles; evolution and involution; the division of nature into planes, and man into principles; the different planes of human consciousness. . . . Some students get fairly lost in this maze of knowledge and possible opportunity for study and investigation. This I wanted to guard against, for while intensely interesting, and while it gives an intellectual basis for spiritual evolution, it is not necessary to progress. What really counts is being good; just plain, old-fashioned being good.

I think it is valuable to remember that many of the greatest saints who ever lived were profoundly ignorant men and women. But no saint could be such without the spiritual qualities which we have learned to associate with the name. So it seems desirable that while we should be interested in our studies, we should pay special attention to them as they are related to conduct,—in a word, we should make them practical. But I think you have the idea. . . .

The only caution I would give is not to attempt things which are too vague and too ethereal. Very few people can work out and understand the meaning of the different kinds of consciousness . . . and apply them personally, but we all know that we must conquer our lower natures, must learn to be unselfish, must be patient, obedient, serene. We are too prone to imagine that the study of occultism is something mysterious and very profound. On the contrary, it is deep and profound because it is so simple. Occultism has been defined as doing the right thing in the right way at the right time and in the right place. One does not have to understand very much about the planes of consciousness in order to comply very thoroughly with this definition.

I am just back from a brief vacation. I hope you had a pleasant summer and look forward to the winter's work.

With kindest regards, I am, •

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

# REVIEWS

*The Christ of the Indian Road*, by E. Stanley Jones; published by The Abingdon Press; price, \$1.00.

The author of this vividly written and exceptionally interesting book has been for years an active missionary in Northern India. He undertakes to tell us something of his experience in India, and also of the impression that the spiritual life of India has made on him. He sums the matter up by saying that recently, at the close of an address, a friend remarked, "He has probably done some good to India, but India has certainly done a great deal for him."

His work is based on spiritual experience, on the sense of communion with the living Master Christ. This communion sometimes takes the form of locutions. At the beginning of his ministry, he tried to preach a brilliant and argumentative sermon, using a long word that made one of his audience smile. He was so upset that he absolutely forgot what he had intended to say, and, with exceptional courage, blurted out, "Friends, I am very sorry, but I have forgotten my sermon!" He started down the steps leading from the pulpit in shame and confusion, thinking that the very beginning of his ministry was a tragic failure. As he was about to leave the pulpit a Voice seemed to say to him, "Haven't I done anything for you?"

"Yes," I replied, "You have done everything for me."

"Well," answered the Voice, "couldn't you tell that?"

A second locution is recorded at a time when he had been working hard for years in India, and had completely broken down, shattered in health, but determined to continue the battle.

"While in prayer, not particularly thinking about myself, a Voice seemed to say, 'Are you yourself ready for this work to which I have called you?' I replied: 'No, Lord, I am done for. I have reached the end of my rope.' The Voice replied, 'If you will turn that over to me and not worry about it, I will take care of it.' I quickly answered, 'Lord, I close the bargain right here.' A great peace settled into my heart and pervaded me. I knew it was done!"

Thereafter, he conceived his work in India to be, first, to realize in his own life, and then to communicate to others, utter and absolute allegiance to Christ as living Master. And he puts it on record that he found a wonderful willingness among the natives of India to accept Christ as living Master, an equal willingness in Brahmans and outcasts, Hindus and Mohammedans, with a resultant breaking down of the barriers of selfishness and exclusiveness.

There were three formidable barriers: the domineering attitude of "Christian" civilization; stereotyped rival organizations among Christians; and a rigid system of dogma. These three things the people of India were not willing to accept, but they were willing, nay, eager, to accept the Master Christ, if he could be divested of these encasements.

Again with high courage, this ardent missionary undertook to try to impart his experience of the living Master direct, separated from Church organization, dogma and Western dominance. As a result, he formed a conception of his Master which has given the title to his book: *The Christ of the Indian Road*, the Master renewing in India the old mission of Palestine, and finding in India a spiritual atmosphere far more favourable and sympathetic. He quotes a Bengali poet: "There is no room for thee there in Europe. Come, Lord Christ, come away! Take your stand in Asia—the land of Buddha!" One day he asked an earnest



Hindu what he thought of Christ. The answer was: "There is no one else who is seriously bidding for the heart of the world except Jesus Christ. There is no one else on the field."

What are the favourable elements in India? He answers eloquently:

"Is it worth while that India feels that at the heart of things is a strict and unfailing justice? The ironlike and heartless inhumanities that have grown up around the thought of Karma will be modified and cleansed away, but this thought that strict justice is at the heart of things may tend to correct a good deal of our tendencies toward an easy forgiveness. Then the passion for inner freedom, the craving to break the thralldom of the outward and the seeming—that is a beautiful passion that has beat in the soul of India, and, corrected by the passion for the freedom of others, will make a great contribution to our collective life. But above all, India standing for the tremendous cost of the religious life, that religion demands all and holds all, will correct much of our compartmentalized and tentative religious thinking and acting. It should bring us *abandon*."

Again:

"India, too, hopes that the world may some day be in need of a new formula. She, too, has her word ready. It will be spelled 'Atma'—*spirit*. That word 'Atma' runs like a refrain through everything in India. The followers of the Christ of the Indian Road will show us the real meaning of a *spiritual* life."

It is inevitable, when a book contains so much to arouse our sympathy, that its limitations should cause regret. • We need to remember, perhaps, that, with a limited mission, a limited instrument (Mr. Stanley Jones is still a Methodist) may be more effective than one whose understanding is greater. Yet, in spite of that consideration, it seems a pity indeed that he knows nothing of Theosophy; worse, that he believes he knows a great deal about it, basing this belief upon frequent contact with Mrs. Besant's Society and her followers in India, Krishnamurti among them. Members of The Theosophical Society can well imagine the result! No wonder that the author's views "cut straight across the ideas of Theosophy" as he has met it, and that those of us who understand, agree with many of his implied strictures.

For lack of the real Theosophy—we might say, of the Master Christ's Theosophy, or the Theosophy of the Lodge—the author is fighting his battle with one eye blindfold and with one arm tied behind his back. For instance, summarizing the different religions of the world, he declares: "Buddhism says, 'Be disillusioned—annihilate thyself'; Hinduism says, 'Be separated—merge thyself'; Mohammedanism says, 'Be submissive—assert thyself';" while "Christianity says, 'Be Christlike—give thyself.'" This, of course, is a caricature of the truth, and is hardly likely to impress the native audiences he is constantly addressing. We may in any case be sure of one thing: the Master Christ would call attention to the best in other religions, and would give them their noblest and most spiritual interpretation, not their worst.

In much the same way the author takes a regrettably superficial view of many of the questions upon which he touches. He is an American and a good democrat, and he interprets Christ as the most thorough of all democrats. He asserts without qualification that war is brutalizing. He clings to certain literal interpretations,—the Virgin Birth among them. Occasionally, perhaps from habit, he talks sheer nonsense, as when he says: ". . . the wretchedness of the poor and the sick is not a sign of their sin of a previous birth, but the sign of the sin of the privileged in this birth for allowing it": as if "the privileged" could save themselves from sickness, let alone others; while, as to poverty, we have yet to learn that either wealth or "privilege" can provide a cure for wanton improvidence.

Notwithstanding these obvious blemishes, *The Christ of the Indian Road* is immensely well worth reading. It is both provocative of thought and spiritually stimulating. C. J.

*Plant Autographs and Their Revelations*, by Sir Jagadis Chunder Bose; The Macmillan Company, 1927; price, \$2.50.

The history of biology since the Renaissance may be divided into four Periods: the Encyclopædic, Systematic, Morphological and Dynamic, which bear in their sequence a curious analogy to the phases of individual human development. The Encyclopædist was the biological

child obsessed by the acquisitive instinct; the Systematist brought order into the chaos left by his predecessor; the Morphologist sought a deeper knowledge of the classified material, and from his investigations with scalpel and microscope there came the great induction which we call organic evolution.

About the year 1890 the biological stream began to deflect into another channel. It was evident that evolution was a phenomenon of dynamism, and that its problems could only be solved by a consideration of the energies which were acting upon organisms. But at this point, when it seemed that the biologist was about to live up to his name and become a student of life, the scientific Karma of the nineteenth century began to come to expression. The agnostics of that century had arbitrarily limited the field of science to the domain amenable to sensuous investigation. The new dynamist, brought up in the agnostic school, felt impelled to fit the phenomena of life to the Procrustean bed of matter and energy. The result of this narrow viewpoint was a period of futile and disheartening groping among shadows.

This short introduction will serve to some extent to explain why the material included in the book under review has waited so long for recognition. Professor Bose is director of the Bose Institute for Plant Research at Calcutta, and for some twenty-five years his striking researches on plants have been known to a generally hostile botanical world. It is only very recently that the growing liberalism of science has admitted of their proper and just evaluation.

The first notable work of this Indian scientist was in the field of electro-physics, and his reputation was already securely established among physicists when he turned his attention to the study of plant response, employing in his experiments the sensitive electrical recorders with which he had been working in his strictly physical experiments. But at this point he came into contact and conflict with the dominant materialism of the official schools of physiology. His paper on Electric Response, read at the Royal Society in 1901, was refused publication in the Society's "Proceedings" and was placed in the "Archives." He was regarded as an intruder into the biological field; his views were an offence to certain pundits of the official physiology; his claim to priority was contested, and finally his work was banned as "old stuff." Misrepresentation and hostility did their work in the old familiar way, and in most universities the terms "dreamer" and "Hindu fakir" sufficed to deter young hopefuls from reading Bose. And just what had this investigator done to discredit himself? He had gone far to demonstrate the unity of life. He had shown that there is an identity of response to stimuli in mineral, vegetable and animal worlds.

Twenty-five years have passed since Bose's first book, *Response in the Living and Non-Living* appeared, and to-day his writings are received by a more tolerant science which begins to suspect that living things may really be alive.

The book before us is a compilation in which Professor Bose sums up such parts of his work as may be of particular interest to the layman. Within the compass of 235 pages he leads us to see how he has been "able to make the dumb plant the most eloquent chronicler of its inner life and experiences by making it write down its own history." Tiny movements of elongation, contraction, pulsation, etc., far beyond the limits of unaided human vision, are magnified many thousand times and are automatically recorded by appropriate methods. Metals, plants and animals are proved to suffer fatigue under repeated shocks; they react alike to the same chemical, thermal, electrical and mechanical stimuli. The plant bears, within its body, motor and conductive tissues which simulate muscle and nerve; through the rhythmical pulsation of the inner cells of the bark it pumps its sap upward.

The book is written in a charming style, and through it all plays a delicate humour. It has been suggested that real humour is a prominent hall-mark of those who are on the Buddha's Ray, and that Professor Bose, wittingly or unwittingly, may be connected with the deeper Source of Wisdom. It seems certain that his work has been of a kind that would call forth approbation from that quarter.

At the present moment our university courses in plant physiology are in a highly unsatisfactory state. The dust of nineteenth century materialism lies heavy upon them. In Professor Bose's work we may detect the note of a new biology which seems destined to mould the dust into a living organism.

R. E. T.

*Platonism and the Spiritual Life*, by George Santayana; Charles Scribner's Sons, 1927; price, \$1.75.

In many ways, this is a provocative book, for it presents a view of Plato which is sharp contrast to general opinion. However, it provides a much-needed counter-irritant against the platitudes of enthusiasts who have veiled the inner meaning of Plato's thought almost from the beginning. That does not mean that we agree with all of Professor Santayana's assumptions, but no student of Plato should miss such an opportunity to re-examine his own judgments.

Professor Santayana suggests that Plato was not primarily a "spiritual" philosopher but a moralist and pragmatist who had the faculty, in exceptional degree, of casting his ethical theories in the form of myth and allegory. On the other hand, the greatest of the Platonists, Plotinus, used the metaphysical fables of Plato to illustrate a much deeper part of experience than is revealed by the ordinary exercise of the social virtues. For Plotinus, "the good of the soul and her salvation had taken the place of domestic, military and political goods; so that while the various spheres of being, like the terraces of Dante's Purgatorio, were all permanently and divinely appointed, the spirit now moved through them without rest. Its abiding place was beyond. . . . Plotinus professed to be, and actually was, an orthodox Platonist; and yet this dominant sense in him of the spiritual life was perfectly foreign to Socrates and Plato" (pp. 24-27).

Plotinus had genius and originality, and was quite able to stand on his own feet without Plato's assistance. But Professor Santayana seems to limit the real significance of Plato. It is very probable that the Athenians of Plato's generation were primarily interested in political science, and it is certain that Plato spoke to them in terms which interested them and which they could understand. But that does not imply that Plato's wisdom was not actually more profound than that of his contemporaries. If he were, indeed, an occultist—which we do not expect Professor Santayana to believe—he may have been speaking to future centuries as well as to his own. Perhaps it was part of the genius of Plotinus that he discovered some of the hidden meanings of his great predecessor.

The book is, however, by no means merely a study of historical Platonism. The author contributes his own view of spiritual life, and this view is of value and interest. It is natural that his attempt to define somewhat the meaning of Spirit should be reduced mostly to a series of negations; Spirit is not this and it is not that. He has the authority of every mystic who ever lived to support this method of describing "the Real of the real."

It is best to let the author speak for himself. "The great masters of the spiritual life are evidently not the Greeks, not even the Alexandrian Greeks, but the Indians, their disciples elsewhere in the East, and those Moslems, Christians and Jews who have surrendered precisely that early, unregenerate claim to be enveloped in a protecting world designed for their benefit or vindication. The spiritual life, then, is distinguished from worldly morality and intelligence not so much by knowledge as by disillusion; however humble may be its career, it lifts those few and common adventures into the light of eternity. . . . The spirit lives in this continual sense of the ultimate in the immediate" (p. 83).

S. L.

*The Conquest of Civilization*, by James Henry Breasted; Harper and Brothers, New York and London, 1926; price, \$5.00.

The greater part of this book has already been published in an earlier history by the same author, entitled *Ancient Times*. The present edition, under its new title, contains, in addition, archaeological evidence which has recently come to light, in particular in regard to (1) the tomb of Tutankhamon; (2) the discovery and decipherment of Babylonian cuneiform tablets, dating from 3000 B.C.; (3) the decipherment of cuneiform Hittite tablets, with special reference to the Greeks at the time of the Trojan war. In other respects the text and the illustrations of this new library edition are almost identical with the previous text-book, which was intended for use in schools. Both books make very interesting reading for those who are not learned in Ancient History, and who yet desire to gain a bird's eye view of the progress of civilization from the earliest known times. The author sees the conquest of civilization as "a process of

evolution which has moved on through the ages." He traces that process hopefully, as a "rising trail," leading up to its culmination in the modern world, in which he sees civilized man as "the highest form of life known to us."

Those who have searched more deeply into the mysteries of man's progress, will not agree with so simple an explanation of evolution. Historians usually start with the assumption that man's evolution began from the lowest form of human life, and can be traced as a gradual ascent. But this theory is not always in accordance with the recorded facts. The first part of *The Conquest of Civilization* treats of the men of the Stone Age. Modern Science generally admits that the existence of man can be traced back for some 500,000 years, but is not, as yet, prepared to endorse the statement of *The Secret Doctrine* that mankind has actually existed for 18,000,000 years. According to Breasted, Neolithic man dates from about 10,000 B.C. In the next section of his book, the author gives a graphic account of the marvellous civilization of Egypt, existing since at least 3000 B.C. He does not seem to find it inconsistent to believe that those ancient Egyptians, with their art and learning—which are agreed to be, in some respects, in advance of modern civilization—evolved, in a few thousand years, from the primitive races of Neolithic man.

Students of Theosophy find a more logical explanation in the teaching of a simultaneous process of involution and evolution, of the descent of man from a far-off "golden age," and his gradual ascent towards the Divine. They believe that theosophical teaching concerning the cyclic progress of nations and races is more often in accordance with historical and archaeological evidence. Professor Breasted admits that "the sudden and dramatic recovery of the earlier chapters of the human career . . . has created a situation to which our histories of the ancient world have only recently begun to adjust themselves."

The present reviewer is not in a position to discuss the accuracy of the historical and chronological evidence. He notices that, in the matter of dates, there is a difference of opinion of some 2000 years between Professor Breasted and another great authority, Sir Flinders Petrie. The history of Egypt, through 2000 years, is graphically described, and the author gives a sympathetic account of the religious reforms of King Ikhnaton, stating that "in all the progress of men which we have followed through thousands of years, no one had ever before caught such a vision of the great Father of all."

The succeeding chapters of the book draw a vivid picture of the other great civilizations of the Orient, in Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, as showing the successive extensions of the Semitic and the Indo-European races, and the great heights of progress to which the various nations in turn attained. The history is illustrated throughout with photographs of monuments, works of art, and religious symbols. In the chapter on Assyria, there is a fine symbolic picture of the god Assur, showing the winged sun-disk of Egypt, surmounting the Babylonian Tree of Life. The similarity of symbols throughout the different nations, with their varying forms of worship, is of profound significance.

In the chapter on Persia, there are interesting paragraphs on the prophet Zoroaster, and the cult which he originated. The account of the civilization in Palestine forms a useful commentary on the historical books of the Old Testament. One point, in particular, may be noted: that the Philistines, against whom Saul fought continuously, sometime about 1000 B.C., are now believed to have been warriors from Crete, which was then entering upon the decline of her great power as leader of the Ægean.

In his survey of the civilization of the Orient, Professor Breasted does not travel further East than Persia, and leaves out of account the civilizations of India, China, Thibet, Japan,—perhaps as having only a remote influence on the progress of European civilization, with which he is chiefly concerned. More than half his book, of some 700 pages, is taken up with classical history, given in considerable detail. The history of Greece is given with knowledge, insight, and sympathy. Afterwards he traces the rise and extension of the Roman power, to the downfall of the Empire in the fifth century A.D., which ends his survey of early civilization.

# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION No. 334.—*We are told that we should study ourselves that we may see our faults to correct them, and at the same time we are warned not to think much about ourselves; but if we do not first form a mental picture of ourselves as we are, how can we grow into what we should like to be?*

ANSWER.—The first thing to do is to form a clear picture of what we should like to be, and then act accordingly, so far as we are able. That would take us a long way. It is also important to study our faults, but that should be done impersonally, with detachment, as if we were studying a machine to find out why it does not function as we wish,—which, in point of fact, is exactly what is happening. So many people see their faults, not with any idea of correcting them, but with the fear of what others are thinking of them, and the resulting hurt to their vanity fills them with despondency and discouragement. It is a question of the motive with which the fault is studied and of the action which follows. Self-examination undertaken with the motive of fitting oneself to serve more effectively, and invariably followed by action against the faults revealed, is, in its invigorating effects on the nature, the polar opposite of the morbid “thinking about ourselves” against which we are warned.

J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—For years it had been my desire to climb a certain steep and dangerous mountain, yet from the sunny valley below, the dark and lowering crags were forbidding, and a quick fear always seized me when I looked up at them. Then one day I learned that an expedition was being formed to scale that lofty peak, and there was no time to pause if I wished to join it. We started, each lashed to each, a long line; if one slipped, *all* were in danger. The climb was cruel, and many times I fell, imperilling my companions, but always I was able to rise again, sometimes seemingly by my own effort, more often because of a friendly hand stretched quickly out to save me, the very crags which had frightened me when viewed from the valley below, serving as footholds in my ascent, though at the time I was too much absorbed in the effort of climbing to notice this. . . . We reached the top, and from that high altitude I could examine all the rough places where I had fallen, stretched out endlessly beneath, and I knew that when I climbed a mountain again I should understand better how to meet and conquer these, for *from above* I recognized both their value and their impotence. D.

ANSWER.—It is a question of which self we are going to think of as being really “I,” the Higher Self or the lower self. Study the lower self with detachment, yes, that we may see our faults; view it, as it were, from above, looking down. But to associate ourselves with the lower self, to identify ourselves with it, to think much about ourselves in the sense that we immerse ourselves in questions which have to do with our personal comfort, our personal preferences and dislikes,—this is fatal.

If, however, we take as our own, Mr. Judge's watchword, “I am the Higher Self;” if we try in some measure to begin to effect the transfer of our consciousness from the lower to the Higher, our mental picture of ourselves becomes clearer.

We do not have to attain complete understanding of the lower before we can function at all in the Higher. Through our devotion and our effort we begin, on the one hand, to have a clearer comprehension of the lower, at the same time that we begin to have a much more definite and distinct vision of what we should really like to be, and can and must be.

C. R. A.

ANSWER.—The fact seems to be that we already have a great superfluity of mental pictures of ourselves. Let us select one virtue which we know perfectly well we ought to cultivate, and work on that. Such work will increase self-knowledge and help us further to reduce the picture-making, so far as we ourselves are concerned. To see ourselves exactly as we are is not merely unnecessary; it is impossible.

C. M. S.

ANSWER.—Some problems persistently face us down as long as we deal with them in mental terms. Let us put this one into the terms of everyday life. Suppose a boy who greatly desired to become a good singer, decided that he could not continue to take voice-training lessons from the excellent teacher to whom you had sent him. He tells you that he has every confidence in the teacher's method, and would like to follow it, but it has taken away all his joy in singing and even his ability to give pleasure to his friends with his voice. The difficulty is that the teacher requires him to listen incessantly to the tones he produces—and all music has thus vanished. The temporary nature of this difficulty, as well as the part that vanity was playing in it, would be evident to you. Perhaps you would ask him if he could remember the exquisite tones of some violinist or some singer whom he admired. Since they were vivid in his memory, you might assure him that he could, similarly, keep listening with his imagination to his ideal of pure tone-quality, while he was practising, and thus have his attention fastened upon the ideal that appealed to him, and not upon his own performance as such. You would show him the wisdom of the teacher who, instead of giving him a minute analysis of all his faults in singing, had directed him to hold the ideal before him and constantly to reach up toward it.

A. B.

QUESTION NO 335.—*In the light of Theosophy, what is the rationale of a miracle? Many of the Saints, Christian and "Pagan," are said to have possessed the "healing touch," and are known to have wrought cures. Might a Saint, who had not attained full wisdom, effect a miracle, contrary to the Karma of the sufferer? If so, would he and the Saint eventually have to suffer for it?*

ANSWER.—Many students of Theosophy are convinced of the validity of various recorded "miracles," those described in the Gospels, for instance. They do not, however, regard them as due to a temporary setting aside of natural law by the interposition of Divine Will. They do not believe that anything ever happens or can happen "contrary to law." They see in "miracles" the operation of higher forces which overcome lower forces, as the speed of an aeroplane overcomes the force of gravitation, or as the telephone and radio overcome the laws limiting the distance which sound ordinarily can travel. For the human voice to be heard from New York in London would have seemed a miracle one hundred years ago. Perhaps we might define a "miracle" as the setting aside of a law with which we are familiar by the use of a law with which we are not familiar. When we become familiar with the higher law, its operation ceases to appear miraculous. As man develops, he will gain knowledge of, and control over, higher and higher forces and laws. The Masters must wield forces which we cannot even imagine,—but always in accordance with law.

All of us possess powers to a greater or less degree, and are responsible for the use we make of them. There is no essential difference in principle between responsibility for the use of the "healing touch" and for the use of any other power; all powers are divine in origin. If an unwise Saint, or a too clever physician, free a man prematurely from the indigestion which, under Karma, should have cured him of gluttony, does he suffer for it, and do they? Surely he does, for he has not learned his lesson of self-restraint, and accordingly must suffer until he learns it, repeating the process which perhaps he had nearly completed. Whether the Saint—or the physician, as the case may be—will suffer, would appear to depend upon the motive

with which the cure was effected,—assuming that it really was “contrary to the Karma of the patient.” That, however, is always a doubtful assumption, for the chances are that the one having the power to relieve suffering has been brought by Karma to the sufferer, and that it is the Karma of both that the suffering should be relieved. Failure to relieve it without good reason might come under the condemnation: “Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin.”

J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—The principle is well stated by T. W. Rhys Davids, in his introduction to one of the Buddhist texts: “In this Sutta we have the position taken up by the early Buddhists, and no doubt by Gotama himself as to the practice of wonders or miracles, in which there was then universal belief. They were not, however, miracles in our Western sense. There was no interference by an outside power with the laws of nature. It was supposed that certain people, by reason of special (but quite natural) powers, could accomplish certain special acts beyond the power of ordinary men.”

If what is mistakenly called a “miracle” is simply the exercise of a natural though unusual power, then the law of Karma will act exactly as in the case of any other power. The act may be wise or foolish, the motive may be good or bad; the results will correspond.

The phrase, “would eventually have to suffer for it,” suggests that in the view of the querent, “reward and punishment” are the purpose of Karma. But, if we consider the purpose to be “development,” and that sufferer and Saint will gain the development they need, the whole problem becomes simple.

J.

ANSWER.—A “miracle” is a phenomenon which the beholder cannot explain. As soon as he can explain it, the miraculous element disappears. To believe in miracles in the ordinary sense, is subversive of reason; but, on the other hand, it is still more subversive of reason to refuse to believe in phenomena until they can be explained. No one yet has explained the why or how of fire; but if a man should refuse to believe in fire, he would not stay long in this world. In reply to the second question: nothing can happen “contrary to Karma;”—if I am foolish enough to permit a wandering *faqir* to exercise his “miraculous” powers on me, my folly is certainly part of my Karma. My answer to the last question is: undoubtedly,—the *faqir* or “saint” for his presumption; the sufferer for his folly.

H.

ANSWER.—There is no difference in terms of Karma (the law of cause and effect) between a cure brought about by the “healing touch,” and one that follows a dose of medicine. Neither is miraculous, though both may be, and probably are, inexplicable. The questioner would probably think nothing of calling on a doctor, of paying three dollars or more for a prescription, and of being cured; but the questioner would know nothing of what might be the doctor’s hopeless inability to account for the effect produced. The theory of how a particular medicine “works,” is discarded every five years or so, for a new one; but even doctors, who live on faith, do not fall back on “miracles” as the explanation.

N. P.

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### NOTICE

The regular meetings of the New York Branch of The Theosophical Society will be held throughout the winter at 64 Washington Mews, on alternate Saturday evenings, beginning at half past eight and closing at ten o’clock. Branch members will receive printed notices, giving the dates. This notice will also be mailed to non-members who send their names to the Secretary T. S. Out-of-town members of the Society are invited to attend these meetings whenever they are in New York, and visitors who may be interested in Theosophy are always welcome.

# 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.



*The THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY is the official organ of the original Theosophical Society founded in New York by H. P. Blavatsky, W. Q. Judge and others.*

*Owing to recent newspaper notoriety, we are obliged to make it clear that we have no connection with any other organization calling itself Theosophical, headed by Mrs. Besant, Mrs. Tingley or others, nor with Co-Masonry, the Order of the Star in the East (Krishnamurti) and similar bodies, the purposes and methods of which are wholly foreign to our own.*

*Editors, Theosophical Quarterly.*

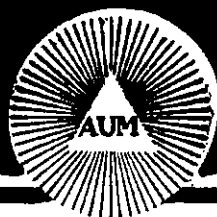
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WISE AND FOOLISH DISCIPLES

WITH the single exception, perhaps, of *The Light of Asia*, the popular narratives of the Buddha's life surround the great story with coloured clouds of phantasy, giving to one of the greatest of men the semblance of the hero of a fairy tale, and sometimes adding qualities of sentimentalism that are wholly out of place in one of the most rigorous thinkers in the history of mankind.

Much has been said, in these studies, regarding the radiant sense of humour which illumines the Buddha's teaching. It may not be untimely to illustrate another quality of his noble mind and soul: the sternness with which he could rebuke vanity and presumptuous folly. This is one side of the Buddha's intellect, another side of which comes out clearly in his practical teaching to sincere and faithful disciples, which will also be illustrated.

The Buddha's readiness to administer stern and well-deserved rebuke is finely and graphically shown in the story of the vain youth Sunakshatra, who had associated with members of the Buddha's Order, without being in any real sense a disciple, or making any earnest effort to develop the qualities that might in time have made him a disciple. His skilfully drawn portrait suggests certain persons who, in the earlier days, held a similar relation to The Theosophical Society: seekers after wonders and startling doctrines, full of a sense of their own importance, and ever ready to complain that the Movement did not fulfil their high expectations. These petulant critics were in general contemptuous of "mere morality" and discipline, and they often departed from the Movement loudly proclaiming its manifold shortcomings. It is edifying to find exactly the same futile and vexatious characters besetting the work of the Buddha two and a half millenniums ago.

Such a one was the youth Sunakshatra. Once upon a time, we are told, the Master was living among the Mallas, one of the tribes of the Ganges valley, having

his temporary home in a Malla village, or small town. As was his wont, the Master rose early in the morning, donning his yellow robe and taking his bowl, with the thought of going through the village to receive food. But he bethought him that it was too early to seek food, and that it would be well to go instead to visit a pilgrim, a wandering devotee of the clan of the Bhargavas, descendants of Bhrigu. The pilgrim had established himself in a pleasant garden, and thither the Master went.

Thereupon the pilgrim of the Bhargava clan spoke thus to the Master:

"Greeting to the worthy Master! The worthy Master is welcome! It is long since the worthy Master has had occasion to come hither. Let the worthy Master be seated! Here is a seat made ready."

The Master sat down on the seat that was made ready. The pilgrim of the Bhargava clan placed for himself another, lower seat, and sat beside him. Seated beside the Master, the pilgrim of the Bhargava clan addressed him thus:

"In days gone by, worthy Sir, in days long past, Sunakshatra, a son of the Lichchhavis, came to where I was, and said this to me: 'Bhargava, I have given up the Master! I will no longer remain for the Master's sake!' Is it so, worthy Sir, as Sunakshatra, the son of the Lichchhavis, asserted?"

"It is exactly as Sunakshatra, the son of the Lichchhavis, said. In days gone by, Bhargava, in days long past, Sunakshatra, the son of the Lichchhavis, came to where I was abiding. Coming to me and saluting me, he sat down by me; seated by me, Sunakshatra, the son of the Lichchhavis, spoke thus to me: 'I am giving up the worthy Master! I will no longer remain for the Master's sake!'

"When Sunakshatra, the son of the Lichchhavis, said this, Bhargava, I spoke thus: 'Sunakshatra, have I ever said, "Come, Sunakshatra! Abide with me!"?"

"No, worthy Sir!"

"Or hast thou ever said to me: "I shall abide with the worthy Master!"?"

"No, worthy Sir!"

"If this be so, vain man, as being what dost thou give me up?"

"But the worthy Master never performs superhuman works, miracles of magical power!"

"Did I ever say to thee, Sunakshatra: "Come, Sunakshatra! Abide with me, and I shall perform for thee superhuman works, miracles of magical power!"?"

"No, worthy Sir!"

"Didst thou ever say to me: "I shall abide with the worthy Master, if the Master will perform for me superhuman works, miracles of magical power!"?"

"No, worthy Sir!"

"If this be so, vain man, as being what dost thou give me up? What thinkest thou, Sunakshatra? Whether superhuman works, miracles of magical power, be performed, or be not performed, does the Law of Righteousness taught by me lead to the destruction of misery for him who fulfils it, and for whose sake it is taught?"

"It is true, worthy Master, that, whether superhuman works, miracles of magical power, be performed, or be not performed, the Law of Righteousness

taught by the Master does lead to the destruction of misery for him who fulfils it, and for whose sake it is taught.'

" 'If this be so, Sunakshatra, then what is accomplished by these superhuman works, miracles of magical power? Behold, vain man, how great is thy offence!'

" 'Yes, but the worthy Master teaches nothing concerning the knowledge of the beginning of the universe!'

" 'Did I ever say to thee, Sunakshatra: "Come, Sunakshatra, abide with me, and I shall teach thee concerning the knowledge of the beginning of the universe!"?' "

" 'No, worthy Sir!'

" 'Didst thou ever say to me: "I will abide with the worthy Master, if the worthy Master will teach me concerning the knowledge of the beginning of the universe!"?' "

" 'No, worthy Sir!'

" 'If this be so, vain man, as being what dost thou give me up? What thinkest thou, Sunakshatra? Whether knowledge of the beginning of the universe be taught, or be not taught, does the Law of Righteousness taught by me lead to the destruction of misery for him who fulfils it, and for whose sake it is taught?'

" 'It is true, worthy Master, that, whether knowledge of the beginning of the universe be taught, or be not taught, the Law of Righteousness taught by the Master does lead to the destruction of misery for him who fulfils it, and for whose sake it is taught.'

" 'If this be so, Sunakshatra, then what is accomplished by teaching concerning the knowledge of the beginning of the universe? Behold, vain man, how great is thy offence!'

" 'On many an occasion, Sunakshatra, praise of me was spoken by thee in the town of the Vajjis, the Lichchhavis, saying: "The Master is an Arhat, a supreme Buddha, possessing fully the method of instruction in wisdom, a welcome one, a knower of the worlds, unexcelled, a teacher of Radiant Beings and of mankind, the Master is the Buddha." Thus, Sunakshatra, on many an occasion was praise of me spoken by thee in the town of the Vajjis!'

" 'On many an occasion, Sunakshatra, praise of the Law of Righteousness was spoken by thee in the town of the Vajjis, saying: "Well set forth by the Master is the Law of Righteousness, bearing immediate fruit, operating without delay, as who should say, 'Come and see!' leading to liberation, to be known by individual experience, full of intelligence." Thus, Sunakshatra, on many an occasion was praise of the Law of Righteousness spoken by thee in the town of the Vajjis!'

" 'On many an occasion, Sunakshatra, praise of the Order was spoken by thee in the town of the Vajjis, saying: "Well ordered is the Master's Order of disciples, uprightly ordered is the Master's Order of disciples, justly ordered is the Master's Order of disciples, perfectly ordered is the Master's Order of disciples, suited to disciples of each class, worthy of sacrifices, worthy of gracious reception, worthy of gifts, worthy of reverent salutation, the unexcelled field of right deeds for mankind." Thus, Sunakshatra, on many an occasion was praise of the Order spoken by thee in the town of the Vajjis!'

" 'I announce to thee, Sunakshatra, I make known to thee, Sunakshatra, that

there will be those who will say of thee: "Sunakshatra, the son of the Lichchhavis, had not the valour and endurance to live the pure life of a disciple under the ascetic Gotama; lacking valour and endurance, he has turned his back on the teaching and returned to the baser way." Thus, Sunakshatra, will they speak of thee!

"Thus, Bhargava, did I address Sunakshatra, the son of the Lichchhavis, when he deserted this law and discipline, falling away, falling into punishment."

This vigorous and finely told story depicts with perfect art the character of the youth Sunakshatra, in the beginning eloquently praising the Buddha, the Law of Righteousness and the Order, but really attracted to the Master by the hope of beholding superhuman and magical powers and hearing startling doctrines of the beginning of all things. Seemingly drawn to the Master by desire for wisdom, his real motive was self-seeking, sensationalism, mental curiosity. The seed, fallen on shallow soil, at first sprang up and flourished, but presently withered and died. Lacking the true courage and endurance of the disciple, the willingness to sacrifice self, he became a deserter and incurred the stern censure of the Master.

The story draws the portrait of the Buddha with equal clearness. Not often in the Suttas are we given so direct an insight into the mind and heart of the great Master, his thought about the nature and purpose of his teaching, his estimation of displays of magical power and philosophical discussion, before the heart has been made clean. Some Western students, whose minds are coloured by the materialism of their time, have laid stress on this story as indicating that the Buddha entirely disbelieved in these superhuman powers and magical endowments, which were mere popular superstitions of a credulous age. But this is not so. This very story goes on to relate two incidents, both of them striking and dramatic, and illuminated by a keen sense of humour, which illustrate the Buddha's spiritual seership and his power to foresee and foretell future events, while the second shows him bringing to confusion a boastful miracle-monger by what would be called "action at a distance." The Buddha believed in the existence of these powers for the best of all reasons: because he possessed and constantly exercised them; but his aim and purpose was, not to exhibit feats of magic, but to impart wisdom to disciples seeking wisdom, and, so far as might be, to reveal the way of liberation to the whole world.

To teach wisdom to disciples seeking wisdom: this was the principal purpose; and justice has not yet been done to the penetrating power of his teaching, and to the fruit which it bears when put into practice.

The cogency and rigour of the Buddha's thinking are well illustrated in one of the Suttas, which is devoted to Recollection, as a means toward spiritual enlightenment. When considering this teaching, it is wise to remember that it was delivered to disciples, members of the Order; and to hold in mind what this implies. Before seeking admission to the Order, each one of them had "given up the life of house and family for the homeless life." They could not hold property; they were pledged to celibacy; they had no separate possessions; they had accepted the obligation of obedience to the Buddha and to those to whose

care he entrusted them: they had renounced self and self-seeking in the most practical way possible. What, then, did the Buddha direct them to do?

First, to gain the power of Recollection, to which this Sutta is devoted. We are told that, once upon a time, the Master was abiding among the Kurus, the same tribe whose princes took part in the great war of the Mahabharata. Abiding there, in one of the towns of the Kurus, the Master addressed his disciples, saying:

"There is one way of salvation, disciples, for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of grieving and lamentation, for the conquest of misery and dejection, for the increase of wisdom, for the attainment of Nirvana, namely, the establishment of the four kinds of Recollection.

"What are the four? In this world, disciples, a disciple with reference to the body abides considering the body, ardent, fully conscious, recollected, altogether putting aside both covetousness and dejection; with reference to sensations he abides considering sensations, ardent, fully conscious, recollected, altogether putting aside both covetousness and dejection; with reference to imaginings he abides considering imaginings, ardent, fully conscious, recollected, altogether putting aside both covetousness and dejection; with reference to forms of thought he abides considering forms of thought, ardent, fully conscious, recollected, altogether putting aside both covetousness and dejection.

"And how, disciples, does a disciple with reference to the body abide considering the body?

"In this world, disciples, a disciple, dwelling in the forest, or beneath a tree, taking the position of meditation on a seat, holding the body erect, keeps his mind firmly fixed on recollection. Recollected, he draws each breath; recollected, he exhales it. When he draws a long breath, he is conscious that he draws a long breath; when he exhales a long breath, he is conscious that he exhales a long breath. When he draws a short breath, he is conscious that he draws a short breath; when he exhales a short breath, he is conscious that he exhales a short breath. He practises himself to be aware of his whole body as he draws each breath. He practises himself to be aware of his whole body as he exhales each breath. He practises himself to control and tranquillize the energies of the body as he draws each breath. He practises himself to control and tranquillize the energies of the body as he exhales each breath.

"Just as, disciples, a skilled turner, or turner's assistant, when he makes a long turn of the lathe, is conscious that he makes a long turn of the lathe, or when he makes a short turn of the lathe, is conscious that he makes a short turn of the lathe, in just the same way, disciples, a disciple is conscious when he draws a long or short breath, when he exhales a long or short breath. He practises himself to be aware of his whole body, to control and tranquillize the energies of the body, as he draws each breath.

"Thus he abides considering the body, whether with reference to his own body, or with reference to the bodies of others, or with reference to both. He is regardless of the character of beginning in the body, or of the character of passing away, or of both. Realizing that such is the body, his recollection is established in the



measure of this knowledge, in the measure of this detailed recollection. In this way, disciples, a disciple with reference to the body abides considering the body.

"Again, disciples, a disciple, while he is walking, is conscious that he is walking; while standing, he is conscious that he is standing; while seated, he is conscious that he is seated; while lying down, he is conscious that he is lying down; in whatever way his body is disposed, he is conscious that it is so disposed. And he abides unswayed by outer things, nor covets anything in the world.

"Again, disciples, a disciple, when advancing or withdrawing, is fully conscious of it. In looking toward, or away from, anything, he is fully conscious of it. In bending or extending his arm, he is fully conscious of it. In eating, in drinking, in chewing, in tasting, he is fully conscious of it. In walking, in standing, in sitting, in sleeping, in waking, in speaking, in keeping silent, he is fully conscious of it."

So far, so good. The disciple must be thoroughly awake, aware, alert, at all points, in every moment. He must be positive, ardent, intent, never dreamy, drifting, comatose. With regard to what is said of breathing, it may be worth noting that, while even breathing does in fact tranquillize the bodily energies and emotions, this is not the point in the present case. It is a question, not of any kind of 'Yoga-breathing,' but of alertness, awareness, watchfulness. At any moment the disciple must know exactly what his body is doing, and in what way.

But this is only the beginning, a means to an end. That end is complete conquest of the body and the energies and desires of the body. To gain this end, the Teacher takes a somewhat rigorous course. He impresses on his disciples, and teaches them to impress on their own minds, not only the need for unbroken recollection regarding the body, but the still greater need to realize the transitory, unenduring nature of the body; nay, more, to dwell on what Saint Paul calls the corruption of the body. This may seem to us too rigorous; but we should consider the extent to which the worship of the body and its appetites is carried in our day and generation; the enormous amount of energy that is expended on pampering the body and ministering to its desires and to the vanities which spring from these desires. The Buddha is convinced that, until this flood of bodily desires and imaginings is stemmed, there is no possibility of rising to the higher states of consciousness above bodily and animal consciousness, with their highly coloured psychical reflections and reverberations. Therefore he goes to the heart of the matter as vigorously and incisively as does Saint Paul. The teaching continues:

"And further, disciples, a disciple considers this body, upward from the sole of the foot, downward from the crown of the head, enclosed within its covering of skin, realizing that this body is made up of hair, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinew, bone, marrow, kidneys, heart, membranes, spleen, lungs, intestines and other organs, filled with substances subject to decomposition. It is just as though there were a bag filled with various kinds of grain, namely, upland rice, lowland rice, kidney beans, broad beans, oil seeds, husked rice, and a keen eyed man were to pour forth and examine the contents, recognizing the upland rice, the lowland rice, the kidney beans, the broad beans, the oil seeds and the husked rice; so the disciple realizes the contents of the body, from the sole of the foot to the crown

of the head, enclosed within its covering of skin, filled with all manner of impurities. So the disciple attains full realization regarding the body, whether it be his own body or the body of another. He recognizes in the body the character of beginning and the character of passing away. Realizing that such is the body, his recollection is established in the measure of this knowledge, in the measure of this detailed recollection. In this way, disciples, a disciple with reference to the body abides considering the body.

"And further, disciples, a disciple considers this body however it may be placed, however it may be disposed, as consisting of the elements, namely, that the body consists of the element of earth, the element of water, the element of heat, the element of air. It is just as though a skilled butcher, or butcher's assistant, having slaughtered a cow, setting up his stall at a place where four roads meet, divides the body into pieces; so the disciple recognizes that his body consists of the elements, namely, the element of earth, the element of water, the element of heat, the element of air. Realizing that such is the body, his recollection is established in the measure of this knowledge, in the measure of this detailed recollection. In this way, disciples, a disciple with reference to the body abides considering the body."

It may well be thought that this is a somewhat repulsive comparison. It is so, without doubt, and it is so because the purpose of the Teacher is to arouse and establish a feeling of revulsion, to counteract the mood of infatuation, of slavish pampering, which is so nearly universal. This idolatrous service of the body, "whether it be one's own body or the body of another," can only be killed by strong revulsion. This definite purpose, to arouse a mood of strong revulsion, is made clear by the passages which follow, and which are rather grimly called the "nine charnel grounds," places where corpses were thrown, to disintegrate and decay. Of these, only one need be translated:

"And further, disciples, it is as though a disciple were to see a body cast away on a charnel ground, being eaten by crows, or being eaten by buzzards, or being eaten by vultures, or being eaten by dogs, or being eaten by jackals, or being eaten by vermin of various kinds, and, considering his own body, should realize that such is the body, with such a destiny, which it cannot escape."

But, besides this mood of revulsion, which the Teacher considers it necessary to arouse and sustain, there is another side of the problem. When the tyranny of the body has been overthrown, the time comes to recognize it as a useful, nay, an indispensable servant. And the Buddha has laid down detailed directions for his disciples, concerning the right care for the body. He is entirely opposed to the extremes of self-torture to which many of the ascetics of his day went, often with motives of vanity. He is equally opposed to the neglect of bodily cleanliness and order, of which these same ascetics were often guilty. There are complete directions for regular washing of the body, with hot and cold water, for the proper clothing of the body, and the way in which the garments of the disciple should be worn, including the yellow, or saffron-coloured robe, which was the uniform of his Order; and equally detailed directions regarding the proper posture of the body, in standing, walking, sitting, resting. In all things, at each

moment, there must be complete recollection and awareness. And no least detail of good manners or courtesy is overlooked. Here, as in all things, the Buddha follows the golden mean.

But the Teacher indicated four fields of recollection, namely, with reference to the body, with reference to sensations, with reference to imaginings, and with reference to forms of thought. We come now to the three remaining to be considered.

"And how, disciples, does a disciple with reference to sensations abide considering sensations?

"In this world, disciples, a disciple experiencing a pleasant sensation, is conscious that he is experiencing a pleasant sensation; when he experiences a painful sensation, he is conscious that he is experiencing a painful sensation; when he is experiencing a sensation which is neither painful nor pleasant, he is conscious that he is experiencing a sensation neither painful nor pleasant; when he is experiencing a pleasant sensation involving the flesh, he is conscious that he is experiencing a pleasant sensation involving the flesh; when he is experiencing a pleasant sensation not involving the flesh, he is conscious that he is experiencing a pleasant sensation not involving the flesh; when he is experiencing a painful sensation involving the flesh, he is conscious that he is experiencing a painful sensation involving the flesh; when he is experiencing a painful sensation not involving the flesh, he is conscious that he is experiencing a painful sensation not involving the flesh; when he is experiencing a sensation neither painful nor pleasant involving the flesh, he is conscious that he is experiencing a sensation neither painful nor pleasant involving the flesh; when he is experiencing a sensation neither painful nor pleasant not involving the flesh, he is conscious that he is experiencing a sensation neither painful nor pleasant not involving the flesh.

"Thus he abides considering sensations, whether they be his own sensations or the sensations of another. He is aware of the beginnings of sensations. He is aware of the passing of sensations. Thus he recognizes the nature of sensations, and his recollection with reference to sensations is established in the measure of his knowledge, in the measure of his complete recollection. Thus he abides unswayed, coveting nothing in the world. Thus, disciples, does a disciple with reference to sensations abide considering sensations.

"And how, disciples, does a disciple with reference to imagination abide considering imagination?

"In this world, disciples, whenever he has a passionate imagination, he is conscious that it is a passionate imagination; whenever he has a dispassionate imagination, he is conscious that it is a dispassionate imagination; whenever he has an imagination coloured by offence, he is conscious that he has an imagination coloured by offence; whenever he has an imagination free from offence, he is conscious that he has an imagination free from offence; whenever he has an imagination coloured by delusion, he is conscious that he has an imagination coloured by delusion; whenever he has an imagination free from delusion, he is conscious that he has an imagination free from delusion; whenever he has an intent imagination, he is conscious that he has an intent imagina-

tion; whenever he has a distraught imagination, he is conscious that he has a distraught imagination; whenever he has an exalted imagination, he is conscious that he has an exalted imagination; whenever he has an unexalted imagination, he is conscious that he has an unexalted imagination; whenever he has a low imagination, he is conscious that he has a low imagination; whenever he has a high imagination, he is conscious that he has a high imagination; whenever he has a concentrated imagination, he is conscious that he has a concentrated imagination; whenever he has an unconcentrated imagination, he is conscious that he has an unconcentrated imagination; whenever he has a liberated imagination, he is conscious that he has a liberated imagination; whenever he has an unliberated imagination, he is conscious that he has an unliberated imagination. Thus he considers the imagination, whether in himself or in another. He is aware of the beginnings of imagination, and of the passing of imagination, and, realizing that such is imagination, his recollection with regard to imagination is established in the measure of his knowledge, in the measure of his complete recollection. Thus he abides unswayed, coveting nothing in the world. Thus, disciples, does a disciple with reference to imagination abide considering imagination.

"And how, disciples, does a disciple with reference to forms of thought abide considering forms of thought?

"In this world, disciples, with reference to the forms of thought a disciple abides considering the forms of thought in the five obscurities.

"And how, disciples, does a disciple with reference to the forms of thought abide with reference to the forms of thought in the five obscurities?

"In this world, disciples, a disciple having within himself a sensual form of thought, is conscious of having within him a sensual form of thought; or not having within him a sensual form of thought, he is conscious of not having within him a sensual form of thought; and he is also conscious of how the uprising of a sensual thought not yet arisen comes about, and how the rejection of a sensual thought which has arisen is accomplished, and how in the future the uprising of a sensual thought which has been rejected may come about.

"Or having within him an envious form of thought, he is conscious of having within him an envious form of thought; or not having within him an envious form of thought, he is conscious of not having within him an envious form of thought; and he is also conscious of how the uprising of an envious thought not yet arisen comes about, and how the rejection of an envious thought which has arisen is accomplished, and how in the future the uprising of an envious thought which has been rejected may come about.

"So also with regard to thoughts of sloth and torpor; with regard to thoughts of vanity and vacillation; with regard to thoughts of doubt. The disciple is conscious of having, or not having, within him these forms of thought; of their uprising, their rejection, and the danger of their return, even when they have been rejected."

The Teacher goes on to consider further fundamental classes of thought and consciousness, but their analysis must be deferred for another occasion. We

have reached the mid point of the discourse, the turning point, from which the teaching gradually ascends to the more spiritual states of consciousness. There is no sharp break, but rather an ordered and necessary transition. Beginning with recollection, alert awareness of the body and simple bodily acts like breathing, the disciple has learned to be conscious of what his body is doing at each moment, and in what way each act is being done. We gradually pass upward to awareness of sensations, to awareness of imaginings, to awareness of thoughts. But a spiritual element has already made its entrance, or, to speak more truly, has been present implicitly from the beginning. When a disciple is aware that he is harbouring an imagination coloured by delusion, he has already gone far toward overcoming that delusion, to receiving and assimilating the spiritual light which that delusion would have shut out. So with each step. If recollection regarding each detail be faithfully practised, spiritual unfolding inevitably follows. The steps of that unfolding remain to be considered.

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*How can we tell if we are lacking in wisdom?*

*By the following signs;*

- (1) *If we are always proving ourselves in the right.*
- (2) *If we judge rashly in thought.*
- (3) *If we attach ourselves to trifles.*
- (4) *If we are always quoting others in support of our own opinions.*
- (5) *If we have an abrupt manner.*
- (6) *If we are full of self-excuses.*
- (7) *If we choose for ourselves.*

AUGUSTUS DIGNAM.

## SIGNS AND PORTENTS

IT is seven years since the first publication of *The Outline of History*, in which Mr. H. G. Wells attempted to turn from his own field of imaginative fiction and pseudo-science, "to tell, truly and clearly, in one continuous narrative, the whole story of life and mankind so far as it is known to-day." He had succeeded in engaging, for this undertaking, the interest and assistance of a number of English scholars, whose names he lists in the Introduction, and "the advice and editorial help of Mr. Ernest Barker, Sir H. H. Johnston, Sir E. Ray Lankester and Professor Gilbert Murray," are specially acknowledged on the Title-page. Though Mr. Wells was careful to point out that "of course none of these generous helpers are to be held responsible for the judgments, tone, arrangement, or writing of this *Outline*," and that "in the moral and political implications of the story, the final decision has necessarily fallen to the writer," the inclusion of their names lent to his work a weight it would not else have had, and appeared to support his pretensions to write as the amanuensis of modern science and research. His assertions and summaries, therefore, passed at first largely unchallenged by the public he addressed; and as he wrote of the first men on the earth with the same graphic power and wealth of realistic detail as had marked his earlier phantasy of *The First Men in the Moon*, it was easily assumed that the vividness of the picture was an index of its truth. The reader believed himself instructed, while he knew he was stimulated and entertained; and for this reason—and another to which we shall later refer—the book proved enormously popular. In one form or another, over a million copies were sold to the English reading public, and Mr. Wells's views of life and of history, reflected from so many facets, became a noticeable factor in the drift of popular opinion and belief.

What those views are, may be suggested by a few sentences culled from the Introduction.

"Our internal policies and our economic and social ideas are profoundly vitiated at present by wrong and fantastic ideas of the origin and historical relationship of social classes. . . . It [the *Outline*] is an attempt to tell how our present state of affairs, this distressed and multifarious human life about us, arose in the course of vast ages and out of the *inanimate clash of matter*, and to estimate the quality and amount and range of the hopes with which it now faces its destiny. It is one experimental contribution to a great and urgently necessary educational reformation, which must ultimately restore universal history, revised, corrected, and brought up to date, to its proper place and use as the backbone of a general education. We may 'restore,' because all the great cultures of the world *hitherto*, Judaism and Christianity in the Bible, Islam in the Koran, have used some sort of cosmogony and world history as a basis. It may indeed be argued that without such a basis any really binding culture of men is inconceivable.

"... There are, moreover, quite a number of nominally Universal Histories in existence, but they are really not histories at all, they are encyclopædias of history; they lack the unity of presentation attainable only when the whole subject has been passed through *one single mind*."

The italics are ours. It is history as it has been able to pass through "one single mind," Mr. Wells's mind, with all its prejudices and predilections and emotional reactions, which he presents to us as the established conclusions of science and as the basis of a new world culture; asking us to correct our "profoundly vitiated" economic and social ideas, and to replace the outworn superstitions of ancient faiths, by a vision of life rising, not from the Breath of the Spirit, not from the Word made flesh, but from "the inanimate clash of matter."

It is not surprising, therefore, that when, in the past year, a new and revised edition of the *Outline* appeared, it was met with a direct attack by an ardent apologist of the Roman Church. Mr. Hilaire Belloc, who, in addition to his studies in military strategy, has given much thought to the resetting of historical incidents in a light more favourable to his Church, published *A Companion to H. G. Wells's "Outline of History,"* in which he subjected the *Outline*, chapter by chapter, to a searching and destructive analysis, challenging both the soundness of Mr. Wells's "science," and the fitness of this "single mind" to serve as a sieve through which history was to be strained. There can be no doubt, in the mind of anyone who reads the *Companion*, that Mr. Belloc makes his challenge good and proves his case,—so far, that is, as he confines it to Mr. Wells and his work, which, unfortunately, he does not always do. As one reviewer remarked, he utterly discredits Mr. Wells "in his vital rôle of stenographer," and shows that not only with regard to the faiths which he ridicules, but also in the science at whose dictation he claims to write, he is "in many respects, less of an encyclopædia than an ignoramus," clinging to theories which science itself exploded twenty years ago.

Mr. Wells, stung to the quick, threatened in reputation, revenue, and his most cherished prejudices, retorted in an apparently hurried, and certainly furious and ill-advised booklet, *Mr. Belloc Objects To "The Outline of History."* As Mr. Belloc had, pertinently enough, characterized Mr. Wells's outlook upon life as "suburban" and "muddle-headed," Mr. Wells impertinently replies that Mr. Belloc is "compactly stout," and that he has seen him "dodging about" in Soho—which does not really answer a charge of muddle-headedness. But worst of all he makes the mistake of accusing Mr. Belloc of having invented the "modern European culture and science," whose consensus of opinion he opposes to the *Outline*; for the door is thus thrown wide open to Mr. Belloc's final and crushing rejoinder—*Mr. Belloc Still Objects*—where he has but to give a list of eminent biologists, with brief quotations from their works, and to express his amazement that Mr. Wells should really have been ignorant of the very existence of such authorities in the science whose conclusions he professes to report.

The widespread amusement which the set-to has accorded, has been, on the

whole, a healthy reaction; but the actual grounds and implications of the controversy are far too serious to be dismissed with such laughter as bull baiting and slap-stick comedy can be counted upon to provoke. It is, in miniature, a true reflection of the crisis which the world faces to-day,—the crisis which The Theosophical Society was founded to meet. The protagonists are whole-heartedly sincere in their belief in the views which they advocate; and the fact that they are amateurs, in science and theology alike, makes them the more typical. Mr. Wells, and millions like him, do honestly believe (so far as emotional beliefs are ever honest) that science has sounded the death knell of all other creeds; that evolution has proceeded by a "Natural Selection" responsive only to physical forces and blind climatic changes, without guiding purpose or design; and that the usefulness of the old moral moulds has been outgrown with the recognition that immortality is but a myth. Mr. Belloc, and other millions, do honestly believe that in their own special communion are a divine authority and truth that are unique. If Mr. Belloc has rendered us a service by showing how unscientific is much that is taught in science's name, we are equally his debtor for a clear-cut statement of what he would have us substitute in its place. Let him speak for himself.

"The Catholic Church is to Mr. Wells (as to all his kind) one religion out of many religions. . . . But the whole point of the Catholic Church is that, true or false, it stands quite apart from anything else in the history of our Race. It assumes, as no other system ever did, a universal Divine and absolute authority: and that authority not vague but detailed, specialized, insistent, manifold, covering all human life.

"The Catholic Church says 'I am of God, none else is of God.'"

It is the old conflict: not between science and religion, but between science misunderstood and theology become sectarian. False science and false theology, arrayed one against the other, and alike robbing mankind of religion and of truth. It matters very little what Mr. Wells and Mr. Belloc may individually believe, or which may have come off the better, and scored most heavily against the other, in the duel between them. Mr. Wells says truly: "Neither Mr. Belloc nor myself is a very profound or exhaustive philosopher. In ourselves we are very unimportant indeed. But we have this in common, that we can claim to be very honestly expressive of the mental attitudes of clearly defined types of mind, and that we are sharply antithetical types." It matters very greatly that these two sharply antithetical types, should have come to stand, in popular thought, for science and religion; and that throughout our public schools and colleges, often as part of the prescribed and enforced curriculum, science should be mistaught, as Mr. Wells misteaches it, with covert, or open, sneers at all for which religion stands. It matters very greatly that the teaching of religion, and ethics and morality, should have had to be banished from our public schools,—for reasons which Mr. Belloc's claim for his church makes clear. The sectarian spirit will not brook the thought that "the faiths are all brothers, some older, some younger." It must have all or nothing. "I am of God, *none else is of God.*" It is easy to understand, there-



fore, why, since each such "religion" could not be given all at the hands of our school boards, it has been given nothing. But the effect has been to surrender the instruction of the youth of our country to such "science" as Mr. Wells's. For let it be clearly noted that it is not, and never can be, science itself which is taught in our schools, but only what purport to be summaries of science; and it is impossible to summarize except by putting forth conclusions and interpretations of fact, rather than fact itself, so that it is always the teacher's own philosophy and outlook upon life which his summary reflects.

How different such second-hand teaching is from that of those who are dealing directly with the facts, may be illustrated by Mr. Wells's contemptuous references to "'Design,' whatever that is," and the heavy sarcasm with which he continues: "Mr. Belloc, I gather, calls it design again here and makes his Creative Spirit, which has already urged these two individuals, lions or liver flukes or fleas or what not, to make an effort and adapt themselves, lead them now to their romantic and beneficial nuptials." He is attempting to defend himself against Mr. Belloc's attack upon his interpretation of Natural Selection, and has referred to Sir Arthur Keith—one of the few distinguished biologists who still adheres to the original theory—as his authority. But within the last few months Sir Arthur Keith has spoken for himself upon the marvellous way in which design permeates the whole process of growth and evolution. In his Presidential Address before the British Association of Science, he likens the evolution of life-forms to the evolution of the motor car, and points out that: "The public has selected its favoured types of car, but it has had no direct hand in designing and producing modifications and improvements which have appeared year after year. To understand how such modifications are produced, the inquirer must enter a factory and not only watch artisans shaping and fitting parts together, but also *visit the designer's office.*"

To Mr. Wells, there is no "designer's office." How can there be when there is no "design?" The second-hand scientist will tell us that cars are turned out by blind machinery, down to the last screw and rivet, the last polish of the paint. He has never entered the factory; never watched the artisans at work; never thought of the human *purpose* the car is designed and built to serve.

But Sir Arthur Keith does not stop with that. A little later he says:

"With these recent discoveries new vistas opened up for students of evolution. The moment we begin to work out the simile I have used, and compare the evolutionary machinery in a motor factory with that which regulates the development of an embryo within the womb, we realize how different the two processes are. Let us imagine for a moment what changes would be necessary were we to introduce 'embryological processes' into a car factory. We have to conceive a workshop teeming with clustering swarms of microscopic artisans, mere specks of living matter. In one end of this factory we find swarms busy with cylinders, and as we pass along we note that every part of a car is in process of manufacture, each part being the business of a particular brigade of microscopic workmen.

"There is no apprenticeship in this factory, every employee is born, just as a hive-bee is, with his skill already fully developed. No plans or patterns are supplied: *every workman has the needed design in his head from birth*. There is neither manager, overseer, nor foreman to direct and co-ordinate the activities of the vast artisan armies. And yet if parts are to fit when assembled, if pinions are to mesh and engines run smoothly, there must be some method of co-ordination. It has to be a method plastic enough to permit difficulties to be overcome when such are encountered, and to permit the introduction of advantageous modifications when these are needed. A modern works manager would be hard put to it were he asked to devise an automatic system of control for such a factory, yet it is just such a system that we are now obtaining glimpses of in the living workshops of nature.

"I have employed a crude simile to give the lay mind an inkling of what happens in that 'factory' where the most complicated of machines are forged—the human body and brain. The fertilized ovum divides and redivides; one brood of microscopic living units succeeds another, and as each is produced the units group themselves to form the 'parts' of an embryo. Each 'part' is a living society; the embryo is a huge congeries of interdependent societies. How are their respective needs regulated, their freedom protected and their manœuvres timed? Experimental embryologists have begun to explore and discover the machinery of regulation. We know enough to realize that it will take many generations of investigators to work over the great and new field which is thus opening up. When this is done we shall be in a better position to discuss the cause of 'variation' and the machinery of evolution."

We need not underscore the difference in tone and temper, and the still wider difference in spiritual significance, between this first-hand account by Sir Arthur Keith and the second-hand "report" of his "conclusions" which Mr. Wells purports to give. They speak for themselves. But what we have to note is that Mr. Wells does really believe that he has been only putting into his own words what his master has said. It is not a question of opposing scientific theories. It is an evidence of the profound but unconscious distortion which scientific theories undergo as they are passed through a mind dominated by its own predilections, prejudices and emotions. All that is uncongenial to such a mind is automatically sifted out and rejected, until black becomes white and white black, and the omnipresence of design in all the processes of life becomes its absence and negation. And it is so that "science" is being taught in all our schools. The teacher, unconscious of the substitution, presents, as its established truths, the summary his own mind has made, and teaches, in its august name, his own instinctive and unchecked philosophy. Do we wonder that Tennessee wished none of it; voted not to tax its citizens that such views of "evolution" should be forced upon their children? Yet Tennessee's action was met by a storm of protest, and the whole educational world was up in arms in defence of "academic freedom." It is one thing to give freedom to the seeker for truth; it is quite another to give unlimited licence to the teacher of youth to teach what and how he pleases. The system

of compulsory education of our public schools is not the place for "academic freedom."

It is more than a full generation since "science" has thus held the field in our popular education to the exclusion of religion, and there has been time to observe something of the result. It is significant that upon this Mr. Belloc and Mr. Wells should have reached much the same opinion: that Mr. Wells is himself its typical product: that in him and in the popularity of his *Outline*, we may see "the religious revolution through which the English-speaking Protestant culture is passing, and the pace of that revolution." Mr. Wells is not the leader of the herd, he is its follower, and it is to this—more even than to his own marked talents—that the wide circulation of his book is due. He is reporting, not science, but the emotional reaction of the times to what it has been taught as science. He teaches what his readers wish to believe,—and, wishing, persuade themselves they do believe: that this life is all; that religion has played its part; that the restraints of the old moral moulds may be cast aside; that reverence is but superstition; that the great and the gentle are as small and crude as we; and that in this new era of democracy and freedom, the soldier and the priest are alike anachronisms, since there is no need either to fight or to pray.

The closing passages, both of Mr. Belloc's *Companion* and of Mr. Wells's reply to it, deserve more attention than they have received. In them we find again an unexpected and significant agreement, the same judgment being reached, from opposite points of view, of the far-reaching effect of the revolution our generation has seen, and of the gravity of the crisis our civilization fronts. From Mr. Wells it comes as threat, thinly cloaked with sentimental regret; from Mr. Belloc, with a note of despair.

"It may be," writes Mr. Wells in closing "we have been pouring new wine into old bottles. It may be better to admit frankly that if man is not fixed, Christianity is, and that mankind is now growing out of Christianity; that indeed mankind is growing out of the idea of Deity. This does not mean an end to religion, but it means a fresh orientation of the religious life. It means a final severance with those anthropomorphic conceptions of destiny, that interpretation of all things in terms of personality and will with which religion began. For many of us that still means a wrench and an effort. But the emphatic assertions of Mr. Belloc, the stand that Catholicism, as he expounds it, makes against any progressive adaptation to the new spirit in human life, may render that effort easier."

This was to be expected from Mr. Wells. He had told us much earlier that he was "not a Christian"; he had paid his compliments to Mr. Belloc's faith as a "neat and jolly marionette show of the unchanging man and his sins and repentances and mercies, his astonishing punishments, and his preposterous eternal reward among the small eternities of the mediæval imagination." He had boasted "I strut to no such personal beatitude," and had declared that "the essential distinction of the newer thought in the world is in its denial of the permanence of the self." He concludes as he began. But

we have been less prepared for the profound pessimism of Mr. Belloc's final words:

"Men hesitate to say it; they are afraid of facing the truth in the matter, but truth it is: the foundations have gone.

"I do not mean that in their place other foundations may not be discovered. I do not predict chaos, though chaos is a very possible result of it all. What I do say is that Christian morals and doctrine, and all that they meant, are, in our English-speaking world, much more than in any other part of contemporary white civilization, in dissolution.

"This is no place in which to discuss the remedies (if any practical remedies be available) or even the probable results of so vast a revolution; but it is the place in which to emphasize the truth that the revolution has taken place.

"It is a revolution in doctrine, discipline, morals, and intellectual action, as complete as any that we can find recorded in History since the conversion of the Roman Empire to the Catholic Church. It applies only to a section of the modern world, the section which I have mentioned: Britain, America and the Dominions: but that is a very important section of the modern world, and (what is of chief interest to us) it is the section wherein we live, of which we are citizens, to which we owe allegiance, and with whose fate our own and that of our children is bound up.

"I will add no more."

From time immemorial, the strategy of the great Lodge of Masters has been to wrest victory from defeat. It was on the cross, condemned, rejected, that Christ won the world, and through death passed to his resurrection.

This, which Church and laity forget, Theosophy ever remembers. No "lost cause" is lost to it. Defeat is but the means and price of victory; the bugle call of time and opportunity.

"When all men have said 'Impossible,' and tumbled noisily elsewhere, and thou alone art left, then first thy time and possibility have come. It is for thee now: do thou that, and ask no man's counsel, but thy own only and God's."

The call has sounded. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

HENRY BEDINGER MITCHELL.

## THE CROSS

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FAR away and long ago it was the fashion for small girls to work horrible little cross-stitch mottoes on canvas. When completed these were used to propitiate those in authority. One, bearing the legend, "No Cross, no Crown," endeared itself by its brevity, and every teacher in the land possessed them by the barrel, for we turned them out in teeming thousands. At the age of ten we knew the motto was true because grown-up people had made it up, but later, as we passed on our way through the Hall of Learning, there was "great argument about it and about," a disposition to suspect that an old-fashioned generation was trying "to put one over" on us, and a deal of staggering under home-made crosses in the effort to prove that there was no such a thing, for it is incredible what those will endure who spend their time taking elaborate precautions against crucifixion. Those, for instance, who paraphrase the basic truth that "God is Love" into some mayâvic fallacy of their own, such as "He only wants us to be happy,"—a statement entirely false if it means plenty of pink cotton wool for everybody here and now; or those professed hedonists who look the other way and refuse to be reminded of unpleasant things; or those professed optimists who would "whoop things up" in the best of all possible worlds; or, and most dismal of all, those pseudo-philosophers of the cheerful cults, who think to explain the cross away as a little error of the unenlightened, and to disperse the central fact of the universe by a laying on of helpless hands, by a reiteration of baseless affirmations, or by untimely demonstrations which would flaunt karmic law. And all other futile paste and paper screens that come clattering about our heads as the winds of necessity blow. But the most vociferous denier knows in his heart that the Cross is a fact, and proves it by instant scuttle to some sounder formula as soon as "trouble troubles him."

It saves time to begin by admitting that the Cross is a fact,—that the world is sown with it like a post-war French cemetery. The loudest repudiator of us all is staggering up the hill beneath his own, and his eyes laugh into other eyes from under a crown of thorns. For man is greater than his creeds and braver than his fears; we carry, one and all, for those who have eyes to see, the sacred stigmata, and Everyman is Chrestos.

There hangs in a Brussels Gallery a Crucifixion. Its value to art is not in question here, but regarded as a theosophical document, it is of arresting interest to the student. The Christ hangs between the two thieves, and it is especially to the latter that the eyes are drawn and drawn again, for whether the artist knew it or not, here are Higher and Lower Manas and their reactions to Buddhi. The condition of the malefactor on the left can hardly be hinted at—he endures his passion and it is the passion of revolt. Suffice it to say that with all the strength of his young strong body he is wrenching himself free, his

right hand already torn from the nail and raised in cursing, the effect of the whole figure being one of indescribable malignant alienation. The malefactor on the right is on another plane of consciousness. In his extremity he has now become aware of the Master, who is so keenly aware of him, and in the glance that passes between them, Master and disciple recognize each other. He attempts no exculpation, demands no material miracle; he only asks to be remembered, and with the prayer and the Master's instant answer he already treads the path to Paradise. Between these two extremes we all meet our Cross.

There is another picture in this gallery—the “Pieta with St. Francis” of Rubens. You who have seen it will remember the noble beauty of its masses, its exquisite colouring. Unless you are Rubens-daft, you have undoubtedly permitted yourself the usual critical snub—for why, oh why, must all his women have the arms of the village blacksmith, why this, and why that? And then perhaps it came to you that Rubens, in common with all the great masters, if they are great enough, knew more than he knew, was perchance inspired by a Lodge Messenger to paint this picture? We can afford to give him his way with brawn and muscle, and apply ourselves to spiritual meanings. The painting is a Pieta, and it is something more. In the funny date-ignoring mediæval way, St. Francis stands with the other mourners round the beautiful down-lifted Christ; and who has a better right? But this group is not the heart of the picture. At one side two great indignant angels sweep in on wings carrying the spear, in the foreground lie the superscription and the crown of thorns, for this is an assembling of the instruments of the Passion. But it is in the unforgettable loveliness of the kneeling Magdalene that all significance is concentrated. She is meditating on sin. In vain one would describe a thing like this; in vain one brings home disappointing photographs thinking to renew the spell,—only as the beauty and the strangeness are printed on the retina of the inner eye can that be done. She holds the nails. The right hand one, whether by accident? design? points toward her heart, but is forgotten. On the left nail, in tranced absorption, she meditates. Her senses are sealed. She is not a human woman, but a state of consciousness, and that consciousness is occupied exceedingly with the nail of His feet. The correspondences she is working out are not in the mind but in the heart. Working them out for herself, working them out for us, through all time as it stretches backward and all time as it stretches on. Compared to the dumb passion of her visioning, even the grief of the group behind her seems an easy thing; compared to the tense stillness of her realization, even the eyes that watch the body of the Master seem blind.

*We cannot leave Mary Magdalene to make this meditation alone. We must share her vigil and her vision. However long we shrink and evade, we must know with a certainty beyond all knowing that the nails of the hand are forged by the massed cruelty and greed of man; that the thorns are the harvest of all the idle and evil thoughts of man; that the superscription is the sum of the fostered ignorance and the stupid scorn of man; that as the soldier who “saw*

that He was dead already" pierced Him with a spear, so we, recking nothing of the Living Christ, pierce Him with our nonchalance and our forgetting—that the nail of the feet is driven whenever the besotted race of man—"for the tidal wave of life mistakes some little ripple blue"—follows the line of least resistance, travels the primrose paths, seeking only his pleasures. When this realization comes we shall surely turn to where we belong—to our crosses—thus hastening the day Be With Us.

Malefactors one and all, the question is not whether we are crucified in time on the cross of matter. It is obvious. It is not whether we can by insane projection of the unregenerate will wrench ourselves free. We can, in some measure, and for a little while. It is only whether we are permitting the Cross so to mould us that by-and-by we shall find ourselves to be one with the Heavenly Man—crucified in space with arms outstretched in universal love and rapture. Then we shall be with Him in Paradise. For Everyman is Christos.

L. S.



*The greatest thing in all the world is character, and the crown of character is holiness.*—IAN MACLAREN.

# FOR BEGINNERS

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## SELF-EXAMINATION

**M**ODERN psychology lays great stress on the influence of what it terms the subconscious, and asserts that our actions are caused, to a surprisingly large extent, by motives, desires and feelings of which we are either quite unconscious, or which we sense only vaguely. It is not difficult to see the truth of this in the case of others, but few men are willing to believe that they themselves are so influenced. Fear, vanity, envy, unworthy desires of all kinds, are expert at concealing themselves behind a cloak of plausible excuses, with the result that in many cases their presence is never even suspected by the one they dominate, though often apparent enough to onlookers. No one likes to think of himself as a puppet moved here and there by strings pulled from behind the scenes. It is, moreover, obviously impossible to control that of which we are not aware. It follows that if we are to be masters of ourselves, few things are more important—and, as we shall discover, few more difficult—than to learn to know our own motives.

In its emphasis on the subconscious, psychology is not revealing anything new. It is merely putting into modern terminology a fact known to the spiritual writers of all ages. These spiritual writers have a great advantage over the psychologists in that they knew and dealt not only with the subconscious mind, but with the superconscious as well, which the psychologists have yet to discover.

Very little observation of ourselves or of others will demonstrate the truth of the Theosophical teaching that there are two natures in every man, a higher and a lower, and that these two are constantly at war with one another. The battlefield is the man's mind, which stands between, influenced by both but not wholly possessed by either, and only vaguely aware of the potentialities of the two adversaries. As yet he does not know friend from foe, nor which one of them holds captive his heart's desire. The higher nature wishes to do what it sees to be right,—its duty; the lower seeks to do what it wants to do,—to indulge itself. The conflict usually begins on waking, with the desire of the higher to get up on time and the desire of the lower for another five minutes in bed; and so through the day. Every man without exception has a lower nature—has his share of lower nature, would, perhaps, be a better way to put it, as all lower nature is potentially the same; and, in consequence, all men have in varying degree the potential capacity for all sins. The discovery of this fact is a great shock to many people. They feel humiliated, ashamed, and too often discouraged, when they find it to be true of themselves.

There is, of course, no reason why they should feel discouraged. There is



nothing new in the situation, usually nothing which their friends have not long known. They are just as they have been, except that, having seen one or two of their faults, they can now set about conquering them. Obviously it is necessary to see that one has a bad habit before it is possible to do anything about breaking it. Hence the importance of self-examination, whose purpose is to reveal our faults to us in order that they may be attacked and conquered. To say of oneself, with real or conveniently assumed humility, "I have so many faults already that I do not need to look for any more," is as unwise as for a general to say that he will not send scouts to look for possible enemy forces on his left, as he can already see on his right as many as he cares to fight. All sins blind us, but some are particularly expert in laying smoke screens so thick that we have no idea of what is going on behind them. Like poison ivy, the little shoot that shows above ground may be a long way from the main root. All sins, moreover, help one another with team-work that elsewhere would command our admiration. (Do not, Gentle Reader, think, because we are speaking of sins and of course you never commit any sins, that this does not apply to you, a highly respected member of the community. Vanity is a sin; so is waste, self-indulgence, self-pity, and many another of your daily practices.)

Proficiency in self-examination gives us the power to see something, at least, of our true motives, our weaknesses and of what goes on inside us. Clearly this is a most desirable power, but, like all powers, it is a two-edged sword. If we see our faults and do nothing about them—except perhaps to let their contemplation depress us—we are worse off than before. This accounts in part for the wide-spread prejudice against self-examination, particularly among those who have never tried it. They feel that it is depressing; that it makes one introspective and morbid, and that it is far better to forget oneself in working for others. Morbidity and depression are negative conditions. They result from seeing action that ought to be taken, and then not exercising the courage or the will to take it. Like all negative moods, they invariably yield to action. Even brisk physical movement, like a quick walk, helps to dispel them. The discovery of a fault should always be followed by a vigorous attack upon it. When this is done, far from making one depressed or morbid, the result is always an accession of cheerfulness and good spirits. The reasons for this lie deep in human nature. The best proof of its truth, however, is not to be found in reason or argument, but in experience. If you doubt it, try it for yourself and see,—the only condition being that the attack must be vigorous.

Introspection is the love of thinking about oneself for its own sake, with no idea of doing anything about it. There are those who take a perverted pleasure in thinking of their sins, looking for slights from others where none were intended, and hugging to themselves the fancy that everyone dislikes them. What they need is a shaking. Such brooding over self is the same type of self-indulgence as self-pity. It has nothing whatever to do with self-examination, but is often confused with it.

Much of the depression attributed to self-examination is the result of a mistake into which beginners are particularly likely to fall. They undertake to search within themselves for new faults, or for unrecognized expressions of old ones, which they have not heretofore seen. They succeed, and perhaps find a particularly glaring defect. Their attitude ought to be that of a business man whose business is prosperous and paying good dividends but who, desiring to make it still better, searches for waste. Each item of unnecessary expense that he discovers and cuts off, adds that much to his profits. The more waste he finds, the better off he is. It is exactly the same with us if we would only see it that way. We have, let us hope, done reasonably well heretofore, enjoying our share of love and friendship, in spite of our innumerable weaknesses and failings. When our search, therefore, is rewarded with success, and we discover a fault, perhaps with far-reaching roots that may often have spoiled our best endeavours in the past, it is clearly an occasion for rejoicing. But does the beginner rejoice? Not at all. He is most probably plunged into deepest gloom. His vanity is hurt. Instead of seeing the situation for what it is, an opportunity to free himself from something that has been hampering him for years, he is likely to see his failing as reflected from the eyes of his neighbours. What will they think of him now? How can such a one as he, ever hold up his head again; and so on, in deepening gloom and dejection. The root of all this gloom is nothing but hurt vanity. It is a sign that the individual has not yet reached the stage of development at which he can be trusted safely with the weapon of self-examination. The test lies in what we do when we see a fault. The right attitude is that of the business man who, realizing that the *discovery* of waste is sheer gain, sets to work, at once and with joy, to eliminate it.

Self-examination, as we have said, should invariably result in positive action. It is undertaken for the purpose of uncovering faults in order that they may be attacked and conquered. We are all willing to admit theoretically that we are full of faults in general, but usually resent the implication that we are ever guilty of any particular one. Faults, however, can not be attacked in general. They must be seen and conquered specifically, in detail. Every step in the spiritual life requires the exercise of some degree of humility. If we are wise, therefore, we shall begin by *assuming* that we have to a certain extent, however slight, all the faults that we have ever seen in others, no matter how mean, unclean or contemptible. Specifically:

1. That we are full of vanity, of the desire for admiration, attention, the good opinion of others, etc.
2. That we love comfort, and frequently sacrifice the comfort of others to our own.
3. That we are lazy and slothful, physically or mentally or both.
4. That we are self-centred and full of self-love, self-reference and self-pity; that these lead us into constant little meannesses, such as envy, jealousy, detraction of others, etc.

5. That we are self-willed and want our own way, constantly cloaking this under the excuse that what we are doing is for the good of others.
6. That we love and seek sensation for its own sake. (This includes, among many other things, sex, gluttony, and much mental and imaginative activity, apparently innocent, where the true motive is quite unsuspected.)
7. That our motives in all that we do and think, without exception, are tainted, in greater or less degree, by one or more of the foregoing manifestations of lower nature.

If you think that you are free from any one of those mentioned, that is the one for which you ought to look. It is probably your ruling passion, which spiritual writers say is usually the last fault which we will admit in any degree at all. If, after watching for one week, that particular sin fails to reveal itself to you, ask any candid friend or any older student of Theosophy to tell you how and where to look.

If you admit having them all, so far so good. That at least is a beginning in humility,—“that virtue without which all others are spurious.” It ought also to prevent discouragement later, though it probably will not; for while we may admit the possession of these faults theoretically, we do not at first really believe that we have them. (If you doubt this, watch your reaction the next time any one accuses you of having been guilty in a particular instance.) The second step is to decide which one is the most serious,—which one inconveniences others most, is not a bad way to begin. Having decided that, find specific instances where you fell into it, and plan a definite campaign for its eradication. It is impossible to be too definite in attacking a fault.

Assume, for instance, that we decide that we are inconsiderate of others. To say, “I will be considerate,” does no good at all, if we do not bring it down to details. The first thing to do is to see clearly where and with whom we are habitually inconsiderate. We find, perhaps, that we do not listen, but interrupt constantly. “I will not interrupt,” is an improvement, but is still too indefinite. Only when we resolve that we will not interrupt Uncle James to-morrow evening when he tells those tiresome stories, but will pay real attention, do we begin to make progress.

Our present subject, however, is not the conquest but the discovery of faults. Nor is it our purpose to demonstrate that the seven sins we have listed, are really sins, and not simply “harmless weaknesses.” We are assuming that the reader has progressed beyond the point where vanity, for instance, is called harmless, and where self-love, self-will and self-reference are regarded as the normal, if not the proper, attitude for all men; and that these are seen for what they are,—roots from which all evil and all sins may spring. Among such roots, the love of sensation for itself is one of the most prolific in evil fruit.

Any of us may be willing to admit, perhaps all too cheerfully, that he possesses all of the seven sins in some measure. As we have said, that is far too

general an admission to be of much practical service. It leaves us unmoved. But if we ask ourselves exactly how and when we manifest each of these defects, our cheerful complaisance disappears, and we find ourselves refusing to acknowledge in detail what we admit in general. The mind prepares a barrage of denial, excuse and counter-accusation. It is now essential to remember that it is *self-examination* that we are engaged in, and that the conduct of others concerns us not at all—no matter how wrong, provocative, or otherwise inexcusable it may be. Their actions may have been as black as our minds seek to paint them. The fact remains that, whatever the cause, weaknesses were revealed in us; and it is precisely our weaknesses that we are trying to discover. The red herring of the sins of others must not divert us from our true trail.

A most helpful model for self-questioning is given in the article on "Self-Examination," by Mr. Griscom in the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY for July, 1918. The preceding and following issues of the magazine (for April and October, 1918) also contain articles on the same subject, and the beginner will be much aided by studying these, and, above all, by acting on them.

In all self-examination, it should be borne in mind that thought is causal, and that outer acts are merely the expression of preceding thoughts and feelings. Hence it is our thoughts and feelings which should be our primary concern, and we should study and work at them. There are many people to whom the idea that they can or should control their thoughts, has never even occurred. "I can't help my thoughts, can I?" is a common phrase. Of course we can and must control our thoughts. There is a saying, attributed to Mr. Judge, that "Five minutes thought can undo the work of five years." It shows the importance of mastering our minds.

Only a little observation is needed in order to see that all thought tends to express itself in action. If, for instance, we indulge now in mental irritation, nursing our feelings and thinking what good cause we have for them, we shall be much more likely to speak with irritation when we again are provoked. The force is cumulative until it finally breaks out. This shows us the general principle we should follow. We should never permit our imaginations to picture us, inwardly, as saying or doing anything that we are not willing to do outwardly.

To test this, recall to mind the last time you did or said something of which you were subsequently ashamed—let us say it was an outbreak of irritation. Is it not a fact that on earlier occasions, when irritated at the same person, you had permitted your imagination to picture you doing or saying something very similar? Watch the way in which the mind dwells on grievances, real or imaginary, phrasing to itself the crushing retorts it might make to the offender, repeating its complaints and criticisms of those that displease it; and then note the outbreak which sooner or later follows and which so humiliates us. Most of us try to have fairly good manners outwardly, but too often our mental manners would disgrace a stable-boy. These thoughts, feelings and desires of which we are ashamed, but which we still harbour, are all moulds

into which future action tends to flow. Suppose, as may well be the case, that in some future life we have to live them all out in the open, for all the world to see! All such things come to light sooner or later, unless nullified by other desires stronger than they.

Another principle that should govern all our mental activity is that the mind should never be used for the purpose of producing sensation of any sort. This includes not only so-called evil thoughts, which are obviously wrong, but all that is indulged for the sake of feeding vanity, all the heroic or clever things we imagine ourselves as doing or saying, and all picturing of ourselves in the eyes of others. It also includes mental scenes of violence, such as "telling him what I think of him," most criticism of others, and all self-pity—a sensation which many people love and indulge constantly, to their great detriment.

In self-examination, it is vitally important to remember that we are not our lower natures. We are the higher nature, the will within us to do our best. This is the fundamental and enduring part of us, the immortal spark of the Divine, destined ultimately to return to its source, the Supreme. That is what we are. Lower nature pertains to the mortal personality, our instrument, through which we must work and which it is our duty to purify. But we are not the instrument, we are the immortal soul which has to use it, and must make it fit for use. The secret of success lies in this principle of "right self-identification," as it is called,—the identifying of ourselves with our true and best desires, and the repudiation of the lower as not ourselves but as emanating from our instrument, the personality. It enables us to face our faults honestly and courageously, to see them with impersonality and without depression; but it does not relieve us of responsibility for their eradication. We are not the weeds in our garden, but we are responsible if they remain there.

It is pleasanter to pick flowers for the sick than to weed one's garden, but he who neglects his weeds has few flowers to give. We should all like to "forget ourselves and work for others," but we must be masters of ourselves before we can forget ourselves. Selflessness is the goal to which self-examination is the means. Its purpose, in fact, is to enable us to see and to eliminate the hidden element of self from our motives, thoughts and actions, that we may serve more freely and effectively. It has been said that every step of the path to heaven is heaven. There is no surer way of learning sympathy and tenderness for others, and charity for their faults, than to see and to fight the faults within oneself. It is also the road to humility and to cheerfulness,—as well as to the Masters.

# STUDIES IN PARACELSUS

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## VI

IN the third chapter of the first Book of the *Philosophia Sagax*, Paracelsus discusses the formation and activities of the inner bodies of man. He tells us that the corporeal mass was taken by the hand of the Creator from the four elements. From these four elements two bodies were formed, one visible and material, the other invisible and spiritual; both were natural and formed in accordance with nature. Thus man was in part formed of the two corporeal elements, earth and water, and in part of the two invisible elements, firmament and chaos; that is, air and fire. This twofold body was made substantial, so that the "astral" body, formed according to the divine Image, might exercise its activities; so that these activities might be exercised in man together with his virtues and essences, arousing these virtues and setting them to work, just as a mechanical art is exercised. In this way the sapience of the Light of Nature is called into operation, so that the Magnalia of God, the divine secrets, may be made manifest and imparted to the external elements.

The Light of Nature is invisible to the outer eye; this invisible light is the directing art, while the visible man is the tool by means of which the invisible is made manifest. Thus man has received in the invisible his sapience and science from the Light of Nature. Then substance was added, from the two elements, earth and water, in order that he might also have a tangible body through which the invisible light might come into operation. Thus the two bodies, the invisible, formed from air and fire, and the visible, formed from earth and water, are brought into conjunction, so that they may be no more divisible than colour from a coloured object, or heat from the sun. Thus in the beginning God brought forth created things in a twofold way: tangible and intangible. The tangible beings are men made after the Image of God; the intangible beings are angels and spirits. So man is visible and tangible, and his invisible body is likewise corporeal, because it is made from the elements, air and fire.

In the hand of God all things are white, and He tints them according to His will. Thus he can transform the elements into flesh and blood. But he transforms only a part into flesh and blood; a part is retained as the fine extract, the quintessence, to be put to other uses. And, since man was made by God from the elements according to the divine Image, therefore man has rule over the elements from which he came forth, that the elements may be subject to the divine Image. The *astra* make up the real man, and the *astra* are the tools of the divine Image.

Just as the body uses tools to work with, so the body itself is the tool through which sapiences and sciences work, in the same way that the unrevealed Spirit

works through the revealed Word. Spirit is from the beginning, and its operation is as follows: Whatever activities God, or an angel, or a spirit, exercises in the Spirit, these same activities man exercises in the body, using the body and its members as his tools. Therefore the body is a tool only; hands and feet by no means constitute the real man, but sapience and science make man truly man. It is as when God desires to produce a pear. The pear is not made of wood, but is formed from an essence contained in the wood. The pear is like a spirit until it has gained bodily manifestation, and the tangible elements through which it was made manifest were drawn from the essence of the wood. In just this way, wherever there is need of a tangible body, this body is formed from the essences of the two lower elements, earth and water. Thus a seed is in a sense a spirit. But if it be sown, a tree comes forth from it. That which at first was an elementary spirit has become material and corporeal. In the same way, when God wishes to make manifest the powers which are with Him in the firmament, such as sciences, arts and faculties, he ordains that these shall be perfected through man, as the pear is perfected through the pear tree. There must be some being through whom these sidereal powers may operate, and such a being man alone is. Therefore man has been endowed with a form of such a kind that all the secrets of nature may be made visible and manifest through him, and may take bodily form through this same man formed of flesh and blood. Therefore, let man know that he alone is the tool of the Light of Nature, through which the science and sapience which God has stored in the firmament may be made manifest.

Paracelsus adds a warning. Though this be man's high destiny, yet he does not always follow it. Man is not always truly man. He may show himself a brute, since there are in him the seeds of the wolf, the viper, the fox, or the sheep, all these potencies being stored up in the quintessence from which man is made. Therefore, if he chooses, man may live according to the brute side of the Light of Nature, and refuse to be obedient to the laws of the divine Image and the eternal Light.

The Creator burns with so great desire that the arcane secrets hidden in the *astræ* may be revealed, that to this end He formed the microcosm, man. He desires that through the works of man not only the secrets stored in the *astræ*, but also the natural mysteries of the elements, may be manifested, which could not be accomplished without man. Therefore, man should deeply ponder the truth that with this purpose he was formed; to fulfil this purpose, he must refuse to take his ease, to keep holiday, to be torpid, to revel; he must be watchful, sober and sedulous in the daily exploration of the secrets, the arcane things, which God has stored in nature. Whence it follows that man should perform the duties of his calling, not forgetting nor despising divine things. And with this steady effort everyone may render more perfect service to his neighbour and penetrate more deeply into the knowledge of the gifts of God. But the sluggard and the sensualist possess no knowledge, and without knowledge they cannot serve God, but "play the hog and have no more wisdom than a hog."

If man's intelligence be united in just proportion with his corporeal nature,

which is formed of the "slime of the earth," then whatever comes forth from him is justly proportioned and perfect. And there is within him a conscience, a moral guide, through which he should rule his bodies, when they tend to impurity.

The natural man must draw to himself nourishment from without him, and must assimilate it within him, in order that his body may be sustained. Therefore, he must prepare food and drink, cooking it and partaking of it in the right way. The same truth holds with regard to man's higher powers, which belong to the firmament. If we desire to develop and use our powers, we must draw material toward them; just as the natural body sustains and warms itself by means of the power of appropriation which it has in its hands and feet, by using which it obtains whatever it needs. To obtain bread, we must till the ground, we must sow and reap, we must grind the wheat and bake the flour. In order to learn the arcane things of nature, we must draw from the Light of Nature what pertains to natural sapience and science. Within living things there is a Magnet, a power to attract and assimilate, which draws to each its aliment. Thus we observe that trees in a grove enjoy perfect nutrition, because they contain within them the Magnet which attracts their food. Man must go about more actively in order to obtain his food. And, just as he sustains the natural body by the preparation of food, so must he act with regard to the sidereal body, preparing and using the Magnet, the attracting power, which belongs to the sidereal body.

In the fourth chapter of the first Book, Paracelsus analyses and describes what have been called the Occult Arts. While there is much in his descriptions that is rather vague and obscure, they are both interesting and valuable, as indicating the powers which he himself may have exercised, and the method which he pursued. Thus, by Anatomy, he means not only the analysis of the material substance of the body, but also the dissection of the thoughts and feelings which, included in the invisible *astra*, form part of the constitution of man. These are the forces which tint or colour the "elementary" body, and, throughout his writings, Paracelsus lays much stress on this tinting or colouring. We should remember that Paracelsus was a true alchemist in spite of his denunciations of the "gold-cookers," and should give due weight to his analysis of the colours and forms of all material substances, which have their correspondences in the invisible world. Both in his own writings and in the Dictionary of his follower Ruland, there are very careful and detailed descriptions of the colours and forms of precious stones, plants, ores and chemicals, each of which has its correspondences. In Mrs. Atwood's *Suggestive Enquiry into the Hermetic Mystery*, there are further hints which, taken with his own writings, indicate that, under this cautiously veiled language, Paracelsus was seeking to describe the properties of the psychical *astra*, and also those higher *astra* which were destined to become the food of the higher astral body, the future sheath or vesture of the divine Image, which in its turn is nourished in the same way as the elementary body described in the preceding chapter.

Coming to the details of the Occult Arts, Paracelsus describes, under the



heading of Magic, various talismans and "transformations," by the use of which the power of the Word is infused into bodies, just as the physician makes extracts of herbs. This he calls *Ars Characteralis*. Then there is *Ars Caballistica*, by means of which doors may be opened without a visible key, swords may be prepared which no protection can repel, or corselets which no weapon can pierce. To these magical objects he gives the name *Gamaheu*, including under the same title the formation of images by which people at a distance may be influenced. A further division of the *Ars Caballistica* enables one to hear a voice across the sea, or to travel a month's journey in a day. Paracelsus does not tell how these wonderful things may be done; he approaches the matter indirectly, by bringing together illustrative parallels from natural objects and processes. These things constitute Art Magic; they are the Arts of Sapience, they are mortal and pertain to the Light of Nature.

What he calls Nigromancy has reference to the two "spirits" which man leaves behind at death: the elementary and the sidereal. Nigromancy so far as it relates to these two "spirits," he calls "the cognition of mortals"; there is a third division, involving additional properties of the sidereal spirit, which he names *Meteorica Vivens*.

By Nectromancy he appears to mean the study and practice of clairvoyance, and he clearly distinguishes between a lower and a higher form of clairvoyance; the first, according to the Light of Nature, and practised by the aid of "familiar spirits," called Flagæ; the second, a direct perception in the Light of Heaven, as described in the second Book. What Paracelsus describes as Astrology relates both to the firmament and the *astra*. Just as one may observe the varying movements of a man without understanding his purpose, so one may observe the movements of the heavenly bodies without understanding the influences within these movements. The true astrologer must know both movements and influences. As there are movements of the elementary *astra*, so there are movements of the sidereal *astra*: the cognizing of these is Astrology. The more skilled astrologer knows the purposes and influence of the firmamental *astra*, as well as the separate courses of the heavenly bodies. As man begins many things which he cannot finish, so also do the *astra*. Paracelsus declares that the firmament is "captive in the hand of the Highest Mover." This would indicate that what he calls Astronomy deals with the action of the Highest Mover, while Astrology, a subdivision of Astronomy, has various subordinate purposes.

Paracelsus has much to say of Signatures. The principle underlying the teaching of Signatures is that "the herb grows in that shape which accords with its nature and properties; and it is so also in regard to man." He says that the Fabricator does not fashion the animating influence according to the form, but rather adapts the form to the animating influence; thus the "shape" of man is moulded in accordance with the nature of the "heart." Therefore, it is necessary to judge of the nature of men not only by form and lines, but also by habitual conduct and innate qualities.

Under the title, *Artes Incertæ*, Paracelsus includes various subdivisions of

the Occult Arts. He says that "every man is a prophet of the Light of Nature." Some prophecies are uttered by word of mouth, some by gestures, some by nods, and so on. Thus, according to the element which preponderates in different men, some work and prophesy by Geomancy, through the element earth; some by Hydromancy, through the element water; some by Chaomancy, through the element air, and some by Pyromancy, through the element fire. These operations are carried out by means of the elements, but the art of prophecy springs from an inborn prophetic constitution. Behind the manifestations of these various arts there is a true basis. He who discovers that true basis and works from it is a Certist, one with certain knowledge, but he who is not thoroughly acquainted with this basis is an Incertist, and is no more to be trusted than are the dice.

Speaking of Adept Physic, Paracelsus says that there are two kinds of physic: that derived from the *astra*, and that derived from the elements; just as there are two kinds of diseases, those pertaining to the *astra* of the firmament, and those pertaining to the elements. There is also a third kind, derived from Heaven. The firmamental nature is so combined with the elementary body that an infection may cross from the invisible into the visible; but a visible infection cannot affect the invisible, and this is true also of remedies.

With regard to what he describes as Adept Philosophy, Paracelsus makes it clear that we must distinguish between the realm of elementary bodies born of the elements, and the inner realm of the *astra*, born of the firmament. The Adept Philosopher must be able to discern and describe the firmamental within the elemental. What pertains to the elements is subject to alchemical preparation, but what pertains to the firmament cannot be manipulated in this way. Yet there is a higher alchemy by which the firmamental may be dealt with, and sidereal arcana may be compounded. So also with Adept Mathematics; there is the realm of the elements, and also the realm of the firmament. Each has its own character, to be separately studied and mastered.

In the fifth chapter of the first Book, Paracelsus goes more fully into the subdivisions of what he calls Astronomy. The sciences of Astronomy, he says, are not essentially human arts, but are ethereal, Heaven itself being the Astronomer. Yet these sciences, being the special property of man, cannot be carried out without man. He enumerates ten sciences of Astronomy, each of which has at least three subdivisions.

The first of the sciences of Astronomy he calls Divination, which may be practised in two ways: first, by means of signs and prognostications; second, by prophecies and predictions. This higher art belongs to the higher consciousness which is gained through regeneration, to be considered in the second Book. Paracelsus makes the distinction that the "arts" belong to the outer side of life, while the "sciences" belong to the inner; the "arts" are concerned with the elements and the *astra*, while the "sciences" lead to the *anima* (the soul) and the divine Image.

He has much to say of those forms of divination which a student of Theosophy would describe as psychism. He calls this a foreign sapience, in contrast

to the natural sapience which God has given to man, that he may live as man, cognizing all things, and deciding and estimating what he hears. This foreign sapience is a "spirit of giddiness" (a psychic intoxication), which makes the mind "waver like a reed in the water." Paracelsus compares it to the intoxication caused by wine exciting the brain, and says that it produces "inebriate speech, inebriate phantasms and inebriate imaginations." But just as there is a new wine produced from grapes, so there is a "new wine of the firmament," which is celestial.

Under the subdivision of Inclination, Paracelsus describes the influence of the *astra* inclining the spirit of man in one or another direction. Sometimes the *astra* govern a man and direct his decisions, in order to bring into manifestation some necessary work. And, he adds, if there be no one ready, the *astra* select some man and constrain him, as though one should adopt a son. As examples of men guided and impelled by the *astra* he names Solomon, in regard to character; Julius Cæsar in regard to intellect and will; also Barbarossa and Suevus; Albertus Magnus, Lactantius and Wyckliff in regard to doctrine; Albert Dürer in regard to art; and, in regard to commerce, August Fugger, the founder of the great commercial house, whose news letters have recently been published.

What he calls Impression, another subdivision of the sciences of Astronomy, is concerned with the body of the elements, and has no kinship with the body of the *astra*. The Impression of the body of the elements is the *Spiraculum Vitæ*, the "breath of life," which would seem to be identical with Prana. The breath of life, he says, is closely related to the body of the elements, the physical body, yet its source is the *astra*. A student of Theosophy would express the same thing by saying that, during physical life, Prana is closely connected with the body, but is derived from, or is an aspect of, Akasha. Without the breath of life, the body of the elements has no life. And there is also a higher aspect of the breath of life, a divine breath, breathed into man by God either directly or through His representative, as set forth in the second Book, which describes regeneration.

Under the division of Generation, he speaks of the Sun as the *Spiraculum Vitæ* of the elements, the primal source of Prana. Just as in the physical body of the man, the breath of life is the vivifier and builder, so the Sun is the vivifier and builder of the elements and of all things in nature. Without this solar breath of life, the elements can generate nothing. A man in whom the *anima* (the soul) is present, is truly Animate; one without the *anima* he calls Inanimate. And, just as men dwell in the four elements, and are at the same time endowed with the *anima*, so there are beings dwelling beside man in the elements, the beings that are called Gnomes (of the earth), Nymphs (of the water), Lemurs (of the air), and Vulcans (of the fire); there are also two other classes, which he describes as Giants and Umbragines. These "elemental" beings are not, like man, derived from "the slime of the earth," but are formed of the "quintessence"; they are allied to men and dwell beside them in the elements, but belong to a different order of "creation."

In the section on Meteorica, Paracelsus describes what may be called celestial influences, coming from above, from "the supernal Olympus, whence they descend like drops of rain." These influences descend on us like vivifying dew poured over us; but they do not possess substance, since they are spiritual, not corporeal.

In the sixth chapter of the first Book, Paracelsus takes up a very interesting part of his subject, namely, Magic and the Magus, which he is naturally compelled to treat guardedly and rather obscurely. Magic, he says, is "the art of inducing heavenly powers into a medium and performing operations in this medium." The true medium is man himself. He distinguishes between two classes of Magi, a lower and a higher: the lower Magus derives his knowledge and power from the *astra*, from the Light of Nature. The higher Magus receives his power from the Light of Heaven. When the Magus is "born," he is endowed with Magic, as the eye is endowed with vision, and the ear with hearing. When Christ said, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart," he was speaking of the highest School of Magic. Paracelsus further distinguishes sharply between the true Magic and the arts of Magic; that is, between Occultism and the Occult Arts.

As nature infuses her powers into plants and medicinal herbs, so the Magus can infuse his power into "characters," magical pictures, and images. As the potter, using his imagination, moulds a vessel on his wheel, which he can alter to another shape in conformity with another image in his mind, so also can the Magus. Just as the body of the elements can operate in the elements, so can the spiritual body operate in spiritual things.

Paracelsus lays stress on the truth that the forces belonging to the *astra* are more powerful than the forces belonging to the elements. But he also emphasizes the essential necessity of the power of Faith. Just as the "dead" are regenerated by God, through the Son, so the natural Divi, "gods," who are also called Magi, exercise the powers and potencies which are conferred upon them. As there are Divi in God for the purpose of salvation, who are called Saints, so there are Divi in God for the purpose of natural virtues, who are called Magi. The Saint operates from God, the Magus from nature; yet both from God.

Paracelsus goes on to speak of the sidereal body, which would seem to be the lower aspect of Kama. He says that the sidereal body is mobile, and follows the habits of the man in life. The sidereal body is not the man himself, nor is it the *anima* (the soul). It is engaged with those matters which the imagination and mind of man regard with longing. It is with the activities of the sidereal body that what he calls Nigromancy is concerned, and Paracelsus deals severely with Nigromancy, and with its practitioners, the Adjurists, Exorcists, Conjurists and Intercessors. He then goes on to describe the dissolution, first of the body of the elements, and then of the sidereal body, and says that the content of the sidereal body is "whatever the mind contains," that is, the mass of desires in the mind. The sidereal body will conform to the nature of these desires: "Where the treasure is, there will the heart be." If the

Exorcist has established a relation with the sidereal body of one who has died, this "body" may reveal to him buried treasures; but these disclosures are not made by the *anima* (soul), nor by the spirit, nor by the eternal man, but only by the transitory and mortal sidereal body (the Kama Rupa, the spook).

Paracelsus enters fully into the condition of the various bodies after death. He shows that the body of the elements is dissolved in the elements in the grave, and that the body of the firmament is dissolved in the firmament; but that, while dissolution is taking place in a time and manner proportionate to the energies expended during life, there is also a third, a subtile body, which is like these two, and is conjoined to them, but not identical with them. It is this third body which is the cause of apparitions after death and of such activities as have been described above, and there identified with the Kama Rupa. Paracelsus passes severe judgment on the Exorcists, Conjurers and Intercessors who make a practice of consorting with these "spirits." He says that they do not appear in the Light of Nature, but are the means of bringing under the power of Satan those who consort with them.

Speaking of Nectromancy, which we have identified with clairvoyance, Paracelsus teaches that this is an art given to man, and that, when the bodily eye does not avail, the art of Nectromancy is used. He quotes the words of Christ: "There is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed;" and adds that this saying relates not only to the secrets of the heart but also to the natural works of God. And the further saying: "Seek and ye shall find," is a mandate to be diligent in the search. This is a rule and precept not only as regards eternal things, but also as regards the Light of Nature. Therefore, the search for that which is hidden comes forth from that which is hidden: Knowledge belongs to (magical) art, and through the knowledge of this art the explorer seeks. He then lays emphasis on the principle that "He who would seek life eternal must derive the basis of his search from Him who is eternal life." For no one can reveal this basis except the Craftsman who provides it.

From this it follows that the Light of Nature places before us arts, by means of which we may search. These arts come forth, not from man, but from nature, which acts in such a way that "where the heart is, there also is the mouth," the voice, and thus the power to discern and reveal the heart. And where the treasure is, there is the heart, and also the mouth. Now this mouth is science. Likewise the operation of nature must be sought from nature, not from man. For nature looks within herself and sees what things lie within, and with her own eye sees all her own arcane things. This eye is Nectromancy. And the keenness of this eye is so exquisite that no force in nature can be so hidden that it cannot be found by nature. He continues: "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh;" that is, the secrets of the heart are revealed through the mouth. He who hears the mouth speak, hears the secrets of the heart. Thus there is nothing of things hidden and withdrawn which does not, in the place of a mouth, possess a spirit which is the mouth, to reveal the arcane things which lie hid within itself. Thus the mouth is the eye, looking within the heart.

Paracelsus goes on to describe the methods of external Nectromancy through the use of magical mirrors, crystals and divining rods, through dreams and the casting of dice (a form of Geomancy). He also refers to the recovery of things lost by these means. But he ends by dwelling on uprightness and purity, as conditions required for the right exercise of this art by those in whom the power is innate, and says that this innate power, when exercised in its fulness, is the property of the body of regeneration, as expounded in the second Book. The heart may then seek to discover the secrets of external nature, or the secrets of God.

Speaking of Signatures, Paracelsus lays down the principle that "according to his *animus* (will, purpose), nature and character, man is endowed with a fitting body, so that figure, body and potency are in agreement, each indicating the other. The potency reveals the hidden essence, so also the form and shape, the body and substance." Nature exercises the right and power to mark and shape everyone according to the character of his purpose and will; she designs the form and places it in everyone; in measure as he is good or evil, so are a man's will, feelings and thoughts healthy or vicious. With the knowledge of good and evil came the difference of form and imprint. Thus variety of form corresponds to variety of virtue. The *astra* send rays into man, and these, as they pass through him, mark him for what he is; thus the rays mark him for health and disease; and not only for external health, but also for eternal health.

Man bears marks of three kinds: the marks of nature; the marks of his own making, "according as the secret things of his heart are declared by his mouth," and the marks set upon him by God. He describes four arts, by which the significance of Signatures may be known. The first is Chiromancy. Paracelsus has in view the study, not merely of the lines of the hand, but also the appearance of the hands and feet, the veins of the body and their arrangement, the ducts, lines and wrinkles. The second is Physiognomy, the study of the countenance and whatever is contained in the head. The art of Physiognomy discerns the impress of the finer senses and the reasoning powers. For, while the heart is one thing, and the head another, the heart and not the head is chief and lord. Therefore the heart governs the shape of the head. The third art he calls Substance, which includes the shape of the whole body. This art shows how to become acquainted with man, to measure his feelings and mind, his reasoning power, the purpose of his heart, and the goal of his inner meditation. The fourth art is Habit and Custom (*mos et usus*); in whatever way a man carries himself, so also is he in other things. These four arts are to be joined together, because they jointly supply the perfect cognition of the concealed interior man and of all things that spring from nature. For the form is the index of the invisible essence. Thus the form of a house reveals the creative thought and purpose of the builder. Thus that which is hidden in feeling and mind and nature can be known by none until it puts on its own form and figure. So the things which men desire in heart and will are made manifest through their works; therefore nothing is hidden which shall not be revealed. The image-making power of imagination, together with the will,

supplies the "virtue" which effects the rendering into a form. The essential "virtue" of a man constructs a figure proper to itself. Through this "virtue" the spirit is rightly cognized, and many are the marks to be noted in men, all proceeding from heart and will, and through the will rendered into form. Thus will and form are made one.

The spirit bloweth whither it listeth, and none knows why. The spirit of the divine Image rules the *astra*, through which the guiding impulse is passed on to the hands and feet, which are instruments, like the hammer in the smith's hand, which is guided by his brain. In all activities the motive power is nature, while man is the medium through which nature works. It is certain that, through the power of the Light of Nature, the image-making power effects wonderful things, accomplishing more than the elements or *astra* are able to perform. Meditation rules and commands all these powers; it is free and held in bondage by none. The freedom of man is established in meditation, which surpasses the Light of Nature. From meditation is born the motive power which transcends the elements and the *astra*. Now, if such be the power of meditation that it dominates both elements and *astra*, it can surpass all the works which the elements and *astra* put forth, through the regenerated spirit. Meditation makes the new heaven, the new firmament, and in addition a new power, from which new acts flow forth. For man is of so great potency that he is more powerful than earth and heaven itself; for man possesses Faith. Neither honesty nor uprightness nor the will of God can be maintained, unless Faith subdue all things. The obtaining of all things consists in prayer, in seeking, in knocking. For the flesh and blood are not the man, though they are to be used by him. Man is the heart, and in the heart great powers lie hidden. In the measure of the heart's awakening are its perfection and performance. And, though more is found in art than may seem to be cognized through nature, yet this should cause none to wonder, for the new heaven of meditation and the arcane things of God reveal more than is possible to nature.

A. KEIGHTLEY.

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*A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds.*—BACON.

# LODGE DIALOGUES

## VII

WE were talking together in the garden, as the twilight fell. It was some time since I had seen him, and there were many things we had to say. I found him grown, matured. Experience had reached him; something had been acquired, accomplished. There was no longer the restlessness, the vagueness of the mere beginner; his questions had coherence and meaning.

So after a bit I took my turn at questioning.

"You have learned something since we were last together," I said, "you have made a step towards your goal."

"Yes," he answered quickly, and I knew then that he had been waiting for this moment, "yes, I have had much, much,—may I try to tell you?"

"Please tell me," I replied.

He leaned forward, looking into the gathering dusk. When he began to speak his voice broke a little, then hesitated. In a moment or two he began again:

"It seemed to come from very far off," he said, "and yet I knew it was near me. At last, in answer to all my prayers, to all my longings; so strange, so vibrant,—a new, a wonderful sound—the Master's Voice. There was no mistaking,—I *knew*."

"How did you know?"

"How did I know? because it was so familiar, because I knew it so well, because my whole life had lived in it,—all that was of any worth, all I could possibly wish to claim or to remember; more familiar than the voice of the most familiar friend, and dear—beyond all telling. . . ."

"I had waited for an experience, for something dazzling or overpowering to happen to me, like a thunderbolt from heaven, or St. Paul's vision on the road to Damascus. With this I was tranquil, at home; only a fountain welled in my heart, whose waters were the waters of Eternal Life, and so of deepest joy.

"Not to be dazed was I, but reassured; not stunned, but serenely safe, in the wonted, in the trusted, in the comprehended and comprehending.

"It was from far away, because there was no period of my existence when I had not heard it; it was close by, because I now realized what I had been hearing all along. It was as wonderful as that, and as simple as that."

"O the divine simplicity of the spiritual world!" I said, more to myself than to him; but I heard his voice in the darkness answer:

"Amen."

M.



# A TEXT=BOOK OF PHYSICS

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A FRIEND of mine has been a student of Theosophy for a number of years. Recently his interest in the Movement has taken a new impetus, so that it is becoming the mainspring of his thought and action. It has given him a new incentive, and, while his outer life remains unchanged, he finds himself constantly referring events and circumstances to the inner light which alone can guide. Of course he makes mistakes, not having the trained vision which enables him always to distinguish between the true light and its psychic reflections, but he remembers that it requires long training and discipline to develop the faculty of intuitive knowledge.

He had once read a tale which delighted him, of an aspirant who, on arrival at a monastery, looked round to see what work he could do, and said to himself: "Every place like this needs a beast of burden, an ass; I will be the ass of the monastery." My friend was content to work on, after the same manner; then, one day, an older student of Theosophy startled him by advising him to work as if, some day, he might have to carry the entire burden of the Movement. With a good deal of anxiety, he set himself to consider this new point of view. After consideration, he decided that the time had come for some sort of action, and, in his search for the right direction, he studied, more closely than before, the objects of The Theosophical Society. He paused at the second aim: "The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study."

The vast subject known as "comparative religion" had always been of profound interest to him; philosophy also had proved absorbing, ever since his first introduction to Plato. As to science, he was entirely ignorant, and that ignorance was felt as a serious disability, not only in his Theosophical studies, but also in his daily life and work. In the past he had been influenced, more than he cared to admit, by a sentence in a book of devotion: "Science and sanctity, following the star of truth by their different roads, meet at the foot of the Cross, and find here the reconciliation of their disparate energies."<sup>1</sup> In accepting that statement, he had assumed that there must always be a certain divergence between the two roads; now he began to doubt the validity of the supposition. He wondered if the two roads might not run parallel all along the Way, and questioned whether the "disparate energies" might not be reconciled, from the very beginning, and work in harmony in that search for Truth which alone makes life worth living. The reconciliation could be found in Theosophy, in the Society's approach to Truth, and in its attitude to Life. There the man of religious fervour could study scientific problems with responsive intuition; the scientist could approach religion with the advantage of intellectual training, and a respect for Truth.

<sup>1</sup> *The Path of the Eternal Wisdom*, by John Cordelier; p. 14.

As to the philosopher, he remembered the insistence of Plato on the need for right mental training and discipline, as preparation for the study of philosophy. He had discovered, for himself, that the foundations of philosophic knowledge rested on certain unchanging laws, which seemed to have a definite relation to physical law. Metaphysics was therefore incomplete, without an elementary understanding of physics. Conversely, the scientist could learn much by seeking to penetrate beneath the surface of ascertained facts, to find their foundation in Eternal Laws. The student believed that every earnest seeker after Truth is given help, in the measure in which he deserves it, and can make use of it; that the Elder Brothers of the Race, who have attained to knowledge, are only too willing to extend their assistance to younger seekers, when the right moment comes. He remembered a sentence concerning their attitude towards scientific thought: "Exact experimental science . . . can make no claim upon our help until it blends itself with metaphysics."<sup>2</sup> As a student of metaphysics, it was no use for him to complain that his scientific education had been neglected, and to let the matter rest there. "The Gods help those who help themselves." He decided that the first step was to search out a suitable hand-book of physics, and the next, to find time to study it.

He looked up a number of text-books from which to make his choice. Many of these had fascinating illustrations of the wonders of modern invention; their value was chiefly in the interest and enthusiasm which they could evoke in youthful pupils. In modern education, interest is considered of paramount importance, and routine work is often set aside as being rather too discouraging for the young. The student was conservative in his views, and chose to believe that the mastery of any subject involves a certain amount of hard, grinding work. He chose, for his own use, a comparatively simple text-book, giving the fundamental facts of physical science in a systematic manner.<sup>3</sup> It was part of his philosophy, borrowed perhaps from Plato, that the Universe is governed by law and harmony; that evil is akin to disorder. In the acquisition of knowledge, he thought it wise to follow a logical method, thereby gaining the help that is inherent in orderly sequence.

The next problem, to find time for regular study of the book, settled itself, as such problems usually do; since earnest desire, in any direction, is usually followed, sooner or later, by the possibility of fulfilment. The student had, for long, been enthusiastic about the great pioneer of modern science, Sir Isaac Newton, that master-mind who "excelled the human race in intellect," but who yet had the attractive modesty and reticence of most real thinkers, and who kept, to the time of his death (two hundred years ago), an instinctive reverence for the Infinite which stretches beyond the narrow limits of human knowledge. When the opportunity came for the study of physics, the student's interest was always stimulated by the thought of the pioneers. He believed that the discoveries of Isaac Newton, great as they were, could

<sup>2</sup> *The Occult World*, by A. P. Sinnett; p. iii.

<sup>3</sup> *A Class-Book of Physics*, by Gregory and Hadley; 1917.

more truly be called rediscoveries of ancient truths known to scientists in previous ages. Perhaps the truths were understood by the early Greek physicists; they were probably known to the scientists of India and Persia; they were undoubtedly used by the pyramid-builders of ancient Egypt; and so the knowledge could be traced back, in continuous sequence, beyond the mists of time.

In his immediate studies, the student was fortunate in having a friend, a teacher of science, who was willing to give him occasional help. In that way, he could save his questions for a weekly discussion, and find out if he had grasped the subject-matter or not: a friendly hand was ready to help him over the difficult places. The sequence of subjects treated by the text-book was worth noticing,—fundamental measurements, hydrostatics and mechanics, heat, light, sound, magnetism, electricity. There were seven subjects in all, and already the student's philosophical mind was at work to find the corresponding metaphysical analogies. This, however, would never do, till the subjects had been studied in detail; so he set himself to a patient mastery of facts. He had not time or opportunity to test the facts by laboratory experiment, which is the only proof of their validity; but he was willing to take the statements on trust, relying on the experience of trained scientists.

The first subject to investigate was "matter," which exists, according to the scientists, in any one of the three states, solid, liquid, or gaseous. Possibly other states exist, but they have not yet been explored by the chemists, who are now, to a great extent, concentrating their attention on the interesting "border-line" between the states, where solid merges into liquid, and liquid into gaseous. The student thought he could discern an analogy with the three "worlds" of metaphysical literature, the material, psychic, and spiritual worlds, and he is still busy tracing the correspondences involved in such a comparison.

One of the baffling problems of the scientists seemed to be to find an adequate description of matter; the best they could suggest was, "that which can occupy space." Immediately the inquiring mind demands, "What is space?"—but definition does not seem to be possible. The student found, to his surprise, that matter has been proved scientifically to be indestructible; it is capable of many changes and transformations, but no part of it can be wholly destroyed. Then came questions as to the composition of organic matter, of what constitutes life (the riddle of the biologists), and of the progress of evolution through changing forms. "Nature consciously prefers that matter should be indestructible under organic rather than inorganic forms, and works slowly and incessantly towards the realization of this object—the evolution of conscious life out of inert material."<sup>4</sup>

The problems of biology, fascinating as they are, had to be left for further consideration, and the student returned to his inquiry into the composition of inorganic matter. This led to an investigation of the atomic theory, and to modern discoveries concerning the structure of the atom. It would seem

<sup>4</sup> *The Occult World*, p. 115.

that the different elements, of which every material thing is composed, vary from one another in the composition of their infinitesimal atoms. The atom, which has been likened to a miniature solar system, consists of a positive nucleus, and of negative electrons; the number of these electrons varies for each element, but the "immense variety of Nature can be resolved into a series of numbers." This seemed to the student to connect modern science with the teachings of Pythagoras. He was eager in his questioning. "What is the composition of the nucleus? the electrons? How do they come to form matter?", and so on. But his teacher could suggest no solution, and it seemed that modern science, for all its progress, has not solved that ancient problem of the origin of matter.

In order that matter can be weighed, or measured, it is necessary for it to have some degree of cohesion, which is said to be one of the fundamental properties of matter. Another consideration of importance is the factor of gravity. The student found that it was necessary to re-adjust previous misconceptions as to the ordinary physical facts of daily existence. Take, for instance, the question of weight, which had always seemed to him to be a constant factor in any one object. Now he discovered that the "weight of a body is the measure of the attractive influence of the earth upon it." The weight is actually lessened if the object is taken high up in an aeroplane, where the attraction of the earth is diminished. This consideration led to a whole train of speculation.

It is a common phrase to speak of a "weighty matter," when considering any factor of importance, whether tangible or intangible. It would seem that the weight of such a matter depends entirely upon where the centre of gravity is placed. For a large proportion of mankind, the centre of interest is in their physical appetites, desires, pleasures, amusements, comforts or luxuries; and everything in life is weighed in relation to that centre. Yet another class of men are mainly interested in things perceived through the finer senses, in creations of the imagination, as seen in art, literature, music. Such matters take precedence, with them, over the ordinary affairs of daily existence, and are weighed accordingly. Then there are those who, having "set their affections on the things that are above," determine to pursue their ideal, with heart and mind and soul and strength, since that ideal becomes the one vital thing in life. It is all a question of the centre of gravity; as that centre moves upwards, with the progress of the individual, the attraction of the earth is, very perceptibly, diminished. There takes place what might be termed a reversal of polarity. Such a condition is more adequately described in Eastern terms: "Things of the sense withdraw from the lord of the body who tastes them not; even the desire for them falls away from him who has seen the desireless Supreme."<sup>5</sup>

The question of gravity leads to another interesting consideration,—that of equilibrium. For an object, resting on a base, to be in stable equilibrium, its centre of gravity should be low, and it must fall within the base of support.

<sup>5</sup> *Bhagavad Gita*, Book II.

When the centre of gravity of the object is high, and the base is small, the object is seen to be top-heavy, and easily topples over. The student remembered wise advice to "seek a spot, not too high and not too low, and sit there." Those who are experienced in the spiritual life sometimes suggest that poise, balance, equilibrium, are essential conditions to right action.

In weighing objects, it was suggestive to consider the principle of the balance, whose accuracy depends on the fact that the scales must be equidistant from the fulcrum, or pivot, which is the central point of importance. Once more, the insistence was on the central point, as providing the key to the situation.

Objects can also be weighed by being suspended from a spring dynamometer; in that case, the elongation of the spring is directly proportional to the load. It seems that there are two forces at work,—the external pull, or strain, on the spring, and the internal force, or stress, which reacts against it, and brings the spring back to its true position, when the weight has been removed. It is rather misleading that, in daily conversation, the terms "strain and stress" have been used interchangeably, as though they were synonymous. In physics they describe the interplay of two opposite forces. If too great a strain is placed on a spring, the stress is unequal to it and the spring will break; but if the spring is made of finely tempered steel, it will bear a very considerable strain.

The student again was busy tracing the metaphysical correspondences. He imagined that, if the spring be represented by individual will, outer events and circumstances will provide inevitable strain, which is counteracted by the strength of the individual's purpose in life, or his true desire. "Behind will stands desire." As the will is trained to the quality of tempered steel, it will become an instrument fit to bear increasing strain, provided that the inner purpose is continually raised to a higher degree of efficiency. Much depends upon foreseeing and guarding against a possible breaking point, for the physical law, "the strain is proportional to the stress,"—is constant.

Again, it is through the initial compression of the spring that it is given its resilience and ability to resist and react against external strain. Those who are concerned with the education of children, realize that judicious discipline is necessary to their true development. Joseph de Maistre, in writing of education, has suggested, "*Laissez mûrir l'enfant sous le toit paternel; comprimez-le pour lui donner du ressort.*" In after life, the concentration of desire, self-discipline and self-restraint must be called upon to this end; for a spring can act as a spring only through the balancing of stress and strain.

The second chapter of the text-book dealt with hydrostatics and mechanics, and the student was greatly interested in working out the application of various laws relating to the pressure of liquids. It would seem that, by the use of hydraulic pressure, an immense amount of power can be obtained. He remembered having heard it conjectured that the builders in ancient Egypt used an elaborate system of hydraulics, in the construction of the pyramids.

It was really a marvellous conception that a small amount of pressure exerted on a liquid, at one point, could be converted into far greater pressure, working on a large piston to produce mechanical results. All depended on the way in which the pressure was directed and controlled.

It is an interesting fact that, in liquids, "there is always an upward pressure equal in magnitude to the downward pressure at the same point." In physics this explains why it is that objects float on water, provided they are of less density than the water, for when submerged their own weight presses them down less than the water presses them up. There is a correspondence to be traced with metaphysical laws, since the upward and downward pressure are seen constantly at work on the will of every individual. The upward pressure will prevail, when the will has been so refined that it is less dense and material than that which surrounds and presses against it. Then it will eventually come to the surface and control any situation, whatever may have been the previous storm or tumult.

It was worth investigating the physical causes of every-day occurrences, and sometimes this led to startling information. The student had always had a vague notion that the air exerted a degree of pressure that could be scientifically ascertained. But it came as a surprise to him that the actual weight of the air was fifteen pounds to the square inch, and that the average pressure of air on the human body was something like two tons. He took a deep breath, and conjectured that the physical structure of the body must be marvellously adjusted to bear this pressure. But that question belonged to the realm of physiology, and time did not permit of his wandering into that realm, for the present.

Questions as to pressure, led to the consideration of the fundamental laws of motion, which have been so clearly defined by Newton:—

(1) Every object remains at rest, or moves with uniform velocity in a straight line, until compelled by force to act otherwise.

(2) The change of motion is proportional to the impressed force, and takes place in the direction in which the force operates.

(3) Action and reaction are equal and opposite.

These laws are apparently simple and easy of comprehension, but they are capable of almost infinite application. The first consideration is that of inertia, or "the inability of a material body to change by itself its condition of rest or motion." It seemed to be difficult to find a definition of force, and the text-book confessed that even "by defining force, we do not get to know anything more about it. All we can know are the effects produced by something we call force." Whenever force is exerted, a certain amount of work is done in overcoming inertia. This leads to inevitable friction, until the resistance is completely overcome. The question of friction is interesting, and can be simply illustrated. It is required to move a block of wood, resting on a table. Force is exerted to move it, which is neutralized by the opposite force of resistance, which keeps the block at rest. When the applied force exceeds the maximum of stress, the block moves. It is worth noting that,

once the object is set in motion, a smaller force will keep it in motion. It is always the first step that costs the most, especially when this is translated as an individual decision towards the pursuit of any special objective, whether crime, material success, or holiness. The student had heard it observed that the saints are not often represented, by their ardent admirers, as having to contend against a strenuous amount of inertia in their own natures. Yet this was invariably the case. It was their fine achievement in overcoming such inertia, that resulted in their becoming men of powerful character, whose influence for good extended far into the world.

Another factor of interest was that it is possible to reduce friction by substituting rolling contact for sliding contact. The question as to who first invented the wheel is one which puzzles historians and archæologists; but the wheel has been used, since that first invention, in almost every mechanical contrivance. In an article on "An Approach to Spiritual Science" (THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, April, 1927), it was suggested that the process of thought could be described as a cyclic rhythm, beginning with perception and ending—if the cycle is to be completed—in action. In metaphysics, the process of perception-action might be regarded as a series of wheels which provide the rolling contact, and so reduce the friction afforded by inertia. It must be observed that the process has to form a complete cycle for effective action to take place; then the action will, of itself, lead imperceptibly to a higher grade of perception, in endless sequence. Also there is need of a lubricant, if the machinery is to run smoothly. It is for each individual to determine whether the power of his imagination provides a sufficient lubricant, and what is to be the orientation of his desire. The question of the direction taken by any force, is included in Newton's second law of motion; the velocity of a moving body is in proportion to the original force which gave it momentum.

The third law, that "action and reaction are equal and opposite," can be observed, in its results, in the place where a force originated. For instance, a shot is fired from a cannon; the reaction is seen in the recoil, which is inevitable, and can be calculated beforehand. The law seems equally applicable in the realm of metaphysics, and it is only by observation and calculation that we can learn to control inevitable reactions, and then redirect them into a useful channel.

The science of mechanics is mainly concerned with work and energy. An illustration, from the text-book, showed a man at work to lift a weight from the ground; when his muscular energy exceeds the maximum of resistance, the weight is moved. "Work is done when the point of application of a force moves." The work is proportional to, first, the force overcome, second, the distance through which it is overcome. There is a third factor to be considered, that of time; and power may be defined as the rate of doing work. The powerful man is he who achieves much, in a short space of time, though his achievements may never be apparent on any outer plane of existence. A further consideration comes in, that of efficiency, which can be tested by the

result. In mechanics it is stated that  $\text{Efficiency} = \frac{\text{work done on the load}}{\text{work done by the force}}$ , or

$\text{Mechanical Advantage} = \frac{\text{work}}{\text{force}}$ . If there is a great output of force, and no

useful work is achieved, the mechanical advantage is nil, and the result is complete waste and loss. In the domain of metaphysics, as in the world of physics, it is important to consider how efficiency may be increased by the right application of force. There is a divine economy in all things, which opposes the output of much energy for a trivial result; unfortunately, in the human order, the rule is frequently transgressed, with consequent loss of time and energy, and inevitable friction to the worker.

Energy is another word which is difficult to define, though its Greek derivation simply means action. "The energy of a body is the power of overcoming resistance, or doing work. Kinetic energy is the energy of matter in motion. All energy which is not kinetic is known as potential energy." The student made a note of this, since the problem of the metaphysician, who tests his theories by action, is much the same, and the work done is proportional to the inertia overcome. But it is wise to remember that, once energy is aroused, it cannot be foreseen what direction it will take in the individual. The result of arousing it prematurely is sometimes startling to the observer, though it is always possible, by discipline, for the individual eventually to guide his energy in the right direction.

The concluding pages of the chapter on mechanics gave remarkable illustrations of the use which can be made of the pulley, which acts after the same principle as the fulcrum of a lever. Every movable pulley reduces by one-half the effort required to raise or support the mass below it. The expert knows how to arrange mechanical contrivances, so as to find the right place to apply force and the right means to control it. Archimedes is said to have boasted that, by an arrangement of levers and pulleys of sufficient magnitude, he could move the world, if only he could find a fulcrum! The study of mechanics was certainly worth while, but the student could not do more than master the simple laws, and was unable to work out their complicated applications. He made a note that, in metaphysics, laws are usually simple in their essence, but capable of an infinite variety of applications. Their validity must be tested in the laboratory of life, before the student can be said to have mastered them.

The student realized that he had acquired, in a short time, a store of scientific information, but unless it were put to use, by frequently thinking it over, and tracing the correspondences in metaphysics and the inevitable conclusions in daily standards of conduct, the information might itself constitute a danger. "Closer insight gives heavier responsibility." He could no longer plead the excuse of ignorance of certain universal laws. He remembered a sentence from a well-loved book: "Science does not therefore deal only with matter, no, not even its subtlest and obscurest forms. . . . Science is a word which covers all forms of knowledge . . . it is not everyone who



restricts his (strictly scientific) desire for knowledge to experiments which are capable of being tested by the physical senses."<sup>6</sup> For him the study of physics had, quite literally, opened up wide horizons and unfolded a new world. Yet he was convinced that such a widening of horizon must be within the scope of all who are willing to "take knowledge," and work for it with steady persistence.

Not all can study a text-book of physics, yet the laws traced in such a book can be found written over all the world of manifested life, and discovered in the most insignificant facts that underlie material existence. "Study all things in this light, and the most physical will at the same time lead to the most spiritual knowledge." What is needed is, not so much scientific information, as a new outlook on life, an eager desire to penetrate beneath the surface to the unchanging and eternal laws which underly every event and circumstance. Such an attitude is perhaps best expressed in the Eastern phrase,—"untying the knot of the heart."

The student had found the same spirit in a book of Western mysticism, and one sentence in particular had delighted him: "He who finds the inner in the outer is in better case than he who finds the inner only in the inner."<sup>7</sup> It was not only the right insight that was needed; it must be allied with a will, like tempered steel, ready to meet every obstacle, to go through every difficulty, for the attainment of that purpose on which the heart is set. He remembered a story of Napoleon that seemed to express what he was striving after. A group of officers was discussing the possibility of a plan, when Napoleon entered the room. "Gentlemen," he said, "if the thing is possible, it is done; if impossible, it shall be done." Energy, adventure, romance,—is not that the spirit of every great Cause, of Theosophy itself?

Scientists tell us of the "romance of physics," the "romance of modern invention." Was there ever Romance like that of the Spiritual Life?

H. S. ELAIS.

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<sup>6</sup> *Light on the Path*, p. 31.

<sup>7</sup> *The Book of the Twelve Béguines*, by Ruysbroeck; p. 31.

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*A wise man, in what condition soever he is, will always be happy, for he subjects all things to himself, submits himself to reason, and governs his actions by counsel, not by passion.*—SENECA.

# MONT SAINT MICHEL

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*Le seul nom du Mont Saint Michel évoque ce que les paysages de France ont de plus grandiose, ce que le patriotisme a de plus inviolé, ce que la religion a de plus saint.*

SIMEON LUCE.

SEVERAL years ago, I had the good fortune to go with a friend on a voyage of discovery in northern France. It was a wonderful trip for me, because I had never been there before, and I was profiting by my friend's knowledge and experience. Our discoveries had been many and varied. We had gone over the battle-fields of Flanders and Picardy, and had surveyed with horror the devastation—much of it repaired, but some irreparable—wrought by the Germans. We had visited with the keenest interest the royal châteaux, which still stand in silent grandeur, though the princes who erected them have long since passed away; we had knelt in the most beautiful houses of worship—great cathedrals, filled with the aspirations and prayers of the people; we had lingered in many Norman towns, rich in history and romance, had woven fancies of the festivals and processions of mediæval townsfolk, and had reconstructed in our minds the magnificent pageant of the Field of the Cloth of Gold.

Our wanderings were to end at Mont Saint Michel, which, we hoped, would set a crowning glory upon our experiences. Before going there we spent a day on the Breton coast and walked out to the tip of a rocky point near Cancale. Seated on a boulder, surrounded by plumed grass and nodding, purple heather, bracing ourselves against the strong wind which swept over that high and exposed spot, we remained a long while without speaking, watching a vividly emerald sea hurl itself in impetuous joy against the sharp, cruel rocks which form the coast. These rocks are of a rich, deep brown, and when the waves break over them, a blinding sheet of foam spreads itself in the sunlight. As we sat there, the roar and swish of the breakers filled our ears, and a steady wind from the East was warm and fragrant. Suddenly my friend, grasping my arm, cried: "Look!" Turning, I saw that which I shall never forget. Before us twenty miles of shimmering water, tossing in restless waves at our feet, but melting into a golden mist in the distance; and there, so ethereal that it seemed part of the mist, a pyramid of gold, rising phantom-like from the sea—Mont Saint Michel!

The next day saw us at Genêts, setting out on a somewhat perilous drive across the *grèves*—the name given to the wide reaches of sand, which, at low tide, surround the Mount. On this particular morning we had the good fortune to be the first people to cross the sands, and they stretched smooth and trackless before us, all previous marks erased by the morning tide. They

were soft and wet under the horse's feet, and at times we plunged into deep pools of water which the sea, in its headlong retreat, had left behind. When we arrived within a mile of Mont Saint Michel, we saw a figure running towards us across the *grèves*, and our driver explained that this was the guide who would lead us past the treacherous quicksands which lay before us. The guide was bare-footed and lightly clad, for sometimes he has to wade through deep water. His skin was burned a dusky bronze by the sun and the sea. In his hand he carried a long, three-pointed fork, and he looked strangely like a spirit of the waters come out to greet us. When he reached hailing distance, he turned suddenly and started back towards the Mount at a jog-trot, every few rods stopping to turn up a small heap of sand with his fork. The marks thus made were to serve as a trail for us to follow, while later visitors would have, to guide them, the deep ruts made by our carriage wheels.

Seen as one approaches it from the East, Mont Saint Michel is divided into three tiers. Rising abruptly from the gleaming sands, the ramparts stretch a protecting arm around the little town which nestles behind them. For a short distance these fortifications follow the lower level, but soon they turn abruptly and clamber up the side of the hill, finally losing themselves among the buildings at the very top. Built in the early XVth century, they have withstood many hundred years of siege by man and by the sea. Safe within them, the town, of scarcely fifty houses, clusters about the base of the rock in a charming confusion of roof-lines and chimneys. Higher up, and crowning the stony hillside, is a splendid group of ancient buildings surmounted by a Gothic church. Poised on the top of its lofty spire is a gleaming, golden figure of Saint Michael, with sword upraised in protection over all France.

We soon reached the entrance to the town, which is well guarded by the beautiful *Porte du Roi*. This strong gateway is stern and forbidding on the outside. The sharp, iron points of a portcullis appear at the top of the arch, and the tall battlements on either side lower menacingly on passers-by. Once inside the gate, however, one is in a typical Norman town, the houses crowding closely on the roughly paved street. From a Gothic niche high up on one of the walls, the figures of the Virgin and Child smile down most graciously. As we proceeded along this, the only street in the place, we caught glimpses of snowy washing, bleaching in the sun, and gaily coloured flowers growing in pots. Most of the housewives who live here must content themselves with potted flowers, as there is little available soil where growing things can be cultivated, and what there is, is generally used for raising a few vegetables. One or two of the houses have vines trailing over them, and there are a few hardy fruit trees wedged in crannies in the rock. In every corner where it is possible is a little patch of grass, which, though it be no larger than a pocket handkerchief, is clipped and cared for as if it were a highly prized lawn.

After stopping to have lunch in an excellent restaurant, we set out to visit the church and abbey buildings above the town. This was to prove no easy task, for it meant an ascent of several hundred feet. Gently, at first, the street slopes upward, past the little parish church, and then the serious climb-

ing begins. The houses are huddled together, and seem to cling to one another as if afraid of slipping down the precipitous hillside. Breathlessly we toiled, and as we paused, gasping, for a moment, the great rock seemed to rise before us like a wall. We clung to each other to keep from falling, rather like the houses, and sympathized with what they must have endured for so many years. The narrow street is forced up and up until, finally, it can endure it no more, and bursts into steps. Soon the end of the town is reached, and the way continues up long flights of stone stairs built on the top of the climbing ramparts. A short distance beyond the last houses, stands a mighty round tower, the *Tour du Nord*. It is pierced with numerous openings through which we can look down a sheer drop of more than a hundred feet to the weatherworn rocks below. From here, in days of old, stones were hurled, and boiling pitch was poured, on the heads of any rash invaders who attempted to scale the walls.

Facing this grim fortification, and in direct contrast to it, is perhaps the loveliest spot on the island. It could scarcely be called a garden, because it has no flowers, only a piece of smooth green turf, shut in by high ivy-covered walls. Against the further wall hangs a large wooden crucifix, beautiful in its simplicity. There is a wonderful peace here. The passing throngs affect it not at all, but those who will, may bear away with them a blessing and a strong sense of the nearness of the unseen world. Up and down go the hurrying throngs of visitors, some rapturously exclaiming at the beauty of the buildings above, others examining with eager curiosity the stern defences of the tower and the ramparts. Hardly one in a hundred gives more than a glance at the simple garden and the plain wooden cross with the patient figure upon it.

It was with great reluctance that we left this still retreat, but time pressed and we had much to see. Before us stretched apparently endless flights of steps, and perhaps no place on earth so well symbolizes the "steep ascent of Heaven" as this arduous climb. At last, however, we reached the entrance to the abbey-fortress, a low archway, flanked by two very tall towers, beyond which a narrow stairway leads upwards, disappearing in the gloom. At the top of this stairway is a bare, dimly lit chamber with passages leading out of it. Following one of these, we came upon dank prison cells, hollowed out of the rock; while beyond them were airy apartments perched high up in the tops of towers; there is the large room which the guard used to occupy, a spacious refectory, a covered walk where the monks took their gentle exercise in bad weather, and all the accessories inevitably connected with a monastery and a citadel. We did not linger long in the church itself, however, as it has recently been completely restored and all its atmosphere destroyed, but we passed on to what was to prove the most beautiful part of the whole abbey. Secure in the shadow of this great structure, the exquisite cloister lies like a jewel. It has a double row of slender columns surmounted by a steep red-tiled roof. In the spandrels of the arches are intricate carvings of delicately wrought foliage and flowers. No two are alike, giving the whole an effect of perfect

rhythm. This cloister has arched openings towards the sea, and I fancy that on hot days, when the sands are quivering under the heat of a scorching sun, a cool breeze playing among the reed-like columns might believe that it had strayed into some faery garden, and be tempted to linger on for ever.

No matter in what part of the abbey one may wander, it is easy to picture in imagination its inmates of former times, going about their daily tasks. The *Salle des Chevaliers* is thronged with knights. Having laid aside their armour, they are grouped about the huge fireplaces, clothed in fur-trimmed robes of rich colours, telling of their encounters in the lists, or perhaps listening to some minstrel, who sits on a broad window ledge, harp in hand, and sings of Roland and Oliver and Charlemagne's peers. The adjoining chamber, the *Salle des Hôtes*, must often have been the scene of grave deliberations during times of siege. The abbot, with a few of his oldest and wisest monks, is planning with the captain of the guard how they can best make a sortie and surprise the besiegers while they sleep. For the Mount was never idle. Always an impregnable stronghold in times of war, it was crowded with pilgrims on more peaceful days, all eager to see the incredible stone structure which springs from the top of the hill, and which is known in France as *la Merveille*. Tradition informs us that some of the early abbots were men of real fervour and insight, and many charming legends are told about them. It is said that Saint Aubert, the bishop who first built a church here, toward the close of the VIIth century, was commanded to do so by Saint Michael, who appeared to him in a dream. For some reason the bishop paid no heed to this summons, and Saint Michael appeared to him again with the same command, and again it was ignored. The persevering Archangel made a third visit to his slothful servant, and this time he pressed his finger on the bishop's skull so firmly that the indentation remained for ever after. Apparently Saint Aubert was convinced by this mark of authority, and proceeded at once to make preparations for the construction of a church on the Mount. It was not until some time later, however, that the buildings as we now see them were erected. A remarkable piece of engineering was achieved here, for the natural formation of the hill is high and rugged. Instead of cutting the summit away to give themselves a broad, firm base on which to build, the architects took the top of the rock as their level, and built a platform at that height to support the church. This daring plan was for the purpose of exalting the Archangel as much as possible.

All this while we had been climbing higher and higher, for the rooms in the abbey are piled one upon the other, instead of being spread out as are most monasteries. One passes from chamber to chamber by flights of steps, which take the place of the usual level passages, and so, by degrees, the summit is reached. The last short flight is no longer of square, rough stones, but of lace,—granite so finely chiselled that it is like the meshes of a bridal veil. It is easy to fly up these ethereal stairs, our feet seem hardly to touch them, and they lead us out on to a broad platform. Suddenly we realize that we are on the very top of the choir of the abbey church, in a forest of delicately carved

Gothic spires. Above, towers the great square lantern with its triple arches, where the bells used to ring in fog and in storm to guide lost mariners on their way. Below are massed the abbey buildings, the sides of which drop perpendicularly down to their firm rock base, and to the town itself, which clings to the lower hillside, well justifying its ancient title of *pendula villa*. Supporting the whole, the solid line of the lower ramparts marks the place where the kingdom of man ends and that of the sea begins.

In whichever direction we turn, a most radiant panorama is spread. Beyond the white sands of the *grèves*, low wooded hills are ranged in a great semi-circle around the bay, each hill crowned with a spire. Back of these, heavy clouds are gathered, deeply fringed with a flame of gold lit by the setting sun. The sun itself is already hidden behind them. To the North, the sands stretch as far as the eye can see, except for a narrow band of white which glistens on the horizon. As we look and wonder what this may be, the wind brings to our ears a murmur "as of many waters,"—and so, indeed, it is! The evening tide is coming in, and in half an hour the sands will have disappeared and we shall be surrounded on all sides by the sea. Gradually the sound increases; the white band draws nearer, and gives a curious impression as of a high wall of foam and waves. Soon streams of turbulent water rush with startling rapidity into the deeper furrows in the sand. As the waters continue to rise, they spread themselves swiftly and silently over the *grèves*, leaving only the higher mounds exposed. Finally these, too, are covered. Woe to the foolhardy adventurer who might have lingered too long on the sands! The sea would soon claim him for its own, for no human foot could outstrip those advancing tides. They are powerless, though, over Mont Saint Michel *au péril de la mer*, and, as always, it stands firm. For over a thousand years the sea has encircled it twice a day, sometimes caressing its rocky base with gentle friendly tides, more often beating and pounding it with a violence which would long since have crumbled a weaker material than its unyielding granite.

The sun had now set, and, in order to reach the mainland before night, we were obliged to descend from our vantage point and make our way to the little vessel which awaited us in the harbour below. Having lain high and dry on the sand all day, it was now set afloat by the tide, and we could see it rising and falling on the waves just outside the gate. It was easy to run down the steps which had been so difficult to ascend, and we paused for a moment before that lovely garden, now so still and grey in the gathering dusk.

At the *Porte du Roi* we found a busy scene, for when the tide is up the water advances far into the street. It is the custom that all visitors to the Mount should be carried to and from their boats at high tide, and there is really no other way of reaching them dry-shod. Four or five strong, fair-haired sailors, true descendants of the Norsemen, were busily wading back and forth with their human burdens. My friend and I watched this amusing sight for a while, when, suddenly, I was seized by strong arms as if I were an infant, and gently but firmly placed in the boat which was awaiting us. There was no chance for refusal or argument, and I was relieved, a moment later, to see

my friend deposited with equal informality at my side. The craft which was to carry us back to Genêts was a fishing boat of sturdy build, and its pilot was a keen-eyed Norman fisherman. As we moved away from under the ramparts, the island with its buildings towered high above us, and its pinnacles seemed to reach up into the sky for ever.

The evening grew rapidly darker, and our pilot, after scanning the sky, warned us that we might expect a shower. Turning our eyes in the direction which he indicated, we noticed that the clouds which we had seen at sunset were covering a large part of the heavens. A cool breeze was carrying us rapidly towards the shore, and, as we looked back, we saw the dark mass hanging low over the water. There was still a broad stretch of pale sky on the horizon, however, and against this, Mont Saint Michel stood out in bold relief. Strong and black and terrible, it loomed out of the leaden sea, the embodiment of unconquered resistance, and, as the distance increased, we looked for the last time at the angelic figure on the summit, soaring lonely and sublime, with sword in hand, the upraised arm and spreading wings forming a cross which seemed to cleave the sky.

Then the cold, silent curtain of the rain fell.

VOYAGEUR.

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*It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.*—EMERSON.

# WHY I JOINED THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

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**H**AD this been asked me at joining, my reply would have been, not merely different, but it would have been untrue. Whenever I look back and think over the years since that time, as one should do, in the increasing light from the Society that has never shone so brightly as now, I see myself in relation to the Movement more clearly than I did then.

It seemed that not until after these many years of discipline, as of actual interior thrashings by outer circumstances, each leaving its mark, that lesson after lesson might be more deeply enforced,—yet as ever so divinely intended, so benignantly leading on to where one feels and will yield to his inner need—did I begin to see myself as I was, and as I now am, compared with what in loyalty I should and could have been. Not till I had learned to reverence life, if not to love and to trust it through the opportunities for understanding which it so benignly and repeatedly brings—did I begin to realize the nature and intention of that which led me into the Society, and which has inwardly brought me to where I am, wherever that may be.

Unlike some at starting, I was mentally lazy. I was therefore morally and spiritually so, or indolent in consciousness. Consequently, I had no very distressing problems either of thought, or of conduct in life, that I wished immediately to solve, such as have come and pressed for solution since, or as other members have had. Yet, as is so often the case, what appeared to me the would-be disciple's crowning virtue was to keep myself physically active, and to cause others to become equally busy; to be as overbearing and brimful of conceit as I was of outer energy in whatever intellectual or other ability I did show, while constantly dreaming of the sacrifices that myself and others should make. Covering all was what seemed humility,—before I was awakened to find it a mere subtle form of my vanity and self-love, as well as a mask for my incompetence and cowardice.

On my way to join, compelled by an inner urging that I had increasingly felt but none the less only half-heartedly obeyed, I had of course dallied here and there with some of the variously devised schemes of thought and organized effort intended for our enlightenment or refinement, or material benefit; lingering with one or the other long enough for me to scan mentally and to fumble with, whatever in it there was that I found interesting at the moment. A little of this or that: from theology and philosophy and literature in their shallows, to something of spiritualism, socialism, politics, science as it is popularly understood, and an appreciation or emotional liking for music and art, as easily accessible. I did not work for any of them, save once, when a mere boy, in a slum mission which strongly appealed to me. Not that the rest had no



depths of meaning, nor disillusioning purpose to serve, so needful for me; but I had neither the insight, nor moral stamina enough, to probe them, or to go into them farther. Yet, not strange to say, so far as I went people welcomed me as one who was in earnest; and I appeared so, even to myself, both of us deceived by the resemblance. I still feel the inwardly benumbing and atrophying effects from it all; now holding me back, or as warning me of a more inner, deadlier level of mediocrity and lassitude that can recur from it on the way to discipleship—whose more threatening, more stealthily vitiating and devitalizing forms I have sometimes to fight.

Later on, beginning to feel conscious of my inner sluggishness, but thinking to cure it by more strenuous outer activity, one day in my hurry and lack of attention I caused considerable damage to a valuable piece of machinery, when I heard a voice, as though from one in undeniable command at my side, say, "Be thorough!" Again, while holding to my own will which was then perversely aroused in defiance of correction from circumstances, I heard that same voice more softly pleading with me to surrender. But even with these to arouse and impress me more deeply, so that they might never be forgotten (though they should have impassioned me), it was a long time before I actually realized that it is always the inner fire that must first be inflamed,—of will and courage, loyalty and love, of the inner virility I needed, and whose deadened embers were at last beginning to burn.

It was this slowly bestirring impulsion from within, working to cure me of my ills, of my perversion of energy and waste of power since the time of my due but delayed responsibility, that started me out and set me inwardly to work on my more ostensible theosophical career, whether I personally wanted to do so or not. It is refreshing, and illuminating too, I find, at this pressing but opportune time for a new beginning, to feel thus stripped in thought for awhile from the self-woven glamour that so closely, so insidiously, enwraps itself around one.

Theosophy, then, is not what my self-caressing, trifling fancy at first took it to mean. Neither is it the system of philosophy, nor the religion, nor the science or art of living, nor the ways of devotion, I have since in turn more seriously thought it to be. As I see its more widely, divinely conceived plan of action for each and for all unfolding, and reaching ever farther back and for ever forward into the years, it shows for me the very path of life itself, in thought and will and deed: its power within, and impelling all; its divine light guiding all, from the tiniest radiant atom now feeling its way, to the highest of the Immortals responsible for its genesis and growth—each beholden for self-consciousness, light and direction, to the next one above him: its self-transfiguring purposes, the way of devotion for all; howsoever slowly evolving, yet leading each one on, in and by ever purer and more beautiful forms, up into and through discipleship, its evolutionary corollary for ourselves; and from there ever onward, in ever ascending degrees of illumination, nascent and conscious responsibility, with ever-increasing love and self-giving, in unbreakable succession. Thus it forms a chain that cannot be broken; how-

ever much such as we—as yet but half awakened from our inner sleep and outer dreaming—may still be so deluded, so be-deviled, I may say, so satisfied with where we are, as to wish to stay as we are, should nothing worse overtake us.

To “become as ‘little children,’ and be led step by step. This represents not merely our only hope of attainment, but it is our only hope of *survival*.”<sup>1</sup>

On looking back it would seem that because of this the Masters founded the Society, and have since fostered it, from where they are, in their yearning care for us. They intended it to serve as a way of light and for more strenuous inner working, up and on, farther yet, from the outer world of mere reflections that we find so bewildering, so inuring and deadening—from wherever each one is; whenever he deeply desires and wills, or feels he has defaulted enough—to what is in reality the human world, *to themselves and the Lodge*. A lay-chêla “is but a man of the world who but affirms his desire to become wise in spiritual things”; and “virtually every member who subscribes to the second of our three declared objects is such, for though not of the number of true chêlas he has the possibility of becoming one, for he has stepped across the boundary line which separated him from the Masters, and has brought himself, as it were, under their notice. In joining the Society and binding himself to help along with it, he has pledged himself to act in some degree in concert with those Masters, at whose behest the Society was founded, and under whose observation and protection it remains.” Active membership therefore confers upon one, from the very beginning, the lay-chêla’s privilege “of working for merit under the observation of a Master,” to whom the effects from the member’s thoughts and deeds, as of the very words he utters, will be known, whether the member may meet that Master in person, or become conscious in any other way of him, or not.

Concerning the deeper meaning or more rigid practice and brighter promise for the future of its third object, the true chêla is one “who has offered himself to a Master,” and has been accepted by him, “as a pupil to learn practically the ‘hidden mysteries of nature and the psychical powers latent in man’”—that, with the knowledge so gained, he may share in the greater responsibility. His must be never ceasing, never failing, self-giving, as he thus goes more fully and freely, and himself leads others, more consciously, into the divine life.”<sup>2</sup>

Inasmuch as this is so in the Society, may it not more directly concern each of us, that the Masters have looked for our coming, from far back in the years, to guide and guard us on our way to them; that a member’s own Master, whoever he may be, and howsoever seemingly far away, will hasten out to meet him—soon, or at sometime later—should the fire from that Master’s love and will and power, so flame within him as for the Master to say: “For this my son was dead and is alive again . . .” A. M.

<sup>1</sup> From *Fragments*, by Cavé; Third volume, p. 96.

<sup>2</sup> The quotations were taken from the article, “Chêlas and Lay-Chêlas,” which appeared in an early number of *The Theosophist*, and was afterwards reprinted in *Five Years of Theosophy*.

# BRIHAD ARANYAKA UPANISHAD

## PART III, SECTIONS 1-7

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### YAJNAVALKYA AND THE BRAHMAN PRIESTS

**W**HEN the great Upanishads were prepared as instructions for disciples, much was done to make the lessons interesting. The dramatic tale of King Janaka's ceremony of sacrifice is vigorously conceived. The characters are all well drawn, the dialogue is vivid and full of humour. Yajnavalkya, the great Initiate who is the chief personage in this, the longest, and in some respects the greatest, of the Upanishads, is a living figure full of wisdom, full of power, and with a strong sense of humour, as is shown at the outset when, even before any test of learning or knowledge has been proposed, he bids his disciple drive home the thousand cattle which King Janaka has offered as the reward for the highest knowledge of the sacred lore. When Ashvala the priest takes him to task, Yajnavalkya serenely answers: "We make obeisance to the best knower of the Eternal, but we desire to have the cows." Then the Brahman priests fall upon him with questions, eager to prove that they know more than he, and the dialogues begin.

In these dialogues is the essence of the teaching for disciples. On the one side stands Yajnavalkya, possessing the sacred wisdom which was attained through Initiation. The heart of this wisdom is the knowledge of the two ways "for those who go forth": the Path of the Gods, and the Path of the Fathers; the way of divine liberation, and the way of reincarnation through the bondage of Karma. On the other side, the Brahman priests do not know these great mysteries. Each answer shows that Yajnavalkya is a master of this hidden wisdom. But the answers of the great Initiate do not fully reveal the secret. It was for the disciples, studying these teachings, to meditate on what he said, and to discover as much as they could for themselves.

Through questions and answers runs a consistent symbolism. The Brahman priests, seeking to catch Yajnavalkya and prove his ignorance, ask concerning the recondite details of the ceremony in which they were about to take part. Besides King Janaka, who ordered the ceremony, four Brahman priests had conspicuous parts in the rite. They stood, one on each side of the altar: the priest who made the offering, the priest who prepared the Soma-juice, the priest who chanted the Vedic hymns, and the priest, who bore the special title of Brahman, whose duty it was to guide and supervise the ceremony, lest it might be vitiated by some ritual defect. It does not appear that any animal was to be offered; it was a ceremony of the sacred fire, symbolical of divine power, like the rite of the Zoroastrians, and the modern Parsees, that is, Persians. The whole ritual was intricate, ceremonial acts to

be carried out with exactitude, with the accompaniment of certain hymns, in reality magical incantations, whose efficacy depended on tone and rhythm. The priests first tried to trip Yajnavalkya with questions concerning details of the complicated ceremony, so that they might claim for themselves the cattle which had been so cheerfully driven off by Yajnavalkya's disciple. But in each case his answers showed a complete mastery of the ritual. In each case they also suggest one aspect or another of the teaching of the Mysteries. Yajnavalkya spoke with a twofold meaning, dealing at once with the outer and the inner, the ritual and the spiritual science. It may be noted in passing that the thousand cattle are also symbolic: they stand for powers of perception "grazing in the field of knowledge"; five stand for the natural powers, vision, hearing and the rest; where the number is ten, or a multiple of ten, the inner senses, spiritual vision, spiritual hearing, and the rest, which are developed and awakened by Initiation, are added.

Answering Ashvala's first question, Yajnavalkya declares that "he who offers the sacrifice" is liberated by Fire, by Voice. His inner meaning is, that the disciple, in Initiation, is liberated by the divine Fire, the divine Word or Logos, Buddhi active, which raises him above the realm of death. Vision and the Sun have a like meaning. The Sun is the universal symbol for the Logos. Vision is the Light of the Logos. The Breath is universal Prana, the building power in the manifested world, an aspect of the universal building power in the unmanifested worlds. The Moon is the universal symbol of dual Manas, of Mind, two-sided, subject to flux and flow, to waxing and waning, and shining by reflected light. The three Rig verses, incantations taken from the hymns of the Rig Veda, stand for the "three worlds": earth, mid-world, heaven; the world of men, the world of the disciple, the world of the Master. In like manner Yajnavalkya uses the offering of melted butter poured on the sacrificial fire to symbolize the three destinies of the soul after death: liberation, paradise of dreams, immediate reincarnation. In the same way the forward-breath stands for the natural energy which impels to physical life; the distributive-breath is the psycho-spiritual energy which expands in the paradise of dreams; the upward-breath is the pure energy of aspiration which leads to the divine world. When Yajnavalkya speaks of the man who has died "expanding and drawing in the outer air" he is describing the expansion of the subjective nature in the paradise of dreams. He says that Name remains to the man; that is the inner individuality, the Sutratma; its energies, manifested in life after life, are the All-powers.

When Artabhaga asks concerning "the spirit of man," Yajnavalkya takes him by the hand and leads him apart. The meaning is, that the answer pertains to the Mystery teaching, not to be discussed in public, but to be revealed only to a disciple.

In the later questions, there are two which strongly suggest the methods of the spiritualists. The wife, and also the daughter, of a certain Patanchala, among the Madras, are possessed by "seraphs." The commentary explains this by saying that a seraph, a Gandharva, is a spirit of some kind, not a

human spirit, because a human spirit could not reveal the answers to such mysterious questions. Regarding the problematic Parikshitas, whose destiny in the hidden worlds the first seraph reveals, we may, perhaps, hazard the guess that their name is derived from a word meaning "ordeal, trial," and that they are "those who have passed through the trials" leading to Initiation. The Upanishad which we are studying began with the symbolism of the "sacrificial horse," as representing the manifested Logos. This would imply an identity between "those who offer the sacred horse" and "those who have passed through the trials," both indicating Initiates. This is borne out by Yajnavalkya's declaration that "he who thus knows, conquers the second death." The second death is the death from the paradise of dreams, which leads to rebirth in this world. He who conquers the second death is freed from the compulsion of rebirth; he "goes no more out; on him the second death has no power," as declared in the Apocalypse.

We are told nothing regarding the identity of the lady Gargi, who rather surprisingly intervenes with a question. But there is a charming fitness in the form of her question, framed in terms of the feminine art of weaving; the lengthwise threads of the warp being first laid on the loom, the crosswise threads are then added with the shuttle. So the lady Gargi asks how the fabric of the worlds is warped and woven, weaving the garment of Divinity. The eloquent answer of Yajnavalkya to Uddalaka hardly needs elucidation.

#### THE ANSWERS OF YAJNAVALKYA

Janaka, verily, King of the Videhas prepared a ceremonial sacrifice accompanied by many gifts. Thither the Brahman priests of the Kuru and Panchala peoples were assembled together. Then in the heart of Janaka, King of the Videhas, there arose a desire to know which of those Brahman priests was most learned in the sacred lore. So he had a thousand cattle brought together in the pen, and ten measures of gold were fixed to the horns of each, five measures on either horn. Then he said to them:

"Worshipful Brahman priest, whichever of you best knows the Eternal, let him take away these cattle."

But those Brahman priests had not the hardihood to do this. So Yajnavalkya said to his disciple: "Samashravas, beloved, drive these cattle home." He drove them home.

Then those Brahman priests were wroth: "How does he call himself the best knower of the Eternal among us?" said they.

Now Ashvala was the priest who made the offering for Janaka, King of the Videhas. He questioned him, saying:

"Yajnavalkya, art thou the best knower of the Eternal among us?"

He said: "We make obeisance to the best knower of the Eternal. But we desire to have the cows."

Then Ashvala, the priest who made the offering, undertook to question him:

"Yajnavalkya," he said, "since all that is here is held by death, since all is

overtaken by death, through whom is he who provides the sacrifice liberated beyond the reach of death?"

"By the priest who makes the offering, by Fire, by Voice. Voice, verily, is he who makes the offering in the sacrifice. That which is this Voice is also this Fire, he who makes the offering. This is liberation, this is liberation beyond the reach of death."

"Yajnavalkya," he said, "since all that is here is held by day and night, since all is overtaken by day and night, through whom is he who provides the sacrifice liberated beyond the reach of day and night?"

"By the priest who prepares the Soma-juice, by Vision, by the Sun. Vision, verily, is the priest who prepares the Soma-juice in the sacrifice. That which is this Vision is also this Sun, he who prepares the Soma-juice. This is liberation, this is liberation beyond the reach of day and night."

"Yajnavalkya," he said, "since all that is here is held by the two halves of the month, the waxing moon and the waning moon, since all is overtaken by the waxing moon and the waning moon, through whom is he who provides the sacrifice liberated beyond the reach of the waxing moon and the waning moon?"

"By the priest who sings the chant, by the Breath, by the Life. The Life, verily, is the priest who sings the chant in the sacrifice. That which is the Life is also the Breath, he who sings the chant. This is liberation, this is liberation beyond the reach of the waxing moon and the waning moon."

"Yajnavalkya," he said, "since the mid-world offers no foothold, as it were, by what ascent does he who offers the sacrifice ascend to the heavenly world?"

"By the priest who guides the ritual, by Mind, by the Moon. Mind, verily, is the priest who guides the ritual in the sacrifice. That which is Mind is also the Moon, he who guides the ritual. This is liberation, this is liberation beyond the reach of the mid-world." So far, liberation. Now the attainments.

"Yajnavalkya," he said, "With how many Rig verses will he who makes the offering operate to-day in this sacrifice?"

"With three."

"Which are the three?" he said.

"The opening verse, the accompanying verse, and the benediction as the third."

"Through these, what does he conquer?" he said.

"Whatever there is here possessing life."

"Yajnavalkya," he said, "how many oblations will the priest who prepares the Soma-juice pour out in this sacrifice to-day?"

"Three."

"Which are the three?" he said.

"Those which flame up when they are offered, those which flow over when they are offered, those which sink down when they are offered."

"Through these, what does he conquer?" he said.

"Those which flame up when they are offered, by them he conquers the

divine world, for the divine world glows like flame, as it were. Those which flow over when they are offered, by them he conquers the world of the fathers, for the world of the fathers is over this world, as it were. Those which sink down when they are offered, by them he conquers the world of men, for the world of men is the world below, as it were."

"Yajnavalkya," he said, "through how many divinities will the priest who guides the ritual, standing on the right hand, protect this sacrifice to-day?"

"Through one."

"Which is the one?" he said.

"Mind. Without end, verily, is Mind. Without end are the All-powers. Through this he conquers the world without end."

"Yajnavalkya," he said, "how many hymns of praise will the priest who sings the chant sing in this sacrifice to-day?"

"Three."

"Which are the three?" he said.

"The opening hymn, the accompanying hymn, and the hymn of benediction as the third."

"Which are they with reference to the self?" he said.

"Forward-breath is the opening hymn. Downward-breath is the accompanying hymn. Distributive-breath is the hymn of benediction."

"Through these, what does he conquer?" he said.

"He conquers the earth-world through the opening hymn, the mid-world through the accompanying hymn, the heavenly world through the benediction."

Thereupon Ashvala, the priest who made the offering, became silent.

And so Artabhaga son of Jaratkaru questioned him:

"Yajnavalkya," he said, "how many apprehenders are there, how many outer apprehenders?"

"Eight apprehenders, eight outer apprehenders."

"These eight apprehenders and eight outer apprehenders, which are they?" he said.

"The forward-breath is an apprehender. It is joined with the downward-breath as outer apprehender, for through the forward-breath he apprehends odours.

"Voice is an apprehender. It is joined with name as outer apprehender, for through voice he utters names.

"The tongue is an apprehender. It is joined with taste as outer apprehender, for through the tongue he distinguishes tastes.

"Vision is an apprehender. It is joined with form as outer apprehender, for through vision he beholds forms.

"Hearing is an apprehender. It is joined with sound as outer apprehender, for through hearing he hears sounds.

"Mind is an apprehender. It is joined with desires as outer apprehender, for through mind he desires desires.

"The two hands are an apprehender. It is joined with work as outer apprehender, for through the two hands he accomplishes work.

"The skin is an apprehender. It is joined with touch as outer apprehender, for through the skin he is aware of contacts.

"These are the eight apprehenders, the eight outer apprehenders."

"Yajnavalkya," he said, "since death consumes all, which is the divinity who consumes death?"

"Death is as fire. It is consumed by the waters. Thus he overcomes the second death."

"Yajnavalkya," he said, "when the man here dies, do the life-breaths depart from him?"

"Not so, not so," said Yajnavalkya; "here, verily, they are drawn together; he expands, he draws in the outer air; drawing it in, he lies dead."

"Yajnavalkya," he said, "what does not leave him?"

"Name. For unending is name; unending are the All-powers; through this he conquers an unending world."

"Yajnavalkya," he said, "when the man here is dead, and to the fire goes his voice, to the wind his life-breath, his vision to the sun, his mind to the moon, to the spaces his hearing, to the earth his body, to the shining ether his self, to plants the hair of his body, to trees the hair of his head, to the waters the blood and seed return, where then is the spirit of the man?"

"Take, beloved, my hand. This, Artabhaga, we two shall know together. It is not for us while with others."

They two, going apart, counselled together. When they spoke, it was of Karma they spoke; when they praised, it was Karma they praised: through good works he becomes good, and evil through evil works.

Thereupon Artabhaga son of Jaratkaru became silent.

And so Bhujyu descendant of Lahya questioned him:

"Yajnavalkya," he said, "Among the Madras as pilgrims we were travelling. We came to the dwelling of Patanchala, of the Kapi clan. He had a daughter, possessed by a seraph. We asked him, 'Who art thou?' He said, 'Sudhanvan, of the Angirasas.' When we were asking him of the ends of the worlds, we said to him, 'What has become of the Parikshitas? What has become of the Parikshitas?' So I ask thee, Yajnavalkya, what has become of the Parikshitas?"

He said: "That one said, 'They have gone thither, whither go those who offer the sacrifice of the sacred horse.'"

"But whither do they go, who offer the sacrifice of the sacred horse?"

"Two and thirty days' journeys of the sun god is this world of men in extent. Twice as great is the whole earth, surrounding it. Twice as great is the ocean, surrounding the earth. Then, as is a razor's edge, or a mosquito's wing, so great, in the space between, is the shining ether. Indra, becoming as a winged one, delivered them to the Breath. The Breath, bestowing them within himself, conveyed them thither, where are those who offer the sacred horse. Thus, as it were, the seraph praised the Breath. For the Breath is the expansion and the drawing together. He who thus knows, conquers the second death."



Thereupon Bhujyu descendant of Lahya became silent.

And so Ushasta descendant of Chakra questioned him:

"Yajnavalkya," he said, "that which is the Eternal, known eye to eye, not by the eye of another, the Self within all, that reveal thou to me."

"It is thy divine Self, Atma, within all."

"Which one, Yajnavalkya, is within all?"

"He who breathes forward through the forward-breath is thy divine Self within all. He who breathes downward through the downward-breath is thy divine Self within all. He who breathes distributively through the distributive breath is thy divine Self within all. He who breathes upward through the upward-breath is thy divine Self within all. This is thy divine Self within all."

Ushasta descendant of Chakra said: "This has been explained to me as if one were to say, 'That is a cow, that is a horse!' That which is the Eternal, known eye to eye, not by the eye of another, that reveal thou to me."

"It is thy divine Self, within all."

"Which one, Yajnavalkya, is within all?"

"The seer of seeing thou mayest not see. The hearer of hearing thou mayest not hear. The thinker of thinking thou mayest not think. The knower of knowing thou mayest not know. This is thy divine Self within all. All other than this is subject to affliction."

Thereupon Ushasta descendant of Chakra became silent.

And so Kahola descendant of Kushitaka questioned him:

"Yajnavalkya," he said, "that which is the Eternal, known eye to eye, not by the eye of another, the Self within all; that reveal thou to me."

"It is thy divine Self, within all."

"Which one, Yajnavalkya, is within all?"

"He who rises above hunger and thirst, sorrow and infatuation, decay and death, knowers of the Eternal who have perceived this divine Self, overcoming the longing for sons, the longing for wealth, the longing for the world of men, set forth on the pilgrimage. For this longing for sons is a longing for wealth, and the longing for wealth is a longing for the world of men, for both of these are the same longing. Therefore, let the knower of the Eternal turn from learning and seek to become a child. Let him turn from the child state and from learning and seek to become a silent seer. Let him turn from silence and what is beyond silence and seek to become a knower of the Eternal."

"Through what may he become a knower of the Eternal?"

"Through that whereby he so becomes. All other than this is subject to affliction."

Thereupon Kahola descendant of Kushitaka became silent.

And so Gargi daughter of Vachaknu questioned him:

"Yajnavalkya," she said, "Since all this is warped and woven on the waters, on what, then, are the waters warped and woven?"

"On the Breath, Gargi."

"On what is the Breath warped and woven?" she said.

"On the intermediate worlds, Gargi."

"On what, then, are the intermediate worlds warped and woven?" she said.

"On the worlds of the seraphs, Gargi."

"On what, then, are the worlds of the seraphs warped and woven?" she said.

"On the sun worlds, Gargi."

"On what, then, are the sun worlds warped and woven?" she said.

"On the moon worlds, Gargi."

"On what, then, are the moon worlds warped and woven?" she said.

"On the star worlds, Gargi."

"On what, then, are the star worlds warped and woven?" she said.

"On the worlds of radiant beings, Gargi."

"On what, then, are the worlds of radiant beings warped and woven?" she said.

"On the worlds of Lord Indra, Gargi."

"On what, then, are the worlds of Lord Indra warped and woven?" she said.

"On the worlds of the Lord of beings, Gargi."

"On what, then, are the worlds of the Lord of beings warped and woven?" she said.

"On the worlds of the Eternal, Gargi."

"On what, then, are the worlds of the Eternal warped and woven?" she said.

He said: "Gargi, question no farther, lest thy head fall apart! Thou art questioning too far concerning a Divinity not to be questioned. Gargi, question no farther!"

Thereupon Gargi daughter of Vachaknu became silent.

And so Uddalaka son of Aruna questioned him:

"Yajnavalkya," he said, "Among the Madras we were dwelling in the abode of Patanchala son of Kapi. He had a wife possessed by a seraph. We asked him, 'Who art thou?' He said, 'Kabandha Atharvana.' He said to Patanchala son of Kapi and to those who were learning the sacrifice, 'Patanchala, son of Kapi, knowest thou the thread by which this world and the other world and all beings are tied together?' Then Patanchala son of Kapi said, 'I know it not, Sire.' He said to Patanchala son of Kapi and to those who were learning the sacrifice, 'Knowest thou, son of Kapi, the inner ruler, who rules from within this world and the other world and all beings?' Then Patanchala son of Kapi said, 'I know him not, Sire.' He said to Patanchala son of Kapi and to those who were learning the sacrifice, 'Son of Kapi, he who knows that thread and the inner ruler, he knows the worlds, he knows the bright powers, he knows the Vedas, he knows beings, he knows the divine Self, he knows all things.' He declared it to them, therefore I know it. Therefore, if thou, Yajnavalkya, without knowing the thread and the inner ruler, drivest off these cows bestowed on the Brahman priests, thy head will fall apart."

"In truth, son of the Gotamas, I know the thread and the inner ruler," he said.

"Anyone may say, 'I know, I know!' But as thou knowest, so declare!"

He said, "The Breath, son of the Gotamas, is the thread. By the Breath,

verily, as by a thread, this world and the other world and all beings are tied together. Therefore, son of the Gotamas, they say of a man from whom life has gone forth, that his limbs have slackened. For by the Breath, son of the Gotamas, as by a thread they are tied together."

"Even so, Yajnavalkya. Declare the inner ruler."

"He who, abiding in the earth, is other than the earth, whom the earth knows not, of whom the earth is a body, who inwardly rules the earth, this is thy divine Self, the inner ruler, immortal.

"He who, abiding in the waters, is other than the waters, whom the waters know not, of whom the waters are a body, who inwardly rules the waters, this is thy divine Self, the inner ruler, immortal.

"He who, abiding in fire, is other than fire, whom fire knows not, of whom fire is a body, who inwardly rules fire, this is thy divine Self, the inner ruler, immortal.

"He who, abiding in the interspace, is other than the interspace, whom the interspace knows not, of whom the interspace is a body, who inwardly rules the interspace, this is thy divine Self, the inner ruler, immortal.

"He who, abiding in the sky, is other than the sky, whom the sky knows not, of whom the sky is a body, who inwardly rules the sky, this is thy divine Self, the inner ruler, immortal.

"He who, abiding in the sun, is other than the sun, whom the sun knows not, of whom the sun is a body, who inwardly rules the sun, this is thy divine Self, the inner ruler, immortal.

"He who, abiding in the spaces, is other than the spaces, whom the spaces know not, of whom the spaces are a body, who inwardly rules the spaces, this is thy divine Self, the inner ruler, immortal.

"He who, abiding in moon and stars, is other than moon and stars, whom moon and stars know not, of whom moon and stars are a body, who inwardly rules moon and stars, this is thy divine Self, the inner ruler, immortal.

"He who, abiding in shining ether, is other than shining ether, whom shining ether knows not, of whom shining ether is a body, who inwardly rules shining ether, this is thy divine Self, the inner ruler, immortal.

"He who, abiding in darkness, is other than darkness, whom darkness knows not, of whom darkness is a body, who inwardly rules darkness, this is thy divine Self, the inner ruler, immortal.

"He who, abiding in radiance, is other than radiance, whom radiance knows not, of whom radiance is a body, who inwardly rules radiance, this is thy divine Self, the inner ruler, immortal. So far concerning divinities.

"Now concerning the powers of beings. He who, abiding in all beings, is other than all beings, whom all beings know not, of whom all beings are a body, who inwardly rules all beings, this is thy divine Self, the inner ruler, immortal. So far concerning the powers of beings.

"Now concerning the self. He who, abiding in life-breath, is other than life-breath, whom life-breath knows not, of whom life-breath is a body, who inwardly rules life-breath, this is thy divine Self, the inner ruler, immortal.

"He who, abiding in voice, is other than voice, whom voice knows not, of whom voice is a body, who inwardly rules voice, this is thy divine Self, the inner ruler, immortal.

"He who, abiding in vision, is other than vision, whom vision knows not, of whom vision is a body, who inwardly rules vision, this is thy divine Self, the inner ruler, immortal.

"He who, abiding in hearing, is other than hearing, whom hearing knows not, of whom hearing is a body, who inwardly rules hearing, this is thy divine Self, the inner ruler, immortal.

"He who, abiding in mind, is other than mind, whom mind knows not, of whom mind is a body, who inwardly rules mind, this is thy divine Self, the inner ruler, immortal.

"He who, abiding in touch, is other than touch, whom touch knows not, of whom touch is a body, who inwardly rules touch, this is thy divine Self, the inner ruler, immortal.

"He who, abiding in intelligence, is other than intelligence, whom intelligence knows not, of whom intelligence is a body, who inwardly rules intelligence, this is thy divine Self, the inner ruler, immortal.

"He who, abiding in seed, is other than seed, whom seed knows not, of whom seed is a body, who inwardly rules seed, this is thy divine Self, the inner ruler, immortal.

"The unseen seer, the unheard hearer, the unthought thinker, the unknown knower: other than He there is no seer, other than He there is no hearer, other than He there is no thinker, other than He there is no knower. He is thy divine Self, the inner ruler, immortal."

Thereupon Uddalaka son of Aruna became silent.

C. J.

(To be continued)

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*Over all hostile circumstances let me triumph in Thy inspiring strength; the inward transfiguration is better than the outward.*—A. SMELLIE.

# THE TYRANNY OF HABIT

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IT has been said that it is just as easy to form a good habit as it is to form a bad habit, and that it is done in exactly the same way. A moment's thought will make us realize the truth of this statement. In the first place, it is a question of our motive and purpose, whether they are high and selfless, or whether they are tinged and coloured by the lower nature. In accordance with this motive and purpose, so will our desires, our thoughts, be right or wrong. Whichever they may be, we brood over them in our hearts, we turn them over in our minds, we identify ourselves with them, we bring the full force of our imagination to bear, until inevitably in the course of time we translate these inner thoughts and desires into outer acts. We repeat these acts, and habit is formed. Perhaps our motive and our desire have been right; perhaps we have made a right use of the imagination, have employed right self-identification, and the resulting habit is a good one. What, however, if it be a bad habit? How may we get rid of it, change it, make it permanently good?

St. Augustine in his *Confessions* states, not as a theory but as a truth, that the law of sin is the tyranny of habit. As one reads, one becomes impressed with the reality that lies behind his assertion. One is conscious that Augustine spoke with authority; that he had tested and proved all things, on each plane of the inner life, by a steady questioning of experience. He makes it clear, on each successive higher plane, that it is not a question of attaining first to an understanding of truth, and then to mastery of the lower nature, nor first to self-mastery and then to truth. He shows that the two efforts are mutually helpful and go hand in hand; that it is a dual progress; that recurring familiar problems, persistence of old faults and habits of mind, on successively higher planes of consciousness, are in reality opportunities, milestones along the way. The point is reached at which, the heart definitely turned to the spiritual world and the will consciously aligned, the imagination, alive and watchful, seeks in turn for its opportunity. He treats, then, of those obstructions to progress which persist; of those habits of thought, those habits of action which, tyrannous and strong, still impose their will. He helps us to analyze their origin and their characteristics, to understand how and why they operate, to circumvent and to demolish these last strongholds of the lower nature.

To the student of Theosophy it is as a practical treatise on the first steps toward chelaship that the *Confessions* particularly appeal; for in whatever moulds of thought and belief they may be written, throughout them runs a familiar and universal strain. The underlying principle, the first and ultimate essential of his quest, was union with that inner world of spirit of which we are in our higher selves a part, and without which our hearts are restless

until we rest therein. Truth, known and understood, nourishes the whole nature of man. Truth, once realized, must be applied in practice. There lies the test. Yet we must not seek to put perception first, making insight precede the will. Equally is it a mistake to put the will first, trusting that action will bring experience, and that experience in its turn will bring insight and wisdom.

It is impossible, however, within the confines of this short article, to trace further parallels, to establish other contacts. Rather is this an attempt to examine in practical terms, in terms of that divine wisdom than which no other is more practical, this brief quotation,—“For the law of sin is the tyranny of habit.” To what extent is this true? If true, why is it true? What are the practical mechanics of the matter? How do they work? How are we to get rid of wrong habit?

The quotation is really the summing up of particular and practical experience. Elsewhere Augustine shows that, in the first instance, the desire for evil comes from a perverse will; that the service of evil ends in habit; that acquiescence in habit produces necessity. It would be possible to paraphrase this in somewhat different terms, without sacrificing anything of its truth and of its meaning; to say that the desire to express self-will comes from a will turned against the divine Light; that self-will, given expression, ends in habitual similar self-expression; that continued acquiescence in such habitual self-expression results in the necessity of giving the habit, thus formed, full play. Let us examine, in these terms, specific instances of the tyranny of habit.

To those who have any knowledge of the men among whom the Rescue Mission does its work, the case of the habitual drunkard will at once suggest itself as an example. Here, gratification of self, indulgence of self, is the desire, the motive; the will is perverted to this end. Repeated indulgence in drink, or in vice of one form or another, becomes a habit. This habit is intensified as psychic moulds are formed, as physiological reactions are set up, until a vicious circle is established,—long-continued acquiescence in the habit producing the necessity of gratifying it at all costs. At last, of himself able to do nothing to set himself free, he appeals for help outside himself. Through religion, in one form or another, some measure of light illumines his darkness. He recognizes at least that the habit of drinking is the result of sin in himself, although he may be totally unable to trace the various steps from the inception of that sin in himself, to the complete conquest of his higher nature by the devastating habit. In any case, the glimpse which he gets of the significance and meaning of the tyranny of habit, brings him to the threshold of being able to understand something of what Augustine means when he speaks of the law of sin.

We may agree with all this in theory, as a matter of academic interest, making the mental reservation, however, that such crude and elementary experience can have nothing whatever to do with us in any way, or afford any parallel to those absorbing and highly interesting complexities within our-

selves. Yet, actually, if there be any difference, it is in the kind of experience and not in the fundamentals of its character; for the point is that our vision of ourselves is often considerably impaired by our involuntary self-admiration at the very magnitude of these inner complexities of ours. We forget that the greater our inner complexity, the greater is the probable element of evil in it. We lose sight of the fact—if we allow for our far greater opportunities and the extent of our privileges—that there is within us an element of evil fully as ugly as in the Mission convert.

Take the sin of temper. Our comfort is disturbed; our will is crossed; some pet scheme of ours is blocked, from the success of which we may have hoped much for others, but into which we have insensibly been weaving more self-interest than we had realized. We are hurt, angry, disappointed; we indulge our lower nature by dwelling on our grievance, until our feeling comes out in words. We speak sharply, crossly. Then we are sorry; but we do not go to the root of the matter, within. Instead, we try merely to check the expression of our annoyance. On the next occasion we find that it is more difficult not to vent our temper in words; and still more difficult on each succeeding occasion, until to our dismay we discover that we have formed the habit of speaking crossly, sharply; that we must indulge this habit; that we can no longer control it, but that it controls us. With the growth of this outer habit we find that we are more ready, inside, to resent fancied slights, to criticize, to look for grievances, to insist on our own way. The vicious circle is again established. The tyranny of habit is again, in its turn, imposing an additional burden of sin.

So, whether in the crude example of the Rescue Mission convert, or in the more subtle problem of controlling our temper, the indulgence of the outer habit increases with the uncontrolled exercise of self-will. We are afraid, let us say; because we are afraid, we refuse absolutely to take some step, up to which life itself has been leading us little by little. Why? Because, perhaps, we think that our dignity may be impaired; that the surroundings in which we shall find ourselves may be uncongenial; that we may undergo some financial disadvantage; that we may suffer physically. In our repeated refusals to advance, we strengthen the force of those fears within us; each time we yield to them, we become increasingly more afraid. This time our self-will has taken a slightly different form of concentration on self, until we are powerless to take any step forward, either without or within. Innumerable instances might thus be given of the ways in which the tyranny of habit, inner or outer, increases for us, through our repeated yielding to it, the burden of the Karma which we must necessarily bear. Two-fold in its effect, our habit doubly lengthens the whole process of our relief. Not the least part of that added burden lies in the darkening of our insight and imagination. Finally, we are totally unable to see the significance and inter-relation of events, or to recognize the intervention of spiritual powers, or to perceive that in truth they are leading and directing in person, and that all we have to do is to obey. We miss, too, the significance of words, spoken or written. We take words at

their face value only, without applying them to ourselves, until they become for us utterly valueless and meaningless.

It is a common experience and a common complaint to-day that the Churches do not satisfy; that there is nothing real or alive in the average Church Service; that the stereotyped prayers and the conventional ritual are cold and dead; that any vital spark of feeling is buried so deep that it is well-nigh impossible to dig it out, and hardly worth while to try to do so. Many people quite frankly, and, they think, quite honestly, ascribe this feeling to the fact, as they call it, that they were given too great a dose of religion as children. They complain that they were taken to Church with such unflinching regularity, and heard the lessons and the prayers read so many times, that all meaning vanished from the words. As they grew older a sort of hard outer shell was formed, which became entirely impervious to all flow of feeling, until, they complain, it became a habit to pay no attention whatever to what they heard. Whatever element of truth there may be in this, it would be interesting to know to what extent the element of self-will had entered in. How often, as children, did they rebel against going to Church because it interfered with plans for play? How often, older in years but still like children, did the necessity of hearing these same prayers, this same ritual, interfere with some equally delightful form of self-expression? Later on, these same people, through the pressure of life itself, through trouble, through the need of comfort and help, return to these discarded forms, and, because some measure of right consciousness is at last awakened, they find in them new life and new meaning. But to what extent does the tyranny of old habits of mind, old moulds of thought, prevent them from grasping the full extent of that meaning, the full measure of that life?

How may we rid ourselves of the tyranny of wrong habit, and of all that holds us back? Not—Augustine points out, and Theosophy teaches—by first striving to attain to inner heights, nor by first concentrating on the habit itself. To each one the way of application must vary, as his own individual needs and problems differ from those of others. But when the heart is once turned, we *want* to change the habit. The reverse of the process outlined by Augustine has begun. The will is no longer perverted, but is swung over to the side of the heart, aligned with it, at one with that divine light which has begun to permeate the heart itself. And then, alive at last within, alert and watchful, understanding the situation and the steps which have led up to it, we concentrate mind and perception and imagination on the way to change. We strive to substitute a good habit for a bad habit; to replace the one which we have come to loathe, with its opposite. We strive, for instance, to replace fear with courage, that always we may act courageously; we strive so to increase within us, love and tolerance and compassion, that it may become impossible for us any longer to vent our temper. The old inner things have passed away; all outer things have become new.

When we reach this point of inner replacement, so to speak, we shall find that the very habit itself, which we are trying to replace, may be of inestimable



assistance. In an instant of carelessness or of inattention, the old outer habit may momentarily reassert itself. This will serve at once as a reminder of the way in which we definitely do *not* want outwardly to do things. Then, alert again through this intimation from the inner world, we set ourselves to use our opportunity; we force ourselves to act as if we were full of courage, or of sympathy, or of whatever virtue we may have failed to exercise. We force ourselves to ignore the inner hurt or disappointment, and to speak graciously and with courtesy, to control our voice, its tones and all outward expression. We *do* the positive opposite.

So, once the understanding and desire have come, it is possible to use the old external things, and by their right use to force further inner understanding and greater desire. It is a well known fact that commanding officers in the Army insist that raw recruits shall begin at once to salute in a punctilious and military manner. It might be thought that *esprit de corps* should be inculcated first, and that, this once done, voluntary and punctilious saluting would follow as a natural consequence. As a practical matter, it has been found that the external act helps to arouse the inner feeling; the *esprit de corps* is there, and men find it by their involuntary acknowledgment of its presence. First of all, and primarily, they obey, and in obedience they find an easier way, a fuller and a better understanding. So, too, shall we, if we will only try it; for in obedience, in the last analysis, lies relief from the tyranny of habit. To the extent of our obedience shall we be free from the law of sin; in the measure in which we obey shall we be free to see and to know, and to hear the Song of Life within our hearts.

S. D.

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*Strength of character consists of two things.—power of will and power of self-restraint. It requires two things, therefore, for its existence,—strong feelings and strong command over them.—ROBERTSON*



## MEDITATION, CONCENTRATION, WILL.<sup>1</sup>

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THESE three, meditation, concentration, will, have engaged the attention of Theosophists perhaps more than any other three subjects. A canvass of opinions would probably show that the majority of our reading and thinking members would rather hear these subjects discussed, and read definite directions about them, than any others in the entire field. They say they must meditate, they declare a wish for concentration, they would like a powerful will, and they sigh for strict directions, readable by the most foolish theosophist. It is a western cry for a curriculum, a course, a staked path, a line and rule by inches and links. Yet the path has long been outlined and described, so that any one could read the directions whose mind had not been half-ruined by modern false education, and memory rotted by the superficial methods of a superficial literature and a wholly vain modern life.

Let us divide Meditation into two sorts. First, is the meditation practised at a set time, or an occasional one, whether by design or from physiological idiosyncrasy. Second, is the meditation of an entire lifetime, that single thread of intention, intentness, and desire running through the years stretching between the cradle and the grave. For the first, in Patanjali's *Aphorisms* will be found all needful rules and particulars. If these are studied and not forgotten, then practice must give results. How many of those who reiterate the call for instruction on this head have read that book, only to turn it down and never again consider it? Far too many.

The mysterious subtle thread of a life meditation is that which is practised every hour by philosopher, mystic, saint, criminal, artist, artisan, and merchant. It is pursued in respect to that on which the heart is set; it rarely languishes; at times the meditating one greedily running after money, fame and power, looks up briefly and sighs for a better life during a brief interval, but the passing flash of a dollar or a sovereign recalls him to his modern senses, and the old meditation begins again. Since all theosophists are here,

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<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from *The Irish Theosophist*, of July 15th, 1893.

in the social whirl I refer to, they can every one take these words to themselves as they please. Very certainly, if their life meditation is fixed low, down near the ground, the results flowing to them from it will be strong, very lasting, and related to the low level on which they work. Their semi-occasional meditations will give precisely semi-occasional results in the long string of recurring births.

"But, then," says another, "what of concentration? We must have it. We wish it; we lack it." Is it a piece of goods that you can buy it, do you think, or something that will come to you just for the wishing? Hardly. In the way we divided meditation into two great sorts, so we can divide concentration. One is the use of an already acquired power on a fixed occasion, the other the deep and constant practice of a power that has been made a possession. Concentration is not memory, since the latter is known to act without our concentrating on anything, and we know that centuries ago the old thinkers very justly called memory a phantasy. But by reason of a peculiarity of the human mind, the associative part of memory is awaked the very instant concentration is attempted. It is this that makes students weary, and at last drives them from the pursuit of concentration. A man sits down to concentrate on the highest idea he can formulate, and, like a flash, troops of recollections of all sorts of affairs, old thoughts and impressions, come before his mind, driving away the great object he first selected, and concentration is at an end.

This trouble is only to be corrected by practice, by assiduity, by continuance. No strange and complicated directions are needed. All we have to do is to try, and to keep on trying.

The subject of the Will has not been treated much in theosophical works, old or new. Patanjali does not go into it at all. It seems to be inferred by him through his aphorisms. Will is universal, and belongs not only to man and animals, but also to every other natural kingdom. The good and bad man alike have will, the child and the aged, the wise and the lunatic. It is therefore a power devoid in itself of moral quality. That quality must be added by man.

So the truth must be that will acts according to desire, or, as the older thinkers used to put it, "behind will stands desire." This is why the child, the savage, the lunatic, and the wicked man so often exhibit a stronger will than others. The wicked man has intensified his desires, and with that his will. The lunatic has but few desires, and draws all his will force into these; the savage is free from convention, from the various ideas, laws, rules, and suppositions to which the civilized person is subject, and has nothing to distract his will. So to make our will strong we must have fewer desires. Let those be high, pure, and altruistic; they will give us strong will.

No mere practice will develop will *per se*, for it exists for ever, fully developed in itself. But practice will develop in us the power to call on that will which is ours. Will and Desire lie at the doors of Meditation and Concentration. If we desire truth with the same intensity that we had formerly wished for

success, money, or gratification, we shall speedily acquire meditation and possess concentration. If we do all our acts, small and great, every moment, for the sake of the whole human race, as representing the Supreme Self, then every cell and fibre of the body and inner man will be turned in one direction, resulting in perfect concentration. This is expressed in the *New Testament* in the statement that if the eye is single the whole body will be full of light; and in the *Bhagavad Gita* it is still more clearly and comprehensively given through the different chapters. In one it is beautifully put as the lighting up in us of the Supreme One, who then becomes visible. Let us meditate on that which is in us, as the Highest Self, concentrate upon it, and will to work for it as dwelling in every human heart.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE.

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*The best armour of old age is a well-spent life preceding it; a life employed in the pursuit of useful knowledge, in honourable actions and the practice of virtue; in which he who labours to improve himself from his youth will in age reap the happiest fruits of them: not only because these never leave a man, not even in the extremest old age, but because a conscience bearing witness that our life was well spent, together with the remembrance of past good actions, yields an unspeakable comfort to the soul.—CICERO.*

# ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

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THE Philosopher took the floor. "There are students of Theosophy," he said, "who are altogether too free and easy with the Absolute. They forget that definition limits, and that, whatever the Absolute may be, the word itself excludes the idea of limitation. This is the kind of statement to which I object: 'Evolution is the result of a purpose, but it is not a conscious purpose, a plan directed by any faculty like that of consciousness in human beings, because, as the Aryan sages understood ages ago, a perceptive consciousness, based on the division of subject and object, cannot rightly be postulated of the All, which is inherently one.' My impression is that while the Aryan sages would have refused to postulate that sort of consciousness as being that of the Absolute, they would also have refused to exclude it from the Absolute, because exclusion necessarily implies limitation. However, quite apart from Aryan sages, it should be clear, I think, that it is dangerous to try to shut up the Absolute within the confines of our present experience. If anyone imagines that consciousness is based on the perception of subject and object, all I can say is that I have reason to believe him mistaken. The state of mystical Union—and there is universal testimony as to its reality—proves the contrary. In Mahayana Buddhism, for instance, while Enlightenment (*anuttara-samyak-sambodhi*) results in Liberation, Enlightenment, not Liberation, is the goal; and Enlightenment can be obtained by exercising the faculty of Prajna, an aspect of Buddhi, not by means of the intellect (*Vijnāna*). Prajna, when truly functioning, lifts us above the dualism of matter and spirit, subject and object, ignorance and wisdom, thus giving us the Enlightenment which means direct perception of the truth. It was full Enlightenment of this sort that Gautama gained, or regained, at Gayā while meditating under the Bodhi-tree; but he did not thereby *lose* awareness of those states of consciousness based on a division of subject and object; he included those states and all other states—without being deluded by them—within the vast expansion of his being and vision. In other words, having been able to perceive as men perceive, Enlightenment gave him the ability to perceive *also* as minerals perceive, as trees and plants perceive, as ants and birds and animals and gods and demons and all the hierarchies of heaven perceive, to heights beyond our ken (please do not try to define them!),—and all this as one and the same condition, both within and above time."

"That is both interesting and valuable," said the Recorder, "and I am very glad to have it; but I don't want to devote all our space to metaphysics. May I have something of wider appeal?"

"First let me ask one question, please," the Student interjected. Then, turning to the Philosopher: "Do the Mahayana Buddhists say that the faculty of Prajna is possessed by all men, at all stages of development?"

"They do," the Philosopher replied; "they teach that all beings, sentient or non-sentient, *potentially* are Bodhisattvas, no matter how dormant the Prajna faculty in them may be; no matter how many millions of births may be needed before Prajna becomes active as the instrument of Enlightenment."

"What a pity that Christianity does not teach that all men are potential Christs!" exclaimed the Agnostic. "How far more ennobling such doctrine would be, than the belief that Christ was unique, and that we, inherently evil, can be saved only by faith in his unique divinity."

"That was just my point," said the Student. "Christianity *does* teach that all men are potential Christs. It was Christ himself who said: 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' It was Paul the Apostle who spoke of us as 'heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ,' and of Christ as 'the firstborn among many brethren.' The doctrine you so rightly despise," he continued, turning to the Agnostic, "was invented by the Church in later centuries. The early Fathers taught otherwise. I could give you quotation after quotation from their writings, though I have only one with me, which I happened to note this morning from a homily by Saint Macarius the Egyptian, who was born about 300 A.D. This: 'He was called Christ, in order that we also, being anointed with the same oil with which He was anointed, might become Christs, of the one substance and one body.'"

"Thank you," the Recorder responded. "And now I want the fruit of someone's meditation,—fresh fruit."

There was a pause. "What does this mean?" he asked. "Meditations without fruit? Or were the meditations so sublime, so exalted, that mortal speech cannot reveal their mysteries?"

They laughed. None the less, thus goaded, minds worked more quickly, until the Engineer produced a really helpful suggestion. "It dawned upon me the other day," he said, "that wherever the mind is interested, there is seen a next step to take. It may not perhaps be clearly defined or known as yet, but we are consciously working toward it none the less. In business, for instance, if there be no next step ahead—an economy to put into effect, a new field of sales effort, or a new article to produce—we may be sure that the management is stale, unfruitful, unequal to its task. Obviously this is true also of the spiritual life. If we are not working consciously toward a next step of a definite kind, it means that our minds are not really interested, and that we are only going through the motions of trying. The would-be disciple—much more, the disciple—whose heart is in his effort, is invariably working to complete and perfect some step already undertaken, and is doing so as a preliminary to attempting some other step which he sees ahead of him, with a still further step in the distance, less clearly defined, as next year's objective. Perhaps the education of a child is the best analogy, because it would be difficult to conceive of anyone undertaking it without having several next steps in view.

"So we have a test of the genuineness of our interest in the inner life of the

soul, in our own spiritual development, and, therefore, of the genuineness of our desire to serve the Masters."

The Historian was the next to volunteer. "I have been thinking along different lines," he said, "although, as so often happens among us, our lines converge,—presumably because their origin is the same. I had been reading a 'filler,' which a friend had sent for use in the *QUARTERLY*,—a quotation from F. W. Robertson: 'Few men suspect how much mere talk fritters away spiritual energy; that which should be spent in action, spends itself in words. Hence he who restrains that love of talk, lays up a fund of spiritual strength.' I thought how few people seem to realize the truth of this commonplace of experience; even students of Theosophy, who should know better, waste hours in purposeless talk. Then I realized that the conquest of this, as well as of other phases of lower nature, is made difficult by our blindness to their perversity,—to their ugliness; and that this blindness is due to habit. Thus, if a man steal for the first time, his conscience will reproach him, and he will see something, at least, of the inherent hideousness and sinfulness of what he has done. If he repeat his offence, his conscience will still reproach him, but his sin will not seem as serious as it did on the first occasion. So it will go, until he will reach the point at which he is able to do no more than admit, on general principles, that stealing is not right, but will be full of self-justification for his own breaches of the general rule. Further than that, he will at last be quite incapable of seeing that what he has done is, in fact, stealing.

"Exactly the same thing is true of vanity and of all the sins and weaknesses against which the would-be disciple struggles. If the sin be old and deep-seated, he will not see it. His attention called to it by some older student perhaps, he will be obliged intellectually to recognize his tendency, but, hating it in others, he will not be able to hate it in himself. He will have lost that power because his sin has become habitual, and because habitual sin means blindness.

"We turn violently against the sin we recognize; against the sin we see for what it is, in all its hideousness. In that case, we leave it instantly behind us; we do not have to struggle against it. If we have to struggle; if we fight and fail, and pick ourselves up to fight again, it is proof that we have not fully turned from it, and that therefore we have not truly seen it.

"How see it? It is impossible to see it at first 'as the Masters see it,'—although this is the effort of many misguided students. We cannot jump from hell to the upper reaches of Paradise. We must force ourselves, by effort of will and imagination, into the point of view of our friends, and then of our enemies. We must make ourselves see out of their eyes. It is best to begin with some one person, whose good opinion of us we value, either an older student, or possibly a younger student whom we are trying to help. Think of him as seeing this weakness in us,—of hearing us say such and such a thing which we said yesterday, or of doing something, such as we did some weeks ago, or of thinking something which we habitually think in some form or other: what would his reaction be? In other words, having lost the sight of our own

eyes, we must begin by using the sight of others, as a necessary step toward the recovery of the use of our own.

"There is, of course, a still lower depth to which people fall,—and there are would-be disciples among them; that is, as the fruit of long-continued self-indulgence and of deliberate self-blinding, to have become convinced that 'everybody does it,' and that it is only hypocrisy or self-deception in others which makes them disapprove of what *I* do. Once that stage is reached, I do not see how anyone can use the eyes of others to help him to see. His last resort in that case, is to admit, theoretically, that it is not ideal, and to try, by some means or other, to increase his respect for that ideal,—presumably embodied in Masters. But I do not see how he can respect the ideal, or believe—except intellectually—that the Masters have attained it, so long as he persists in justifying his own weakness by attributing it to his betters. The thief perhaps says to himself, and occasionally to others, that everybody steals; but the truth is that everybody does *not* steal, as we well know. There is no worse blindness than that, and nothing more degrading to the soul. In the same way, everybody does not lie, everybody does not gossip, everybody's conversation does not revolve around personalities, everybody's thoughts do not revolve around themselves.

"We must see such habits as bad, and not only as bad, but as intolerable, if we have any hope of discipleship either now or in the future. Then, instead of cheerfully taking it for granted that we are guilty of none of these things, we must daily accuse ourselves of them, examining our conversation and our thoughts to determine whether we have sinned under any of these heads."

"I agree with every word you have said," the Ancient commented, "but I fear you have been too general, and perhaps too gentle, to produce much effect. It is nothing short of a scandal if those who have studied Theosophy still sin in these respects. Conversation about persons is vulgar, is provincial, and it is an insult to Theosophy if one of her students remains on that low level. Sophie, the cook, goes to a new doctor; she tells all her friends all about it,—what he said, but especially what she said. Her friends repeat this to their friends, with variations. She went to consult him about her headaches; by the time it is passed on the comment is, 'Poor thing, it is too bad about her headaches; they must be terrible,—though of course the wonder is she has not something far worse, with that dreadful old father!' At that point, a pause, so as to give the friend an opportunity to ask, 'Who was he?' or 'What about him?'—the omission of such a question being a distinctly unfriendly act. Then follows the history of Mr. ——— *père*,—'a perfect villain, my dear, always beating his wife and. . . .'

"On the whole, though, I think that more harm is done by intended glorification than by scandal, so far as students of Theosophy are concerned. Superstition plays its part in this. In the light of superstition it is almost an insult to an important person to regard anything he does as natural. Even so, why talk about it! Thus: 'He was marvellous, my dear! I wish I knew *who* it was who spoke through him; the force nearly swept me out of my seat.' Or:



'She talked in the most wonderful way; it really was a glimpse of heaven. Her face was positively transfigured.' And again I ask,—even so, why talk about it?

"The answer is that all such things are said from a very mixed motive. There is the usual desire to glorify self by reflex glorification, while there is a very great desire just to pass on a 'thrill,'—to use a word I intensely dislike.

"The result invariably is to throw away—to use up in 'thrills'—that which, if spiritual in origin, should have been conserved by silence; for *to speak of spiritual experience is to lose it*. That law is absolute."

"The way we undo with one hand, what we accomplish with the other, is simply appalling," exclaimed the Student.

"Fortunately for us," the Ancient replied, "we have more than our own unaided aspiration to raise us. An article on Mont St. Michel in this issue of the QUARTERLY, should serve to remind us of that; for Mont St. Michel is more than a symbol: it is the embodiment of a universal law. It might be interpreted symbolically as an expression of man's aspiration,—the yearning of the heart for heaven, the ceaseless striving of the spirit of man for that which is above the level of earth. This, however, would be but half the truth; and half the truth is misleading. Man would never ascend—Mont St. Michel would have remained bare rock—if heaven had not first reached down to earth; if St. Michael himself had not descended, not once, but thrice, to inspire mortality with vision and desire. There was response at last, but not until a skull—an average human skull—had been dented, so great was its resistance to the force coming down from above.

"Man needs to be well-nigh broken before he will accept the guidance of the Lodge,—and St. Michael is of the Lodge. Not all, perhaps, are so obdurate; but the man who thinks of himself as an exception, is probably the most obdurate of any. Yet, once surrender is made, and man gives himself wholly to divine construction, how marvellously beautiful is the result!"

At this point our Visitor, who had shown signs of great interest in the preceding conversation, suddenly asked: "Who are those of whom you speak as Mahatmas or Masters? Are they spirits?"

"Neither spirits nor goblins damned!" the Historian promptly answered; but he said no more, perhaps realizing that an adequate answer would need more than a sentence or two, and wondering if we wanted him to proceed. So the Recorder urged him to do so, and to take his time, as the question was of infinite importance.

"I must begin at the beginning, then," the Historian assented; and he began: "The Sanscrit word, Mahatma, means Great Soul, and is frequently used in that sense in the old scriptures of India. Mahatmas are Masters of Wisdom,—just men made perfect. They are the flower of the human race, the product of ages of evolution, the Elder Brothers of mankind.

"Some of them have appeared from time to time as Avatars (another Sanscrit word), which means that, for the salvation of mankind, they became the embodiment of what St. John, following Philo, called the Logos, or Word,

—a special incarnation, for a special purpose, distinguishing them, during that life-time, from other Masters. Christ was the last of these Avatars; before him came Gautama Buddha; before Buddha came Krishna and others.

"Masters, however, are not 'gods,' though in tradition and legend they are often so described. They are not omnipotent. They do not perform 'miracles.' They are in no sense 'supernatural.' On the other hand, they have acquired the full use of powers which are latent in all men—powers which are inherent in the divine spirit of man; and they have extended their range of perception and understanding infinitely beyond the narrow limits of our ordinary faculties. Because of their great powers, and of their knowledge of things and events to which lesser men are blind, the ignorant of earlier ages—who appear to have been 'God-fearing'—worshipped them as divine beings, while the ignorant of later ages—who ceased to be 'God-fearing'—hated and persecuted them whenever they failed to conform to the will of the multitude.

"History is full of stories about them, always as the benefactors of mankind. Leaving aside for the moment the better-known instances, the life of Quetzalcoatl gives a good illustration of the work they do in the world. His existence is just as well established historically as that of Krishna in India. He is said to have been a Toltec, but this is not certain. The ancient Mexicans, in whose midst he appeared, and with whom he lived for twenty years, were brown and beardless. They described him as of another race, a fair man with a fair beard and noble features. He seems to have won them by his great scientific knowledge, especially of astronomy, metallurgy and agriculture. He persuaded them to give up their practice of human sacrifice. The encyclopædias say that he taught the Mexicans 'to follow his austere and virtuous life, to hate all violence, to sacrifice no men or beasts on their altars, and to do penance for their sins. He taught them picture-writing and the calendar.'"

"When did he live?" our Visitor interrupted.

"It is difficult to say," the Historian answered. "I never knew anyone with so many dates! I suspect he appeared more than once. The *Britannica* speaks of 'an unknown scientist, possibly deified as the god called Itzamna' (it was Quetzalcoatl) who 'seems to have invented the Mayan calendar after making a daily record of observations beginning on August 6th, 613 B.C. . . . The unknown scientist reduced a calendar of moons to a calendar of numbers. . . . The writing out of the numbers of days in the Mayan calendar involved place-value numeration one thousand years before this important arithmetical device was known to the Old World, and the Mayan eral count of days preceded by three hundred years the first eral count of years in the Old World. . . . The unknown Mayan scientist likewise invented [?] a system of designating the days by a permutation of thirteen numbers and twenty names. . . .'

"That would mean that he appeared in Mexico at about the time of Pythagoras in Greece; but other dates are attributed to him up to as late as the eleventh century A.D. From one standpoint, it does not so much matter when he lived; the point is that he undoubtedly lived, and that his memory and influence still live among the natives of Mexico.

"I speak of Quetzalcoatl only incidentally, however," the Historian continued. "The subject of Masters is stupendous, and I am afraid that a preliminary understanding of Karma and Reincarnation is essential to the least idea of how Masters become Masters. As briefly as possible then: Karma literally means 'action,' but in the philosophy of the East it has come to mean the universal law of action and reaction, of cause and effect, subject to which we reap what we sow, and must have sown, at some time in the past, whatever we reap to-day. It is misleading to interpret it in terms of reward and punishment; it is nearer the truth to see it as renewed opportunity, as the means by which continued progress is made possible. For instance, if I were to possess self-control, it would necessarily be the fruit of many efforts at self-control in the past; it will necessarily remain with me in the future, either increasing or diminishing, in accordance with my own efforts. In this way, a man makes his own character from day to day, and is in large measure the creator of his own destiny.

"Looking back over his own past, every one, with an honest mind, must see the truth of this doctrine so far; but it is only the first step. He must push his investigation one stage further, looking for that which has *not* changed, in spite of changing character and circumstances; he must look for that unchanging centre within himself—his sense of 'I-ness' if you choose—which is now able to observe the past, and which serves as an unbroken link between yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow. Let us call this centre within him, his ego or soul.

"He believes, perhaps, that it will survive the death of his body,—there is abundant reason to believe that. Apart from other considerations, annihilation cannot be imagined. Try it, and see. Nor is any absolute end conceivable. So he will be compelled to think of himself as essentially an immortal being, ever growing, and in that sense ever changing, but, in the deepest self within him,—undying.

"From looking forward, now let him turn backward. Hume argued many years ago that 'what is incorruptible must also be ingenerable,' adding that 'the soul, therefore, if immortal, existed before our birth.' There is no answer to that argument. To express it in cruder terms: an endless cord would not be endless if it began at a given point; if infinite, it must be infinite in both directions. So we arrive at the doctrine of the soul's pre-existence."

"But where and how did it pre-exist?" our Visitor interjected.

"Once we think of the present life of the soul on earth as the Karmic fruit of pre-existence somewhere, we may properly ask ourselves: 'If I reap on earth to-day, is it not a fair inference that it was on the same earth (in the same field) that I sowed what I now reap?' Clearly the answer must be, Yes. We shall perhaps remember, also, that Herbert Spencer, basing his philosophy solely upon reason, insisted that Evolution is only half of the law of growth; that the other half is Involution,—and that he pointed out the universality of the law of periodicity, by which periods of expansion and contraction, exfoliation and indrawal, follow each other alternately, as in summer and winter, waking and sleeping, day and night. Arguing that the same law must govern the life of

the universe, he repeated the doctrine of ancient India, according to which 'the outbreathing and inbreathing of Brahma' symbolize vast periods of outer manifestation, followed by vast periods when, from infinite diversity, all things indraw once more into the Unity from which they sprang.

"Eastern thinkers were more logical, or in any case more consistent than Herbert Spencer, however, because they included the life and development of the soul as part of this universal process; besides which, many of them further disposed of the matter by adding quietly that with them it was not a theory; it was a fact; they remembered their past lives on earth, in human bodies, quite as clearly as they remembered the events of this life's childhood. Just as some people can remember the events of their childhood easily, and others, only as the result of effort,—so some can remember their past lives; others, not at all. It is the soul that reincarnates,—not the body or its desires; and a man must become at one with his soul if he would acquire the soul's memory of past incarnations, and of those intermediate periods of indrawal (between outer 'manifestations' on earth) when the soul returns to its true home in the spiritual world.

"It would be impossible, as I have said, to understand how such men as Masters can exist, unless we see in them the fruit of ages of evolution, as well as of effort which average humanity simply will not make. Masters are the flower of the race. They are 'the first-born of many brethren.' They have forged their way ahead of the rank and file, out of compassion for the rank and file,—inspired by an intense desire to save mankind from the suffering which it perpetually and yet needlessly inflicts upon itself. They are Masters of Wisdom *because* they are Masters of Compassion.

"They differ from ordinary men as a mature man differs from an infant in arms. The analogy holds good, not only in terms of intellectual and spiritual achievement, but in such matters as the control of energy, the power of movement, and so forth. Physical analogies, however, necessarily fall short of the truth, because most people think of matter as more real than spirit, or in any case as more powerful: a 'spiritual body' would suggest something tenuous and vapoury, instead of something a thousand times stronger and better consolidated than any physical organism known to us. I do not mean to imply that Masters have spiritual bodies only; I do mean that substance exists on many different planes, of many different grades, and that, as a general rule, the less objective (grossly physical) it is, the more powerful the force which acts through it. Etheric forces, for instance, are more powerful, when controlled, than any form of physical energy (electricity can produce a far greater heat than coal); and if we can imagine a consolidated etheric body, as the vehicle of human consciousness, we should be able to realize how much more responsive it would be as an instrument than the thick, dull matter through which we now function.

"The inner life and growth of the soul have been symbolized in all ages and in all religions by natural phenomena which are as suggestive to-day as ever: the butterfly, emerging from the chrysalis, the sheath of a caterpillar which

once was an egg; the scarab-beetle, because it passed through a similar life-cycle; the serpent, because of the sloughing of its skin. Both the Master Christ and his disciple, Paul, used the simile of 'a corn of wheat'—part of the symbolism of Egypt. The death and resurrection of Christ unveil the mystery, for those who have eyes to see and ears to hear. He revealed himself to his followers in 'an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens'; he had been 'clothed upon'—to use Paul's expression—"that mortality might be swallowed up of life." Yet he was not a 'spirit,' 'for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have'; nor does a 'spirit' eat,—'and they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them.' On the other hand, he was no longer limited, as we are limited, by time and space: 'When the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side.' He had built for himself a house not made with hands. His body was of finer stuff than any known as yet to us—of far more powerful and enduring stuff—able to penetrate our seemingly solid matter more easily than light penetrates glass. Using other terms—though to some they may be more confusing than helpful—one who has become a Master is no longer confined to a three dimensional world, and just as we, who at present are three dimensional, can do things which would seem miraculous to two dimensional creatures (living and moving on a flat surface), so Masters can do things, without effort, which seem miraculous to us, or which would seem miraculous if it were not for the explanation which Theosophy alone provides.

"Verily, to the priests of to-day, as to Nicodemus of old, it might be said: 'Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?' For the priests of Christianity cannot explain the birth or life or death or resurrection of Christ, or anything about him. Theosophy alone does that; and they would treat Theosophy, if they could, as Caiaphas treated Christ."

The Historian paused, perhaps for breath. At once our Visitor asked: "Do these Masters of whom you speak, live on earth, and, if so, where?"

Said the Historian. "I understand there are seven degrees of Adeptship. The Adept becomes a Master, or Mahatma, only after the four lower stages have been passed. Beneath the Adept—that is to say, less evolved, less highly developed than he is—are chélas, or pupils, of seven degrees. All these together constitute what we term the Lodge, which exists both on earth and on all planes of the unseen world. The Lodge is both 'active' and 'contemplative.' Its headquarters on earth has been situated in different places at different times, but it has always had branches in other parts of the world. Some members of the Lodge work in physical bodies; others work in bodies that are super-physical, but which can be made objective to us at will. There are Adepts who travel a great deal. They have been met in London, Paris, New York and elsewhere. They have their own means of avoiding recognition, unless they seek it.

"Do not jump to the conclusion that everyone in history or tradition who

performed wonders was a Master. It is but very rarely that a full Master works openly in the world. It would be waste of spiritual power; further, his visible presence, except at certain turns of the great cycle, would produce a needless and even dangerous commotion. Work in the world is left to lesser members of the Lodge. Masters and their disciples are the servants of Karmic law—of the divine will; and can only come or send in obedience to that law. Apollonius of Tyana, for instance, is referred to sometimes as a Master, but, extraordinary as he was, I think it would be nearer the truth to see in him an Initiate, an Adept, but not a Master. Great natural, though untrained, seers, such as Swendenborg, were not even Initiates; their clairvoyant powers did not carry them beyond this plane of matter.

"H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge were Initiates. They worked in the world under the direction of Masters.

"Finally, should you come to believe in these things, please remember that the Masters and their disciples labour ceaselessly to lift us out of the mud. We perhaps do not realize that we are in the mud, but we are, up to and over our eyes. Masters surrender the joy of a purely spiritual existence—the reward of all their efforts—solely that they may keep in touch with us, and perhaps save us from earthly suffocation and spiritual death. We have a tendency, intensely strong in most of us, to sit by and watch the other man do it. In America and in England, as in ancient Rome, thousands watch while a dozen play the game. But not even the greatest of the Masters can really help us so long as we are content to play around in the mud. Christ came, offering salvation not to anyone who would repeat the Apostles' Creed in Church, or who would partake of Communion so many times a year,—but to those who would follow where he had gone before; to those who would live the life which he revealed as the path to life eternal. He gave his life to beat a pathway for us; but we must tread it; we cannot be carried along it, though we are helped every step of the way. The very existence of Masters proves that we contain, potentially within ourselves, all that they have become, just as the existence of a full-grown oak proves that an acorn contains potentially within itself the full glory of a perfect tree. We must learn to co-operate with the Masters in their efforts to raise us and all mankind 'till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.'"

"You have made a new universe for me," exclaimed our Visitor. "I am very grateful."

"Do not thank us," the Historian answered. "Thank those who brought this knowledge to us, and to whom we owe all that we possess,—including our responsibility."

# LETTERS TO STUDENTS

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November 29th, 1908.

DEAR ———

I have noted your change of address, and I have to acknowledge your letter of November 15th. I think the plan of study you are following ought to be most fruitful, and I have nothing to suggest with reference to it provided you always keep in mind that the only purpose of study is not that we should know a thing, but that it should enable us to live a better life or to help others to live better lives. So many people study for the sake of study, in order to *know*, which is only a sublimated form of vanity. The greatest saints were as a rule ignorant persons until they showed the truth of the aphorism in the *Gita*: "He who is perfected in devotion findeth spiritual knowledge springing up spontaneously in himself in the progress of time." "Live the life and ye shall know the doctrine," said another of the Great Ones.

I too have been reading the life of St. Francis by Sabatier, and I have found it very interesting indeed, as I do the lives of all the saints. I read them a great deal. They stimulate and inspire me more than anything else I know. . . .

As to humanitarian work: many members cannot do theosophical work of the organized kind, but in that case are expected to do any other kind of useful work for others which their environment permits.

The other day I heard the finest compliment which I think was ever paid to Theosophy. A person said that they did not know anything about it, except that the best people they had ever met were theosophists, and that they could not help having the highest respect for any belief that had such a marked effect upon its adherents. Was not that nice? And cannot you see what an immense influence Theosophy would soon have if there were many believers in it who would so influence their friends? It is in this way that we can and should do our greatest work. There is no other kind of propaganda which compares with it.

To have this kind of influence we must begin in very humble ways. It is more by little things than by big things that we impress people. There are many who can make some great sacrifice; but there are few who can always be good humoured at breakfast, who can always be patient and simple and unselfish in day to day intercourse, and who do all this because of the principle involved. The other day a theosophist was invited out to dinner and did not want to go, but it was a duty and she went. Then she had a dreadful headache but still went to the table, and was bright and cheerful and entertaining. The strangers present did not even suspect that she was suffering, but her family knew, and they knew too that she did what she did because she was a theosophist and as a duty. They were full of enthusiastic admiration, al-

though not theosophists themselves. I believe all those people are the better for having known that woman and that incident, and will respect Theosophy much more than ever before, and yet it was a very little and a commonplace thing.

With kindest regards, I am,

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

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December 27th, 1908.

DEAR ———

I am much obliged to you for the newspaper clippings about the order of the Fifteen. It is one of the countless psychic counterfeits of occultism by which our movement is surrounded, and by which it always will be surrounded as long as it has any real vitality. The law is a simple one. If the Lodge gives out force to the physical plane, as was done in the case of the T. S., it must come down through the psychic plane, where of course it creates an immense disturbance. Any psychic may feel this disturbance, and may get into the currents which are created by it. Hence they get a sort of reflection of the real thing, an echo as it were, which they distort and confuse, and, worst of all, which they often mix with their own evil or sensual minds. This may very easily deceive the unwary or ignorant.

Indeed so dangerous are these necessary reactions of the work of the Lodge, that they may have to consider long and carefully before they determine whether the good they can do will not be overborne by the harm which may result. It is the law which limits what they can do in the world, which limits their time of activity to the last quarter of each century.

The very best possible attitude to all these counterfeit movements is to ignore them; do not think of them or dwell upon them or give them any fresh life by thought and attention. They all die out in time, for they have no real basis.

Fortunately our members have had so much experience with these things, that they are rarely attracted by them, and it is not often that we have to take any notice of them.

With best wishes for the New Year,

I am,

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

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February 22nd, 1909.

DEAR ———

I have your letter of January 15th. It is quite proper for you to speak to me of the difficulties you have in meditation. It is my hope that I may be able to help you past these difficulties.



The tendency to go to sleep is a very common one and has a simple explanation. We must quiet our personal life if we are to meditate at all, and if we succeed in doing that without awaking our higher life we go to sleep; there is nothing left to be active and conscious. Sleep is nature's method of saving us from going into the astral plane if we fail to reach the higher planes. If it were not for sleep, every time we get so tired that our minds stop working, we should drift into the psychic world. Indeed most people do drift into it for a moment, as they go to sleep or as they wake up. Doubtless you have noticed how all sorts of images and ideas will float into your mind just as you drop off or wake. It has been said that at the moment of waking we are on the threshold of divination, for it is of course equally true that we need not go into the psychic world, but may go into the spiritual world; and this is what we must try to do. We should always go to sleep with the conscious idea in our minds that we wish to pass at once into the spiritual world.

The remedy for the tendency to go to sleep when trying to meditate is, as you yourself suggest, to make the meditation more positive. We must put more force and will into it. There is no limit to the amount of Will in the universe and it is all available for us. We can make so much of it ours as we choose. So seize a big share and make it work for you, make it force your consciousness up into the spiritual world and keep it there.

If you do this, there is no danger of your going to sleep; you will feel that never before were you so fully awake. Needless to say these things are not easy to do. It is what makes saints, and we are all far from being saints; but we must try, try constantly, knowing that every effort counts, and that in the end we shall win out.

I was interested in your account of your friends and their interest in Theosophy. Of course I shall be glad to hear of anything which interests you, and which you think it appropriate to write to me. As we grow older, we see more and more that it is what we are, and not what we do, that really counts and that really has influence, so your friend was right to be the thing and not to label it or to talk about it. •

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With kindest regards and best wishes, I am,

Fraternally,

C. A. GRISCOM.

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DEAR -----

May 4th, 1909.

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You speak of whether or not we are chélas. . . . It is both a simple and a complicated matter. From the technical, occult point of view we are not

chêlas, nor anywhere near that point. To be a real chêla means very much more than you understand now, for if you did understand it you would be one. In occultism we only do really understand what we are. A chêla is one who, is fully alive on the inner planes; one whose consciousness is centred there instead of in the personality, one consequently, who never for a moment, asleep or awake, loses his consciousness of his real being. Even when going about outer, worldly occupations, he is still living an inner life, which has little or nothing to do with the outer life. This is what is meant by continuous meditation. We must be capable of that before we can be chêlas.

Also a chêla's mind is in such complete harmony, and in such intimate connection with, the mind of his Master, that the Master is always conscious of every thought of the chêla, and the chêla is conscious of just as much of what goes on in the mind of the Master as the Master wishes. It is as if they thought with each other's minds. You will see, therefore, one reason for the insistence upon purity of thought, and you can see how impossible it would be for a spiritual being, like a Master, to have his mind full all the time of the thoughts which we think every day,—petty little envious or jealous thoughts, at the best, and actually evil and impure thoughts in many cases. You will realize that we are still far from chêlanship in the real sense.

But in another sense we are disciples, for we want to be and we are trying to be, and in occultism that counts for everything. We make ourselves chêlas by being chêlas, and until we reach that point, we are disciples just to the extent that we are disciples, that we act and think and talk as disciples. Chêla, as you doubtless know, means simply child. Occultly speaking we are all infants, not even children.

The way to reach the goal, the way to become a chêla, is very simple, and consists in observing, strictly and faithfully, the fundamental laws which control every member of the Lodge from the Dhyan Chohan down. . . . We must obey these laws with our hearts as well as with our heads and bodies; we must learn to want to obey them, to love to obey them, for only so do they become a vital part of our real life.

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Fraternally,  
C. A. GRISCOM.

October 12th, 1909.

DEAR ———

How are you getting along? It has been some months since I received your last letter (which I did not answer for I went to Europe shortly after receiving it).

I trust that your studies are going on smoothly, and, more important than

this, that you are getting a clearer and clearer vision of the spiritual world, a more definite and comprehensive idea of what occultism really means, and what are the lessons of the special life you are called upon to lead.

It does not really matter very much what we do, if we understand the inner things and live up to that understanding.

Sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM.

February 9th, 1914.

DEAR ———

It was very good of you to write me so fully about the state and local work of ———. I return the papers herewith, and I congratulate you all who are associated with this very practical movement to benefit your fellow men.

There are in this country literally a thousand different ways in which people have associated themselves together for the more effective doing of philanthropic and altruistic work. I am glad to see any member of the T. S. associated with and working for any one of these various enterprises.

I have only this comment to make. It is in many cases a question of the halt leading the blind. For instance I am one of the directors of ——— which maintains several houses where many kinds of institutional work are done, and which also maintains about fifteen clergymen and chapels in connection with the prisons, penitentiaries, reformatories, work-houses and hospitals of New York City. It is of course splendid work. It is deserving of every possible support and encouragement. But of all the people with whom I come in contact in this activity, those who need help the most are my fellow directors, who are all rich, prominent and successful men. They have the terrible disadvantage of being satisfied with themselves, and of thinking that they are fit to teach others. They are not. Not one of them is on the right track. They do not realize that the only permanent way of influencing another human being for good, is by example. Spirituality is, and only can be, spread by contagion in the most direct and personal way, and permanent results in work for humanity, in the last analysis, can only be achieved through the elevation of character. Except so far as this element enters into the work of these countless reform and so-called helpful movements, they benefit but those who *give* their time, money and work. I do not believe there are twenty-five people in the United States that realize this truth fully. The directors of ——— meet as often as is necessary; raise money (usually not from amongst themselves); and then hire the most competent people they can get to do the work for them. Their vanity and self-complacency are stimulated by the thought that they are doing work for others, and in the majority of cases I think that their association with ——— does them more harm than good.

The people who are really benefited are the few actual workers, who are

benefited to the extent to which they put personal devotion and self-sacrifice into their work, instead of doing it as a profession and means of livelihood.

I have gone into the whole question somewhat at length, because I think that one duty we members of the Society have, is to understand these principles clearly; and then, as we associate ourselves with these countless different activities, gradually and tactfully to instil into the minds of the others the correct principles, by the way in which we ourselves do our share of the work.

With kindest regards, and best wishes to all the members in —,

I am,

Very sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM.

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*You can be an apostle in the course of the most banal days, in the midst of the most ordinary occupations. From the time that your example is elevating, your dignity unimpaired, your kindness conspicuous, your faithfulness to duty unrelenting, your devotion proved to be supernatural, you have brought God to souls. Through you he will have worked silently his work of redemption.—HÉBRARD.*



# REVIEWS

*Christianity as Bhakti Marga*, by A. J. Appasamy; Macmillan and Co., \$1.80.

The scope of this exceptionally interesting little book is more clearly stated in the sub-title: "A study in the mysticism of the Johannine writings," that is, the Gospel and three Epistles of John, but not the Apocalypse. The author is a native of Southern India, perhaps the son of native Christian parents, since there is, in the book, no record of the stress of a conversion. But he is also an ardent and appreciative student of the religious literature of his country, especially of the hymns composed by the Dravidian poets of religious feeling, and, to a lesser degree, of the Upanishads, the *Bhagavad Gita* and some of the Puranas. He has some acquaintance with the great Master of Southern India, Shankara Acharya, but is not attracted by him, and falls somewhat short of understanding him. Dr. Appasamy has studied at Harvard and Oxford, and this book was first written as his thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the great English university. In England he met Baron Frederick von Hügel, to whose memory, as a noted student of mysticism, the book is dedicated, and Canon Streeter, with whom he collaborated in a work on mysticism, *The Sadhu*.

Since his book is popularly written, and intended and is likely to be genuinely helpful to students of religion both in India and in the West, we are prepared to find him defining Mysticism as "the communion of the human soul with a personal God," the only expression that is intelligible to certain minds. But it is clear that he uses the word "God" with many meanings, as the Absolute, as the Logos, and as the divinity revealed in a Master. Perhaps he has in mind, in using the expression just quoted, the communion of the soul of the disciple with his Master, and in particular the Master Christ. To keep this more precise definition in view, while reading the book, will make much of its meaning clearer.

In spite of his long immersion in the academic tradition of two great Western universities, he braves the critics by declaring his belief that the Gospel and Epistles of John were written by the beloved disciple himself, or by one of his disciples, saturated with his spirit and drawing on his knowledge of Jesus. But he seems to concede too much to these critics, when he suggests that John, or his disciple, to a considerable extent transformed the teaching, and even the acts, of Jesus, writing what was in fact a philosophical and mystical treatise of his own about the great figure of his Master, rather than a history, truer in fact and deeper in insight than the narratives of the three synoptic Gospels. Dr. Case has recently put forward sound arguments to indicate that the fourth Gospel is more trustworthy than the others in three particulars: first, the duration of the ministry of Jesus, as nearly three years, rather than a few months only; second, as to the earlier part of the mission in Judea, hardly touched on by the Synoptics; and, third, as to the day of the crucifixion. All these instances point, as Dr. Case shows, to the testimony of an eyewitness, though he hesitates to identify that eyewitness as the beloved disciple John. But the same reasoning applied to the discourses in the fourth Gospel would indicate that they are at least as accurate, if not more accurate reports, than the sermons and parables in the Synoptics; that they represent, with special fidelity and insight, the heart of the teaching of Jesus. Then, instead of saying "the mysticism of the Johannine writings," we should say "the mysticism of Jesus, as recorded by the beloved disciple."

Dr. Appasamy discusses a series of passages in the Gospel and Epistles of John with a clear

mind and a reverent spirit, illustrating his thought by parallel expressions from the great hymns of the Dravidian religious poets, and, in a lesser degree, from older Sanskrit scriptures. The passages discussed are: the opening verses of the Gospel, with the Logos doctrine; portions of the great farewell discourse; the fourth chapter of the first Epistle; part of the twelfth chapter of the Gospel; part of the sixth chapter; verses of the third and fifth chapters; and finally, as shedding light on Jnana Marga, "the way of wisdom," part of the fourteenth chapter.

He shows deep insight when he writes: "The attainment of salvation by suffering is not a specially Christian idea; the moral quality of suffering is. The highest faculties of man are trained in the school of Christ's suffering"; it would have been even truer to say "Christ's continued suffering." He emphasizes a vital moral principle when he says: "Bhakti is the offering of our whole personality to God. It is not a cult of personality. We do not follow it in order to develop our thought, enrich our feeling, or strengthen our will. But in practising Bhakti we are enriched and strengthened along all these lines." This is really the teaching of pure disinterestedness on which the *Bhagavad Gita* lays such stress. The chapter on Prayer is particularly valuable, at once lucid and reverent.

C. J.

*The House of Fulfilment*, by L. Adams Beck; T. Fisher Unwin, 1927.

*The Man Who Was Born Again*, translated from the German of Paul Busson by Prince Mirski and T. Moulst; Heinemann, 1927.

Both these books purport to be "occult" novels; both of them, in widely different ways, are pernicious. The first is absolutely moral in any ordinary sense, but hopelessly cheapens everything it touches, from Yoga to Adeptship. Its picture of Masters and of discipleship would be ridiculous if it were not so shocking to those who reverence these great ideals. Take *Monte Cristo*, add some *Zanoni*, the mountains of Kashmir, a Tibetan monastery or so, some Buddhism and plenty of saccharine; dress these to the taste of a gaping imagination,—and the book is written. The second is the opposite pole of the first: it is coarse, brutal, insufferable. The "hero," having lived a life much lower than that of animals, dies and reincarnates, and then promptly becomes a chela, with the creed: "After much suffering and trouble the Germans will some day become the chosen nation, and the salvation and redemption of the world will come from them." Sex, as may be imagined, is the key to everything, including Adeptship. We can only hope that no one will imagine that either of these books is in any way representative of Theosophy.

T.

*Selected Letters of Baron von Hügel*, edited by Bernard Holland; J. M. Dent & Sons, London and Toronto; price, \$7.00.

Baron von Hügel was domiciled in England when the World War began. He immediately declared himself wholeheartedly on the side of the Allies and became a British subject, serving on the war committee which was concerned with the religious instruction of British soldiers.

Some readers of the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY already know Baron von Hügel as the author of a scholarly and philosophical study of Saint Catherine of Genoa and other works. But he is especially interesting because, through a long and active life, he strove hard to reconcile intellectual honesty with devoted membership in the Roman Catholic Church. He was in close touch with the leaders of the Modernist movement, which began with the century and was crushed in the year 1910. His letters to Father George Tyrrell are the most valuable part of this collection, from the point of view of contemporary history.

One of the letters to Father Tyrrell contains an interesting and thoughtful criticism of the standpoint of some at least of the Christian mystics, which deserves to be quoted at length:

"The primary function of religion is not the consoling of the natural man as it finds him, but the purification of this man, by effecting an ever-growing cleavage and contrast between his bad self, and the true, enlightened self-love that clings to the true self; and the deepest, generally confused and dumb, aspirations of every human heart, correspond exactly to, and come from precisely the same source, as the external helps and examples of miracle, Church or

Saint. The true exceptional is thus never the queer, but the supremely normal, and but embodies, in an exceptional degree, the deepest, and hence exceptional longings of us all.

"This purification must take place by man voluntarily plunging into some purifying bath or medium of a kind necessarily painful to the false, surface, immediate, animal man, and necessarily purifying where willed and accepted by the true, inner, remoter, spiritual self.

"And now I have reached the point where I would part company with them (the Mystics).

"They teach us as far as possible (their practice is generally fuller and about all I want) that the soul gains this purification by turning away from the particular, by abstraction, and absorption more and more in the general, as leading away from the particularity of the creature to the simplicity of the Creator. There seems, I think there actually *is*, no logical place in this theory for science, at least experimental, observing science; and the motives for (ever costing) reform in and of this visible world are weakened or destroyed.

"I would like the teaching to run thus:

"As the body can live only by inhalation and exhalation, nutrition and evacuation, etc., and as the mind can only flourish by looking out for sensible material and then elaborating and spiritualising it: so the soul can live, to be fully normal in normal circumstances, only by a double process: occupation with the concrete and then abstraction from it, and this alternately, and so on. If it has not the latter it will grow empty and hazy, if it has not the former, it will grow earthly and heavy."

By the "concrete" Baron von Hügel means such work as that of Darwin, whom he finely describes as "a deeply attractive mind and heart: humble, self-diffident, with the grand, semi-dumb objectivity of the instruments of God in the world; without a touch of 'cleverness'; ever effecting more than he knows or can at all master himself."

Many passages in the letters show that he was interested, not in one Church or one religion only, but in the spirit of religion everywhere. Thus he writes:

"Abbot Butler in his *Western Mysticism*, soon to come out, will, he tells us, give the exact words in which St. Augustine treats the Ecstasies of Plotinus as genuine and from God. I think we ought to work this testimony particularly, since never was there a man less liable to any washy liberalism than St. Augustine, and since he had here to do with a Pagan."

One of the most attractive passages is concerned with an even greater Pagan than Plotinus:

"I was surprised to find that Mr. Thorold carefully drove home the fact that at least primitive Buddhism is without any conviction or idea of God. I thought I had in my *Eternal Life* made it quite clear that I was fully aware of the fact and that, at the same time, I thought I could actually use it as so much evidence in favour of my general contention. I still think that a downright observation on the part of those Buddhists as to the sickening character of all mere change, that their longing for Nirvana, for a complete cessation of all consciousness such as theirs, thus penetrated with a sense of mere change and hence of pure desolation; I think that this is quite magnificent as a prolegomenon of all religion. I take it to my mind quite simply as one of the most striking effects of the Real Presence of God also in those men's hearts. It is because they have the dim, inarticulate sense of what the Abiding means that the mere slush of change is so sickening, a change not of growth, not of full establishment of Faith and Light, but a sheer racket; something fairly like what the evening papers of our most enlightened times tend to produce in the minds of their unhappy devotees."

This may not be an adequate expression of the wisdom of Buddha, any more than the author's understanding of the Mystics can be regarded as complete (for even in the passage quoted, he does not do them justice). None the less his views are singularly refreshing in many ways.

C. J.

*Men and Thought in Ancient India*, by Radhakumud Mookerji, M.A., Ph.D., Professor and Head of the Department of Indian History, Lucknow University. Macmillan and Company, 1924; price \$2.60.

Professor Mookerji is a Kulin Brahman, a member of one of the four families most highly esteemed in Bengal. The name means, "He whose vehicle is the mouth of Brahma." In harmony with it, he has set himself to record something of the spiritual and universal signifi-

cance of the history of India. The record is a valuable one. The first three figures carefully and faithfully drawn, Yajnavalkya, the Buddha, and King Asoka, have indeed a universal message. Professor Mookerji has the true instinct of an historian.

If we have a general criticism to make, it is that he too much subordinates himself to Western authorities. The first section, dealing with Vedic times, is strongly coloured by Max Müller's views and the Oxford atmosphere which dominated him, especially to the detriment of ancient chronology. The second section is rather too dependent on the work of Rhys Davids, but it contains many valuable things. Among them is the following: It seems that one of the Bharadvaja Brahmins called the Buddha "a camel and an ass"; to which the Buddha replied, "Abuse that is not answered is like the food rejected by the guest which reverts to the host." This is at once far more courteous and far keener than the traditional *Tu quoque*.

The section on Asoka, to give his name the Pali form, is probably the best in the book. We get the impression that Professor Mookerji made pilgrimages to the score or more of rock inscriptions, scattered all over India, which record the life of this remarkable convert to the Buddha's teaching. One of these inscriptions, he translates as follows:

"On the roads I have had banyan trees planted to give shade to man and beast; I have had groves of mango trees planted; at every mile I have had wells dug; rest-houses have been erected; and numerous watering-places have been provided by me here and there for the enjoyment of man and beast." This monarch of twenty-two centuries ago also established hospitals and botanical gardens.

The sections on Samudragupta and Harsha, the first a contemporary of Constantine, the second born shortly after the death of Gregory the Great, are equally valuable and well written. Though these two militant monarchs are of less universal significance, their stories serve to bridge serious gaps in our knowledge of India. Just as the history of Asoka rests on the foundation of rock inscriptions, so the story of Samudragupta is confirmed by the discovery of coins. In this way, both receive material corroboration.

We should like to come back to the earlier period, described in the section devoted to Yajnavalkya. Professor Mookerji writes:

"The foundations of Indian Civilization were fixed roughly during the period 2000-1000 B. C., when the Indo-Aryans began and nearly completed their work of colonizing and civilizing the Indian continent."

The date is an echo of Max Müller. It is not the result of trustworthy original work, such as we find in the sketches of Asoka and Samudragupta. In return for the genuine pleasure which his well written book has given us, we should like to repay the author by advising him to read certain articles on the modern garbling of ancient Indian chronology, originally published in the *Theosophist* in the closing months of 1883, and republished in *Five Years of Theosophy*.

C. J.

*An Anthology of Mysticism and Mystical Philosophy*, with Notes by the Compiler, William Kingsland; Methuen and Co., London, 1927; price, 7s. 6d.

This is a collection of quotations by well-known authors, covering such subjects as the Absolute, Cyclic Law, Death, Evolution, Free Will, Heaven and Hell, Mind, Materialism, and so on through the alphabet. The Compiler is more interested in the mental or philosophical aspect of his subject, than in the mysticism of experience, and in no case does he depart from the beaten track of quotation; but his book is the only one of its kind known to us, and contains much of value from Bergson, Böhme, Chuang Tzu, Du Prel, Eckhart, Hermes, Huxley, Anna Kingsford, Max Müller, Plotinus, Royce, Underhill, and other similar sources.

H.



# QUESTIONS OF THE ANSWERS

QUESTION No. 336.—*I have heard it said that it is well to say a prayer before commencing each duty of the day; also that it is not right to say prayers in reference to our business affairs. I do not understand why it is not just as important that our business affairs should be well done as it is that our other material affairs should be.*

ANSWER.—The purpose of prayer is to raise the consciousness to a high spiritual level, receptive of spiritual and divine direction. In this sense it should precede, and accompany, all undertakings. But this is something quite different from praying for personal success, the gratification of one's personal wishes and desires, whether in business or in anything else. Every prayer should include the clause: "Not my will, but Thine." J.

ANSWER.—There can be no difference in principle between business duties and other duties; and so there is every reason why we should pray to do them all well. That is why they are set before us as duties. If, however, our motive be material gain for ourselves, without thought of others or of how the work itself is done, we weight our prayers with lead, and they are most unlikely to rise to the plane where the Masters dwell. Prayer that reaches the spiritual world, must contain some element from that world, something of selflessness or self-sacrifice, some love of others or of an ideal, some aspiration toward the Masters or the cause they serve. These things are the wings of prayer, without which it falls back to earth. J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—Whoever is reported to have said that "it is not right to say prayers in reference to our business affairs," probably did not in any sense mean that it was wrong to pray for help to transact legitimate business as thoroughly, as honestly, and as speedily as possible. The admonition was no doubt directed against petitions for success in business which would lead to purely personal gain; which would redound to one's own glory or profit,—a prayer, for instance, that one might make more money, knowing that the desire sprang from a wish to appear well in the eyes of the world, or a prayer for business advancement which was the fruit of ambition, not because of a desire to enlarge one's sphere of usefulness; or a prayer for increase of salary because one would like to live more luxuriously, or for some equally unworthy and egotistic object. T. A.

ANSWER.—It is just as important. Our business affairs are our duties of the moment. We have this business problem, that business opportunity, perhaps some business complication, because they are the particular things we *need* at that particular moment; because through them we may learn, may grow; may learn, perhaps, to teach others. We would not dare to pray that this or that business result may be accomplished, that we may gain some particular advantage. But to avoid even a suspicion of such selfishness of motive, knowing that of ourselves we can accomplish nothing aright, we should and must pray that the hearts and minds of men may be so ruled, that events may be so ordained, that we may so act in the right way at the right time and in the right place, that the deeper purpose and meaning at work behind the outer screen of our business affairs may be accomplished, and so our Master may be glorified. C. R. A.

ANSWER.—The Theosophical Society, being a living soul, and incarnating in a very evil world, inevitably, during its youth, contracted measles and mumps and various other feverish

ailments of that kind. Also, in the person of some of its members, it passed through a stage—not uncommon in youth—when certain affectations were “the thing”; and it should be remembered that nearly all affectations spring from laziness or some other form of self-indulgence. One of these early affectations, to which many members fell a prey, was that of perfect indifference to money: ravens, sent by the Lord, fed Elijah; the Lord doubtless would send his ravens to feed them. They forgot that not everyone is an Elijah. They also forgot that it was written: “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread”—not otherwise. No; they were interested in Theosophy; they preferred to give their time to Theosophy; money was gross, and a spiritual person looked at it askance.

As usual, there was an element of truth in this extreme. More men have been ruined by money than by the lack of it; in fact, there is not one man in a thousand who can survive, spiritually, its possession. On the other hand, lack of sufficient money very often is due to a moral defect,—to carelessness, laziness, need of self-discipline, of concentration, of system, of right consideration. People are so busy that they have no time to keep accounts; they cannot say “no” to a borrowing acquaintance; they are full of a sense of their own superior principles, and, not content with this (“riches” enough, surely!), they are everlastingly asserting this superiority, either explicitly or by innuendo, in their dealings with other men.

Therefore, whether our obstacle be riches, or the causes which make for poverty, we should pray without ceasing for understanding of our weaknesses and for the energy with which to conquer them. It is our fault, due to our blindness, if our “business affairs” are not as much part of our inner life as a T. S. Branch meeting. T.

QUESTION NO. 337.—*In the last Convention report one of the speakers is quoted as saying that he believed the great workers in the T. S. were as much present at that Convention as were the members who were there in their physical bodies. Would it be possible for such persons to impress their thoughts on the members present? If so, then what difference is there between that and some of the impressions received by spiritualistic mediums?*

ANSWER.—A speaker at a T. S. Convention may try to impress his ideas on his audience through their outer physical ears. A Master may reach the inner ear, the hearts and minds of those who, striving to serve the Movement that he serves, eagerly desire his guidance; but he would never seek to impose his will upon them or interfere in any way with their free will. A medium makes himself utterly negative, his will abdicates and permits his instrument—his body—to be used without restraint by unknown influences. A chela is always in complete control of his instrument. A medium abandons all control to outside and often thoroughly evil dominance. J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—Possible, yes; depending upon the extent, if any, to which the members present were able, individually and collectively, to receive such impressions. Surely no individual possessing finer sensibilities to any degree, could be present at a T. S. Convention and fail to be conscious of a rarified atmosphere, of a wearing thin of the veil. The extent of this consciousness, in its turn, would depend, of course, upon the degree to which the sensibilities of the individual had been refined and purified.

All the difference between drinking from a flowing spring of clear, crystal, living water, and drinking from a stagnant, foul and muddied pool! In the one case, we are in contact, to whatever extent it may be, with the spiritual world. In the other, we touch the psychic world on its lower planes, and drink disease and death. C. R. A.

ANSWER.—At night, if one enter a dark room where there are flowers, without seeing them, one says: “Here are roses, here is jasmine.” So our consciousness may be aware of the presence of beings unseen. Indeed, are we not always aware of the quality of consciousness of those whom we see—not by the sense of sight but by a more subtle sense?

Surely the great difference between the impressions we may receive at Convention, and the communications received by a medium, is in their *source*. We are told that only the astral “dregs” of the “departed,” and the lowest types of beings, bound by material desires and

Karma, remain near enough to the material planes to be drawn to mediums whose call to them is either one of vulgar curiosity or for financial gain. The positive, active consciousness of a great soul is otherwise engaged in the next state, as it usually is, in this.

The Masters who attend the Convention come with the purpose of sharing with us their power and love, and if our own level of consciousness be attuned to their vibration, we shall certainly be perfectly aware of their presence.

The great of all the worlds require no mediums, only that men should respond to them upon their own plane.

St. C. B.

ANSWER.—An appeal to the history of the T. S. may throw light upon the differences sought. Did Madame Blavatsky and Mr. Judge use mediums for the purpose of imparting teaching to distant pupils? They did not. They are also on record as declaring that after death they would not communicate through mediums. Both frequently wrote on the evils of mediumship, explaining its harmful effects on the medium and on those who attend séances. Obviously, therefore, spiritually awakened beings, whether in or out of incarnation, would refuse to use mediumistic means of reaching those whom they wished to inspire and to teach. To be sure, much that is given out through mediums is highly hortatory and bristles with advice; but at best, the whole tenor of it is reminiscent of children playing at teaching school. Thus we might list the differences as, (1) in point of origin; (2) in motive; (3) in means used; (4) in results produced.

A. B.

ANSWER.—The questioner could probably have answered his question for himself, by reasoning from the known to the unknown. Thus,—begin by imagining a T. S. Convention at which only those in physical bodies are present. Some speak, and perhaps influence us by the spoken word; but the majority remain silent, and, in one sense, almost unnoticeable. Have the thoughts of these people no influence? Imagine that one of them has been a member of the Society for many years; has loved it always, and has greatly loved the Masters who founded it; has laboured for it and for them; has suffered for it, sacrificed for it, yearned over it. Imagine that member's heart and prayer and aspiration and longing at a T. S. Convention. Would it be necessary for him to "project his thought" at others in order to influence them? He would be "a living flame of love": would only "mediums" present catch fire from his fire? Is there no such thing as spiritual contagion? What difference between him, or her, and another member, perhaps equally devoted, who happened to die a few years ago? Does death deprive us of our love! And what imaginable connection is there between this burning prayer of the soul ("whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth"), and the vulgarity of a spiritualistic séance! O slow of heart to believe, when all you are asked to believe is in the power of pure devotion! Must we drag all things down to the level of our little minds? Do the stars "impress their thoughts" upon us? And are we "mediums," or anything resembling mediums, if, once in a long while, we are lifted above ourselves by the passion of those, whether "dead" or living, who behold, as we perhaps do not, a Passion greater than their own, with its eternal promise of a glory transcending hope. T.

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#### NOTICE

The regular meetings of the New York Branch of The Theosophical Society are held at 64 Washington Mews, on alternate Saturday evenings, beginning at half past eight and closing at ten o'clock. There will be meetings on January 14th, 28th; February 11th and 25th; March 10th and 24th; April 7th, 21st and 28th; May 12th and 26th. Visitors are welcome. The location of 64 Washington Mews is on the north side of the Mews, the first Studio east of the Fifth Avenue entrance—the Mews running midway between 8th Street and Washington Square, North.

# 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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"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."

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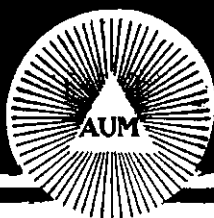
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*Editors, Theosophical Quarterly.*

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APRIL, 1928



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#### BUILDING ON RECOLLECTION

WHILE the *Suttas* record instances in which the Buddha spoke eloquently to groups of villagers, to large numbers of men and women assembled in the towns, to those who visited him, as did King Ajatashatru and many learned Brahmans, yet it remains true that the heart of his teaching and its deepest elements were addressed, not to these varied listeners, but to disciples, or, sometimes, to a single disciple, as the beloved disciple Ananda. His main desire and purpose was to train disciples, to help those who desired liberation, and who were ready to work and sacrifice for liberation.

It was not enough for the aspirant for discipleship to wish for liberty, or even to express that wish to the great Master. He had to do much more: he had to sacrifice; and the initial sacrifice was drastic and inclusive: he who wished to be, in the true sense, a disciple of the Buddha, and a member of his Order, must first renounce all the normal desires and ambitions of ordinary personal life, and prove that his renunciation was real, by "giving up the household life and entering the homeless life"; he must repeat the sacramental formula, "I go for refuge to the Buddha, I go for refuge to the Law of Righteousness, I go for refuge to the Order"; and he must make the equivalent of the monastic vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, and accept in detail a rule of life covering his studies, conduct and manners. Only after these great sacrifices and efforts were made, was it possible for him to be a disciple in the true sense, and to strive successfully for liberation. This necessity of initial sacrifice and effort is universal, perpetually valid; it may not be possible actually to leave home and all its duties and occupations, but it is necessary to make the act of self-surrender symbolized by this "going out", and to maintain and increase that self-surrender.

Therefore, those disciples to whom the essential teaching of the Buddha was



addressed, had already passed through the conversion of the will, the change of polarity, the transference of the centre of gravity, the self-identification, from the outer to the inner, from the lower to a higher self. Much, nay, almost everything remained to be done, but the first great sacrifice had been made, the first transformation had been passed through.

It is essential to keep this fundamental truth in mind when we seek to understand the central teaching of the Buddha: this teaching is addressed to those who have, in will and in act, sacrificed the personal to the spiritual life, and have thus established a focus of self-identification, of consciousness, in the spiritual life. It is especially necessary to keep this in mind while we are seeking to understand the vitally important teaching of Recollection, and what follows as the fruit of Recollection. The disciple, practising Recollection, must become aware of his actions, his sensations, his emotions. Precisely because, through sacrifice and the transfer of the focus of self-identification from the lower to the higher nature, he has raised his point of view from the midst of these acts, sensations and emotions, and has established a footing above them, so that he now looks down upon them from above, this very act of viewing them from above tends to separate him from them, to detach his will and consciousness from his sensations and emotions, and to free him from their domination. In other words, the very act of Recollection is, for the disciple, an instrument of liberation: the white light of spiritual perception is full of power, and, like the pressure of physical light described by Arrhenius, tends to drive outward and downward the enthralling sensations and emotions.

This is true for the regenerate disciple who, drawn by overmastering love of the Master and the beauty of holiness and valour in the Master, has made the initial effort and sacrifice, and has crossed the dividing line, saying, "To the Buddha as my refuge I go." But it is not true for the unregenerate man who, still clinging to the desires and activities of his personality, makes a certain effort towards the practice of Recollection. If, seeking the alert awareness which the Buddha has enjoined on his disciples, he dwells in thought upon his sensations, let us say the sensation of the flavour of alcohol, he is more likely to increase his desire and his slavery than to diminish or conquer it. So with anger or resentment; by becoming more aware of his feeling of injury suffered, he will strengthen it, because the focus of his consciousness, his self-identification, is still firmly rooted in the lower, personal self. The initial effort and sacrifice have not been made. The promised fruits of Recollection will not be gathered by him.

Therefore, *Light on the Path* bids the disciple, at the very beginning of the way, to "seek in the heart the source of evil and expunge it." Before the soul can stand in the presence of the Masters its feet must be washed in the blood of the heart. The great initial sacrifice must be made. Only after it has been made will the fruits of Recollection follow.

This is true of the ground previously covered regarding the practice of Recollection, up to the point where the disciple, having become fully aware of his acts, sensations and emotions, goes on to gain awareness of his thoughts,

immediately "realizing within himself the presence or absence of sensual thoughts, envious thoughts, thoughts of sloth and torpor, thoughts of vanity and vacillation, thoughts of doubt; conscious of their uprising, their rejection, and the danger of their return, even when they have been rejected." It is equally true of the teaching which follows.

The five forms of thought just enumerated are called the "five obscurities", or "obstacles", or "besetting sins", because they are the causal impulses in the mind, which impel and set in motion the ensnaring emotions and sensations. The Buddha then goes on to an equally fundamental part of his teaching, the five Skandhas, or aggregates, which are the basis and substance of personal life, and are therefore described as "the five aggregates of clinging to (personal) existence." Since the Skandhas are a fundamental element of the Buddha's method of instruction, it may be expedient to give the Sanskrit names, and try to gain a clear view of their meaning and content. First, Rûpa, "form", the "aggregate of form" being the physical body, whose constituent elements have already been enumerated and, in the "cemeteries", commented on with grim realism. As was pointed out at the time, the purpose of this stringent description is, to break down, at any cost, the enthralling tyranny of the body, which so dominates much of human life. After that tyranny has been broken, the right use of the body must be learned. Second, Vedanâ, "sensation", the "aggregate of sensations" being "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye", and the like enthrallments of the other senses; as before, conquest of these tyrannies will lead to the right use of the powers of perception; but their abuse must first be blotted out. Third, Sanjñâ, which has been rendered "abstract ideas", "thoughts", and, in the enumeration of the Skandhas, appears to mean, not the direct impressions of the senses, but the thoughts abstracted, or extracted, from these impressions, as the thought of an allurements through the eyes, which is more abstract, and more lasting, than the allurements itself, and which contains the impelling force that leads one to seek the situation in which the allurements may be renewed. It is more mental than emotional, yet it contains the seeds of future emotions and craving for sensations. Fourth, Sanskârâ, "tendencies, both physical and mental". The history of this word is interesting. It seems to have meant first "adornment", and in particular, the adornment of pottery, the curves and dots and patterns which the potter incised on the unbaked clay of a jar which he had completed on his wheel, and which were rendered permanent by the process of firing in the kiln. The past participle of the same base, Sanskrita, "adorned", came to be applied to the "adorned", or "refined", language of the classical period, and is preserved in the word Sanskrit. As an element in the mind, Sanskârâ acquired a more special meaning. At first, it meant an imprint or pattern engraved on the psychic substance of the mind, as an inner copy of some outward object which the attention had rested on; the mind-image of something seen or heard or otherwise perceived. And, because this mind-image, if originally touched with desire, emotion or allurements, takes a certain life and energy of its own, and exerts pressure to bring about renewal of the alluring sensation, thus leading

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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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to a reinforcement of the mind-image, and renewed repetition, the word gained the fuller meaning of "dynamic mind-image", which it has in the school of Shankara Acharya. This is close to the meaning in the teaching of the Buddha, who used the word to describe impressions which, by reason of their energy, become impulses or tendencies; and he included both mental and physical tendencies. Both are built up in the same way, by the embodiment of an "elemental" force in the impression, a force with impulses and claims of its own, and the tendency to express them. Fifth, *Vijñāna*, which means, in Sanskrit, knowing something as different from something else, a knowledge which distinguishes. As one of the *Skandhas*, its meaning is less abstract; it seems to indicate a tendency of the mind based on distinction or preference, and so a "predisposition, physical, mental or moral". To these five *Skandhas*, two more should probably be added: the "heresy of separateness" which marks the boundary of the personality, and "egotism" which supplies the driving power of the personal machine built up by the five more concrete *Skandhas*. With this technical description in mind, we may now consider what the Buddha is recorded as saying regarding the *Skandhas*:

"And further, disciples, with reference to the elements of being, a disciple abides considering the elements of being in the Five Aggregates of clinging to personal existence. How does the disciple so abide?

"In this world, disciples, a disciple attains to the understanding that 'this is *Rūpa*, the bodily form, this is the rising of form, and this its setting; this is *Vedanā*, sensation, this is the rising of sensation, and this its setting; this is *Sanjñā*, thought, this is the rising of thought, and this its setting; these are the *Sanskārā*, the tendencies, this is the rising of the tendencies, and this their setting; this is *Vijñāna*, predisposition, this is the rising of predisposition, and this its setting'; thus recognizing the nature, the rising and the setting of each of these elements of being in the Five Aggregates of clinging to personal existence, his Recollection is established in the measure of this knowledge, in the measure of this detailed recollection."

To put it in other words: the disciple, who has made the indispensable initial sacrifice and effort of self-surrender, and has thereby established a focus of consciousness in the higher, spiritual nature, looks down from that point of vantage at the personality, analyzes it, takes it to pieces, and thus comes thoroughly to understand its nature and impulses, and, most vital, becomes thoroughly saturated with the realization that the personality is "not-self", that in it there is no selfhood or abiding principle. He does this not once, but continuously; establishing his realization by this detailed recollection until it is firmly fixed, and the domination of the personality is broken. Then will come the time for him to discover and acquire the right use of each of these powers, just as the time came to learn the right use of the bodily powers, after these had been analyzed and conquered. And as before, the white light of spiritual perception, in which the disciple views these powers, by its very nature aids him to subdue them. True Recollection is already the first step of conquest. So we come to the Six Dwellings; namely, the five organs of

perception, each being regarded as the dwelling of one of the powers of perception, sight, hearing and the other powers, together with mind, considered as the dwelling or receptacle in which the five kinds of perception are gathered together and moulded into general impressions or mind-images. The Buddha said:

"And further, disciples, with reference to the elements of being, a disciple abides considering the elements of being in the Six Dwellings, whether in himself or in another. How does the disciple so abide?

"In this world, disciples, a disciple understands the eye, understands forms, and understands the attachment which arises through these two, understanding how attachment not yet arisen may arise, how attachment which has arisen may be broken, how attachment which has been broken may arise in the future; so also he understands hearing and sounds and the attachment which arises through them, with its coming into being, its ceasing and the danger that it may arise again; so also with scent and odours; with the tongue and savours; so also with the body and contacts; so also with the mind and forms of thought and the attachment which may arise through these, its beginning, its ceasing and the danger that it may arise again. Thus he abides considering these elements of being, whether in himself or in another. He abides unswayed, coveting nothing in the world.

"And further, disciples, with reference to the elements of being, a disciple abides considering the elements of being in the Seven Members of Illumination. How does the disciple so abide?

"In this world, disciples, a disciple, if that member of illumination named Recollection is awake in his inner self, understands that it is awake; if it be not yet awake, he understands that it is not yet awake; so also with that member of illumination named Discernment of Elements; so also with that member of illumination named Valour; so also with that member of illumination named Joy; so also with that member of illumination named Serenity; so also with that member of illumination named concentrated Meditation; so also with that member of illumination named Poise. In the case of each, he understands how, if it be not yet awakened, it arises, and how, when it has arisen, it goes onward to perfect fulfilment."

The dividing line between the lower and the higher has been passed, the turning in the way has been conquered and the new way has been entered on; the disciple, having fought the good fight against the personal self and won the victory, thoroughly understanding the personal self and all its activities and allurements and delusions, now prepares to enter on that life which supersedes the personality; he is ready to gather the fruits of the spirit. And the fruits of the spirit are these: recollection, discernment, valour, joy, serenity, meditation, poise; this is the wisdom which comes down from above. The disciple is established on the path; his task is to attain these fruits, and to bring each one of them to perfection, assiduously guarding against the danger of recession.

In *Light on the Path* it is written that "he who would escape from the bondage of Karma must raise his individuality out of the shadow into the shine; must

so elevate his existence that these threads do not come in contact with soiling substances, do not become so attached as to be pulled awry. He simply lifts himself out of the region in which Karma operates. He does not leave the existence he is experiencing because of that. The ground may be rough and dirty, or full of rich flowers whose pollen stains, and of sweet substances that cling and become attachments—but overhead there is always the free sky. . . . The operation of the actual laws of Karma is not to be studied until the disciple has reached the point at which they no longer affect himself." This is an eloquent description of the stage of the path we have been considering; a summary of the allurements and the victory over them, whereby the disciple raises himself from the personality to the life which is above the personality, and receives his reward in an understanding of the laws of personal life, the laws of personal Karma. For there is also the greater Karma, the universal law of harmony guiding to perfection.

Therefore, it is precisely at this stage of the way that the Buddha gives his expression of the laws of personal Karma, by expanding and explaining the Four Noble Truths, whose deep metaphysical significance the disciple is now ready to understand, because he has conquered. The four noble truths are:

The misery of bondage to personal life;  
 The origin of this misery;  
 Its cessation;  
 The path that leads to this cessation.

Each of these noble truths is set forth with the Buddha's matchless gift for analysis and order, and also with something even greater, his profound understanding of human pain and sorrow that has won for him the name, Siddhartha the Compassionate; that kingly quality in him which inspired him to say, "Let all the sins of this evil age fall upon me, but let man be saved."

"What, disciples, is the noble truth of the misery of bondage? Birth is misery, decay is misery, sickness is misery, dying is misery, sorrow, lamentation, pain, despondency, despair are misery, longing for what we cannot get is misery, and in brief, the five aggregates of clinging are misery."

With compassion the Buddha describes the misery of birth in bondage to personality, the misery of decay, the misery of dying; with even deeper compassion he speaks of the misery of grief and lamentation, desponding and despair:

"What, disciples, is grief? When anyone, disciples, is overwhelmed by calamity, stricken by pain, so that he is afflicted by grief and grieving, the very essence of grief, the height of grief, the depth of grieving, this, disciples, is named grief.

"What, disciples, is lamentation? When anyone, disciples, is overwhelmed by calamity, stricken by pain, he laments with lamentation, with great and bitter lamentation, with the very essence of lamentation, grievous and bitter, this, disciples, is named lamentation.

"What, disciples, is bodily pain? When anyone, disciples, experiences bodily affliction and suffering, bodily torment and wounds, this, disciples, is named bodily pain.

"What, disciples, is desponding? When anyone, disciples, is afflicted by grief of heart, sorrow of heart, filling and overwhelming the mind, this, disciples, is named desponding.

"What, disciples, is despair? When anyone, disciples, is overwhelmed by calamity, stricken by the very essence of pain, and is filled with despair and despairing, with the full bitterness of despair and despairing, this, disciples, is named despair."

Even more noteworthy are the sentences that follow:

"What, disciples, is the misery of longing for what we cannot get? When any one among mortals longs to be free from the misery of birth, to escape from birth. But this is not to be gained by longing. When anyone longs to be free from decay, to escape from decay. But this is not to be gained by longing. When anyone longs to escape from dying. But this is not to be gained by longing. When anyone longs to escape from sickness and grief and lamentation and desponding and despair. But this is not to be gained by longing."

The Buddha then turns to the source, the cause, of this inescapable misery which surrounds and overwhelms the life of bondage to personality:

"What, disciples, is the noble truth of the origin of this misery? It is that thirsting desire which causes bondage to rebirth, thirsting desire full of sensuality and passion, seeking indulgence everywhere; it is the thirst of desire, the thirst for bodily life, the thirst for separate life. Whatever things are alluring and fascinating in this world, in these desire springs up and grows, in these desire establishes itself and takes root."

And once again he repeats to the disciples, now better able to comprehend, the long lists of sensual things which fascinate and allure, and of the powers through which they allure, dispensing "a several sin to every sense". Then follows the question:

"What, disciples, is the noble truth of the cessation of this misery? It is revulsion without any reserve, renunciation, abandonment, forsaking of thirsting desire; it is final liberation, free from allurements.

"And what, disciples, is the noble truth of the path that leads to the cessation of misery? It is the Noble Eightfold Path, that is: Right Understanding, Right Resolution, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Recollection, Right Meditation.

"And what, disciples, is Right Understanding? It is an understanding of the misery of bondage to personal life, an understanding of the origin of this misery, an understanding of its cessation, an understanding of the path that leads to this cessation.

"And what, disciples, is Right Resolution? It is the resolution of self-surrender, the resolution to be rid of malice, the resolution to refrain from injuring others.

"And what, disciples, is Right Speech? It is abstinence from lying, abstin-

ence from slander, abstinence from cruel words, abstinence from foolish and frivolous talk.

"And what, disciples, is Right Conduct? It is to abstain from killing, to abstain from taking what is not given, to abstain from unclean desires.

"And what, disciples, is Right Livelihood? It is when a noble hearer of the teaching, renouncing a wrongful livelihood, enters upon a right livelihood.

"And what, disciples, is Right Effort? It is when a disciple, with regard to evil and sinful elements of being which have not arisen, arouses his will, determines, makes valorous effort, concentrates his imagination and resolves that they shall not arise; when with regard to evil and sinful elements of being which have arisen, he arouses his will, determines, makes valorous effort, concentrates his imagination and resolves that they shall be extirpated; when with regard to righteous elements of being which have not arisen, he arouses his will, determines, makes valorous effort, concentrates his imagination and resolves that they shall arise; when with regard to righteous elements of being which have arisen, he arouses his will, determines, makes valorous effort, concentrates his imagination and resolves that they shall be established, that they shall not be shaken, that they shall be increased, that they shall be developed to full perfection.

"And what, disciples, is Right Recollection? It is when a disciple with reference to the body abides considering the body, ardent, fully conscious, recollected, altogether putting aside both covetousness and dejection, and so likewise with reference to sensations, to imaginings, to forms of thought.

"And what, disciples, is Right Meditation? It is when a disciple, cleansing himself from sensual desires, cleansing himself from sinful elements of being, enters into and abides in the first stage of Contemplation, which is accompanied by analysis and reasoning, born of discernment, suffused with happiness and joy; when, rising above analysis and reasoning, he enters into and abides in the second stage of Contemplation, a stilling of mental activity within himself, unified, without analysis or reasoning, suffused with happiness and joy; when, rising above rejoicing, he abides poised, recollected, fully conscious, aware of bodily serenity, he enters into and abides in the third stage of Contemplation; when he transcends both rejoicing and grieving, when both exulting and desponding have ceased, he enters into and abides in the fourth stage of Contemplation, beyond rejoicing or grieving, poised, recollected, pure. This, disciples, is Right Meditation. This is the noble truth of the cessation of the misery of bondage."

So far the Noble Eightfold Path, which is the consummation of the Four Noble Truths. For how long, through how many lives, must the devoted disciple tread the path before he attains to liberation? The answer of the Buddha to this inevitable question is, perhaps, the most striking part of the whole teaching:

"Whoever, disciples, thus goes forward through these four degrees of Recollection during seven years, may confidently look for one of two rewards: even in his present state he will attain to illumination, or, if there be in him a



remainder of the aggregates, he will not again fall into bondage. But, disciples, it is not a question of seven years; whoever thus goes forward through these four degrees of Recollection during six years, may confidently look for one of these rewards. Nor, disciples, is it a question of six years; whoever thus goes forward through these four degrees of Recollection during five years, may confidently look for one of these rewards. Nor, disciples, is it a question of five, or four, or three, or two years, or even of one year, of seven, or six, or five, or four, or three, or two months, or one month, or even of a half-month; whoever thus goes forward through these four degrees of Recollection during seven days, may confidently look for one of these two rewards: even in his present state he will attain to illumination, or, if there be in him a remainder of the aggregates, he will not again fall into bondage.

"This was my meaning when I said in the beginning that there is one way of salvation for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of grieving and lamentation, for the conquest of misery and dejection, for the increase of wisdom, for the attainment of Nirvana, namely, the establishment of these four degrees of Recollection."

Thus spoke the Master. Rejoicing, the disciples praised the Master's word.

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*Stewardship not only embraces money, but time, talents, influences and life. Money is the easiest thing to give. The question about money is not how much of my money shall I give to the Lord, but how much of the Lord's money, temporarily in my possession, should I keep for myself? I am the custodian, not the owner. Likewise as a steward of time or talents or life, how much should I use in pleasure or recreation, or business, or self-seeking? It is all His.—ANON.*

# FRAGMENTS

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THE Eternal Truth speaketh:—

If thou canst not fly, then run; if thou canst not run, then walk; if thou canst not walk, then crawl. Be not so much concerned with the dignity of thy progression, as that progression be accomplished. Surely it were better to crawl into the Kingdom of Heaven than never to enter there at all.

To make a fine appearance in thine own eyes will serve thee little with the angels, whose clear vision pierces to the essence; and a strut will carry thee crab-wise whither thou wouldst not go.

If thou be a worm, then humbly crawl; mayhap thy Lord will lend thee later iridescent wings, when thy novitiate fulfils thy transformation.

---

Thou must give Me all because I am all. Whatever thou canst find in any created thing is but symbol of that which I must be to thee, and which therefore thou canst have in fulness and perfection.

Never is it a giving up, but always an increase of gift and of possession, until there be no limit; since that which is limitless will be contained in thee—thy consciousness expanded to the All.

---

So act that all thy actions may return to Me; so think that in Me at last all thy thoughts may find their home.

Yet for this their nature must be similar to Mine: that which is unlike I cannot have. Impress this duty firmly upon thy mind; make it as an offering of love throughout thy day.

---

Darkness, thou sayest; what of that? Sorrow, thou sayest, and pain; again what of that? Why fix thy gaze upon the ephemeral instead of on the Real? Look at the Radiance beyond.

Not here is peace, but tribulation;

Not here is rest, but toil;

Not here is any satisfaction, but Dead Sea fruit.

Yet here is opportunity, and work, and need—*My need*: and therefore here is thy joy—for Me, and in Me alone.

CAVÉ.

# PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

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IT is the purpose of this article to consider certain practical aspects of our consciousness and of the instruments through which it acts, in the hope that we may thereby gain a clearer understanding of what is involved in aspiration to chelaship and the inner life. We shall try to see what it is that now limits our personal consciousness, and how those limitations may be overcome; and by examining the way in which our physical organism serves our will, we shall seek to learn how we ourselves may serve a Will higher than our own.

Let us begin with the first fundamental proposition of *The Secret Doctrine*: the unity of Being, above and within the duality of manifestation, and the omnipresence of both consciousness and matter, as two facets or aspects of that Unity.

To the unity of the physical universe, our modern science bears abundant testimony. A change in any part affects every other part. I move my hand, and, obedient to the law of gravitation, that movement is registered in an altered pull upon each and every particle of matter—to the farthest stars. Its effect diminishes with "the square of the distance"; but nowhere is it zero. Again, the contrast and play of light and shade, which make up the visible scene we now look upon, are radiating out into space with enormous, but calculable, velocity, in an ever growing sphere. A thousand years from now it will still be there, a *present* scene, for a sufficiently sensitive and sufficiently distant eye,—as the light, which now reaches us from the fixed stars, started on its journey to us years, or centuries, ago. Space and time, in separating, also connect; and all things, near and far, past, present and future, are interrelated in mutual action and reaction, knitting diversity into unity.

The modern thought of the West—which thus both parallels and illumines, with concrete illustrations, the doctrine of the unity of the universe in its physical aspect—has paid far less heed to its equally omnipresent aspect of consciousness, and has, indeed, scarcely made a beginning in investigating its characteristics and laws. When, therefore, we attempt to follow Theosophy into the realm of consciousness, and there to do for ourselves what science has done for us in the realm of matter, we no longer feel upon such familiar ground, and have not the aid of ready-made illustrations and of examples that have become classic through use, so that a mere reference is sufficient to bring their significance to mind. Though we do no more than draw, from the same fundamental principles, the same logical consequences that physical science has verified in their application to matter, and though our conclusions, as

applied to consciousness, are not dissimilar to the speculations of Bergson and certain other philosophers, they have not yet, in that application, the support of general recognition and acceptance; and for this reason it may be best for us to formulate them here merely as tentative—asking no more of the reader than that they be considered as hypotheses to be examined and tested by the results that they yield.

Let us assume then, in accordance with this first fundamental proposition of *The Secret Doctrine*, that, in the ultimate analysis, "Spirit (or Consciousness) and Matter are, however, to be regarded, not as independent realities, but as the two facets or aspects of the Absolute (Parabrahm), which constitute the basis of conditioned Being, whether subjective or objective"; and that, therefore, they are equally omnipresent throughout the manifested universe; that wherever matter is, there also is consciousness; that whatever affects matter, is registered also in consciousness; and, conversely, that whatever affects consciousness, is also registered in matter. From this it follows immediately, as the necessary and logical conclusion, that as matter is infinitely diversified, yet interconnected and interrelated in all its parts by mutual action and reaction, so also consciousness, infinitely diversified, must still be knit into a single whole, in which each part shares in whatever affects any other part. Each reflects the whole, and to that whole makes its own special contribution. In short, it follows that everything that is, is conscious and universally conscious—sharing in the consciousness, to some measure and degree, of everything else that is, and of the Whole of which it is a part.

It is clear that this leads to a very different view of consciousness and of the world about us than that which is ordinarily assumed; and that it involves a radical readjustment of our naive and egotistic assumptions, which it may not be easy for us to make, and which, indeed, appears at first to present serious difficulties. We can no longer, for example, think of anything as inanimate and unconscious. Everything, sticks and stones, the earth under our feet and the air about us, the paper on which we write and the pencil which we use, must have a consciousness of its own,—which in some measure shares in ours, and in which we in some measure share. The metaphysical problem of consciousness is completely reversed. It is no longer concerned to explain how consciousness arises; for it is here seen not as arising but as ever present, not as secondary but as primary, being, with matter, a facet of the primordial "Being" from which all else arises. The problem is not, therefore, to account for its presence in living organisms, but to explain its limitations there; to understand how and why consciousness, which in theory should be infinite and universal, is in ourselves so partial and restricted. Any assertion that our own consciousness is all-embracing and "cosmic," is met with the common-sense retort that, if so, we are unconscious of it; and we have to face the rather puzzling questions as to how consciousness can be unconscious, whether such a notion is anything more than a flat contradiction in terms, and whether it does not reduce the whole theory to meaningless nonsense.

On examination, however, these difficulties are found not to be as formid-

able as they at first seem, and the theory itself (or something very like it) is one to which, quite independently of Theosophy, a number of thinkers have been led as the only one which squares with the observed and inescapable facts. Among them, as we have said, is Bergson; and his book, *Matter and Memory*, is largely devoted to its exposition, and to resolving in detail the difficulties it presents. We must content ourselves here with more summary answers to our questions, merely indicating the directions in which their verification may be found.

That which limits our consciousness is the narrowness of our interests. We are primarily interested in action—for the most part of very restricted, though by no means always physical, kinds—and, in our absorption in our primary interests, we push into the background and ignore everything which does not immediately concern them. In other words, we disregard everything upon which we do not propose to act, and confine ourselves to what we think we can use in furtherance of our present purpose. We shall not, however, be able to accept this statement, indeed it is turned into nonsense, unless we recognize that there are inner as well as outer acts, and that our desires are concerned with both. Biologists are in the habit of asserting that the primary desires and actions are directed to self-preservation, to the obtaining of food, shelter, etc. This is as true of our emotions as of our body. When resentment, for example, is uppermost in us, it seeks food on which to feed; and if it be attacked, it shelters itself under any subterfuge. These are as direct "actions" as any which the body performs, and usually they are of far more potent and lasting effect. With this understanding of what we mean by "action," the truth of the theory becomes self-evident, and we proceed to note that, as "desire precedes function, and function precedes organism," the mind has been formed as an organ to guide us in such actions as affect our habitual desires. In the exercise of this function, there are drawn into the mind those elements of our consciousness which are pertinent and useful, and these are illumined by the desires they are evoked to serve. As the stronger and more concentrated is the light, the darker is the shadow that it casts, the rest of consciousness sinks into deeper obscurity, and our recognition of our own consciousness becomes thus limited to that upon which the spot-light of desire falls—to the momentary content of the narrow circle of our mind. We make the mistake of identifying ourself with our mind—the self with an organ of the self; and since the efficiency of the mind is measured no less by its rejection of all that is irrelevant to its decisions, than by its assembling of all that is pertinent, *mental* consciousness can, and should, never be more than partial.

This principle, thus briefly sketched, is of fundamental importance to the understanding—and consequently to the development and enrichment—of the type of *personal* consciousness which is all that we generally recognize as ours. We must cease to think of the mind as the cause, or origin, or seat, of consciousness, and see it, instead, as an organ which, in the service of desire, focuses consciousness upon the choice of action open to us, and thereby *limits*

it to what is relevant to that choice. In the view to which Theosophy leads us, we have to regard the consciousness of any thing as an ever present and inseparable facet or aspect of its action and reaction upon the universe of which it is a part; and since, because of the unity of Being, this action and reaction are ceaseless and unlimited, extending throughout the infinite Whole, so also must be the consciousness that is inseparable from them. Yet that which distinguishes us as *persons*,—that which is characteristic of what we call living, sentient beings—is, that in us there is a certain freedom of choice, a measure of *free will*, which enables us to choose the nature of the response or reaction we shall make to the influences we experience. There is a zone wherein we may accept or reject, co-operate or resist, obey or disobey,—where, as persons, there is open to us the possibility of spontaneous action, unnecessitated and unpredictable. Within that zone therefore, our actions and reactions are of a different order from the actions and reactions of “inanimate” things; and it is this difference (either of order or of range within which it operates) that differentiates our *personal* consciousness from the consciousness which we share with the “lower” kingdoms—with earth and air and fire and water, with rocks and trees and flowers, with birds and beasts. The *personal* consciousness is characterized by choice, by preference, by desire, and is limited as these are limited, confined to the zone in which they operate. It is not the whole of consciousness; it is a form of consciousness, which in us is so brightly lit that all else is cast into shadow.

When the light is lessened, when we are no longer dazzled by the glittering lustre of our own desires, then the shadows thin and vanish, enabling us to see what lay within them. Our conscious consciousness, the consciousness we recognize as ours, expands,—until nothing of Being seems foreign to it. With St. Francis we begin to hear the music of the Canticum of the Creatures: “Most high, almighty and good Lord, thine be the praise and glory, the honour and every blessing. . . . Praise to Thee, Lord, with all thy creatures. . . . to Brother Sun, who makes the day that lightens us. Fair he is, and shineth with a great splendour. Most High, he bears the mark of Thee. . . . Praise to Thee, Lord, for Sister Water. Very useful is she, and humble and precious and chaste. . . .”

As we reflect upon this, we may be reminded of that marvellous allegory of the Garden of Eden and the fall of Man, which is so generally and grossly misinterpreted, but which we may now see in a wholly different light. Before the “knowledge of good and evil,” while all about him, “good” to God, was also good to Man, Man accepted all things—as the rock to-day accepts them. He was “obedient” as the rock is obedient, rejecting nothing, and therefore sharing in the consciousness of all,—as, it may be, the rock still shares. But when desire had been born in him, and he had eaten of the forbidden fruit of the distinction between (what was to him) “good and evil,” he fell from the freedom of universality into the bondage of personal preference and finitude. He was shut out from the other fruits of the garden and driven into the wilderness—the lawlessness—of his own desires, there to die, as desire dies, to be

reborn again. As the serpent promised him, it gave him something godlike, something of God's spontaneity and freedom of action, the power of impressing himself upon all he touches, imparting his own likeness to all his works; but it laid upon him, also, something of God's task—the task of a creation whose results should be found "good"—the task of exercising his divine powers and by exercise causing them to grow, till his knowledge of good and evil should be attuned to God's knowledge, and his own desire should lead him back to the obedience from which he had turned. Not until then can his personal consciousness be a universal consciousness; but then, throughout its whole infinite extent, it will be flooded with the light of desire made divine, and of an obedience that is free willed.

We must return, however, to our immediate concern, which is to assure ourselves that we see clearly how our personal consciousness is directed toward action, and how it is limited by the limitations of our desires and interests.

Examples abound on every hand. As visitors, we enter a machine shop. We are nearly deafened by the noise. We are acutely conscious of it because we dislike it, and want to do something to escape it. In the midst of it, we can scarcely hear ourselves think, let alone hearing our companion speak. But the machinists who are working there are largely unconscious of the general din, which deafens us. They are used to it, and do not contemplate doing anything whatever about it. Each is attending to his own machine, and that general noise in no way prevents his being immediately conscious of any change in the sound of the particular moving rods and wheels for whose action he is personally responsible. An altered note, that we do not hear at all, is the signal that oil is needed. He is alert for that signal, intent to act upon it, and therefore is conscious of it when it comes. Were there a gramophone there, it would record "mechanically" all the sounds which reached it (to which it was capable of responding—even with it there is *some* selection). It would not pick and choose according to personal interest.

Again: we open our morning mail. There is an advertisement of a new restaurant (not in our part of town); of a "superlatively elite" laundry; of a sale of women's shoes. Some one wants to sell us some mining stock; some one else—of whom we have never heard—makes free use of our name, and knows us so well that he (or she) is sure that we can have no better use for our money than to send a contribution to his special charity. Our desires disown these, one and all. We have no intention of acting upon them, and they are dropped into the waste-basket and out of our consciousness at one and the same time. There are three or four letters which concern not only us but others. There is nothing we can do about them until we have consulted our associates. They are put aside—on our desk and in consciousness. There remain some half dozen that we have to answer, to act upon, and we take them up one by one. But if they be unrelated, it is only the one upon which we are at the moment working, of which we are mentally conscious. Our mental consciousness of it, however, not only excludes what is unrelated to it, but evokes (both from memory and imagination) whatever is pertinent to the decision to be

made and the action to be taken. That is, our mind does both of these things provided it is working efficiently; and the measure of its efficiency is the rapidity, ease and completeness, with which it does them, and the justness of the ranking and order of precedence which it ascribes to the various elements in relation to the end to be sought. If irrelevancies intrude, if the mind wander, if serviceable factors be overlooked and important correlates forgotten, if the trivial be given equal weight with the vital, or judgments be made from the mood of the moment instead of in relation to our more permanent will,—then it is obvious that the mind is not fulfilling its function and is not working properly. But let us note that though the mind must focus consciousness upon the present action, to the exclusion of all else, it must not become so absorbed therein as not to be ceaselessly alert to opportunities of action of a different kind, and ready instantly to alter the focus, should any other action appear more timely or important. If, for example, while we are writing one of our personal letters, a friend should come in who is concerned in the letters we have put aside, the mind must be alert to the opportunity thus offered to consult him about it. The whole previous content of the mind must be swept away, and a new content instantly assembled. This is a feat of no mean difficulty—as those will testify who have to work under recurring interruptions—and it involves a greater drain upon mental and nervous energy than do hours of consecutive thought directed to a single end. It is as though consciousness, like matter, possessed mass, and the properties of mass which we know as inertia and momentum.

Let us turn now to certain significant features of the organism through which our conscious actions and reactions are made. The more elementary the organism—that is, the further back we go in the evolutionary stream—the more predictable, and the less spontaneous, do its actions appear. The organism itself is less differentiated. All portions of the protoplasmic mass seem equally sensitive and equally competent to perform any of the functions of which the whole is capable. There are primitive forms of marine life (resembling the jelly fish) which have no stomach, but digest with the whole or any part of themselves, simply wrapping themselves around anything they touch and absorbing what they can. On the other hand, when any one of the little prolongations of itself, which the *amœba* puts forth, comes into contact with a foreign substance it is immediately withdrawn. It is a predictable, reflex action, or reaction, of which many examples may still be found in the human body, such as occurs when there is a direct connection between the nerves that receive the external stimulus and those which control the muscular response. Sensitiveness and movement, perception and reaction to what is perceived, are here very plainly two indivisible aspects of a single property. But as we advance in the scale of evolution, the organism grows more complex. "There is a division of labour; functions become differentiated, and the anatomical elements thus determined forego their independence." In particular, there is a separation between the sensory and motor functions of the nerves,—between those which receive an external



influence, and those which set in motion and sustain the organism's reaction to it; between *perception* and the *action* to be taken regarding the thing perceived. "In such an organism as our own, the nerve fibres termed sensory are exclusively empowered to transmit stimulation to a central region [the brain] whence the vibration will be passed on to motor elements. It would seem that they have abandoned individual action to take their share as outposts in the manoeuvres of the whole body" (*Matter and Memory*, p. 56).

In relation to the physical organism, therefore, the brain (and to a lesser extent other nervous centres of the body) acts as a central switchboard, or turn-table, to which all incoming wires or tracks are led, and from which radiate all those that go out. Here any external influence, coming in on any track or wire, meets the focussed consciousness of the mind, and is by it switched over onto any outgoing track or wire; so that the action of the universe upon us is reflected back, as our action upon it, through any one of the reactions of which the organism is capable. *Perceptions* are thereby turned into *actions*, whose character is determined, within the range of the instrument, by the choice of the operator.

This function of the nerves and brain, and the fact that if they are damaged the activity of consciousness is impaired, have led to their being often regarded as the origin and seat of consciousness. This is not correct. If a nerve be severed or paralyzed, it is as though a telephone wire were cut. Consciousness exists at either end, but communication of a certain kind is interrupted; the words that are spoken are not heard, and the directions they were intended to convey are not carried out. If the brain itself is deranged, or dominated by fixed ideas, it is as though the switch-board were damaged or clogged. Some connections cannot be made, and others stick and jam so that they cannot be broken. The signal to the operator does not work; we get "the wrong number," or are put upon a "busy" or noisy wire, where messages are confused by intrusive fragments of foreign and irrelevant conversation. But though all this may limit consciousness, by limiting its interaction with other consciousness, it does not destroy it; nor, conversely, can the instruments which it uses, create it. The rivers cut their channels to the sea, and if the channel is blocked, the flow is dammed, until another outlet be found or created; but the dry bed of the stream cannot create the water to fill it.

It will be profitable to look more closely at this machinery of perception and of action, through which our personal consciousness receives, and responds to, the influences of its environment. We note, first, that, like all machines—all specialized organs—it has been developed to serve a specific purpose, and to perform, as perfectly and economically as possible, a special function, which, prior to the development of the machine, was a labour shared by all elements in the body and was performed, as it were, by hand. The process is well illustrated in the social body. A generation ago, every household baked its own bread. To-day, in the cities, it is largely obtained from bakeries, where machinery is used that has been developed for this one purpose. So, too, with spinning and weaving, the lighting of the home, and innumerable other tasks,

which, in a pioneer civilization, must be done by each separate household, but which are later taken over by specialists, machinery being developed to supply the wants of the whole community. It is the same with our specialized senses and nervous system. They have been designed and built up to meet definite needs in the furtherance of our relatively fixed and permanent desires. They do not report *all* facts, respond to all influences indiscriminately; on the contrary, they strain and sift these, rejecting whatever is not useful to the desires they serve. Therefore our sense perceptions are never "pure" and whole, but, being made as a selection with reference to our desires, are coloured by them. They do not give us the raw stuff of reality, the "run of mine" of Being, but rather the iron or tin or gold, whichever they may be designed to extract, separated out from the crude ore. It is this which they present to our mental consciousness; and, as we have already seen, the mind carries this selective and colouring process still further, focussing upon the sense perceptions and mixing with them those elements of our past experience that are pertinent to our present desires. We perceive reality only through the veil of desire, and in accordance with the use that we purpose to make of it.

The second point that we are concerned to note is the logical corollary of the first. If our desires undergo a radical change, the machinery which formerly served us may become a positive hindrance. What was to our old desires a mere "waste product," may now be what we most want. Our sense perceptions have been trained to reject this, and we are without any specialized organs by which to detect and secure it. It can be found only in the "invisible," in the "silence," in the moveless and unchanging, because our senses have not been designed to "see" and "hear" it, or to respond to its motion. We have now, therefore, in pursuance of these new desires, to begin by doing *with the whole of ourselves* what formerly, in relation to our old desires, our special organs did for us; but as we do this—which can at first be little more than a blind groping—we gradually develop the faculties which enable us to do it better and more easily. We build new machinery, new senses, to serve these new desires, just as our old organs were built to serve our old desires; or, more accurately, we discover that we can modify and rebuild our old machines, reversing their action, so that they reject what they formerly retained, and retain what they formerly rejected. We learn to "see" and to "hear," to act and to react, through sensory and motor "nerves" attuned to a different sensitiveness.

It remains to examine more carefully the three-fold relation that exists between (a) the complexity of the organism, (b) its capacity for spontaneous action (that is, for a response to external influences which is not necessitated or determined either by those influences or by the organism's own nature), and (c) its utility and efficiency as an *instrument* of the indwelling consciousness and will. An *instrument* of our will must be something which our will itself directs, and whose action is determined by us, and neither by itself nor by that to which it is directed. Therefore, if it be a living instrument, it must, first, be capable of spontaneous action; and, second, it must have surrendered

that spontaneity to us. It must be capable of resisting external influences, and of acting upon them in unnecessitated and unpredictable ways, according to its own free choice; and then, instead of making that choice itself, it must refer it to us, and act upon our decision as though it were its own. It is not an instrument unless it fulfils each of these two pre-requisites; and each of them is dependent upon *sacrifice*.

That the surrender of one's own choice involves sacrifice is obvious; though it is equally obvious that more may be gained from it than is lost. It is not so clear that spontaneity itself is dependent upon it, and to see this we have to look a little beneath the surface. We recognize at once that spontaneity implies the possibility of opposite, or at least different, reactions to the same stimulus; and we see that this necessitates some degree of complexity in the organism, such as the coexistence or union of two opposing tendencies between which choice may be made. This is a necessary condition, but it is not a sufficient one. For if the union be only mechanical, the two opposite tendencies would strike a mechanical balance; nullifying one another with resulting paralysis, if equally strong; or the weaker acting as a drag upon the more powerful, robbing it of the greater part of its effect. If the two were nearly equal, so that at one time one predominated, and at another time the other, there would be a delusive appearance of spontaneity; but it would not be real, and it would have been gained only at the cost of efficiency. It would be simply the mechanical resultant of the opposing forces, mathematically predictable the moment the forces were uncovered. That is not the way in which our physical organism works. To extend my hand I do not have to overcome a muscular tendency to withdraw it; and the reason that this is so is that the union, in my body, of elementary organisms of opposing tendencies, is not merely mechanical, but is one to which each of these organisms brings the willingness and the ability to *sacrifice* itself,—to surrender, and itself to hold in check, the operation of its own native reaction, in favour of whatever other reaction may be selected by the central authority to which all report and from which all take their orders. Indeed, the sacrifice and self-surrender go further than this. Not only does each element hold itself in check, so as not to hamper the action of its opposite, but it lends its own strength to re-enforce that action, so that the whole force of the body can be poured into any chosen response. It is sacrifice, and sacrifice alone, that gives true spontaneity. "The gods are nourished by sacrifice." The roots of freedom are in self-surrender.

We are now in a position to approach the practical, personal questions—the central, inescapable problems of the religious life—which press with special poignancy upon all aspirants for chéliship. How are we to become conscious, *personally* conscious, in the inner world, as we now are in the outer? How are we to learn to "see" and to "hear" there, to "speak" and "stand" in the presence of the Masters? How are we to free our sense of identity from the body and the mind, the hopes and fears and emotions and desires, which now hold it, and transfer it to the soul? We read again the words of *Light on the*

*Path*: "Each man is to himself absolutely the way, the truth, and the life. But he is only so when he grasps his whole individuality firmly, and by the force of his awakened spiritual will recognizes this individuality as not himself, but that thing which he has with pain created for his own use and by means of which he purposes, as his growth slowly develops his intelligence, to reach to the life beyond individuality. When he knows that for this his wonderful complex, separated life exists, then, indeed, and then only, he is upon the way." How are we to do this? How make of our "wonderful complex, separated life" an instrument for something greater than our individuality? How are we, who aspire to serve the great Lodge of Masters, to make ourselves its chélas, to enter into its body as an organ—however limited and elementary—for its use? It was to gain such light as we could upon these questions, that we have undertaken this inquiry into the nature of personal consciousness and of the organism and senses through which it acts. Let us try now to see its bearing, and the answers it suggests.

We go back to the beginning of our inquiry. As consciousness is universal, an inseparable aspect of the action and reaction existing through the whole of Being, some measure of consciousness of the inner world, of the Divine Will, and of the Lodge that serves it, must already be ours. It well may be that we did not need to be assured of this. These questions could scarcely be ours had we not recognized some aspect of that consciousness. Yet it is of value to note that our first step is not to gain something which we have not; it is to recognize something which we have, but have ignored. One clear inference from this is that we must seek for the expansion of this recognition, not in the unusual, for we do not ignore the unusual, but in something so constantly with us, so inborn and native, that we have ceased to heed it; taking it for granted as we do the air we breathe, without its ever occurring to us that this same air may be made the means to lift us above the earth. Another inference is that any psychic approach is highly unlikely to be successful, for it, *par excellence*, stresses the bizarre and exceptional, and the universal escapes it entirely, being covered by the trite.

To learn to recognize something which we have: how do we learn to recognize? How does the botanist learn to recognize plants? He observes and collects, and compares what he collects with standard types and specimens. We may do the same; for we have available the records which our elder brothers have left us of their own experience, their first hand knowledge of the inner life. We may read these records. It matters very little, if at all, which we select: *Light on the Path*, *Through the Gates of Gold*, the *Bhagavad Gita*, the Bible, *The Imitation of Christ*, the *Life of St. Teresa*, or Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Any real book will do. As we read, we shall be steeping ourselves in the atmosphere of the other world, and we shall be able to recognize, more and more clearly, both its "otherness," its difference from our ordinary personal consciousness, and its nativeness to that which is deepest in us,—to a Self that is beyond self, a Self which we never are, but which is more real, and more really ourself, than all we are.

Spiritual reading is thus the first practice which our inquiry suggests.

We recall next how consciousness is limited by our interests. So long as our personal interests are centred in the outer world and limited to it, so long must our personal consciousness be similarly confined. To become conscious of the inner life we must *desire* it. Desire must be the driving force. Without it we can do nothing. Over and over again we have been urged to desire greatly; to cease to seek such little aims. A little comfort, a little work, a little praise or fame, a little love, a few more years of life on earth: what are these to the soul of man? Against them we hear the voice of the Master: "And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me." "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman seeking goodly pearls; who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it." There may have been times when we thought these were hard sayings—as though a "jealous god" wished to rob us of all that made life dear; but they are not arbitrary dicta; they are laws inherent in the very nature of the personal consciousness. "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also"; for our consciousness is ruled and focussed by desire.

We have, therefore, to do everything we can to turn our desires to the inner world, and to strengthen their hold upon it. Most of us have had some experience in changing the current of our likes and dislikes, and we know from this that the flow of desire in any given direction can be increased by attention and by sacrifice. We can use these here.

Desires are, however, of many kinds, and our analysis of personal consciousness showed that the desires which focussed it are those which are themselves focussed upon action. The principle, involved in this, is of far-reaching importance. The inner world will not open and yield its secrets to the merely curious, to the dilettante, to the seeker of sensation or the sentimentalist. These must be content with its psychic counterfeit, for they can penetrate no further. Nor is the desire to *know*, the abstract search for truth, pure and high though it may be, sufficient. We must desire to know *in order to act*. We seek the Divine Will in order to obey it. Only when he resolved to be as one of the "hired servants" of his father, did the prodigal son find his way home. It is true that the theory of consciousness permits us to become aware of what we oppose, as well as of what we strive to further, so that theoretically it is possible to enter the inner world as either friend or foe, courting ultimate annihilation or eternal life (and that this possibility is more than theoretical, the existence of the Black Lodge proves); but what is *not* possible is to gain entrance there as neutrals or as drones.

We shall do well to remind ourselves, therefore, over and over again, that as "desire precedes function" (action), so "function (action) precedes organism." It is by *doing* that we build up the organism which enables us to do better; and our faculties of perception, our senses, are, as we have seen, but

part of the organism of action. They receive and select those elements of the action of the universe upon us, to which we react—which we reflect back upon the universe as our action upon it—and this reception and selection is an inseparable part of the action and reaction, and not something that can exist alone. Notice the position which the whole body takes when we try to quicken any sense to its keenest activity, when we look or listen as intently as possible. Instinctively we assume a poise alert for instant action of any kind—even though our reason may tell us that no immediate action will be required by what we see or hear. This, which the body does automatically in aid of our outer senses, we must do intentionally in aid of our inner senses. We must act upon what we know, and we must be alert and poised to act upon what we seek to know.

There may be need here for a word of warning, and for a reminder of what was said earlier of "action" being a broader word than many seem to think it; since there are inner as well as outer acts. Love, worship, adoration, praise and thanksgiving, the humbling of self and the exaltation of others, faith and trust and hope, are far more potent "acts" than the banging of our fist upon the table, the strident insistence upon our own way, and the "busy-body" intrusion into the concerns of our neighbours. Silence may be action of the most direct kind, and may demand and wield a greater power than does speech. Rest, the rest of utter self-giving—not of mere relaxation—is also an act.

From all of this, we draw another clear rule for our guidance. We must consecrate ourselves to action, and consecrate all our actions to the end that our desires seek. Body, mind and heart, all we are or have, must be enlisted and must be used.

Our review brings us now to the characteristic features of our nervous organism, which make it (and the whole body) an *instrument* for our use. Here the lessons are very clear, direct and concrete. If, in the words of *Light on the Path*, we are "to reach to the life beyond individuality" by recognizing and using that "whole individuality" as our instrument, we must so organize it that it can serve that end. The body offers us a working model, and detail by detail we must copy that model until every part of our nature is brought into accordance with it.

Let us see what this involves in relation to our personal consciousness, the consciousness which our physical nervous system serves, and which must now itself be made an instrument of something greater. For this, we have seen that there are two prerequisites: first, our personalities must be made capable of genuinely spontaneous action; and, second, we must surrender that spontaneity—our own freedom of choice—to our Master. If we recall what we observed of the difference between a mere mechanical union of opposing tendencies—giving a spurious appearance of spontaneity—and the organization and true spontaneity which resulted when that union was perfected through self-surrender and sacrifice, it will become startlingly clear, on the least self-examination, that in our personal nature (as distinct from our body) the union is as yet only of the former, the mechanical kind. Our desires, thoughts, feelings

and emotions are under no central control, nor do they manifest even the rudiments of self-surrender and sacrifice. They act, and war, one against the other. At one hour, one is uppermost; and at the next, another; and our actions, our reactions to external influences, instead of being freely chosen, are the automatic, predictable and purely reflex reactions necessitated by the tendency which is uppermost. Something "*makes*" us lose our temper; we do not deliberately choose anger as our response. We fly because fear dominates us, and fear *must* fly; or we press forward, because, for the moment, we are more curious than afraid, yet we feel the drag of fear and advance hesitatingly. Whatever we do, we do against opposition from within ourselves. We are for ever of "doubtful mind," weak, vacillating, ineffective; because the elemental tendencies, which make up our personal nature, have not been trained in sacrifice and self-surrender so as to be willing and able to hold themselves in check in favour of their opposites; and because, an even deeper lack, there is no permanent centre to which everything is referred and which is alone empowered to decide and initiate our actions.

This is what we must alter. We must so control and reorganize our personality as to become capable of genuinely spontaneous, freely chosen action. The "awakened spiritual will"—the will which animates us in this whole undertaking, and which we recognize as that of our true self—must be given that same position of central authority, over all elements in our personality, that our mental consciousness occupies in relation to the physical nervous system. This is both the beginning and the end. It must first be given, then it must be enforced and confirmed; until finally it becomes habitual, as "function" builds up "organism." Such a transformation cannot be accomplished all at once. It must be the result of an effort that is persistent and unremitting. We must remember always what we are trying to do, and *everything* must be referred to this "central authority," to be seen and judged, not from the personal standpoint, but in relation to our true self. This is what religious treatises mean by the practice of Recollection. It is, on a different plane, the same practice, the same "function" or action, which, through ages of evolution, resulted in leading our physical nerves to their centre in the brain.

For this practice to be successful, however, it is clear that we must work also from the other end, breaking up that direct connection between "sensory" and "motor" functions, the receipt of an influence and the response to it, which causes purely reflex action, and which now makes us act automatically on whatever emotion happens to be uppermost and is externally stimulated. Our emotions must be trained to hold their motor functions in check. This in no way diminishes their sensitiveness. On the contrary it increases it. They become keener than before, more sharply aware of all that press upon them; for they have surrendered to the "central authority" all weapons of offence and defence, and act only in their "sensory" capacity, merely reporting what they feel, without themselves opposing or inviting it. Little by little, however, as they do this, their sensitiveness undergoes a change, so that instead of being sensitive only for self and in relation to self, the range widens,

as well as deepens, and they become sensitive for all that concerns the authority to which they report. This is part of what is called the practice of Detachment. It is intimately related to the whole first half of *Light on the Path*. It is not to be confined merely to the emotions; it applies to all elements in the nature. To turn to the centre, we must turn away from the circumference. To buy the "pearl of great price," we must sell all that we have.

These two practices of Recollection and Detachment not only tend to give our true self the control of our personality, and to make it capable of spontaneous action and of use as an instrument; they also have a very direct and marked effect upon the character and range of our perceptions. In our analysis of perception we saw that it was never "pure" or whole, but always coloured and limited by the desires it served. As these desires change, our perceptions change; and when they are replaced by the "awakened spiritual will," the change is radical. The senses, detached from outer things, begin to open on inner things, becoming sensitive to the interests of the will they now serve.

But here, as everywhere, function must precede organism. We must, as our earlier discussion pointed out, act first with *the whole of ourselves* in directions where we have, as yet, no organs to serve us, and where, in consequence, all is to us silent and invisible. It is so that we must strive to become aware of all that concerns the spiritual will and the inner life; and this striving of the whole of ourselves, this detached, recollected, pressing of our being, deeper and deeper into the "cloud of unknowing," is the practice of Meditation.

Its value and importance are beyond all telling, yet we can recognize something of them when we reflect upon what we have already seen, and thus realize that this practice must be the forerunner of every new development, every new acquisition of faculty—whether of insight or of skill. For those who seek the inner life, it is an absolute necessity. In the world to-day, dominated by materialism, misled by a misunderstood and mistaken theory of evolution, men are prone to think of the religious life as no more than the life of the personality made a little better, a little purer, and more unselfish. Like Abou Ben Adhem, "cheerly still," they are not troubled that they have no love of God, if they can point to a little good, done from what they fancy is a love of men. But the religious life, the inner life, the life of chelaship, begins and ends in love of the Divine, and its love of men is but a facet of that higher love. Modern thought has so stressed unity that it has lost sight of duality, and theology itself has become forgetful of that to which all the saints and seers and mystics bear unbroken testimony: that above all else the "other world," native though the soul be to it, is characterized by its "otherness," and that there is nothing in mere goodness, nothing in the whole *personal* life, that alone can lift us to that world and to the consciousness of the soul. That resurrection is an act, not of personal, but of divine power. In the acorn alone is no ability to become the oak. It must open itself to, and be acted upon by, the hidden, universal forces of the earth and air and water, and the heat and magnetism of the sun; and when these have quickened it, and it begins to grow, and is no more an acorn but a sapling, it has entered a different



world; it is a different thing. In like manner the soul of man. Its consciousness is called forth from the consciousness of the personality, as Lazarus was called from the tomb, wrapped in grave-clothes, in answer to his Master's voice. Unless we can hear that call, we cannot answer it; but hearing, however faintly—as from far distances, “as in the winds from unsunned spaces blown,” or as a stirring in the silence of unplumbed inner depths—we can obey. In meditation, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes though we be, and with a napkin bound about our face, we press to where that Voice is heard.

We have said enough. Here, too, perception must grow clearer through action. What is it that our inquiry has shown us? What lesson has it taught? Perhaps it can be summed in this: that in the lowliest, we can learn of the highest; that before we can become chêlas, we must become to our own soul even as our body is to us. And the more we study this model that the body sets before us, and compare it with what self-examination reveals in ourselves, the more clear it becomes that this transformation, which we must make, involves and explains, each and every one of the great ascetical rules which have been laid down from time immemorial for the disciple's guidance. We see that none is arbitrary; none may be omitted or skimmed, for they are rooted in the very nature of consciousness.

HENRY BEDINGER MITCHELL.

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*Our life is but a little holding, lent  
To do a mighty labour: we are one  
With heaven and the stars when it is spent  
To serve God's aims: else die we with the sun.*

—GEORGE MEREDITH.

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## GLIMPSES OF THE ELEMENTAL SELF

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THE *Secret Doctrine* was on my desk with the notes on the study I had undertaken. (The desk chair is not comfortable.) I really did not feel fit to approach the holy precincts of Theosophy. (Spiritual reading and study are too apt to wake up the conscience, when one is enjoying sluggishness.) One should be in a proper frame of mind in order to study. (It does call for effort to reach towards the Higher Mind.) Nevertheless, really and truly, I did not want to get out of touch. (A feeling of conscious virtue is like unto a comfortable parlour fire.) Hence, I refused to read that new novel my sister had asked me to read. ("What a good little boy am I"! ) Besides, I should have had to get up to get it. (When at physical ease, how one does hate to be aroused to any effort.) But, "one may study Theosophy in any phase of life." (Sloth can be stronger than narcotized desire.) What had the Branch been considering of late? (One honestly is scared of wholly letting go.)

Oh! Yes—this question of discipleship. (It is true pride—certainly not "ignoble vanity"—to see one's self as "an interested student".) Instead of wasting time, I decided to "meditate" on "discipleship". (How the lower nature does love to call "sinking into vacuity", a "meditation".) "Here goes"—(How hard it is to keep concentration from becoming drowsiness. When does one fall asleep?)

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It was easy for the Student to let go of any touch with the Fourth Dimension. That which is still tenuous must be grasped—it still lacks the power to grip.

Passage from the Third Dimension was slower—the Lower Mind fought hard against having its ceaseless chatter stilled ("stilled" according to the Drifter—never mind facts, when "drifting into negativeness"). Formed elements, such as Malevolence (draped out in the stolen habiliments of "Friendly Criticism"); Self-Indulgence (masquerading as "Health Protection"); Self-Reference (gaily dominoed as "Self-Examination"); Self-Pity (strenuously proclaiming itself to all in hearing as truly "Right Self-Identification"); and a whole troop of Ugly Sins (bedizened as "Choice Companions")—indeed the entire brood of Lower Nature—objected vigorously to having an established rapport broken. Does not their very energy, power, and life depend upon the continued attention, interest, and sympathy of the personality through its favourite daughter—troop and brood's adopted mother, the Maya of the Lower Self? Why should they not work to hold one in the psychic counterfeit of the lower Third Dimension?

Even when adrift, does the Law of Attraction and Repulsion work on in one. For the moment, the search for the "Centre of One's Being" (never mind on what plane of consciousness) carried the Student on into the Second Dimension—the lunar land of shadows; so-seemingly harmless, yet so truly deadly; the state where sin seems joy and virtue irksome; the plane of unreality, because all is inverted and unsubstantial. Its thin wraiths waved vile tentacles, that seemed like lovely arms, to the Student passing through—ready to envelope him with their miasma whenever he might return and have the folly to linger.

With bated breath the Student shot through the ceaselessly narrowing Land of the One Dimension—life-squeezing pseudologue of the One Dimension; that *state* which perhaps Adepts may meditate upon, but which even high Chêlas dare not pretend they comprehend; though ever to be sought after—and which certainly a mere Student might seek to forget for once—provided he be head-long bent for the "Centre of (his) Being"—on a certain plane!

At last "Nirvana" (for "Jack Horners"! ) was reached—the "Heaven" of sin-eaters—"Pointland" itself. Then came aloud the "Song of Death," the polaric opposite of that "Song of Life" of *Light on the Path*. The Student listened:

"Of course I—I, the Student of all the T. S.; I, the most persistent seeker of the Path, against and over such barriers and obstacles as have confronted none other in all this Mahamanvantara; of course I am a disciple. Anyone may see it—everyone does see it. It is only tribute to my own unexcelled humility that leads others to criticize me at all or in any way. It inspires them greatly to see how stilly I meet all trials. I—the gallant, energetic fighter—am no Pharisee. I do not proclaim my own achievement of discipleship. I—I, the humble-minded and most excellent Chêla—need not make claim to be what I am—to be what I live. O Master ——"

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*Something* happened (something always does happen whenever a Master is invoked). The only way to describe this happening (how can one compress the Fourth Dimension into the Third?) is to say, it was as if a mighty hand had grabbed the Student by the back of the neck—as one picks up a puppy. Through the several Dimensions, the Student was flashed—through Death-in-Attenuation; through the Lunar horrors and the Mundane perils, up into Planetary Spaces, only to be bumped—head first—against the roof of the Solar Dome. Then one eye was planted against one tiny crack and one ear pulled over until it lapped another rift.

The Student gazed. He saw before him a climbing mountain path, with corners where intersecting highways crossed. Behind each corner lurked dirty urchins—many misshapen. Up the way before him travelled many pilgrims, oblivious to all around them, save their Goal.

From time to time, the children shrieked agonizingly; or rolled in painful fits, with wild complaining. Pilgrims would stop to aid them. Sometimes

even Great Personages would hurry down the Mountain side—as if fearing lest the need might be real.

Sometimes a child would leap to its feet; to run off, with free vigour, as shrilly rose a chorused, "April Fool! April Fool!", while raucous adult laughter from unseen beings chimed in.

Sometimes a child would be picked up; to sob out "I have lost the purse my Father gave me to carry to my brother." The benevolent pilgrim who had come to assist, would begin a search. The purse would be discovered. The helper would reach eagerly for it—only to have the purse pulled back by a hidden string.

The acclaim of "April Fool! April Fool!" would ring out again—especially in the cases where some helper, eager to aid quickly in order to relieve the poignant agony of loss of what was precious to the child, would pitch forward, losing balance as the purse swept out under an outstretched hand.

Then, indeed, was the chorus wilder—"April Fool! April Fool! April Fool!" And happier and more raucous was the adult chiming.

The Student tried to pull away eye and ear. The episode was repellent. "What is the sense of making me attend to such a thing as this—it is, indeed, a disgusting waste of my valuable time."

Had the Silence voice? What was it that seemed to say—"Attend; and seek the meaning."

As the Student waited, it seemed as if the happenings were symbolic: symbolic of what? Why did the urchins seem to look like him? Why did it seem as if he were himself playing these cheap and miserable tricks? Why did the cries seem like his own voice?

The pressure of the Fourth Dimension was incomprehensible; yet it produced a reaction within that part of the Third which his understanding could reach—what had all this to do with him—how did he share in such vulgar antic and cruel joy?

Could it be that he counterfeited need? Could it be that his resolutions and pledges were of the nature of the "Purse-trick"? Did he hold in reserve, in his contact with desired discipleship, the unsportsmanlike trick of withdrawal—inexcusable, whatever the reason alleged? Were his cries and his acts real,—or not?

Who were the members of the adult chiming chorus? The Student had heard of the Powers of Evil. Were his slothful demands to have his duty done for him—his repeated withdrawals of resolutions and pledges—not merely harmful to those who would help, but also "pleasure"-bringing to the Sons of the Black Void? Had he not heard that it is on such homage from human beings that the Dark Ones live? Was he in the habit of feeding the Beasts by his own waste and misuse of Divine Compassion? Does he wish to trade on pilgrim or Master—for the benefit of the Death-dealers?

The Student roused. Something impelled him to leap from morris-chair into the uncomfortable desk seat. His eye fell on the word "Jesus" on the open page of *The Secret Doctrine*. He buried his head in his hands.

Whenever he wasted in vague phantasies the teaching and reading of the Spiritual World and of "the Living Wall," who hold back death and destruction from men; whenever he broke pledges and withdrew resolutions; whenever he talked about Masters and forgot the pregnant "Ye are my friends who keep my commandments"; whenever he played at Discipleship and acted it not—how did he differ from the brutal soldiery in Palestine nineteen centuries ago? They clothed the Western Master, Avatar and King indeed, in purple crowned Him—with thorns; gave Him a sceptre of reeds—to offer mocking homage, interspersed with cruellest blows. They were but Roman Legionaries—serving in a proconsulate—ignorant colonials—"Father, forgive them; they know not what they do."

Had the Student this excuse? Where was his "loyalty"—that first and vital step of *Lodge Dialogues*?

Can there be neutrality on a moral issue? Under which standard had he taken his place? Was his sloth cowardice? His sinning treason? His broken resolutions the mockery and beating of a King?

Would he be man, or beast—if ever he fell so low as again to be a mere mercenary or pressed man—not even a volunteer—in the service of those who seek to injure, hurt, and destroy all mankind—worse than that—each and every one he loves?

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"Emotion not put to work by will is ever dangerous." The Student pushed books and papers off his desk—praying to All within him he might never forget,—and began the work that had long been needing his attention. He offered this effort that his will be set—once and for ever—aright; as a dependable servant of his Master; unfailingly faithful to his Master's great Cause—hence doing each "nearest duty."

U. G.  
(GEORGE WOODBRIDGE.)

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*All knowledge begins and ends with wonder, but the first wonder is the child of ignorance, the second wonder is the parent of adoration.*—COLERIDGE.

# PAUL VALÉRY

## AND THE UNIVERSAL MAN

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—*Maître, s'écriait le disciple, quel est ce Dieu brillant de majestueuse splendeur que je découvre au delà des nuages? Ne vous semble-t-il pas qu'il m'appelle?*

*Et le Bouddha, souriant, de répondre:*

*—C'est toi-même, ô mon fils.*

CLEMENCEAU.

ON June 16, 1927, Paul Valéry was received as a member by the French Academy. It was a significant event. His predecessor, Anatole France, had been the lucid and gifted exponent of the skepticism and cynicism that characterized so many French minds during the years of reaction from 1870 to 1914. Valéry belongs to a new cycle. He is ardent and forceful, profound and intense. His election to the ranks of the Forty Immortals symbolizes the "change of polarity" which has occurred in French thought.

In so far as literature is a mirror of life, the works of these two Academicians illustrate, by their opposite tendencies, that great conversion of mind and heart which was the moving power of France during the Great War. Like all such conversions, it involved the emergence of the deepest and truest elements of the nation's life. It has been one of the many resurrections of France.

Anatole France has become so *démodé* that it is hard to appreciate what was the basis of his international fame. He himself has explained it. "The longer I live," he said, "the more I feel that only that which is easy is beautiful." No phrase could more adequately define the tastes of a generation that desired only to be amused as painlessly as possible. Anatole France lived and taught in the Garden of Epicurus. His fluent and sardonic thought passed lightly over the superficial paradoxes of existence, and he veiled his great erudition with an irony which respected nothing and nobody.

Valéry spares neither the reader nor himself. Though endowed with the power of clear and vivid expression, he has the just reputation of being one of the most difficult of authors. But his sentences are not obscure because of any desire to be "original" or "precious". They reveal an effort to give intelligible form to aspects of truth and beauty which have been so neglected by the generality of mankind that words and phrases to describe them can only be fashioned with difficulty out of the language of common speech. He is an explorer of uncharted tracts of consciousness, and is forced at every turn to represent things which have not yet received a name in any modern tongue. To keep his mind in training for so arduous an enterprise, he subjects it to an intense but varied discipline: he is simultaneously or successively poet, critic, savant, metaphysician.

"I put nothing above consciousness", he writes; "I would have willingly sacrificed many masterpieces, which I did not believe to be the effects of meditation, for one page that manifested conscious direction. . . . I had the mania of admiring in a work of art only the signs of the power that created it." Such a work can be understood only by an effort which is proportional to the effort that produced it. If we persist in identifying the true and the beautiful with the easy, we must pay the price for our inertia and self-indulgence. We remain fixed in the useless repetition of a pleasurable sensation. The real lover of truth and beauty knows that this is the way to automatism, to the suspension of growth, to death. Therefore, he is always seeking, with ardour, and, if necessary, with anguish, some new revelation of the powers latent in the Universe and in man. He uses the experience of the past but does not cling to its forms. Why does he live this dangerous and painful life, when he can stop among his treasures and become, at any moment, a sybarite and a dilettante? Probably he has not the time to pause for an explanation—assuming that he can give one in mental terms; but he has his reward in the acquisition of self-control, in the progressive elevation of his centre of self-consciousness.

Such seems to be the main theme of Valéry's work. It can hardly fail to be of interest to students of Theosophy, for it is a variation upon the great theme of the evolution of spiritual consciousness. Moreover, one often has the impression, in following the *detail* of his thought, that Valéry must have some acquaintance with theosophical literature. It appears certain, however, that this is not the case; that he writes like a student of Theosophy because his motive and objective do not essentially differ from those of a student of Theosophy. It should be added that he does not reveal the slightest interest in the so-called "occult arts" or in any of the counterfeits of Theosophy.

It is impossible here to achieve more than a cursory sketch of those phases of his thought which seem to approximate most closely to certain ideas frequently emphasized in theosophical literature. In his *Introduction to the Method of Leonardo da Vinci*, Valéry has incorporated a *Note and Digression* which is an inquiry into the nature of genius.<sup>1</sup> He meditates upon the relation between genius and the real Self of man, the "I am that I am". In a sense, this *Note and Digression* may be selected as an epitome of Valéry's own "genius", of his courage and aspiration and profundity.

"The Universe", he says, "is constituted in accordance with a plan, the profound symmetry of which is, in some way, present in the ultimate structure of our mind. *The poetic instinct should lead us blindly to the truth.*" It may be recalled that the word "poet" is derived from the Greek *poietes*, which means a maker, a fabricator, a creator, and which was not originally limited to the connotation of a maker of verbal harmonies. The first and greatest Poet is the Logos, the fashioner of the Universe, and the earthly poet is only His humble imitator.

There appears to be a fundamental distinction between man and the other

<sup>1</sup> The *Note and Digression* is included in a collection of essays: *Variété*, pp. 169-213; Librairie Gallimard, Paris, 1924.

creatures of this earth. Whereas they evolve in subjection to a plan imposed upon them and which they spontaneously obey, man must in increasing degree discover for himself his destiny, and must obey its laws with self-conscious intelligence. Valéry suggests that the appearance of man upon the stage is absolutely necessary to bring the drama of evolution to its proper conclusion. Nature, divorced from all association with self-conscious intelligence, can be represented only as a vast potentiality, like the primordial *Chaos* or Void of the Greek philosophers. Man alone can bring to their fruition in consciousness the seeds of wisdom and love which the ancient creative gods buried in the earth. As has been said, the perfected man is a "conscious collaborator with Nature."

This is the doctrine so excellently phrased in the axiom of Protagoras, that man is the measure of all things. It is the principle and justification of the great Humanist tradition which has built that which is durable in our Western civilization. In the view of the Humanist, civilization is not, as Rousseau pretended, a disease of our Mother Earth, but is the object and fulfilment of her labours. It is a *poem*, in the sense that it is a creation, and man becomes conscious of his real Self in so far as he participates in the *poetic* or creative activity of building or preserving a civilization. This does not necessarily imply an indefinite multiplication of tabloid newspapers and radios and Ford cars. According to its root-meaning, civilization is a covenant of citizenship, or—as one might say—"the nucleus of a universal brotherhood."

The world usually confuses genius with technique, with some mysteriously acquired or inherited aptitude. But Valéry identifies genius with real Humanism, that is to say, with real self-consciousness. The Humanist is only indirectly concerned with techniques and aptitudes. He needs and uses them, but he is not attached to them. He is, according to Valéry's expression, a "universal man". No human undertaking is alien to him, because his sense of identity is never immersed in any activity, however splendid, of his body or his mind.

Seeking a model for his study of the "universal man", Valéry turned to Leonardo da Vinci. Here was a being at once ardent and tenacious, versatile and concentrated, methodical and inspired. Above all, he found in the great man of the Renaissance a certain detachment, a quiet judgment determining and controlling a marvellous assemblage of talents. It was as if Leonardo's faculties were merely the instruments of a real Self which was placed above and outside them, so that he could change his outer guise from moment to moment, appearing as painter or sculptor or engineer or courtier or philosopher, and yet himself remain distinct.

Of course, there would be exaggeration here, if we were to assume that, as a matter of historical fact, Leonardo was a universal man. Students of Theosophy may recall the Mahatmas—and their modesty. But Valéry is careful to say that he is not trying to prove anything about the actual Leonardo. Leonardo is only a lay-figure, a type of a relatively advanced stage of human nature which appears, from the ordinary point of view, to be universal. "I



attributed to the unfortunate Leonardo my own difficulties, transporting the disorder of my mind into the complexity of his. I inflicted upon him all my desires, imagining that he had already attained them. I changed my incapacity into his supposed power. This was false but living . . . Hercules did not have more muscles than we, they were simply larger. I correspond to him, fibre to fibre, bone to bone, act to act, and this similitude makes it possible for me to imagine his Labours."

Valéry wisely makes no effort to define the "universal man". He conceives that such a being exists, attributes to him the name of Leonardo da Vinci, and imagines that he offers us some fragments of his self-knowledge. It makes interesting reading, but it is not easy. Valéry himself pauses at one point to quote from the Latin: *durus est hic sermo*. But one may add that if it seemed to be easy, we should have excellent reason to doubt either Valéry or ourselves.

"How might some individual of the first magnitude appear to himself, if he paused in the midst of his work and contemplated himself? . . . First, he considers that he is subject to our common needs and realities; then, he returns to the secret of a separate knowledge. He sees like us and he sees like himself. . . . He is absent and present. He maintains the kind of duality which ought to be maintained by a priest. He feels clearly that he cannot define himself by ordinary data and motives. *To live*, and even to live well, is only a means to an end for him: when he eats, he also nourishes another miracle besides his life; half of his bread is consecrated. *To act* is only an exercise . . . What can glory signify to him? To shine in the eyes of others is to perceive in them nothing but the glitter of false jewelry."

He maintains a kind of duality, but he knows himself to be, in truth, one and undivided. He distinguishes carefully between his consciousness, which is a unity, and the successive forms or states that appear mysteriously *within* his consciousness, just as he distinguishes, in his view of physical Nature, between space and the phenomena contained within space. The "universal man" cannot lose the sense of his identity as a unit, as the real Self, which is the perpetual centre of his being, even while he is supervising with the closest attention the series of his *states* of consciousness. This is his constant practical problem. If he relax and allow his sense of selfhood to sink into some mental or psychic phase, to the degree of his surrender he ceases to be self-consciously "universal". And he cannot enter into the common delusion that he is a separate entity, without depreciating or destroying the value of his work.

"For so self-conscious a soul (*pour une présence d'esprit aussi sensible à elle-même*) . . . all events of all kinds, life and death and thought, are nothing but subordinate symbols. As every *visible thing* is at once foreign, indispensable and inferior to *the thing which sees it*, the importance of these symbols, however great it may appear at each instant, becomes slight in comparison with the persistent act of attention which enables us to see them. Everything yields before the pure universality, the insurmountable generality which consciousness feels itself to be."

This *detachment* of the "universal man" is never negative, for it implies and

is, indeed, made possible by an unceasing exercise of *attention*. He cannot afford himself a single self-indulgence. He never takes a vacation, while he is in charge of a body; he is always in control, positive and purposeful. Valéry recalls a motto of Leonardo, "*hostinato rigore*", obstinate rigour, or—as it may be paraphrased—uncompromising self-discipline. "When this self-discipline has been established, a positive liberty is possible. What we usually call liberty is nothing but our capacity to obey every chance impulse; the more one enjoys it, the more closely he is chained to the same point, like some floating cork which is attached to nothing but which everything attracts, so that all the forces of the Universe are neutralized when they act upon it."

The liberated consciousness is above all *purposeful*. It is to the outer eye alone that the direction of its movement seems always to be changing. The "universal man" works consistently for the supreme objective of consolidating the sense of his true identity. "There must be an unassailable conclusion to a life so firmly controlled, which has treated all objects alike as obstacles to be surmounted or overturned. It is not a conclusion of its duration but a conclusion in itself." These obstacles themselves are part of the plan of life, for the soul transforms its awareness of their presence into the purpose of overcoming them. Resistance becomes a stimulus to act.

From the mixture of sensations and intuitions which are registered by his brain, the genius must continuously *discern and choose* those which suit his immediate purpose, and reject all others from the field of his attention. If every sublime act be based upon a sublime intuition, the important factor in its *execution* is not the intuition itself, but rather the cultivated ability to select a particular genuine inspiration from the multitude of its counterfeits, and to keep it in the foreground of consciousness until it has been confirmed by some appropriate action. "The true value of intuitive or inspirational elements does not proceed from the obscurity of their origin; . . . but from their encounter with our needs, and finally from the deliberate use to which we put them,—in other words, from the collaboration of the whole man."

The beautiful and the true become part of our self-consciousness in so far as they are *enacted and personified* in our lives. Otherwise they remain abstract potentialities dimly formulated by the intellect and obscurely divined by the heart, but ignored or denied by our imaginations and by our desires.

The beautiful and the true must be personified, but they have nothing to do with the thing which is ordinarily called the personality. Valéry is very clear as to this point.

"Our *personality* itself, which we vulgarly assume to be our ultimate and most profound *property*, is only a moveable and accidental thing. It is nothing but a secondary psychological divinity living in our mirror and answering to our name. It is of the order of the Penates. It is subject to grief, fond of perfumes like the false gods . . . It loves itself and is, therefore, docile and easy to lead. It is dispersed in the carnival of madness and is bizarrely subject to the monstrosities of dreams. Worse still, it is compelled, with sadness, to recognize the existence of equals and even of superiors; and this is for it a

bitter and inexplicable fact. . . . Its actions are always relative, its masterpieces are casual. Its best ideas come to it fortuitously and secretly, though it is careful not to admit such an origin for them. Moreover, it is not really sure of being *anybody*; it denies and disguises itself more easily than it affirms itself. . . . Its favourite activity is the telling of stories. It lives its romances and plays seriously a thousand rôles. Only its hero is never itself."

The Self which manifests the true and the beautiful is as different from this lower personality as can be. What, then, is the nature of its consciousness? Is it abstract and colourless, or is it intense and properly personal, to a degree that we cannot even faintly imagine? The great mystics have recorded their answer; but Valéry is not a mystic, and prudently hesitates to describe a state of being which he has not directly experienced. Nevertheless, his surmises, even if vague, appear to be remarkable enough. It would be difficult to find many counterparts of them in the literature of the modern Occident, outside the Theosophical Movement. Quite inevitably they call to mind the age-long speculations of the philosophers of India.

"The character of man is consciousness; and the character of consciousness is a perpetual exhaustion, a detachment without rest and without exception from everything that appears to it, whatever it be that appears,—an infinite activity, independent of the quality and of the quantity of phenomena, by means of which the spiritual man (*l'homme de l'esprit*) must finally reduce himself to an indefinite refusal to be anything whatsoever. His consciousness perceives that it corresponds or responds, not to a *world*, but to some system of higher degree, the elements of which are worlds. It recognizes itself to be deeper than the abyss of animal life and death. . . . Assured of its independence and invariability, it represents itself finally as the living image, the immediate offspring of the Being, without form or origin, which is responsible for and is associated with the whole experiment of the Cosmos. A little more, and there will remain for it only two entities essentially unknown: Itself and X. Both detached from all things, implied in all things, implying all things. Equal and consubstantial."

Valéry adds: "By thus exhausting the objects of its power without exhausting itself, this perfected consciousness is as little different from non-being as one can imagine." We may fancy some Oriental metaphysician saying those very words, with joy in his heart. They suggest a question to which in some remote æon we may be vouchsafed an answer. Assuming that "non-being" is identical with "perfected consciousness", does that mean the inevitable end of consciousness, or its real beginning?

In another passage, Valéry describes the bewilderment felt by the soul when it first faces resolutely "the strangest problem that can be conceived", the problem that is forced upon us by the apparent existence of other souls. He imagines the soul solving the riddle of the One and the Many, not by any intellectual gymnastics, but by the sacrifice of itself. "It is not his dear *person* which he (the spiritual man) has exalted to so high a degree, since he renounces it even while thinking of it, and since he substitutes for it, in the

place of the *subjective* principle, the Self without qualities, which is without name and history, which is no more tangible nor less real than the centre of gravity of a planetary system. . . . And now transported by his zeal to be unique, and illumined by his ardent desire to be all-powerful, he surmounts all creations and all works, even his greatest purposes, at the same time that he lays aside all tenderness for himself and all preference for his own will. He immolates in an instant his individuality. He feels himself to be pure consciousness in which there can be no division. He is the Self, the Universal Pronoun, the Name of That which is without form."

One may venture to add explicitly what seems to be implicit in these sentences. Valéry has imagined the attainment of that state where the "universal man" has earned the right to rest from his labours. Yet, if he is, indeed, universal, if he has actually "immolated his individuality", he will continue to work for others. Liberated from the obligation to perfect his own human nature, he is free to toil, without reservation and without impediment, for the perfection of humanity.

Valéry is, as has been said, a difficult writer. It is easy to misinterpret him and to read into his thought meanings which were remote from his intention. Nevertheless, the quotations given would seem sufficiently to testify to the remarkable resemblances, at many points, between his views and certain ideas cherished by many students of Theosophy. One may, perhaps, bring out the resemblances more sharply by referring to Madame Blavatsky's article on "Genius", published in *Lucifer*, V, 227-233.

"The flame of genius," wrote Madame Blavatsky, "is lit by no anthropomorphic hand, save that of one's own Spirit. It is the very nature of the Spiritual Entity itself, of our Ego, which keeps on weaving new life-woofs into the web of reincarnation on the loom of time. . . . This it is that asserts itself more strongly than in the average man, through its personality; so that what we call the 'manifestations of genius' in a person are only the more or less successful efforts of that Ego to assert itself on the outward plane of its objective form—the man of clay—in the matter-of-fact daily life of the latter. The Egos of a Newton, an Æschylus, or a Shakespeare, are of the same essence and substance as the Egos of a yokel, an ignoramus, a fool, or even an idiot; and the self-assertion of their informing genii depends on the physiological and material construction of the physical man. . . . That which makes one mortal a great man and of another a vulgar, silly person is, as said, the quality and make-up of the physical shell or casing; and the adequacy or inadequacy of brain and body to transmit and give expression to the light of the real, *Inner* man; and this aptness or inaptness is, in its turn, the result of Karma. . . .

"Behold, in every manifestation of genius—*when combined with virtue*—in the warrior or the Bard, the great painter, artist, statesman, or man of Science . . . the undeniable presence of the celestial exile, the divine *Ego* whose jailor thou art, Oh man of matter! . . .

"Original and great genius puts out the most dazzling rays of human intellectuality; . . . it is never eccentric, though always *sui generis*; and no man

endowed with true genius can ever give way to his physical, animal passions. In the view of an humble Occultist, only such a grand altruistic character as that of Buddha or Jesus, and of their few close imitators, can be regarded, in our historical cycle, as fully developed GENIUS."

Valéry's "universal man" is, of course, no more "fully developed" than Valéry's own genius. He is the creature of an author's imagination. However, he is, at least, more convincing as a type of advanced humanity than are most of the strange entities who masquerade as "Adepts" in occult novels. It is part of Valéry's artistry and good sense, that he has attempted no more than a sketch. The reader is free to fill in as many missing details as he likes.

Meanwhile, we can be grateful for being reminded, in distinctive fashion, of those attributes of the Genius which we can begin to manifest here and now, however humble our task or however lowly our talents. No aspirant will be the poorer if he persistently cultivate purpose, detachment, attention, discernment, decision, and the will to execute what he decides.

S. L.

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*My earthly tasks are of God's appointment. To keep a high and pure spirit: to do the small things of every day with feet on earth but heart in Heaven: this be my aim—so to act according to the purpose of my being, to the Glory of God.*

—W. J. KNOX LITTLE.

# STUDIES IN PARACELSUS

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## VII

IN the eighth chapter of the first Book of *Philosophia Sagax*, Paracelsus speaks of Adept Medicine, telling us that this division of medicine deals only with those diseases which we contract from the heavens and the operations of the heavens. By the heavens, he means the *astra*, as distinguished from the Divine. All diseases, he says, arise either from the *astra* or from the earthly elements; all diseases must be treated by remedies derived from their own source or plane. Remedies taken from the earthly elements are not effective against diseases derived from the *astra*. The earth with its elements plays its own part, but there is also a Pharmacist in the firmament, who guides the powers belonging to the firmament. In the firmament, as on the earth, there is a Magister, and the wise physician should learn from the Preceptor whom God has placed at the head of the invisible schools in the firmament. In these invisible schools he learns to make use of impressions, powers and secrets which can be infused into a physical body for use against diseases which have their origin in the firmament, just as extracts of medicinal plants can be brought from a garden and put into a box. But the physician must learn these secrets from the supernal world, as Saint Paul learned. When thus speaking of the firmament, Paracelsus appears to mean the astral and psychic planes. He says that there are three worlds: the Celestial, the Firmamental and the Earthly, and that there is a Magister in each. Ascending in spirit to the Celestial, Saint Paul "found in the third heaven the Magister with whom he might speak".

Paracelsus adds that Adept Philosophy cannot be learned from men; it can be gained only from that School in which it is practised, and the learning must derive from another, namely, from Him who is Adept, from Him who is Himself Adept Philosophy. In what is written we seek *sensus* and *intellectus*; that is, significance and reasoning. For in the hidden significance is the whole treasure of what is contained in the writing. The significance must come from him who planned the writing, for no common man can infuse a hidden significance into writing. And the matter is more potent, the less dependence there is upon reasoning. In the same manner Adept Philosophy is not a science devised by man, for it comes from the Supernal, which one man cannot impart to another. Medicinal herbs, seeds, gems, the four earthly Elements, are as the letters of what is written; they serve to convey the inner significance. To illustrate the Supernal Science, Paracelsus cites the words of Christ, "Learn of Me", and the Pentecostal inspiration through which the Apostles were able to speak and act. The body formed of the earthly Elements does not enter the School of Adept Philosophy; the sidereal Spirit enters. He who

enters that School as a disciple will gain a more lofty and exact knowledge of the Magnalia, the great secrets of Nature, than can be attained by flesh and blood, which "cannot inherit the kingdom of God". He who seeks to learn from the Eternal concerning that body which is of the Eternal, must apply to this School as one who is fit for its discipline. Only the regeneration brought about in man can constitute a pupil ready to be led into that School in which are taught the things of the Eternal. Our aspiration must be directed upward, not outward or downward. If we lead the sidereal body into the school of the earthly Elements, or impel the disciple of the Eternal into the sidereal school, or the school of the earthly Elements, by both these courses we shall incur sin. He is truly wise who understands that there is within him the power to learn, not only concerning the earthly Elements and the sidereal mysteries, but also, and finally, to apprehend the things of the Eternal. To this end man has been so constituted that he is not as the brutes, but knows himself as man, able to learn in these three schools. In this way three Lights glow in man, two of which, in relation to the third, are shadows; yet, none the less they are lights of the world. The principle of this School is, Seek first the Kingdom of God. To this all else will be added.

Paracelsus applies the same method to the Science of Adept Mathematics. Adept Science is that which can remove the body of night and darkness, and therefore the earthly hindrances, from the sidereal. Thus the external is night; it is not science and art, but obscurity. The external may be depicted as on a map, but it is not living; the Mover is lacking. In Mathematics, as in Philosophy, the teaching is, that we must abandon the lower and go forward to the higher, leaving the "body of the Elements" as our centre of attraction and passing through the sidereal to the Eternal. Standing firm in the Eternal, man can then illuminate the sidereal and the elemental. Paracelsus quaintly affirms that the elemental bears a grudge against the two higher realms: "This hates the two other schools".

In the ninth Chapter Paracelsus explains that there is a wide range of difference in the *astra*, the sidereal forces which guide men. There may be so great simplicity in their manifestation that those who are guided by them may appear foolish; therefore art and science must be used to discern between this simplicity and delusion. As he puts it, "the *astra* can divine extravagantly". Those men who lead a modest and honest life, who are simple and of humble estate, manifest "artless" wisdom. The ancients considered this problem of divination with careful meditation, so that they might keep body and mind undefiled when about to undertake magical operations of this kind, whether through trance, or contemplation, or the direct activity of the Soul. Through this careful procedure the ancients obtained great sapience, many arts and wonderful prophecies, which can never be attained by those who are given to wantonness and intemperance.

Concerning divination, he explains that man has a sidereal body corresponding to the external *astra*. These two converse together reciprocally, if the sidereal body be not perturbed by the body of the Elements; for these gifts

are not given to the body of the Elements, but belong to the sidereal body. If the body of the Elements be at rest, as in sleep, the sidereal body dwells in its own operation, because it does not sleep or rest. But, if the body of the Elements prevails and predominates, the sidereal body becomes torpid. When the body of the Elements grows quiet, dreams approach; for even as the *astra* operate, dreams come with their revelations. In proportion as the *astra* are well or badly ordered, so is the coming of dreams; while, as has been already recorded, the *astra* reveal nothing to him who is over-confident and too circum-spect. Further, ambition and the conviction of one's own sagacity hinder the sidereal operations and resist the *astra*. Therefore, sidereal operation belongs only to those who know how to respond wisely to the *astra*. Paracelsus clearly shows that the *astra* act on the sidereal body; when the sidereal body is ready for the *astra*, and the *astra* themselves are prepared, wondrous things occur in the revelation of present and past and future things. The entire tenor of this Chapter shows that there are natural diviners, those who have the innate qualities of this gift; but for the perfection of the gift both science and art are needed; and in these are included the preparation of the sidereal body and the *astra* by the discipline and purification which Paracelsus increasingly insists on as a means for bringing to life and activity the body of regeneration with its supernal qualities. In all these divisions of "Astro-nomy", the "science of the *Astra*", the distinction is maintained between the external body (the body of the Elements), and the realm of the firmament, which operates on the body of the Elements through the firmamental or sidereal body. The functions of the body of the Elements and the sidereal body are within the domain of the Natural, and are illuminated by the Light of Nature. So far, we appear to be concerned with the domain of the astral and psychic, and Paracelsus deals severely with those who rest content with these lower realms, declaring that it is this confinement to the lower realms which causes the natural arts to degenerate and produce only uncertain and delusive results. He strongly urges incessant effort to pass upward from the natural to the celestial, saying that these imperfect arts and sciences are transcended by the direct activities of the divine Image which receives the Light of Heaven. No longer "seeing through a glass darkly", the real man in the Light of Heaven "sees face to face".

Concerning the art of divination, Paracelsus draws a distinction between true *Divi*, divinely inspired men, and those who do not rise above the sidereal. He adds a warning of the danger of "astral intoxication": as natural wine intoxicates, so there is intoxication through the *astra*; just as drugs may render men insane or drunken, so is it with the *astra*. There is natural wine and the wine of Olympus, which the Greeks called nectar; while it may be suitable for the Olympians, this nectar may intoxicate the natural man. In relation to food and wine, there is always the danger of excess unless due care be taken. And excess is of three kinds: that belonging to the body of the Elements, that belonging to the sidereal, and that belonging to the celestial or divine. Where "the Spirit quickens", that which comes down from above, from the Spirit, is good. Thus repletion from the divine is alone good, and all other repletions



are to be guarded against. The Apostles were regarded as drunkards by the populace, for those only are taught of God who are intoxicated by the new wine of the Holy Spirit. Paracelsus insists that we must distinguish between this wine of the Holy Spirit, the Olympian or sidereal wine, and the natural wine.

By Inclination, Paracelsus means the pressure of an external force, generally from the higher realms. From the *astra* come the inclinations which perfect the natural man in mind, heart and spirit; and man receives the Light of Nature in those things in which he should operate according to that Light. Inclination is a secret operation in man whereby that is fashioned in him, which Nature cannot fashion unaided. But it is madness to plead that evil "inclinations", like theft and gaming, are thus imposed on man by superior powers; they come wholly from within the man himself. And here we may remember what Paracelsus has said concerning wolf-men, toad-men and the dregs of the brute in the Quintessence. We are not compelled to obey inclination against our wills. Inclination of the flesh comes from the Elements; inclination of the mind comes from the *astra*; Inclination of the spirit comes from the supernal and divine. If we rightly examine the Inclination from above, we shall discover it to be a Preceptor, guiding and informing us. As nothing can be accomplished in the spiritual world without the Divine Command, so nothing can be accomplished in the natural world without the Light of Nature. Man is made perfect through the Command and the Light.

More imperative than Inclination is what he calls Impression, a "perfecting force" in the Light of Nature, evidently an aspect of Karma in its wider aspect of cosmic law. Impression thus resembles what is called predestination. It works through the superior *astra*, and affects all mankind, but does not coerce or vanquish all. "Many are called, but few are chosen", and the few make use of the tendency of Impression, rather than yield to it.

We come now to the concluding part of this abstruse work, the second Book of *Philosophia Sagax*. Paracelsus begins by affirming that the Divine Power performs its operations through a medium, working outward from the interior to the exterior. As symbols of this interior force within exterior forms, he cites the Star of Bethlehem and Gideon's fleece, both of them external manifestations of inner spiritual power. He adds that, as compared with the exterior, the potency of the interior force is enormous. So there are media between the Divine and external nature; just as the herb is the medium which bears the healing power used by the true physician, so among men the Saint is the medium through whom the Divine works in what are called miracles.

The purpose of his teaching is that man may understand both external things and the "interior heaven", and distinguish between them, just as Shankaracharya taught his disciples to "discern between the mortal and the Immortal". In the Introduction, Paracelsus suggests that the sins of men by their reaction cause effects in "heaven", which produce warning signs; so that what unenlightened "astronomers" describe as "evil influences" are really punishments evoked by sins; men should make use of them as warnings, and should avail themselves of the opportunities granted them to obey the

divine law and improve their ways. This would seem to be a description of Karma as the law of action and reaction in the Universal Mind.

While in the first Book, Paracelsus seeks to show the working of the *astra* upon and through the Elements, and the evolution of natural sapience and science through experience of the external world, the second Book deals with the Soul. This corresponds to the distinction which Mme. Blavatsky makes, between Psychic and Noetic Action, in an article in the first volume of *Lucifer*. In undertaking to speak of the Soul, its nature and conditions, Paracelsus first seeks to explain the method of the union of body and Soul, with the cause and generation of what he calls "*immortal flesh*", and the conjunction of mortal and immortal flesh into a single Image. In the first Book he says that man is composed of the "slime of the earth", but this primal material is derived no less from heaven than from earth. What comes from the earth returns to the earth, and that which takes its origin from heaven returns to heaven. From earth comes the form, but the Spirit comes from God. Into the form made of the slime, God breathed the Spirit which dwells there as a stranger in an inn. The real man, man according to his own essence, is invisible; but in relation to the nature of the sidereal, he is not invisible. Though invisible, the sidereal man is not immortal; for neither the elemental nor the sidereal attain to heaven, but only the real man, who is Spirit.

As has been already set forth, God made the divine Image for the purpose of manifestation, to make visible the invisible. This first Image, being of God, existed long before Adam, just as Christ was before Adam. Man was built in accord with the Image of God; and, "through the Image, Man is the invisible *persona* of God; as if God had said: None sees My *person*; yet by means of the slime I will make that very thing visible." The mouth of God is the *spiraculum vitæ*, "the breath of life", which *spiraculum* is the "slime of the heavens", the celestial protyle. Nothing that is earthly shall rise again, but we men shall rise again in Christ; yet, if we be not in Christ, we shall rise again, not in nature, but in the infernal realm. Each goes to its own realm, the natural to the natural, the sidereal to the sidereal, the heavenly to the heavenly; and nothing of the heavenly will be restored to the natural, save in so far as the natural is permeated by the heavenly. Man was not made "to eat and drink and die", but that he might be heir to the kingdom of God. But in that kingdom he is no heir by right, for he is of the earth, and earth attains not to heaven. The bodily vehicle was given to man in order that through it he might manifest the divine Image; it was not given that he might eat and drink. Man must supply food to the earthly body in order that the vehicle may be sustained; he must also "feed the Image" in order that it may be made manifest. So long as man lives according to the flesh, the Soul is held in subjection, unable to act, so that unless man in the flesh lives according to the Spirit in the will of God, he does wrong, for only as he so lives, will the body obey the Spirit. The Spirit returns to God who gave it; it enters the body through the *spiraculum vitæ*, the "breath of life", and departs through the *spiraculum mortis*, the "breath of death", the Spirit thereafter being enriched

because it has been joined to the body, in this differing from the angels. Thus the "celestial flesh" is born from heaven, by regeneration "through water and the Spirit", and in this celestial flesh we shall see God and our Redeemer. Hitherto, mortal flesh has been considered, but the words quoted from Job speak of the celestial flesh, for man sees God in the body of regeneration.

Now, concerning the Soul (*anima*): Soul is one thing, Spirit another. When the Spirit is infused into the body, it is named the Soul; thus the Soul is the form of Spirit after the formation of man, when God breathed into man the "breath of life". But there is also another spirit of inferior nature, which is common to man and the beasts. It has the natural life, not the eternal, and it dies and perishes with the flesh. Though cognate with flesh, it is nevertheless truly spirit, yet it is distinguished from the higher Spirit because it is mortal, while the Spirit, given of God, belongs to eternal life. The lower spirit, belonging to Nature, leads to cognition of Nature; the higher bestows divine cognition. The Soul is the central region of man's being, in which dwell all spirits, both good and evil. Paracelsus compares the Soul to a king with his council, some of whom are of good intent, and some evil. All in turn make suggestions and the king listens to all, but he alone makes the decisions, accepting one counsel and rejecting others. The Soul has its dwelling in the heart, of which it takes possession. Veneration and love of God should proceed from the whole heart, and whatever is opposed to God's will should be expelled from the heart, so that the Soul may remain altogether pure, sifted and purged and clean utterly. "Therefore, regarding the Soul, let it be known that it is the breath from the mouth of God incarnated through Nature, that is, in mortal flesh, which was created in trust for the living flesh of regeneration".

Now, in man the essence and property of the sidereal spirit is the human reason and worldly sapience, which belong, not to the body of flesh, but to the firmament, being in man a bodiless spirit, yet with the shape of the human form, as a man appears in a mirror. Now, in relation to the Soul, know that man has a third sapience. There is, first, the carnal sapience of the animal; second, the sidereal sapience and science of the human reason; and, third, the spiritual sapience. The first two are mortal; the third is from God and brings divine virtues. As the human mind is coloured by the man's acts, so the Soul is coloured by his thoughts. And as man colours the Soul, his actions follow, and thus the Soul manifests itself. In this alchemical work, the moral sense, the conscience, is the guide; it is innate in us, springing from the Soul, and urges us to obey the two commandments laid down by Christ: "Thou shalt love God with all thy heart and all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself". Thus in our hearts is hidden the Quintessence, born in us from God, and we must discern between this divine element and the natural slime, from which our mortal nature is formed. After death, the Soul is no longer encased in the flesh of the body. If it be close to the elect, the Soul will rise again in the flesh of the redemption. The Soul is by nature as the angels, and man should take on this angelic nature. The Soul is man, apart from earthly things; "it is man, by whom it is, in whom it is, and who it is".

In the second Chapter, Paracelsus again considers the natural slime in contrast with the Soul. In the slime, both good and evil are mingled, the nature of the brute and the nature of man, and to these the Quintessence is added. There is also the inbreathing of the divine Image, and this brings the possibility of regeneration through Christ, so that the spiritual life governs the natural life; man, being endowed with the power of choice, may choose to live either according to the external nature, or according to the internal nature, his life being led by divine sapience in harmony with the Soul, which is the medium, or "angel" of communication with the divine life. Summing up this power of choice, Paracelsus tersely says: "Man may be a swine; but need not be".

While the slime is in process of formation, seeds of the brute nature are carried over into the Quintessence, so that man may choose to develop in accordance with these seeds, and may become a hog, a fox, a viper, a dragon, or a basilisk. Adamic flesh and blood cannot enter the divine kingdom; the Soul must be purified, as by fire, from all impurities due to the Adamic flesh, through death which separates man from the flesh. Thus death has a purpose and a meaning; it is the opportunity for purgation; an understanding of this process will show man how to enter the true path, which is his if he chooses to ask, to seek, and to know.

Christ was born for man's sake, and suffered that man might be redeemed and made fit for the kingdom of God. And, since mortal flesh cannot enter the kingdom, another kind of flesh, a new body, was made possible. From the Spirit comes forth the living, "quickened" flesh, destined, not for death, but for life. Paracelsus discusses the Virgin Birth of Christ: as Christ was made man through the Holy Spirit, so "we men, who aspire to the kingdom of Heaven, should put off flesh and blood, and be born a second time of a Virgin and Faith, being made flesh by the Holy Spirit . . . Adamic flesh produces nothing". The Holy Spirit forms the "quickened" flesh. Baptism is the Virgin, and Paracelsus cites the baptism of Christ in the Jordan, the water and the dove being external symbols only. When men are thus reborn from above, their "quickened" flesh can enter the kingdom of Heaven and move there, as mortal flesh moves here on earth. Thus are born "heavenly astronomers", who speak concerning God. They are heavenly Theologians, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Saints of God.

Christ could not effect his purpose through Adamic flesh and blood; "quickened" flesh is needed as a vehicle for him who is born through Christ from the supernal. The Apostles were born in a new body, and in this they left all and followed Christ. Paracelsus then discusses the question whether the Apostolic function debars man from all natural pleasures. Repeating what he has said concerning the life according to the internal and supernal, he says that man must make his choice between this world and the eternal; he must discern between the functions of the mortal and immortal worlds, once he has received his divine commission.

In the remaining Chapters of the second Book, Paracelsus speaks of Astronomy, considered from the natural and the supernal points of view.

If there is a Magic of the external, there is also a special Magic of the internal, far surpassing the external in potency. If there are external senses, there is also an internal sense, dwelling in the heart; and the divine Astronomer distinguishes between dead spirits and living spirits by the heavenly clairvoyance of direct perception. He draws a sharp distinction between the shared consciousness of the heirs of the heavenly kingdom, and the mob consciousness of the external, influenced by psychic vagaries. He concludes by depicting a community of divine interest of all, for all, and all in God, inspired by God.

A. KEIGHTLEY.

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*Misfortune opens the soul to illumination which prosperity is unable to discern.*—LACORDAIRE.

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*The perfectly obedient never uses delay; he himself forestalls the precept.*  
—ST. BERNARD.

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# GRATITUDE

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THOSE who are interested in dates and numbers may have noticed that the April issue of the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY completes Volume XXV, making a total issue of 100 copies since the QUARTERLY was founded. On such an anniversary, the present writer would like to express his heartfelt gratitude to all those who have been concerned with the issue of the magazine that has meant so much in the lives of members of the Society. Their hearts will instantly turn to the founder and first editor who so generously gave his time, devotion and genius to the work, and inspired those about him with the task of maintaining, in all subsequent issues, the same high standard of achievement. There are those who have worked for the QUARTERLY in every one of the 100 numbers, since the beginning, and it needs but a little imagination to realize something of the time and labour involved,—a labour of love, it is true, and a privilege of service which they gladly undertake. We turn, with grateful hearts, to these older members, our leaders, whose help and inspiration have kept the Society true to the purpose of its Founders, and to the Masters of Wisdom, under whose guidance the Society has continued its work in the world for more than half a century. Something of the ideals, and of the work and purpose of the Society, is seen reflected in the pages of the QUARTERLY, and readers who receive much help from each number may welcome the opportunity to put on record their appreciation.

It has been the good fortune of the present writer to spend some time in looking up the past volumes of the QUARTERLY, since the time when it was founded. The reading has proved of absorbing interest and, viewed as a whole, does not present a series of disconnected articles, but rather a continuous epic, a cycle of thought, ideal and endeavour, which embody a single unflinching purpose. It is that unity in diversity which makes its lasting appeal to so many different readers. The subjects treated present a wide range of topic, so that every interest can find recognition; the method of approach to Truth welcomes every contribution that can shed further light through united aspiration; but, deeper than intellect and method, is seen the spirit which illumines and the life which animates the work of the Society. In the QUARTERLY for January, 1911<sup>1</sup>, there is published a letter which sets out the true purpose of the Founders, in terms which arrest and compel attention: "The Theosophical Society was chosen as the corner-stone, the foundation of the future religions of humanity." Those who have the opportunity to study that letter again, will find it a subject for deep thought and profound thankfulness, in seeing the ideal it sets forth, and the manner in which the plan has been worked out in practical achievement.

If the reading of past volumes of the QUARTERLY be treated as an epic,

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<sup>1</sup> *The Theosophical Quarterly*, Vol. VIII, p. 197.

it will be found not wanting in the romance, adventure and chivalry which are the inspiration of the epic poems of old. Few members have the time to review the past numbers in detail, but there are many who experience, as they look through the volumes, that their deepest interests can there find satisfaction. It would be impossible to comment on the different articles that are of universal appeal, but most readers find in the series of the "Notes and Comments," in the "Screen of Time," in the "Elementary Articles" and "Letters to Students," subjects which illumine their thought and give invaluable guidance in the conduct of their lives. They illustrate also, in a living manner, the way in which the Society has fashioned its policy and directed its action, through all the change of time and circumstance. Throughout the Great War, there was maintained a definite policy, founded on principles of justice and truth; in the "peace" which has followed, the call of a trumpet can still be heard, as it summons to the Battle of Life.

The reader who begins to consider how much he has gained from the QUARTERLY, finds it difficult to express his gratitude to the editors and their work. Gratitude has been defined as a "lively sense of favours to come," and, in the case of the QUARTERLY, readers look to future issues with glad hope and expectation. Yet they would be ashamed if theirs was merely a passive part, to sit still and applaud, while others bear the burden of the work and toil. They find a constant desire to respond, in some way, to the help so generously given, but perhaps—taking note of their small stock of ability, or their total inexperience in the use of the pen—they are tempted to think that there is little for them to do. Yet if the pen does not come readily into use, every member has learnt, from advice oft-repeated, that it is his privilege and opportunity to use the spiritual weapons that belong to those who, in joining the Society, find themselves enlisted in the Cause of Truth. How this may be done, has been expressed in many different ways, in QUARTERLY articles, and discussion at Branch meetings. There is one method which is within the reach of all, from the latest recruit to the veteran soldier, which consists in dedicating all work, action and thought, throughout the day, as spiritual capital for the Cause of Theosophy. This demands, it is true, a training in concentration, attention and purification, which must be the work of a life-time, yet we all have it in our power to make a beginning. Once I read of a woman whose time was entirely occupied with arduous work to make her daily living; that work took her about the streets of a city, and she made it a habit, whenever she entered a tramcar, or street vehicle, to say, "Thy Kingdom come," for each occupant of the carriage. So she went her way, scattering gifts, making her daily work serve as a channel of help for others, in the service of her King. In striking analogy to this, it is recorded in one of the back numbers of the QUARTERLY,<sup>2</sup> in a discussion concerning chelaship, that Mr. Judge "would not so much as get on to a street car without thought of the One Self."

A further illuminating hint was once given by the same wise director in the spiritual life, to one who found himself unable, through force of circumstance

<sup>2</sup> *The Theosophical Quarterly*, Vol. VII, p. 274.

to do active outer work for the Society. He advised the student to make it a habit, on different days of the week, to pray for the work of one or other of the Branches of the Society, and said that "the real and best and highest service could be rendered in this way."<sup>3</sup> It is interesting, for those who follow that method, to trace the locality of the different Branches, across the map of the world; in time they will come to realize that there is a continuous track reaching around the earth, which they may follow on the winged feet of prayer and aspiration.

One of the mediæval mystics reminds us that, "To prayer belongeth thanksgiving,"<sup>4</sup> and so, once more, our gratitude can be expressed in frequent thanksgiving directed to the work of The Theosophical Society. It does not take long, or demand any expenditure of effort, to raise the heart and mind in a fervent act of thanks; such a habit depends rather on the orientation of the will. There is a happy Saint, Felix of Cantalice, whose favourite ejaculation was, *Deo gratias*,—so much so that the little boys in the street used to run after him calling out, "Brother *Deo gratias*." When the time came for his passing from this world, he was well content, and begged the Brothers to say *Deo gratias* for him, when he could no longer speak for himself.

Of the greatest of the Saints, it is usually recorded that they radiated an atmosphere of joy, which was felt by all those who came into contact with them. Joy is one of the keynotes of Theosophy, as has often been pointed out—more particularly in *Fragments*—and students of Theosophy should be distinguished by their deep and abiding joy. Many QUARTERLY articles have been contributed, at one time and another, by different members, showing why they entered the Society; such writings form profoundly interesting records of human experience, of earnest search and endeavour, and of the joy of home-coming once the purpose of Theosophy had been perceived. Some members have pointed out that the process of joining the Society extends over our whole life-time, since we do not fully attain to membership till our entire nature has been transformed by understanding its true purpose, and dedicating all our powers towards its fulfilment. When that day comes, for each one of us, there will rise up towards Heaven such a *Deo Gratias* as will prove that we have realized to the full our life's work, and are able to give permanent expression of our gratitude to the leaders of the Movement.

READER.

<sup>3</sup> *The Theosophical Quarterly*, Vol. VIII, p. 58.

<sup>4</sup> Juliana of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love*.



# A STUDY OF FIELDS OF FORCE

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*One thing in each is prominent above the rest, but it also shows forth all.*

PLOTINUS.

*The world globes itself in a drop of dew.*

EMERSON.

*All that science has determined regarding the use of mirrors, and the reflection and refraction of light in connection with them, can be advantageously investigated by those wishing really to pursue the subject . . .*

CAVÉ.

"YOU will recall," said the Mathematician, "that rays of light proceeding from one focus of an ellipse, are reflected from the periphery through the other focus."

The student had forgotten it, but the words awakened an echo within, and touched some spring of action which led him to undertake certain experiments with pencil and paper. The earlier rough sketches of circles and of ellipses traversed by lines, revealed the fact that the simple geometrical truth possessed a content with peculiar metaphysical values if one could only extract it, and as the experiments continued—particularly after square and compass were brought in to aid in the adventure—more and more of what was hidden began to show itself. This is in strict accord with, and another illustration of, the thesis of an article entitled "Thought, Purpose and Creation" which appeared in the QUARTERLY for January, 1927. The earlier incarnations of an idea, so we are told, reveal something of its nature, but they also reveal deficiencies in the concept; this provokes further experimentation and betterment of the expression, till at last a form may be achieved which reflects the full content of the idea. It was in some such way as this that the figures about to be described gradually builded themselves.

Due to the hampering restrictions of paper, one is obliged to represent them in two dimensions, yet one finds that the whole matter becomes clearer and takes on an added richness when one thinks of them in terms of three-space. Since the ellipse is the basic element of the flat constructions, one may substitute in thought the analogue of the ellipse, viz. the ellipsoid—that solid figure which is generated by the revolution of the ellipse upon its major axis. The ellipsoid is only a distorted globe—a falling away from Pythagorean perfection—and is assumed when a plastic sphere, enclosed by a surface tension membrane, is subjected to stress. A dewdrop hanging to a grass blade, and a soap bubble attached to a pipe bowl, are two familiar illustrations of natural ellipsoids. It is a form which nature loves.

But the forces which build up the ellipsoid are not confined to material

manifestation only. Without leaving the plane of sensuous phenomena we can assure ourselves that an ellipsoidal field of force surrounds and connects the opposite poles of a magnet; for if one sprinkle iron filings upon a piece of paper laid over the magnet, they arrange themselves in a way which declares immediately that they are responding to an invisible but very real and very powerful field of force.

It is quite probable, too, that similar electro-magnetic fields link the stars and planets with one another, and if this be true of the heavenly bodies, one can hardly deny the same phenomenon to the elements of the physicist's atom—that miniature analogue of a solar system with its central proton and whirling electrons. It is quite possible that all glowing bodies, such, for example, as a group of lighted lamps, are connected in a similar manner—a point which may have a peculiar bearing upon old tales of ceremonial magic.

The ellipsoidal form is highly characteristic of the propagative bodies by means of which both animals and plants tide their precious life germs through periods of latency. It is assumed by the spores of bacteria, algæ, fungi, etc.; by the seeds and fruits of flowering plants, and the eggs of animals, yet these bodies are so very different in their natures that only a biologist can well appreciate their diversity of structure and origin. Indeed there is evidence that from the living nucleus itself—from the very citadel of cellular life—waves of energy emanate under certain conditions and build up the same familiar figure. For when a cell nucleus undergoes mitotic division, a peculiar structure called the nuclear spindle appears. It develops between two foci, or small polar granules (centrosomes), and is composed of numerous delicate threads known as spindle fibres. The appearance of the resultant figure suggests the presence of certain invisible lines of force, which stream out from the centrosomes and provoke a material representation of themselves in the cell. We may say that the ellipsoid has incarnated itself in protoplasm just as it "inmetallized" itself in the iron filings.

One suspects that the physicist would find himself sadly taxed to explain the real nature of all these fields of force, and we have no intention of trespassing upon such highly speculative territory. We must be content for the present to recognize their presence and to discuss a few of their elementary properties.

Many questions at once press forward for solution. Are the magnetic fields limited outwardly? Are they bounded by transmitting and reflecting films analogous to the surface tension membranes of a water drop or a soap bubble? Are these films illustrative of a recent definition of matter as "warped space-time"? Can a study of their properties lead to a better understanding of some of the profounder aspects of our philosophy? Most important of all, may we perhaps find something here which will throw light upon that matter so close to our hearts,—the relations of Master and chéla?

The figures accompanying this article are based upon strict geometrical principles, for we have been told that "Nature is very conservative of principles," and we suspect that it was for no light reason that Pythagoras insisted

upon mathematical studies for his pupils. In the following paragraphs we have taken a few tentative steps into a difficult region, and our hope is that other and better equipped travellers may be led to extend the area of exploration.

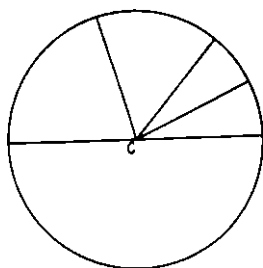


FIG. 1—THE CIRCLE

Rays emanating from the centre, C, are reflected directly back to C.

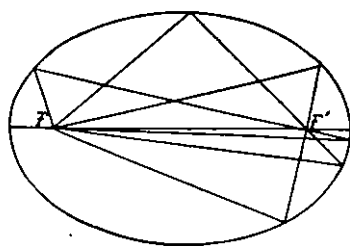


FIG. 2—THE ELLIPSE

Rays emanating from one focus, F, are reflected to the other focus, F', and from F' back to F.

Fig. 1 represents the perfect figure—the circle (or sphere). Let us think of a point of light at the centre (C) from which a multitude of rays shoot outward along the radii. If the inside of the sphere is a reflecting surface like that of a concave mirror, then every ray which departs from the centre is reflected back to the centre.

Within an ellipse, or an ellipsoid, however, such as Fig. 2, conditions are not quite so simple. This figure may be interpreted as resulting from two combined circles whose centres do not coincide. These two centres constitute the foci of the ellipse. All rays of light emanating from one focus, (F), are reflected back through the other focus, (F'), and, in consequence, at focus F', where the rays sent out from F reconverge, a glowing point is established, which in its turn becomes emanative. In fact, the very existence of the gleaming point of light at the negative focus depends upon the positive or generative pole, of which it is a perfect duplicate in every detail. It burns, however, with a lesser glow, and because of the following reason. If the ellipsoidal field were a closed system, bounded by an opaque reflector (something like an egg silvered on the inside of the shell) this would not be true, since, by the law of reflection which pertains to the ellipse, the rays would all reconverge at the negative focus; but if the peripheral film be transparent, as in a soap bubble, part of the light will be transmitted through it, and in consequence the negative focus is dimmed.

The preceding suggestions have been based upon ellipsoids of constant form and surrounded by ideal films with perfect reflective and transmissive properties. But in fact, ellipsoids vary greatly in form and film properties. When their foci are close together their form approaches that of the circle; when, on the contrary, their foci are distant from one another, they become greatly elongated loops. This is well illustrated in our own solar system, where the

orbits of the inner planets are close approximations to circles, while those of the outer planets are greatly extended ellipses.

Now what will be the effect upon the course of the light rays and upon the negative focus when the form changes? If the foci approach one another, the brilliancy of the negative focus increases till finally it unites with its positive parent and the ellipsoid becomes a sphere with a fiery point at its centre. In a sphere, as we have seen, all rays of light proceeding from the centre are reflected back to the centre. If a sun stood alone in space, its radiations would be reflected back into itself from the "boundary of space." On the other hand, if the negative pole retreats from the positive, its brilliancy fades rapidly away, while the form of the ellipse approaches the line as a limit. Actually, however, in consonance with the theory of limits, it is difficult to see how the negative focus could be "put out" till the sun "sets" and the axial ray disappears. It is evident that actual translatory motion of the negative focus is not necessarily involved in this matter. If its field of influence shrinks—if it fails to send out the energy it receives—the whole ellipse contracts, and, under the peculiar conditions of relativity which characterize the whole system, such a contraction is equivalent to repulsion or retreat.

There is also a strange blend of stability and motion in the figures. At the positive focus a perpetual emanation of energy goes on, yet at the same time the system retains a fixed form. It is the same paradoxical rest in motion which Heracleitus saw as the symbol of the universe, and it calls to mind the odd descriptive line applied by Coleridge to the glaciers of Mont Blanc:

"Motionless torrents, silent cataracts."

But in addition to this motionless motion, it seems probable that active rotation about their Central Sun is another element which characterizes the negative sparks or monads of which nature is so lavish. Perhaps this rotary motion is only a *maya* resulting from our imperfect apprehension of hyperspatial sphericities.

It is not, however, until one turns to systems of interlinked fields that their most remarkable properties begin to appear. The isolated dyad (sun-planet or proton-electron), is like a detached word in a sentence; we have to read it in its context if we are to understand its full meaning.

In the accompanying diagram (Fig. 3), six of these bodies are represented as interlinked with one another and as sharing a common positive focus from which six rays proceed outward along the axes of six ellipses. These—the normal rays of the physicist—are comparable to the valence bonds of the chemist. They are gathered up at six negative foci, in obedience to the law of reflection illustrated by Fig. 2. One may spin circles around all the foci to suggest solar, planetary or lunar bodies, or one may enclose the whole major planetary senary with a circle, to represent the sun's sphere of influence or his great invisible body of ether, inside which the planets live, move and have their being. In strict analogy, too, one may extend the system inwards as well as outwards. Then the sun itself becomes a unit in a higher stellar system, or, to use the terminology of a writer in the *Theosophical Forum*, one may trace a

regressive scheme of "prakritic, etheric, alcyonic, pranic and manasic globes." From the metaphysical standpoint, only the First Atom is self-existent, positive and originally emanative; all others are derivative and negative. It is only upon a basis of relativity that the two foci of a minor dyad can be called positive and negative.

In completing the diagram one draws the lines of six reflected rays inside each ellipse. These may also be extended outward along the paths of transmission. It is most interesting to find that the figures proceed to take matters into their own hands as the construction progresses; the majesty of mathematical law asserts itself.

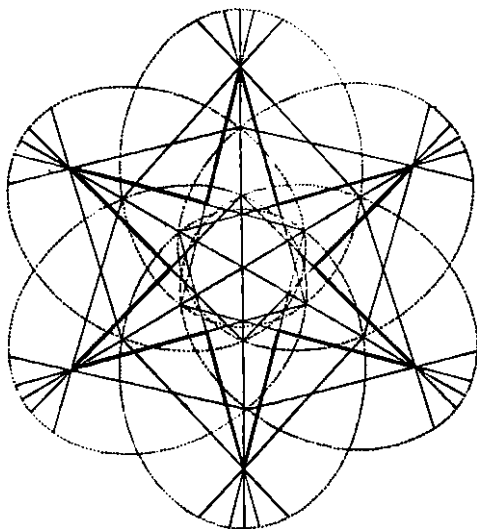


FIG. 3

Diagram of six interlinked Fields of Force—Six rays proceeding from a central positive focus are reflected from the periphery of the ellipses through the respective negative foci.

A close study of the completed diagram reveals many interesting things. It is evident that the negative foci are meant to serve as centres for new systems, and that a vast multitude of seemingly aimless lines (omitted from the drawing, so as not to complicate it unduly) are all extensions from such other systems. They doubtless enter into the formation of geometrical patterns of higher magnitude elsewhere, but similar to the beautiful six-pointed star represented here by heavier lines.

The mind balks as the imagination tries to follow the system inwards. A whirling motion of wheels within wheels; a flashing of chromatic light in kaleidoscopic richness; a blazing out into stars and other geometrical patterns—thus the halting imagination tries to picture an idealized system of interlinked fields of force possessed of the properties we have seen fit to attribute

to them. Perhaps our closest approximation to the vision is seen in the flash and sparkle of dewdrops, as the rising sun awakens the jewel fires in their hearts.

Readers of this article may find it of interest to experiment with three, four or five ellipses around a central focal point, in place of the six shown in our diagram. If such readers are familiar with the Proem of *The Secret Doctrine*, they can hardly fail to be impressed by the significant figures which will be built up. Certain learned ethnologists have assured us that the familiar symbols of religion are just pretty patterns which some rude savage happened to scratch on a piece of wet clay, and which were subsequently copied by all the other rude savages forevermore. Well, science has felt obliged to "reconsider" before, and a similar salutary experience may be in store for the ethnologist. We may safely leave him to his Karma.

Let us rather consider the most important contribution which this study should have made to our own understanding. After all, our primary concern is not with magnetism or optics, or with the beauty of geometrical figures, interesting and valuable though these be. Our chief concern is to use such mental and emotional experiences to point us the way to the Masters.

If our understanding be right, we see in a diagram, such as Figure 3, a profound symbolism. Does it not represent the relation of the Logos to the six subsidiary Hierarchies of Being, or, in a sense less exalted, but to us dearer and more intimate, is it not a faithful representation of a living, central Master, bound to a group of disciples in closest intimacy? Through and from him they draw their life, while to the Divine Pattern each is conformed in his innermost being, since he receives a part of every ray which his Master transmits. In sympathetic union the chélas unite with their Master to build up symmetrical forms of beauty. As the years pass, they are to be drawn closer to his glowing heart, until, at last, entering the flame, each may say with St. Paul: I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.

To us who stand so far off in a cloud of unlikeness, the diagrams bring a challenge to listen to the voice of Lord Krishna repeating endlessly: "It matters not on what road a man approaches Me, on that road I meet him." In rainbow, in dewdrop, in snowflake and crystal, in the branching of a pine tree and the flower of a lily,—all through the world He has scattered hints of His presence so that we may find the way Home. May He give us eyes to see.

R. E. T.

# BRIHAD ARANYAKA UPANISHAD

## PART III, SECTIONS 8, 9

### A GREAT INITIATE

THE teaching for disciples contained in these two sections is full of wisdom, full of dramatic force, humorous, keenly ironical. As before, the contrast is drawn between the exoteric doctrines of the Brahmins who lived in and by the ceremonial system, and the sage Yajnavalkya, the great Initiate, who possesses the secret wisdom of the Mysteries. And, as before, the disciples are set the task of discerning and divining the full depth and richness of Yajnavalkya's meaning. The figures of the dialogue are alive: Shakala's son, champion of the ceremonial Brahmins, Yajnavalkya, Master of esoteric wisdom, and the valiant daughter of Vachaknu, who appears somewhat surprisingly in this learned and contentious company. Gargi, it will be remembered, has already asked a series of questions, seeking, with her feminine symbolism of warping the loom and weaving the web, to learn on what the visible worlds are warped and woven. When she asked the same question concerning the worlds of the Eternal, Yajnavalkya reduced her to silence with the threat that such ambitious questioning would cause her head to fall off.

But Gargi comes up again, irrepressible, and this time, though it is recorded that she finally was silent, she herself had had the ultimate word. And Gargi is humorous as well as valiant; very ironical, too, in her attitude toward the ceremonial Brahmins, and not daunted by the greatness of Yajnavalkya. As a warrior-prince grasping two rival-conquering arrows, she challenges the mighty seer with her two questions, and, when the questions are answered, Gargi tells the Brahmins that they are fortunate indeed to escape from Yajnavalkya at the cost of an obeisance. Nor did all escape.

Gargi's intuitive questioning shows that, thousands of years ago, the great generalization of our new philosophers was already familiar: that Time may be correlated to Space, so that Time is described as the fourth dimension of Space, the directions of length, breadth and height being the first three dimensions. On what, asks the wise daughter of Vachaknu, are Space and Time warped and woven: that Time which people speak of as past, present, future? The answer is, that they are warped and woven on Shining Ether, on Akasha, which is not the ether of our modern physics, but a manifestation higher and more spiritual; as it were, a transparent film upon the Logos. For Space and Time are the forms of thought of the manifested Logos, the Universal Mind.

Gargi shows herself a penetrating questioner. On what, then, she asks, is Shining Ether warped and woven? Is the manifested Logos the ultimate Real? The answer is, that the Logos in turn rests on the Everlasting, the

supreme Eternal, Parabrahm. Gargi shows by her question that she already possessed an intuitive grasp of this final Truth.

Then come the closing questions, in which Vidagdha son of Shakala, as champion of the ceremonial Brahmans, challenges Yajnavalkya. He knows much and asks keenly, quickly following Yajnavalkya, step by step. He combats so vigorously for exoteric learning against esoteric wisdom, that Yajnavalkya asks him whether the Brahman priests have consigned him to destruction, to be burned to ashes.

The son of Shakala asks concerning the Bright Powers, the "gods": how many are there, and what is their true nature? Yajnavalkya answers that the many "gods" of the ceremonial worship are but the manifested powers of the One, the Logos. Then the questioning turns to the source of these powers, which, in man, appear as vision, hearing, and the whole range of energies of body and mind. Each power Yajnavalkya traces back to "the heart," that is, to spiritual consciousness; all these powers are, in the last analysis, manifestations of spiritual consciousness, which is the manifestation of the Logos.

While Yajnavalkya's answers may appear simple, they are profoundly mystical. Thus, "the son born according to the form of the father, issuing from the father's heart," is the "spiritual child" born according to the form of the divine Father, built up from the heart. The same spiritual significance is present in the answer regarding "the bright power of Soma," for this is the mystical fire of illumination, instilled by Initiation, of which Yajnavalkya so clearly speaks.

The ill-starred son of Shakala, pressing his challenging interrogation, finally asks on what "the heart," spiritual consciousness, is established. "Thou shadow of a man!" answers the fiery Initiate, "if thou thinkest it can be anywhere but in us!" We remember the words: "Within you is the light of the world."

But, for all his learning, the son of Shakala knew not the Spirit of the Secret Teaching. Therefore, says the story, his head fell off and robbers took away his bones. The commentator says that this dramatic climax is also symbolical.

Then comes the stately hymn of the tree of man's life. Man is as a tree, lord of the forest; when the tree is cut down, it springs up again from the root; but if it be uprooted, that is the end; it will not return to life.

The tree would seem to be the force that drives us into bodily life, self-perpetuating Karma. Cut down by Death, the force of thirsting desire drives us back to life with its burden of sorrows. But when the root of evil is expunged, there is no longer a forced return to bondage. Liberation in the Eternal has been attained.

## TWO QUESTIONERS

And so the daughter of Vachaknu said:

"O worshipful Brahmans, I shall ask him two questions; if he will tell them to me, then not one of you will ever be his conqueror in declaring the Eternal!"



"Ask, Gargi!" they said.

She said: "I, verily, O Yajnavalkya, like as a warrior prince of Kashi or Videha, stringing his unstrung bow, and grasping in his hand two rival-conquering arrows, might stand up against you, even so with my two questions have stood up against thee. Tell them to me."

"Ask, Gargi!" said he.

She said: "That, O Yajnavalkya, which is above the heavens, that which is beneath the earth, that which is between heaven and earth, that which these people call the past which has been, the present which is, the future which shall be: on what is that warped and woven?"

He said: "That, O Gargi, which is above the heavens, that which is beneath the earth, that which is between heaven and earth, that which these people call the past which has been, the present which is, the future which shall be, on shining ether is that warped and woven."

She said: "Obeisance be to thee, O Yajnavalkya, who hast declared this to me! Gird thyself for the other!"

"Ask, Gargi!" said he.

She said: "That, O Yajnavalkya, which is above the heavens, that which is beneath the earth, that which is between heaven and earth, that which these people call the past which has been, the present which is, the future which shall be: on what dost thou say it is warped and woven?"

He said: "That, O Gargi, which is above the heavens, that which is beneath the earth, that which is between heaven and earth, that which these people call the past which has been, the present which is, the future which shall be, I say that on shining ether it is warped and woven."

"Well then, on what is shining ether warped and woven?"

He said: "It is that, O Gargi, which knowers of the Eternal name the Everlasting. That is neither coarse nor fine, neither short nor long, neither ruddy nor smooth, without shadow, without darkness; it is not air, it is not shining ether, without attachment, without taste, or odour, or sight or sound, without speech, or thinking, without fire, without life-breath, without measure, having neither within nor without; that consumes naught, nor does aught consume that. At the command of this Everlasting, O Gargi, sun and moon stand forth separate; at the command of this Everlasting, O Gargi, heaven and earth stand forth separate; at the command of this Everlasting, O Gargi, the moments, the hours, the days and nights, the half-months, the months, the seasons, the years stand forth separate. At the command of this Everlasting, O Gargi, eastward these rivers flow from the snow-covered mountains, westward flow those, each according to his direction. At the command of this Everlasting, O Gargi, the sons of men praise those who give, the bright powers draw nigh to him who sacrifices, the spirits of the fathers draw nigh to the memorial offering.

"Whosoever, O Gargi, not knowing this Everlasting, in this world makes offerings and sacrifices and performs arduous works, even through many thousand years, that work of his is finite. Whosoever, O Gargi, not knowing

this Everlasting, from this world goes forth at death, he is miserable. And whosoever, O Gargi, knowing this Everlasting, from this world goes forth at death, he is a knower of the Eternal.

"Therefore, verily, O Gargi, this Everlasting is the unseen seer, the unheard hearer, the unthought thinker, the undiscerned discernor; for other than this there is no seer, other than this there is no hearer, other than this there is no thinker, other than this there is no discernor. On this Everlasting, verily, O Gargi, the shining ether is warped and woven."

She said: "O worshipful Brahmans, verily you may think it much that you escape from him by an obeisance! For not one of you will ever be his conqueror in declaring the Eternal!"

Thereupon the daughter of Vachaknu became silent.

And so Vidagdha son of Shakala asked him:

"How many are the Bright Powers, O Yajnavalkya?"

He answered according to the form of invocation:

"As many as are named in the form of invocation of all the Bright Powers: three, and three hundred, three, and three thousand," said he.

"Yea, verily, but how many are the Bright Powers, O Yajnavalkya?"

"Three and thirty," said he.

"Yea, verily, but how many are the Bright Powers, O Yajnavalkya?"

"Six," said he.

"Yea, verily, but how many are the Bright Powers, O Yajnavalkya?"

"Three," said he.

"Yea, verily, but how many are the Bright Powers, O Yajnavalkya?"

"Two," said he.

"Yea, verily, but how many are the Bright Powers, O Yajnavalkya?"

"One and a half," said he.

"Yea, verily, but how many are the Bright Powers, O Yajnavalkya?"

"One," said he.

"Yea, verily, but what are the three, and three hundred, three, and three thousand?" said he.

He said: "These are their manifestations of might; but three and thirty are the Bright Powers."

"Which are the three and thirty?" said he.

"Eight Vasus, eleven Rudras, twelve Adityas, make one and thirty; Indra and Prajapati make three and thirty," said he.

"What are the Vasus?" said he.

"Fire, and Earth, and Air, and Interspace, and Sun, and Sky, and Moon, and Stars. These are the Vasus, the bases, for on them is all this universe founded," said he.

"What are the Rudras?" said he.

"These ten life-breaths in the spirit of man, and Self as the eleventh. When from this body of mortality they go forth, they cause lamentation; because they cause lamentation, they are the Rudras," said he.

"What are the Adityas?" said he.

"The twelve months of the circling year; these are the Adityas, for taking this whole world they go. Because taking this whole world they go, therefore they are the Adityas," said he.

"What is Indra? What is Prajapati?" said he.

"The Lord of the thunderbolt is Indra. Sacrifice is Prajapati, Lord of beings," said he.

"What is the thunderbolt?" said he.

"Lightning," said he.

"What is sacrifice?" said he.

"The animals," said he.

"What are the six?" said he.

"Fire, and Earth, and Air, and Interspace, and Sun, and Sky. These are the six, for all this world is built of these six," said he.

"What are the three Bright Powers?" said he.

"The three worlds, for in these three worlds are all the Bright Powers," said he.

"What are the two Bright Powers?" said he.

"The Food, verily, and the Life," said he.

"What is the one and a half?" said he.

"The purifying Spirit," said he.

Then they said: "Since the purifying Spirit is as one, how is it one and a half?"

"Since in it, all wins increase, therefore it is one and a half," said he.

"What is the one Bright Power?" said he.

"Life," said he; "this is the Eternal, which they call That."

"He who should know that Spirit, of whom earth is the dwelling, fire the world, mind the light, of every Self the ultimate home, he, in truth, would be a knower, O Yajnavalkya."

"I indeed know that Spirit, of every Self the ultimate home, of whom thou speakest. It is this embodied Spirit. Tell me, O son of Shakala, what is his divinity?"

"The immortal," said he. "He who should know that Spirit, of whom desire is the dwelling, the heart the world, mind the light, of every Self the ultimate home, he, in truth, would be a knower, O Yajnavalkya."

"I indeed know that Spirit, of every Self the ultimate home, of whom thou speakest. It is this Spirit formed of desire. Tell me, O son of Shakala, what is his divinity?"

"Women," said he. "He who should know that Spirit, of whom forms are the dwelling, vision the world, mind the light, of every Self the ultimate home, he, in truth, would be a knower, O Yajnavalkya."

"I indeed know that Spirit, of every Self the ultimate home, of whom thou speakest. It is that Spirit in the sun. Tell me, O son of Shakala, what is his divinity?"

"The real," said he. "He who should know that Spirit, of whom radiant ether is the dwelling, hearing the world, mind the light, of every Self the ultimate home, he, in truth, would be a knower, O Yajnavalkya."

"I indeed know that Spirit, of every Self the ultimate home, of whom thou speakest. It is the Spirit of hearing and of the echo. Tell me, O son of Shakala, what is his divinity?"

"The spaces," said he. "He who should know that Spirit, of whom darkness is the dwelling, the heart the world, mind the light, of every Self the ultimate home, he, in truth, would be a knower, O Yajnavalkya."

"I indeed know that Spirit, of every Self the ultimate home, of whom thou speakest. It is the Spirit formed of the shadow. Tell me, O son of Shakala, what is his divinity?"

"Death," said he. "He who should know that Spirit, of whom forms are the dwelling, vision the world, mind the light, of every Self the ultimate home, he, in truth, would be a knower, O Yajnavalkya."

"I indeed know that Spirit, of every Self the ultimate home, of whom thou speakest. It is the Spirit in the mirror. Tell me, O son of Shakala, what is his divinity?"

"The breath," said he. "He who should know that Spirit, of whom the waters are the dwelling, the heart the world, mind the light, of every Self the ultimate home, he, in truth, would be a knower, O Yajnavalkya."

"I indeed know that Spirit, of every Self the ultimate home, of whom thou speakest. It is the Spirit who is in the waters. Tell me, O son of Shakala, what is his divinity?"

"Varuna," said he. "He who should know that Spirit, of whom seed is the dwelling, the heart the world, mind the light, of every Self the ultimate home, he, in truth, would be a knower, O Yajnavalkya."

"I indeed know that Spirit, of every Self the ultimate home, of whom thou speakest. It is the Spirit embodied in the son. Tell me, O son of Shakala, what is his divinity?"

"Prajapati," said he, "the Lord of beings."

"O son of Shakala," said Yajnavalkya, "have these Brahmans here consigned thee to ashes?"

"O Yajnavalkya," said the son of Shakala, "since thou hast reduced to silence these Brahmans of the Kurus and Panchalas, through knowing what Divine Power hast thou done this?"

"I know the realms of space, with their bright powers, with their foundations," said he.

"Since thou knowest the realms of space, with their bright powers, with their foundations, what bright power dost thou assign to this eastern realm?"

"The bright power of the sun," said he.

"This sun, on what bright power is it established?" said he.

"On vision," said he.

"On what is vision established?" said he.

"On forms," said he, "for through vision he perceives forms."

"Then on what are forms established?" said he.

"On the heart," said he, "for through the heart he knows forms, for in the heart are forms established."

"This is even so, O Yajnavalkya. What bright power dost thou assign to this southern realm?"

"The bright power of Yama," said he.

"This Yama, on what bright power is he established?" said he.

"On the sacrifice," said he.

"Then on what is the sacrifice established?" said he.

"On the gifts of the sacrifice," said he.

"Then on what are the gifts of the sacrifice established?" said he.

"On faith," said he. "For when he has faith, he gives the gifts, for on faith are the gifts established."

"Then on what is faith established?" said he.

"On the heart," said he, "for through the heart he knows faith, for on the heart is faith established."

"This is even so, O Yajnavalkya. What bright power dost thou assign to this western realm?"

"The bright power of Varuna," said he.

"This Varuna, on what bright power is he established?" said he.

"On the waters," said he.

"Then on what are the waters established?" said he.

"On the seed," said he.

"Then on what is the seed established?" said he.

"On the heart," said he, "for when the son is born according to the form of the father, they say, 'From the heart he has issued; from the heart is he built up, as it were'. For on the heart is the seed established."

"This is even so, O Yajnavalkya. What bright power dost thou assign to this northern realm?"

"The bright power of Soma," said he.

"This Soma, on what bright power is he established?" said he.

"On Initiation," said he.

"Then on what is Initiation established?" said he.

"On the Real," said he, "for to the Initiate they say, 'Speak the Real, speak Truth!' " said he.

"Then on what is Truth established?" said he.

"On the heart," said he, "for through the heart he knows the Real, the Truth, for on the heart is Truth established," said he.

"This is even so, O Yajnavalkya. What bright power dost thou assign to that fixed realm above?"

"The bright power of the Fire-lord," said he.

"This Fire-lord, on what bright power is he established?" said he.

"On the Voice," said he.

"Then on what is the Voice established?" said he.

"On the heart," said he.

"Then on what is the heart established?" said he.

"Thou shadow of a man!" said Yajnavalkya, "If thou thinkest that it can

be anywhere but in us! For if it were anywhere but in us, then dogs might eat it, or birds of prey tear it to pieces!"

"Then in what art thou and the Self established?" said he.

"In the Life," said he.

"Then in what is the Life established?" said he.

"In the downward-life," said he.

"Then in what is the downward-life established?" said he.

"In the distributive-life," said he.

"Then in what is the distributive-life established?" said he.

"In the upward-life," said he.

"Then in what is the upward-life established?" said he.

"In the uniting-life," said he. "This is that divine Self, of which they say, 'It is not that, not that!' It is incomprehensible, for it is not comprehended. It is indestructible, for it is not destroyed. It is beyond attachment, for it is not attached. It is unbound. It trembles not. It is invulnerable. These are the eight dwellings, the eight worlds, the eight bright powers, the eight Spirits. He who discerns these eight Spirits, and, uniting them, transcends them, He is the Spirit of the Secret Teaching, concerning Whom I question thee. If thou shalt not declare Him to me, thy head will fall off!"

But the son of Shakala did not know Him, therefore his head fell off. Also robbers carried off his bones, thinking they were something of value.

And so he said: "Worshipful Brahmans, whichever of you desires, let him question me. Or do ye all question me. Or whichever of you desires, him among you will I question. Or I shall question you all."

But those Brahmans dared not.

Then he questioned them through these verses:

"As is a tree, lord of the forest, such of a surety also is man.

His hairs are the leaves, his skin is the bark without.

From his skin the red blood flows, as sap from the bark.

From him pierced a stream comes forth, as from the stricken tree.

His flesh is the outer wood, as sinews the fibres are firm.

His bones are the inner wood, his marrow is formed as the pith.

As the tree, hewn down, springs up again, renewed once more from the root;

The mortal, hewn down by Death, from what root does he grow up?

Say not, 'from the seed!' for that proceeds from the living man;

As the tree, springing from seed, comes forth visibly into being.

But if the tree were uprooted, it would not thus return to life.

- The mortal, hewn down by Death, from what root does he grow up?

When born indeed, he is not born again, for who would cause him to be born?

Wisdom, bliss, is the Eternal, ultimate home of the giver of gifts, and of him who stands, knowing That."

C. J.

# WHY I JOINED THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

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WHY, or how, I joined the Theosophical Society, I have not the ghost of a notion. I cannot guess, even, whether my ignorance is of the why of it or of the how of it. I think that it may be of both, perhaps. But I do entertain the suspicion that in some way the matter was, let me say, arranged. And moreover, although I may choose outwardly to regard it as a suspicion, I am compelled inwardly to regard it as a conviction.

I came upon a book, an oldish book. It interested me in a way all its own. I fear that I am easily won to any well presented cause, and again as easily won over to the cause of its opponents when it, in its turn, is more or less equally well presented. But the incident of the reading of that book was an exception. I acquired, as I read it, an abiding faith in its truth.

At that time, I think, I did not realize that anything was being arranged. One would do well to recognize—let alone identify—a whole series in a single one of its terms isolated from the procession.

Well, a little later I came upon the fellow of that first book. I think, although now I am not certain of it, that just about then I began to suspect the existence of the possibility that something was being arranged. The reading of the second book fortified and augmented the faith engendered on the reading of the first.

Thereupon, at any rate, I was led—I am sure that I was led—to visit the periodical room of a library. Ordinarily I do not visit libraries at all. On that occasion I set out with only the vaguest of plans, thinking merely that I might stumble upon some current printed matter relating to the subject which the reading of the books had discovered to me. And I did stumble upon that very thing—the *QUARTERLY*.

Why was the *QUARTERLY* there, where I was? Why was I there, where the *QUARTERLY* was? Why was the library's copy of the *QUARTERLY* not otherwise in use at that very moment? Why, most of all, did I not stumble—instead—over one of several other magazines, any one of which would have brought the incident—or train of incidents—to an unsatisfactory yet nonetheless definite end? My faith increased.

Of course it did. Strange at first acquaintance as the *QUARTERLY* is bound to be, the strangest thing about it—to me—is this: it all reads true, indisputably and of itself true.

I can imagine myself unconsciously seeking something. What it is, I do not know; how to find it, I do not know. Then at one and the same time there are revealed to me both the thing itself in the distance, and the path at my feet

which I may take to find it. It is the thing, because there lies the path; it is the path, because there stands the thing. . . . It is a little like that.

Incidentally, from the outset of my experience I have believed the excellence of the QUARTERLY to be a thing "arranged."

But to return to the story,—naturally enough, then, I wrote for further information. At about that time, I think, I was fully conscious of being led, and very well pleased too. All that I had to do was to coast along through one adventure after another,—several letters, some more reading, an interview, another interview, admission to membership, Convention. And great adventures they were,—each bearing witness to the reality of its predecessors and to the splendour of those to come.

Most gratefully do I remember two bits of advice: one, to endeavour to answer my own questions myself; the other, to read theosophical matter slowly enough to understand it—"a year to a sentence", if necessary. Nor shall I forget a remark made with reference to election to the Executive Committee, characterizing it as "the greatest honour that could be bestowed".

There my story might end. But I should like, first, to confess my debt to Theosophy. I cannot do so in theosophical phraseology, for I have learned much too little for that. I am learning, however, not so much to answer my own questions myself as to ask them myself, and to answer them—if need be—by asking further questions. I am learning, very slowly but I hope very surely, to be tolerant of what is right in others and intolerant of what is wrong in me. I am beginning to understand the importance of the real and the unimportance of the unreal, and my system of questions and answers is enabling me to distinguish real and unreal, false and true. I am learning how to be happy.

X. Y

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*Joy and happiness are indeed good things, but they must be sought where they are.*—ST. AUGUSTINE.



## ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

"THE world, for worldly reasons, has entered into a conspiracy of silence, which it breaks only to utter syrupy platitudes about Peace. It is necessary once more, I think, that the truth be spoken; and the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY is the only place I know where any truth is welcome."

The Historian paused; but as obviously we waited for him to proceed, he took from his pocket a newspaper cutting, which, he explained, gave a despatch from Berlin, dated January 30th. Herr Stresemann, the German Foreign Minister, had addressed the Reichstag, declaring that France must evacuate the Rhineland. Her excuse for occupying it, he said, was "security against Germany"; but "the time has come at last to point out that there is a certain amount of hypocrisy in the demand for security against Germany, which can no longer be endured by the public opinion of the world."

"And why is it," the Historian exclaimed, "that 'the public opinion of the world,' for which Herr Stresemann so strangely feels entitled to speak, can no longer endure the French demand for security against Germany! Listen to his reply: it is because 'I have never yet seen a formula which assures peace between two neighbouring countries more efficaciously than the Locarno agreement assures it between Germany and France. Both nations obligate themselves through this agreement to forego all aggressive action against each other. Whosoever asks for more security than that, doubts the pledged word and the signed treaty.'"

This was too much. One or two of us laughed; one or two of us nearly swore; all of us showed signs of exasperation. We had read that news item when it appeared, but the reminder of it seemed to make it worse.

"Is he deliberate, or is he morally embryonic?" the Student protested.

"I do not know," the Historian replied. "He may realize his impertinence,—by which I mean that he may deliberately be showing his contempt for the world's childish forgetfulness; or he may be so *dumm* as to see no connection between his talk about 'the pledged word and the signed treaty,' and 'the scrap of paper,' which, as all of us must remember, was the way in which Germany characterized and treated her solemn undertaking to respect and defend the neutrality of Belgium.

"In either case, his challenge should be met squarely. He should be told—though it be in the pages of the QUARTERLY only—that if France does not ask for more security than that provided by Germany's 'pledged word' and 'signed treaty,' France will deserve her fate. Germany does not even pretend to have repented. The whole course of history, for a thousand years or more, means that she will invade France again, on some pretext or other, just as soon as she thinks she can do so with a good chance of success. There is no such proof of immaturity and of lack of character, as to forget easily, and those who forget

Germany's record—of which all of us were reminded during the war—show themselves mentally incompetent, emotionally unbalanced, or 'born too soon in human shape.' France will never be safe from invasion unless she lives armed to the teeth. It is what any sensible man would do if he knew his neighbour were a bandit, and if he could neither have him permanently locked up, nor felt justified in shooting him at sight. It would be a nerve-racking life, but I suppose one would grow used to it; and, granted that it might prove inexpedient to take the aggressive, the only alternative would be eternal vigilance and a good supply of sawn-off shot guns and ammunition."

The Historian looked as if he would like to have the bandit at the other end of his shot gun,—so much so, that we charged him with it. "Perhaps," he admitted; "but, in terms of disgust, I think I am more disgusted with myself than with the bandit. Germany is proclaiming at the top of her voice, with endless iteration, that she was not responsible for the war, and that she is being treated most unjustly. Repeat something often enough—almost anything—and loudly enough,—and there is not one man in a million who will not accept it as true, that is, unless he has reason to resist the suggestion consciously, and even then, it may leave some doubt in his mind. So far as Germany is concerned, I really believe I am immune; but the thing that disgusts me with myself is the realization that if I see and hear often enough, 'Smith's Biscuits are Best,' or 'The Whole World knows that Winston's Wool is Wonderful,'—I shall be insidiously undermined, and some day, more than half ashamed of myself, I shall order some, just to find out what 'the best' is like! And although that would not greatly matter, what does matter is that in a thousand different ways we are influenced—usually unbeknown to ourselves—by the clamour of the world around us, shouting its false standards and insane habits, through the press and on the streets and, worse than that, through members of our own family whom Theosophy has not reached. Talk about psychism! Is one of us free from it! No worse mistake can be made than to suppose that we are, merely because we do not see colours and hear whistles—no, I mean bells—and smell sulphur and revel in 'thrills,' whenever we begin to 'meditate.' The vast majority of people never leave the astral plane from the moment of birth until they die,—when, for a second or two, they may come closer to reality. For the rest of the time they're drunk; in their youth, roaring; in their 'prime,' 'carrying it'; in old age, sodden. Think you're entirely free from it, and you're lost. No one is, short of an Adept. Another way of putting it is that no man on earth is such a bore as the man who thinks himself entirely sane. We. . ."

"For pity's sake!" the Student interrupted, laughing. "What do you suppose the readers of the QUARTERLY will think of us? And what on earth has all this to do with Germany?"

"I am concerned primarily with what the readers of the QUARTERLY think about themselves," the Historian answered; "and as to Germany, the connection is direct, because, of all nations, Germany is the most psychic."

"I agree with nearly everything you have exclaimed," the Philosopher now remarked, choosing his words with suspicious care; "but I am tempted to read

to you something that Rama Krishna is reported to have said to Keshub Chunder Sen, when Keshub was leader of the Brahmo-Samaj."

"What was it?" the Historian asked.

"Men think that to criticize is to give life," read the Philosopher. "Criticism creates nothing. 'To create is to be like God. . . . When a selfless person lives amongst us his deeds become the very heart-beat of virtue. The being of such a one hovers over the world on wings of benediction. He becomes the chalice of holiness. . . . That is what I expect you to do, Keshub. You have that power; will you use it? Or shall you squander this life-time by abusing people? Shall men say that Keshub spent his days in the tavern of talk, drinking the wine of eloquence? On the contrary, may you *be* so that they will say, 'He dwelt amongst us like a tiger of truth. Wherever he went, errors trembled like leaves in the jungle, and sin fled before him like a herd of goats. He was so full of blessings that even his feeblest gestures showered love on all. His words were immortalities. He did not humble us with criticisms; for he heightened us with God.'"

"That is one side of the picture," the Historian answered, nothing daunted; "but there is another. In the first place allow me to point out that Rama Krishna was advising Keshub; he was not advising me. Secondly, he was criticizing Keshub severely, while advising him not to criticize others,—which suggests that criticism may be the function of some people and not of others. Thirdly, Rama Krishna was talking in the language of Keshub, who was a Brahmo, or Unitarian; and therefore, perhaps *par politesse*, chose to ignore the more orthodox, and, I venture to think, the more rational Trinitarian view of God, as Brahma, Vishnu, Siva. God creates, but God is equally active as Conserver and Destroyer. In what I said I was attempting to assist the Deity in that last most important function,—not fruitlessly, I trust."

The Philosopher was delighted. "Well," he said, "I suspect your theology is impeccable . . . you have read the book, I imagine?"

"No. What is it?"

"*The Face of Silence*, by Dhan Gopal Mukerji. I enjoyed it immensely; but it needs to be read with more detachment than most people possess."

"Perhaps also with some slight knowledge of Hindu theology," the Historian suggested slyly.

"Exactly! With that added, I do not see how the story of Rama Krishna can fail to stimulate the efforts of any sincere student of Theosophy."

"Tell us about it," several of us asked.

"Better read it for yourselves. The author is inclined to see things *couleur de rose*,—a tendency which I greatly prefer to its opposite, but which means that he needs to be discounted in some respects. I imagine that he has 'the artistic temperament,' with intense sympathies, not often long-lived. His gift of expression is remarkable. Not content with painting Rama Krishna, to the best of his ability, as a demi-god—and Rama Krishna was an extraordinary man—he sees his hero's disciples through the same haze of glory, and although this may not be misleading in the case of Turyananda, about whom

I know nothing except that which the author himself relates, I suspect that Vivekananda, now dead, had limitations which the author either does not know or does not understand. For instance, he quotes Turyananda as disapproving of Pranayama and of Hatha Yoga in general; but Vivekananda, lecturing in this country, taught that Pranayama—which he defined as ‘controlling the breathing’—should be practised in order to control the mind. ‘Breath,’ he said, ‘is like the fly-wheel of this machine.’ ‘To get the subtle perception we have to begin with the grosser perceptions, so we have to get hold of that which is setting the whole engine in motion, and that is the Prana, the most obvious manifestation of which is the breath.’ I am quoting from his published lectures, first printed in 1897. Needless to say that his teaching in this fundamental respect was the opposite of the truth as taught by H. P. B. and Judge, both of whom would have said that Vivekananda was putting the cart before the horse, and that it is the mind, not the Prana, which is like the fly-wheel of the machine.

“There are other things in the book which aroused disapproval as I read it; but for the most part it is admirable.”

“I shall never have time to read it,” said the Engineer. “If you won’t tell us about it at length, at least give us the substance of its doctrine.”

“The Tired Business Man wants the formula in the style of a newspaper heading!” the Philosopher retorted mockingly. “I refuse; but I will read you one or two extracts, if you like.”

“Before you do so,” interjected the Ancient, “may I be allowed to add something to what was said about criticism? I find myself unwilling to leave that subject without further comment. Simply this: it is undoubtedly the duty of parents, teachers, employers and others to criticize; their fitness to do so, however, may be gauged to some extent by their disinclination, for those who criticize without conscious effort and sacrifice, probably are assuming a function which is not theirs, or, in any case, should suspect themselves of having permitted their motive to become tainted with personal feeling. That is all. . . . Perhaps the Philosopher will now be so good as to read to us.”

The Philosopher opened his book. “Its outstanding thought,” he said, “is the need to eliminate self. A rich Hindu, orthodox and very charitable, had been assured by his priests that he would go to Heaven. He consulted Rama Krishna, who said to him—speaking of the three ways of approach: ‘Knowledge, deeds and love,—each one of them has to be selfless in order to find the Self of God.’ Still the man questioned. ‘But how is one to be free of desire to that high degree?’ Came the answer: ‘Stop listening to the flattery of the priests. Do not for a moment think that your deeds are going to do anybody any good. Begin at the beginning. Purify your deeds of any taint of self by purifying your thoughts. . . . Pray and meditate. Only undertake those actions that fall within the limits of your purified thoughts and dreams. Eschew any action that is tainted in the slightest by self. Give up building hospitals, houses for the helpless and other charitable institutions. Seek not to flatter yourself with gigantic deeds. *Undertake duties as small in size as your*

*self-surrender to God.* Then as your selflessness and purity grow—and things of the Soul grow very fast—it will pierce its own way through the material world and benefit others as the Ganges sprang through the hard rocks of the Himalayas and watered thousands of miles with her beneficence. . . . The true God includes all. There is only one thing that He excludes, and that is desire for results whether here on earth or in Heaven. Renounce all earthly results; give up even the hope of the felicity of Heaven, Swarga.' This was too much,—the work of a lifetime disappearing before his eyes! So Rama Krishna explained: 'If you defeat your soul's end by doing good deeds with earthly results in view, you will do it endless harm if you act in order to be rewarded hereafter. Selflessness is not only the road out of earthliness, but also out of Heaven. Does God abide in one and only one place? No. He cannot be chained either to Heaven or to earth. And if you fasten your soul's claws on Him, you will have to give up the selfish joys of Paradise too.'"

"Surely that is strange doctrine," our Visitor protested, evidently much bewildered. "Christ sits at the right hand of God, in Paradise."

"Why place the right hand of God in Paradise?" asked the Philosopher. "Also, what do you mean by 'Paradise'? Rama Krishna meant the state or states of consciousness which Madame Blavatsky, using a Tibetan term, described as Devachan. He did not mean a high spiritual condition. Apart from that, however, you go further than the Creed, which says that 'he ascended into heaven,' but which does not say that he stayed there! If you identify Christ with the Logos, to the exclusion of his humanity, it would be necessary to think of him as remaining continually on the plane of the Logos, not only now, but both before and during his incarnation as Jesus. Think of him, on the other hand, as divinely perfected man, as he appeared to his disciples after his resurrection, and the truth is that instead of being in Paradise, the veil between us and him is so thin that he can remove it at any moment,—just as he did then. The result of your attitude, so far as you are concerned, is to exile him from earth. In any case, Rama Krishna's doctrine, on this subject, is in accord with that of esoteric Christianity, even if the various orthodoxies should see fit to dispute it. Let me conclude my quotation. No true mystic of any creed would deny this: 'When your self is all burnt up, and God has taken possession of you completely, then every act of your life will be immortal. Whether you seek Jnana Yoga, realization through knowledge, or Karma Yoga, realization through deeds, you have to have a dire longing for God at its foundation. Without that foundation the house of knowledge is a perpetual labyrinth of deception, and the temple of deeds is but the tabernacle of self-adulation. Therefore go to-night: lift yourself like an offering to the Self of the Universe. With that act of surrender you will begin to build the palace of immortal acts. With those hands of yours doomed to death you shall erect the citadel of deathlessness.'"

"I like that," said the Historian, "except that if the rich Hindu had taken Rama Krishna's advice literally, and had tried to offer himself 'to the Self of the Universe,' he would have been offering himself to a cloud. He prob-

ably avoided that error by offering himself mentally to Rama Krishna. No man can jump from the level of personal consciousness to the Self of the Universe, which, from that level, can be conceived of only as a void or an abstraction. If he be fortunate enough to know of some Master, and can reach up to the dust under his Master's feet, he will be nearer to the Self of the Universe than by any amount of direct approach. He will never find that dust, however, in any true sense, until he has learned to honour and obey his own conscience, and those who are his immediate superiors in the hierarchy of being. . . . I think the most important thing you have read to us so far is the advice to 'begin at the beginning.' There are too many who want to begin at the end, and who, in their imaginations, do so with scintillating success. Incapable as yet of discriminating between a desire and a duty; thoroughly dishonest with themselves whenever their desire is involved; always persuading themselves that of course their Master would approve of the course they want to follow,—they bask in their own emotions about him, as if these were the pure radiance of his spirit. . . . But please read some more."

"The book covers a much wider field than my quotations suggest, but I want to concentrate on the one point because of its importance. The author gives conversations with Turyananda, in which the latter is reported to have said: 'The man of action, if he eschews all the material reward of his acts here or hereafter, will find God in no time. A mystic who meditates and prays without any desire for acquiring power, he too will find the All-Powerful in a short time. And he, who loves God's creatures, finds Him the instant his love is not caused by a motive, nor held by an earthly end. Here in the house of name and form there is room for all. It is the market place of the Infinite ['Each name and each form that is, exists in order to articulate God.']. . . . In Kali Yuga, this age, the only thing they have to do is to go on wanting the Lord sincerely. If they want Him long, He will reveal Himself to their mortal eyes. There is no doubt of it. He is like the mother-cat who cannot resist the crying call of her kitten very long.' Yet to turn once more to Rama Krishna: 'The way most people act, to know and love God is a scandal. They think He is hungrier than a common beggar at their door, easy to satisfy with a handful of any kind of offering. Oh, no; He cannot be fooled by little sacrifices when desire for earthly results stalks through men's thoughts and dreams like herds of elephants through a jungle. And do you think you can satisfy God by presenting Him with a fraction of yourself? He, being Infinite, will not accept anything but the infinite in you.'"

There was a pause. Then, abruptly:

"Sometimes I think that what The Theosophical Society needs is a rule, or an agreement, that no member shall talk about the Society, or about Theosophy, or about a fellow member, for a full year!" It was the Historian again. Our laughter interrupted him. "Why so savage?" someone asked. But another, outdoing the Historian, added: "How many would be left at the end of the year? No QUARTERLY, no meetings,—Silence!"

"The survivors might be new creatures. As it is, someone snatches at the

idea of selflessness—as old as the hills, but presented freshly—revolves it once or twice in his mind, so as to enjoy its flavour; bolts with it as a panacea for a friend; telephones about it—for fear of being second in the field—to another friend; recommends it to his cook,—and then flies off in search of another idea, to be treated similarly.”

“Yes,” said the Ancient quietly; “the Masters must find us an awful trial. It is bad enough to have to live with oneself for sixty years or longer; but they have to follow our asinities throughout the Manvantara. People talk about their crosses; but as we grow older we discover that we have only one, the terrible cross of the personal self, to which we cling, none the less, as if our existence depended upon it. Some day we must learn to accept that too, and to be thankful for it. After all, its conquest and transformation constitute our present opportunity.”

“Was not that the subject of a recent discussion at the New York Branch?” the Student asked. “I was away on business, and should much like to hear about it.”

“I happen to have the transcript of some stenographic notes of the opening address, if you would care to see it,” one of our editors offered; but he was asked to read it aloud, and did so, as follows:

“I know it is not customary to begin these talks with a text, but that is what I am going to do this evening. The text is: ‘He seeketh liberty, which is so dear, as knoweth he who life for her refuses,’—Longfellow’s translation of some lines from the first Canto of the ‘Purgatorio.’ Virgil and Dante have ascended from hell—you remember how—and once more they behold the stars. Then they pass on to the mountain of purification, to Purgatory, and there they find Cato, as guardian,—Cato of all people, not a Christian, be it noted, but a heathen, and none the less in command of Purgatory. The reason that Dante places Cato in that position is that Cato took his own life rather than become a prisoner,—at least that was one of the reasons. Cato questions them, seeing that one of them is a living man,—not of the dead; and it is then that Virgil, answering Cato, says of Dante, his companion, ‘He seeketh liberty, which is so dear, as knoweth he who life for her refuses’; or, in the translation of Carey, ‘In the search of liberty he journeys; that how dear, they know who for her sake have life refused.’

“Then you will remember that Cato allows them to pass, insisting, however, that Dante’s face must first be washed, and that he must carry with him one of the reeds growing by the shore of the sea,—a reed, symbol of humility; a reed, as he explains, because no flower or tree that stiffens in its bark can bend beneath the turbulence of the sea’s waves and the waves of life.

“Liberty: and liberty, I suggest, should be the subject of our discussion this evening, because it is the culmination of what we have been considering at earlier meetings, which was, the purpose of life. What is the purpose of life, it was asked; and we were reminded of Emerson’s statement that the universe exists for the purposes of soul. It was suggested that life, instead of being for enjoyment, is really for education, that we may learn to understand ourselves,

and the universe,—its meaning, and the things in it. Yet, however we answer that question, we should remember that actually, no matter how learned our answer may seem to be, it is merely, at best, an approximation to the truth; because, until we attain the ability to look at a thing from above, we cannot possibly understand it. For instance, a boy at school may be told the purpose of education, and may repeat accurately something he has heard his father or his teacher tell him; but we all know that that boy cannot really understand the purpose of education until he looks back from the vantage point of another twenty or thirty years, in the light of experience—in that sense from above—and sees for himself what he has gained, or what he might have gained, and what he has lost. Further, so long as we attempt to interpret the universe in terms of the mind, we must of necessity fall short of the truth; while no answer can have much meaning for us without the background of the theosophical philosophy. Consequently, at previous meetings, we have considered the method of growth,—how it is that things evolve, and whether the method indicates a purpose. We have considered the method as applying to the universe, as a whole, and therefore as applying to atoms and to all else in the universe. We have considered those great periods of evolution and involution, of expansion and contraction, which is the way of growth that has always been taught in the East, where they speak of the days and nights of Brahma,—a doctrine which has been echoed by many western philosophers, Herbert Spencer among them. The purpose of evolution followed by the purpose of involution; summer time followed by winter; day time followed by night time. Expressed in other words, it is the descent of spirit into matter for the redemption of matter, thus manifesting the divine nature in and through matter, and in order that spirit itself may acquire self-consciousness: another mental effort to explain the way of growth, of the universe, and of everything in it, based upon the assumption that time and space are realities, and that causality is a reality. We must assume those things, if we are going to speak in terms of the mind.

“In the process of growth, as spirit descends into matter, as unity ceases to be unity and becomes diversity, before diversity returns again to unity,—spirit, in order to come into contact with matter on different planes, evolves an organ of contact, just as a human being or an animal, as the result of desire, evolves an organ of sight, by means of which it can see; or an ear, by means of which it can respond to, and learn from, the world of sound. You will keep in mind, please, Lamarck's suggestion or theory, that just as desire precedes function, so function precedes organism. That is of vital importance, if we would understand the laws of growth. It has direct bearing, not only on the physical universe around us, but on the growth of the soul itself,—upon our daily growth. So we have, as I say, the spirit throwing up or evolving an organ, an instrument of contact, by means of which it may perceive the plane upon which, at that time, it is functioning. I repeat that the same process is followed there as in the evolution of any physical organ of the human or any other body,—the eye, for instance, being an organ which was evolved as the result of desire



to see. Now suppose that the eye developed the illusion that it was 'the person.' The eye, theoretically, cannot see backwards or upwards. It cannot see the creature whose instrument it is. It projects slightly beyond the surface of the body. That eye has a perfect right, from one standpoint, to think of itself as 'it', or as 'I', and perhaps to complain in its own mind of this great big lump that it has to drag around with it. It sounds absurd. It would sound even more absurd if the eye were to begin to think not only that it was 'it', but that it had a right, on its own account, to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. As a matter of fact, that is exactly what the larger organ evolved by the soul has done. The organ evolved by the soul is that which we call the personality, and the personality, which really is the result of an interaction between spirit and matter, instead of realizing that it is just an organ of perception, has come to the conclusion that it is 'it,' and talks about *my* soul and *my* spirit, if it happens to believe in such things.

"Of course, because servants have a way of imitating their masters, as soon as the personality adopts that attitude and becomes imbued with the notion that it is an independent entity, the various organs in the body imitate the thing that ought to be their master, and begin to think that they are 'it', that they have a right to independence, and to various other things. The result is chaos, the kind of chaos, physiologically speaking, in which most people live. You probably know some man, whose liver for instance, quite obviously controls him. Various other organs control different people; they are in a state of rebellion, just as the personality is in a state of chronic rebellion. The personality does not know it; does not think it: it is so convinced that it is the real thing and the centre of its universe, that it has forgotten, if it ever knew, that it is in a state of rebellion. It has taken to itself and into itself, as the result of the interaction between spirit and matter, the 'I-ness' which belongs to the soul alone.

"That was the situation many thousands of years ago, which confronted the great Lodge of Masters, those who, in a previous period of manifestation, a previous Manvantara, had attained to realization, had discovered that the personality is not the self; who had attained to freedom from that illusion, and who therefore acted, as the new day of being began, as the fathers, as the guides, as the kings of this new race of children. That was the problem that confronted them. Here was a race of creatures in a state of rebellion, as the result of assuming that the personality was the real self, as the result of taking and using the powers of the spirit for personal ends. We can imagine that the Masters conferred among themselves as to what could be done to rescue these infants from perdition, to make them realize the truth.

"It is important that that problem of the Masters should be considered and, in so far as we are capable of it, understood; otherwise, we shall never get the slightest idea of what the great religions of the world are about. Let us use an analogy: think of a small boy who steals. Some people who have never come into contact with small boys might imagine that it would be a perfectly simple thing to cure him; just say, 'Johnny, don't steal,' and the thing is done. Those,

however, who have some slight acquaintance with the species know that it is not so simple, and that they may have to try every method imaginable, using the appeal of reason, of love, of shame and mortification, punishment and reward,—every imaginable device to wake that boy up, to make him aware of what he is doing, to bring him to consciousness and to self-consciousness in that respect. They may succeed, and they may fail; my point is that they have to try one method after another. If one fails, try another. Also, it should be perfectly obvious that no two boys are alike. One method may succeed with one and fail with another.

"It is often said of the great religions of the world, that they do not teach the same thing. Superficially, they do not; but suppose two mothers or fathers to be addressing two different boys: perhaps the boys will think, They are saying different things; it must be some kind of 'bluff'! We, who know better, can reconcile *that* kind of contradiction easily; and in exactly the same way, once we understand the purpose of religions, we shall be able to reconcile supposed contradictions between them.

"Once more, what was the problem? Men lost in blindness, men convinced that they had a right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, men convinced that they—that is to say, the personality, instead of being a mere organ of perception, designed merely as a means of contact with the physical and mental world, through which the spirit might gain experience and understanding—convinced that that instrument was the real self. It would seem absurd to anyone to suggest that the eye has any function whatsoever, or any right, except to obey. No physical organ can have any right to go off on a kind of 'spree' on its own account. Nor would it worry you if your eye were to feel bored or unhappy. Yet, while fully admitting that, how many believe, and how many act on the belief, that exactly the same thing is true of the personality; that its sole function is to obey; that its happiness or unhappiness has nothing to do with it?

"The Masters knew that just as rebellious organs in the human body spell misery both for the organ and for the person who ought to be its ruler, so these personalities were miserable—though everlastingly alternating between misery and silly intoxication—and they wanted to rescue the personalities from that misery, and above all, the souls that were the prisoners of those personalities,—because the soul is a prisoner; if all the organs in a man's body are in a state of rebellion, is he not the prisoner of those organs?

"A tremendous problem: how to give these creatures liberty, when they did not know enough even to want liberty. Dante had reached the point, having passed through hell, when he longed for liberty; but how many of us really want it, really want to be liberated from these personalities which have us by the throat? Some of us may think, Yes, that is exactly what we want. But if we wanted it completely, we should have it in three seconds. It is because we are houses divided against ourselves that still we are slaves.

"There is the problem that confronted the Masters of Wisdom—that still confronts them; and first one came and then another came, and tried this

method of presentation and then another. In the course of the winter, I hope we shall consider in detail the different methods or efforts of different Masters to liberate mankind, to free them from the clutches of self, from the blindness in which men are lost, from this supreme illusion of a selfhood that does not exist.

"Anyone who has read the *Gita* must see that it consists, or concludes with, a synthesis of different methods by which freedom can be attained, after presenting first one, then another; and that it shows how these all point to the same attainment, that is, to freedom, if you will follow any of these methods faithfully. Then came Gautama Buddha, with the background of the *Gita* and the Upanishads. Perhaps as the result of observation, the Lodge of Masters had found that many of those who followed the advice of the *Gita* had given it that queer twist that you can give any kind of religious instruction, and had longed for freedom that they might get away from the world and have a little peace; had carried self with them and had never got away from it but had perhaps merely increased the sense of self. Buddha tried a slightly different method: pointing out the miseries of life resulting from the desire for life; teaching the noble eightfold path; instructing his disciples to think of all living creatures, north, south, east and west, and to go out to them with hearts of love, so as to lift themselves out of this little self in which they were immersed;—the *Gita*, pointing upwards to the great Self; Buddha, almost in despair, pointing not upwards to the great Self, but to the pity of life as manifested, especially as lived by men. You may remember that just before he attained to Buddhahood, under the Bodhi tree, he said, I have found the Truth, but what is the use of telling anybody else about it—it is sheer waste of time; and then great Brahma himself pleaded with him and said, Try once more, you may succeed with some of them. Finally, he consented, and because of this supreme sacrifice, from being a Bodhisattva, became the perfect Buddha.

"Then the great Master Christ: other religious teachers had tried to use sorrow and suffering as means to persuade men from the illusion of personal life, pointing out that birth was pain, that life was pain, that death was pain, and saying, in effect: turn from it because you can attain unto peace—*turn* from it. Christ tried a different method. He said: *Grasp* it, and use it for victory—and of course, *did* as he preached. He took pain and used it for the triumph of love, used it to make himself free, that all mankind might become free, if they would only follow the method he had revealed to them, not only in his life but in many of his sayings, such as, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself . . . for whosoever will save his life shall lose it.' *The Imitation of Christ* is an elaboration of the same theme; instruction on how to grasp the cross that we may gain freedom. We certainly need that instruction to-day, though few want it. Most people are like those who have lived so long in prison that they would feel lost if released from it.

"I wonder whether this doctrine of release, as it might be called, amounts to a conviction in many of us, or whether it meets with a mere intellectual assent, or perhaps with some degree of skepticism. Sometimes I think that if one

really knew it with the whole of one's being, one would only have to say it, and everyone else would realize that it is true. Yet, as against that, is the fact that great Masters have said it—the greatest among the Masters—and with what result? Some have listened. Some have responded. Buddha said it, and there were those who, merely by hearing the words he uttered, knew that it was so, and gained liberation in that moment. Christ said it in another language, to another race—a very different race—and I doubt if many gained liberation, while we know how crudely he has been misunderstood by the world as a whole, from that day to this. We know the extent to which orthodox religion, instead of helping people to get rid of their sense of personality, simply increases it in many cases. Think of a man, eminently virtuous, who gives most of his money in charity,—the world would say, a devout man: but why is he doing it? Is he doing it for pure love of Christ, absolutely regardless of himself, with no thought of heaven or hell or his own future, purely for love's sake? Or is he doing it because he has a kindly disposition, believes it is the right thing to do, hopes to go to heaven, hopes to please Christ,—so Christ may be pleased with him, so he may get his reward. Does he in any way whatsoever get rid of the illusion that *he* personally is doing these things, that *he* personally is giving away large sums of money, that *he* is being kind? Very often, he is simply intensifying his sense of I-ness in that personality. He is above criticism. Nobody can find fault with him.

"Prayer—Christian prayer—is very often harmful in that way. I am not saying for one moment that all people who use Christian prayer increase their sense of personal identity by so doing; but too often that is the case: they make it merely an extension of egotism—I-this, I-that, beating against the walls of heaven. Liberation? No thought of liberation in it anywhere; no conception that there is any need for liberation. A perfectly respectable personality is doing the praying. Yet Christ came to earth to liberate mankind, and for no other purpose; to rid them of this night-mare of self which possesses them so intensely that they never let go of it, morning, noon or night. Is that what he wants as reward for his sacrifice,—that kind of perpetual egotistical praying with the personal self as centre and as end?

"So, for your consideration and discussion, we would suggest to you that the end of all religions, and the chief purpose of Theosophy, is to help people, first of all to realize the need for liberation, and then to suggest ways by which freedom can be attained—freedom from illusion, freedom from the bonds of self—so that we may come to understand who and what we really are; not the personality but the spirit; and so that the spirit, having attained to self-consciousness, may become a real individuality in the spiritual world. But that individual in the spiritual world can never be evolved, can never become, so long as the personality takes to itself all sense of individuality, all sense of I-ness, and misuses for its own ends that which is part of the divine nature."

"That is the end of the address. At the next meeting of the Branch, Professor Mitchell opened with a talk which he has since elaborated in the form of an article entitled 'Practical Aspects of Consciousness,' which is to appear in this

(April) issue of the *QUARTERLY*,—packed full of suggestions for thought and meditation."

"I suppose," said our Visitor (he must have seen the point), "that what you have read to us about the personality being merely an organ or instrument, whose only proper function is to obey, is an explanation of the tremendous emphasis which all ascetics have laid on the need to conquer self-will. I remember a statement by Saint Bernard, that when we suffer from hunger or cold, or from any other inconvenience, it is only the self-will in us that suffers; and that we ought to behave accordingly."

"There can be no question about that," the Philosopher responded; "and I for one am grateful to you for your reminder of Saint Bernard. It is strange how difficult many people find it to trace self-will in themselves. Here is a very simple illustration: we are kept up late at night, knowing that we have real and important work to do next day. We may regret that our instrument will probably not be in the best of condition; but do we resent it, either against the friend who kept us up, or against Fate? Is our inner attitude one of complaint? We should certainly learn to apply hundreds of such tests to ourselves, throughout the day, if we would really attack the monster in its den."

"Do you want some scraps of news before we adjourn?" the Student asked at this point. "If so,—a new book by Maurice Maeterlinck, entitled *La Vie dans l'espace*, is being published by Fasquelle, and is certain to appear simultaneously in English. It deals with the fourth dimension and points out that because it takes seventy-two years for a ray of light to travel from the star Mira to our earth, it follows that an astronomer on that star, observing us with a sufficiently powerful telescope, would see, not the events that we think of as contemporaneous, but the events of seventy-two years ago, such as the marriage of the third Napoleon with Eugénie de Montijo. From a still more distant star, the Crucifixion would be seen as taking place to-day. Past and future are dreams. There is only an eternal Present,—the Everlasting Now, to recall Carlyle's striking phrase.

"Another item: Sir Oliver Lodge's address before the International Homeopathic Congress of 1927 was published in the January number of 'Science Progress,' a quarterly journal edited by Sir Ronald Ross. The full title of the address is 'The Nature of Matter, and its Relation to the Ether of Space.' He suggests that life and mind are primarily inhabitants of Ether, but as Ether escapes our senses, 'we only become aware of them when they are associated with the *modified portion of Ether which we call matter*.' He suggests that the link between mind and matter is an 'Ethereic body,' which, says a commentator, carries us back to Spenser's line, 'The soul is form and doth the bodie make' (I suggest an article in the *QUARTERLY* on 'The Source of Spenser's Theosophy,'—to be written in Devachan, and brought back 'next time'!). One of the great discoveries of the age, according to Sir Oliver, is 'the equation or identity between matter and energy.' Matter is one of the forms which energy may take. Matter 'can cease to be matter and reappear as ethereal

radiative energy. Once obtained in the form of radiation it can produce all the well-known effects that we attribute to sunlight—photographic, electric, chemical, vegetative and other.”

“Anything to be said about the Convention?” asked the Engineer.

“I am hoping that less *output* will be necessary, than in recent years,” the Ancient answered; “and that members, when it is over, will speak of its ‘stillness,’ rather than of its ‘force.’ We ought to have reached that stage. In the past, toward the end of the century, when Lodge Messengers have forced their way into the world, a certain amount of splash has been inevitable. Not so now, when the Movement has been carried so far forward; and perhaps never again. I can well imagine that the next time the Lodge ‘sends,’ if the messenger should find a group of disciples ready, he would not have to appear on the public stage at all,—I mean, that he would make himself known to the few only, and would work through them. Of course there are cycles within cycles. There was far more ‘output’ of a kind in 1895 than in 1925; but then in 1925 there was more ‘output’ than in 1905, while its quality was very much higher than in 1895. The higher the quality, the greater the depth; and the greater the depth, the greater the stillness. The stillest spot on earth must be where the Lodge Light burns,—there, on the altar of sacrifice. Great mountain peaks, snow-covered, against a blue sky; vast stretches of desert; primeval forests, untrodden by man, seen from a distance—these may suggest it, one to one person, another to another. But they are symbols only. Stillness in itself is the Will of Masters, immovable yet vibrant,—the very heart of love. May we not hope that its presence—at least its benediction—will be recognized by all members as their dominant impression of the next Theosophical Convention?”

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*Interior mortification is acquired little by little, through never following our own wills or liking, even in the most trifling matters, until we have subdued the body to the spirit.—ST. TERESA.*

# LETTERS TO STUDENTS

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November 2nd, 1908.

DEAR \_\_\_\_\_

. . . . . You must not think that my recent communication was meant as a reproach or to contain a reproof, for I have no right to do either. . . . . Beyond a reasonable urging, I should be overstepping the bounds of my duty and of courtesy. Let us assume that you responded to a reasonable urging!

Personal correspondence *is* now, and for some time has been, a characteristic of our work. The effort is constantly being made to draw the ties which bind us together much closer than would be possible if all we did was to study the same books or believe the same philosophy of life. We are given much personal attention, though sometimes, indeed perhaps often, all that we are aware of are the individual letters which we may receive. These, however, are but an outward expression of an inward and spiritual routine. This is one of the phases of the new cycle to which you must grow accustomed. It will make a very great difference in your point of view. The mere consciousness or knowledge that every thought we think as well as every act we commit, is watched and known by those whose duty it is to look after us, is in itself a wonderful incentive to right thought and right action. Ponder this well, and you will see that it is so. I think you would be wise to make this thought a key-note of your daily life, for even if it were not true it could not help but be beneficial in every way.

It seems to me that our object for the immediate future is again individual; it is that we should so live and act as to draw closer to the Masters, and to make ourselves more perfect instruments for their work in the world.

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There is no doubt that at present an attempt is being made, in which the Theosophical Movement has a part, to reinvigorate and freshen the old Christian doctrines. . . . . So here is an immensely large and valuable organization already in the world, begging for help; and there is little doubt that Theosophy can do much for it. Furthermore, being, nearly all of us, at one time members of some Christian denomination, and all of us with Christian heredity, it is the most natural method to proceed along Christian lines, instead of, say, Buddhist lines, from which we are racially barred of full comprehension. H. P. B. had to start on Eastern lines or we never should have acquired a sufficiently detached point of view from which to value

Christian teachings. We had to make an excursion into new territory, as it were, to get a fresh point of view; to get free from the mental entanglements of words and phrases. We know, for instance, what the Holy Ghost means, because we go back to a consideration of it free from its theological connotations, and with the Eastern teachings of the Higher Self, of the Universal Oversoul, etc., in our minds. We know what the Resurrection was, because we know something of the Eastern teaching of immaterial bodies, of the Mayavi Rupa, etc. And so it goes through the whole of Christian theology. The words and phrases are not stereotyped to us, they have a very real and a very vital meaning. It is now our duty gradually to instil this meaning into the minds of our Christian brethren whenever and wherever we have a chance.

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I do not wish this correspondence to bore you. Perfunctory letters do no good; and I should rather wait another four or five months before hearing from you, unless you feel that you really have something to say, some opinion to express, some question to ask. I hope, however, that so long a time will not pass before you will want to write.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

January 3rd, 1909.

DEAR ———

I have your thoughtful and most interesting letter of the 20th December. It raises many points. There is no doubt that the change of cycle which occurred at the end of the century, approximately, caused a very substantial change in the method of work in the T. S., in the character of inspiration which we received in all points which affected the Movement. We were slow to sense this change, many of us, and some are only just now beginning to understand, or at least to feel, what it is that happened. Those who are incapable of such understanding, or feeling, soon find themselves out of harmony with the rest of the Society, and slough off, for one reason or another. Such, I think, is the inner explanation of the ——— Branch trouble. The trouble with ——— was slightly different.

The troubles in the T. S. of ten years or so ago, tested our sense of personal responsibility; "use your discrimination always" was the key-note; and we learned the lesson with pain and difficulty. Then, almost as soon as we got the idea firmly fixed in our heads that we must always exercise our own judgment, we were tested upon obedience, that bed-rock of occultism. Some of us learned the lesson of using our own judgment so well and so thoroughly, that never afterwards were we willing to accept anything from anyone. The



mere suggestion that we should do or not do something was sufficient to raise our ire, and to make us kick over the traces. — split on this rock. They simply would not do anything they were asked to do. Others have failed on this same point, but fortunately not many.

All this has a bearing on what you say in your letter about individual development being the key-note of the present time. I think this is so; that more stress is laid upon individual effort and individual development; and I believe we may safely accept this and act upon it, if we are exceedingly careful to remember that fundamental law of laws, the necessity for perfect and unflinching obedience. The reason why many persons do not get on in spite of a whole life devoted to self-purification and work for others, is because they lack this interior attitude of the mind and will, without which no Master dares lead them beyond a certain point, and not a very high point either. The whole basis of relationship between Master and pupil must be obedience, and we must have this spirit within us before any Master would dare accept us as a pupil. As it is contrary to the whole spirit of modern, Western times, it proves to be a barrier past which few of us can go; especially as it is an intangible barrier against which we may not know that we are pressing. May I suggest, therefore, that you cultivate the spirit of simple, childlike obedience; implicit obedience; perfect, unswerving obedience, as a very essential element in your future progress. If we go forward upon the Path in this spirit, doing simply and with all our heart the task or duty which lies next at hand, we need know little of the theory which underlies the work we do, and we need not understand at all the cyclic laws which may operate at the moment.

It was exceedingly gratifying to have received such replies from Professor — and Dr. —. Really I sometimes think that we may become respectable, which I surmise would be a very doubtful blessing.

Many thanks for your good wishes, which are very heartily reciprocated.

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

October 19th, 1909.

DEAR —

\* \* \* \* \*

I have a letter from each of you which I have not answered, not because I did not want to, but solely because I have been in Europe all summer and it was hardly practicable to do any writing. We returned a short time ago, and are all of us now settling down to our regular work. It is a pleasure to be back and to be at it again.

\* \* \* \* \*

—, in a very beautiful letter written last June, a letter which I should be incapable of writing, refers to some of the deeper thoughts to which his

recent experiences have given rise, and, among other things, wonders why we have to spend sometimes years on a fruitless quest, and then find that what we sought was at all times almost within grasp of our hands. *Almost* within grasp, but not quite. There is the rub. We are told to meditate; we are told, by the greatest Master of them all, that we have no conception of the power of meditation, and after many years of effort we suddenly find this to be true; we find the way ahead opening out in an almost miraculous manner, and for the first time we catch a clear glimpse of the meaning of our task, the reality of the spiritual life, the warmth and comfort of divine companionship; and then we are likely to feel just what your letter expresses: "Why, oh! why, did I waste years when I had this ready to my hand."

I think the answer is that we did not waste those years, that they were required either to garner the necessary force to break through into the Kingdom of Heaven, or they were required to burn away, in the fire of suffering, certain dross in our natures which was a barrier, or which would be dangerous if vivified by the influx of power which is the necessary sequel of any degree of illumination. We are held back sometimes for our best good. The curtain is kept down until we are in position not only to see, but to use properly the knowledge which will then be ours. We see too many sad examples of men who force their way into the higher planes before they are fit to meet what they find there. It is from this sort of danger that the Spiritual Powers, which watch over the evolution of humanity, guard ordinary humanity whenever they can. There is an "if"; for even the Planetary Spirit may not go against a man's own conscious wish in such matters.

All these things,—an awakened spiritual life, chéliship, conscious communion with the Masters, are ready at every instant of time for us to grasp, and may be grasped at any instant of time, when we have the power and the holiness to grasp them. It is in each man's own hands, but there are few who are ready on all planes of their nature for this final step. Our hearts and bodies may be ready, and our brains need a life's additional training; or brain and heart may be ready, and a few years' foolish indulgence in our youth may have made our bodies a barrier which it will take long to overcome. Or, and I hope this may be the case with both of you, it may be that your efforts have brought your natures to the threshold of chéliship, and that all you need is just a little more power, a little additional effort,—that last ounce of weight which will bear down the balance.

If there is one thing more than another which my years in the Movement have taught me, it is that we have but little idea of the almost incredible moral and physical and psychical perfection which is required of even a new chéla. It may sound discouraging at first, but it is not so if rightly read; for if we have not yet been able to reach that definite point after all these years, it may not be because we have not made great progress, but because the point was really much farther away than we thought when we started out on our journey. We may be disappointed that we have not reached the goal, but we may also be delighted to find that we have really journeyed much farther than we had any

idea. That I think is the fact; the true condition in which most of us find ourselves.

\* \* \* \* \*

Your letter says that, when writing, there was peace in your Branch, but that they were still meeting at the same place. I shall hope to hear that the old trouble has receded still further into the background. For spiritual progress, there *must* be harmony among brother disciples; they *must* learn to put up with each other's peculiarities; else how will they learn to put up with the peculiarities of the Master, who is the synthesis of all his chélas? Ponder that. It goes deep.

I hope ——— will not think that a letter addressed to both of you has been too much filled with references to what ——— wrote. It has simply served as a text to write what was in my mind, and is meant for you both. I shall hope to hear from each of you in reply. ——— writes me that he is staying with you, which I am glad to know. As he is gentle and soothing, perhaps, as an outsider, he may find a means of settling all the past troubles in the Branch.

With kindest regards to you both, I am,

Sincerely and cordially yours,

C. A. GRISCOM.

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*If you cannot go into the desert, of you is required the solitude of mind and of heart. You will be safe there, if there you do not think, if there you do not love, if there you do not act as they think, as they love, as they act in the world.—ST. JEROME.*



## ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES IN LIFE<sup>1</sup>

THAT view of one's Karma that leads to a bewailing of the unkind fate which has kept advantages in life away from us, is a mistaken estimate of what is good and what is not good for the soul. It is quite true that we may often find persons surrounded with great advantages, but who make no corresponding use of them or pay but little regard to them. But this very fact in itself goes to show that the so-called advantageous position in life is really not good nor fortunate in the true and inner meaning of those words. The fortunate one has money and teachers, ability, and means to travel and fill the surroundings with works of art, with music and with ease. But these are like the tropical airs that enervate the body; these enervate the character instead of building it up. They do not in themselves tend to the acquirement of any virtue whatever, but rather to the opposite by reason of the constant steeping of the senses in the subtle essences of the sensuous world. They are like sweet things which, being swallowed in quantities, turn to acids in the inside of the body. Thus they can be seen to be the opposite of good Karma.

What then is good Karma and what bad? The all-embracing and sufficient answer is this:

Good Karma is that kind which the Ego desires and requires; bad, that which the Ego neither desires nor requires.

And in this the Ego, being guided and controlled by law, by justice, by the necessities of upward evolution, and not by fancy or selfishness or revenge or ambition, is sure to choose the earthly habitation that is most likely, out of all possible of selection, to give a Karma for the real advantage in the end. In this light then, even the lazy, indifferent life of one born rich, as well as that of one born low and wicked, is right.

When we, from this plane, inquire into the matter, we see that the "advantages" which one would seek were he looking for the strengthening of character, the unloosing of soul force and energy, would be called by the selfish and personal world, "disadvantages". Struggle is needed for the gaining of

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from *The Path*, Vol. X, pages 123-125.

strength; buffeting adversities is for the gaining of depth; meagre opportunities may be used for acquiring fortitude; poverty should breed generosity.

The middle ground in all this, and not the extreme, is what we speak of. To be born with the disadvantage of drunken, diseased parents, in the criminal portion of the community, is a punishment which constitutes a wait on the road of evolution. It is a necessity, generally, because the Ego has drawn about itself in a former life some tendencies which cannot be eliminated in any other way. But we should not forget that sometimes, often in the grand total, a pure, powerful Ego incarnates in just such awful surroundings, remaining good and pure all the time, and staying there for the purpose of uplifting and helping others.

But to be born in extreme poverty is not a disadvantage. Jesus said well when, repeating what many a sage had said before, he described the difficulty experienced by the rich man in entering heaven. If we look at life from the narrow point of view of those who say there is but one earth, and, after it, either eternal heaven or hell, then poverty will be regarded as a great disadvantage and something to be avoided. But seeing that we have many lives to live, and that they will give us all needed opportunity for building up character, we must admit that poverty is not, in itself, necessarily bad Karma. Poverty has no natural tendency to engender selfishness, but wealth requires it.

A sojourn for everyone in a body born to all the pains, deprivations and miseries of modern poverty, is good and just. Inasmuch as the present state of civilization with all its horrors of poverty, of crime, of disease, of wrong relations almost everywhere, has grown out of the past, in which we were workers, it is just that we should experience it all at some point in our career. If some person who now pays no heed to the misery of men and women should next life be plunged into one of the slums of our cities for rebirth, it would imprint on the soul the misery of such a situation. This would lead later on to compassion and care for others. For, unless we experience the effects of a state of life, we cannot understand or appreciate it from a mere description. The personal part involved in this may not like it as a future prospect, but if the Ego decides that the next personality shall be there, then all will be an advantage and not a disadvantage.

If we look at the field of operation in us of the so-called advantages of opportunity, money, travel and teachers, we see at once that it all has to do with the brain and nothing else. Languages, archæology, music, satiating sight with beauty, eating the finest food, wearing the best clothes, travelling to many places, and thus infinitely varying impressions on ear and eye; all these begin and end in the brain and not in the soul or character. As the brain is a portion of the unstable, fleeting body, the whole phantasmagoria disappears from view and use when the note of death sends its awful vibration through the physical form and drives out the inhabitant. The wonderful central master-ganglion disintegrates, and nothing at all is left but some faint aromas here and there depending on the actual love within for any one pursuit or image or sensation. Nothing left of it all but a few tendencies—*skandhas*,

not of the very best. The advantages then turn out in the end to be disadvantages altogether. But imagine the same brain and body not in places of ease, struggling for a good part of life, doing their duty and not in a position to please the senses: this experience will burn in, stamp upon, carve into the character, more energy, more power and more fortitude.

It is thus through the ages that great characters are made. The other mode is the mode of the humdrum average, which is nothing after all, as yet, but an animal.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE.

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*He that well and rightly considereth his own works, will find little cause to judge hardly of another.*—THOMAS À KEMPIS.

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*The world is full of Judgment Days, and into every assembly that a man enters, in every action he attempts, he is gauged and stamped.*—EMERSON.

# REVIEWS

*Man and the Supernatural*, by Evelyn Underhill; Methuen and Co., 1927; price, 7s. 6d.

Evelyn Underhill's latest book will be welcomed eagerly by a growing body of readers, many of whom will agree with the present writer that it is her best. It is written with the same clearness, vigour of image, and occasional brilliance of her earlier volumes, and is impressive because of its easy mastery of difficult subjects. More than that, however, it shows that, as the reward of a truly honest mind, intellectual appreciation has become recognition, while experience has done much to change aloofness into sympathetic contact. "Such a book" as hers, the author says, "must be, to a great extent, the expression of personal conviction and experience. . . . It is at least as much the result of meditation as of the industrious study of facts" (p. 2).

The result is something better than an analysis and exposition of what others have lived or written; it is a contribution,—and one which should be particularly helpful because couched in modern terms appealing to the modern mind.

The "point of departure" for her study is the sense which the great majority of mankind possess, namely, that there is not only "this world," familiar to all of us, but also "another world" or a "supernatural order," which lies outside the "natural." The fact that man, a "self conscious spirit," emerges from the flux of physical life, finds himself "unable to be satisfied with it," and, "parting company with his animal relations," begins "a blundering search for the hiding-place of that haunting Presence which seems to speak to him from the burning bush"—this itself is a "startling" spectacle. "Perfect adaptation to that [natural] world is no longer his standard"; all history shows us that men have reached out for something above and beyond them, and by this very fact a "genuine correspondence begins to be established between this little living and unstable creature, and a stable Reality beyond the reach of sense" (pp. 3-4). Organized religion "marks the point of contact between natural and supernatural orders," and even in "its worst corruptions and extravagances," it witnesses to "a living and abiding Reality which is distinct from and beyond the world,"—a Reality whose "ultimate demands are the hardest that humanity has to meet." One must deny the witness of history to deny that man is somehow "aware of his own status, as a creature who is somehow capable of relations with a more than natural world" (p. 5).

This general fact, then, taken not in its details of totems, fetiches, and "objectionable exhibits" of "the psychological dust-hole," but as it is writ large over the experience of a whole world of men, provides a "great conundrum which continues to baffle the most ingenious naturalist." Why should mammals of a certain type ever have felt incited to seek communion with an unseen Power?

Miss Underhill's book offers us her answer in terms of "Christian theism." Religion of late has been studied exhaustively as a branch, almost a by-product, of naturalistic anthropology; but because of what is implicit in it, she sees it rather as "perhaps the most significant branch." Religious and mystical experience are more than the mere "emergence from within the organic world of a fresh quality or power, a mere unpacking of the world's portmanteau, another episode in the endless drama of Becoming. They involve, beyond this, the awe-struck response of the creature to something wholly other and over-against itself" (p. 13). There is universal

testimony to a Divinity that shapes our lives, and a supernatural Father who is mindful of, and visits, his children. Some men are more aware of this than others, but the basic fact remains unescapable: "As the fish could not have come into existence without water, and the bird guarantees the supporting though invisible air, so I think we may reasonably claim that the undying fact of sanctity guarantees God" (p. 27). "Therefore in studying man's knowledge of, and relation with, the universe, we are justified in giving a large place to the existence and the declarations of spiritual genius. Indeed, we are bound to do so; for here, so to speak, are the laboratory specimens on which our practical work must be done. Here is the only human type which claims to speak from observation and experience, not from deduction and speculation, of the realities beyond sense" (p. 21).

The first and unanimous testimony of these "mystics," who insist that "they know for certain. . . . a spiritual order, penetrating, and everywhere conditioning though transcending the world of sense" (p. 22), is that they are not "the painstaking discoverers of something, but the astonished receivers of something. . . . The words of St. John—'We love him because he first loved us' sum up, when fully understood, their whole doctrine of mystical experience. This is a position completely opposed to all speculations of personal idealism, all philosophies of mere development and change; for it requires us to hold that the supreme and living Object of the soul's desire Himself incites this desire as a part of His scheme of human life. . . . Thus, feeling the power, the sweetness and the wonder that overwhelm our strangely compounded human nature when the sense of God enters the conscious field, the mystics can exclaim with no sense of unreality: 'O grace inestimable and marvellous worthiness! O love without measure, singularly showed unto man' (*The Imitation of Christ*, Bk. IV, 13; cf. p. 37)."

With these ideas as her main thesis, the author discusses in a series of chapters the contrasts and relations of the Supernatural with the Natural, and how the Supernatural, beginning (in terms of human consciousness) as instinct, develops into vivid first-hand experience, and finally can be recognized as a leading factor in the very fabric of history. This involves a study of the supernatural as "Personality," or in terms of a direct "Incarnation," then in symbols and sacraments, and, finally, in human life, by means of prayer and sanctification. It is impossible in the brief compass of a review even to sketch all that is contained in this compact little book under these several heads, but the reviewer urges a study of them, because much will be found which answers the oft-repeated questions of the day.

Students of Theosophy will see both how far a thorough study of mystical experience can take a sincere mind, and how the very limitations of the Western mystics, together with Western prejudices and misunderstandings, can circumscribe the results achieved. Miss Underhill is obviously acquainted with some literature of Theosophy; but her characterization of the "ancient wisdom" of Theosophy as refusing "to convey supernatural value because, like well-tinned asparagus, though it may on the dish look very attractive it is only pretending to be alive" (p. 104), shows that she knows only the neatly pigeonholed and widely advertised travesty set forth by those self-appointed prophets who left the Theosophical Movement long years ago. If a St. Teresa, a St. Augustine, or a Charles de Foucauld had been, not only saints and mystics, but also self-conscious chélas of the Lodge (though not members of any society labelled Theosophical), and had written of their experiences in Western terms, the author would have considered carefully, and duly weighed, their testimony. But her Western inheritance and training do not yet seem to permit her to enter with insight and understanding into the experience or teaching of those, so numerous in the East, so few in the West, whose inner life has at last transcended the formulas and traditions of any given century or environment, and who have taken their place within the ranks of just men "made perfect". Thus, dealing with the Supernatural "self-given in history," she can so completely fail to grasp the philosophy of the East as to write: "We insult history by regarding it as a form of *Maya*; as the sweep of varied cloud armies across an unchanging sky. This poor conception shows little understanding of the richly woven fabric of the universe" (p. 107). Or again, dealing with the Supernatural given in Personality by way of "Incarnation," she will only accord "in a limited sense, the value of incarnation" to the Buddhist conception of an *avatar* or Bodhisattva, who renounces Nirvana that "he may return to the world and save the souls of men,"—while "so



far as this planet is concerned—the perfect case is seen in Bethlehem and Calvary" (pp. 142-3).

Allowing for these limitations, which, while we may regret them, certainly serve to make *Man and the Supernatural* far more acceptable to Western readers of to-day, we may point to one marked advance over the author's earlier works. At no time has Miss Underhill felt comfortable when confronted with the direct testimony of intercommunion between Master and disciple. With no clear recognition of the Lodge, or of an ascending scale of spiritual consciousnesses, she was heretofore forced to interpret what are technically known as "locutions," in terms of Eternal Reality, mediated or coloured by a given individual's psychology. There is still qualification, but we now find her writing: "This response—inevitably made under symbols, and involving certain well-marked feeling states—seems to the soul, above all else, the response of a person to a Person" (p. 216). Instead of regarding these symbols and states as wholly symbolic, or as limitations imposed by finite and personal man upon Infinite and Impersonal Reality, she has come to see that the whole trend of "supernatural experience" is a demonstration of the effort of the Real to achieve richer and nobler *personal* incarnation. "We cannot in any real sense have unmediated communion with Universals; but only with particulars which embody and represent them. This truth, already seen to be the basis of incarnational and sacramental religion, is still operative in the secret life of prayer. It gives us an explanation, agreeable alike to faith and to psychology, of the fact that abstract contemplation and worship of the Godhead will not alone suffice to feed the hungry soul. It guarantees the validity of that personal and intimate type of devotion which has been so richly developed in Christianity" (p. 226)—and, we might interject, even more richly developed in the East and throughout the history of the real Theosophical Movement, in every land and within every religion. Furthermore, "man's full relation to the Supernatural is a relation not only of patient, but also of agent. He is awakened, called, and trained, that he may work on spiritual levels with and for the purposes of God. We see the visible world filled with an endless variety of living-growing creatures, at every stage upon the ladder of being. Distinct yet interdependent, they act and react on one another in countless ways; and thus contribute to the glory and richness of the physical universe. Even so, we may think of the invisible world as filled with living intelligences, endless too in their variety of type and degree, their place on the ladder of life; but all acting and reacting on one another, and contributing to the richness of the glory of God" (p. 232).

This is a notable statement coming from so scientific, so modern and so Western a mind. The book, as far as it goes, is an exceptionally clear exposition of propositions fundamentally theosophic. One must continue to regret that the travesties of Theosophy current to-day, especially in England, should almost inevitably turn a mind away from Theosophy itself—because in real Theosophy lie the only satisfactory explanations of precisely Miss Underhill's chosen field of inquiry—mystical experience.

A. G.

*The Voice of the Silence*, by "H. P. B." Reprinted by The Chinese Buddhist Research Society, Peking, 1927.

This reprint of a great work is sponsored by Alice Leighton Cleather and Basil Crump, former members of The Theosophical Society, whose attitude toward W. Q. Judge is wholly unjustifiable, but who rightly resent the mutilation of Mme. Blavatsky's teaching by persons who make unwarranted claims to represent her thought and purpose. The book is well printed, and closely follows the style and format of the original edition, issued under Mme. Blavatsky's personal supervision, in 1889.

Further, this edition purports to have been issued under the auspices of one of the highest authorities on Tibetan Buddhism, the Tashi Lama, who, leaving Tibet in 1924, went on a special mission to China and Mongolia, visiting Peking in December, 1925. There, the two students of Oriental religions came into touch with him, and we are told that it was at his request that this reprint of *The Voice of the Silence* was issued, "as the only true exposition in English of the Heart Doctrine of the *Mahayana* and its noble ideal of self-sacrifice for human-

ity." As a frontispiece for this reprint, the Tashi Lama is said to have written four verses in Tibetan, reproduced in facsimile, and translated as follows in an appendix:

All beings desire liberation from misery.  
Seek, therefore, for the causes of misery and expunge them.  
By entering on the Path liberation from misery is attained.  
Exhort, then, all beings to enter the Path.

There is also a note by a Chinese Buddhist, who recognizes that *The Voice of the Silence* "comprises a part of the teachings of the Esoteric School." He thinks it should be translated into Chinese, and hopes to be able to undertake this translation at some future time.

C. J.

*The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, Edited by W. Y. Evans-Wentz; Oxford University Press, 1927; price, \$5.50.

The most interesting thing in this book is the frequent reference to *The Secret Doctrine* and other writings of Mme. Blavatsky, as authoritative sources of information concerning the Buddhism of Tibet. In a note on page 7, the Editor writes: "The late Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdup (the Tibetan translator of this work) was of opinion that, despite the adverse criticisms directed against H. P. Blavatsky's works, there is adequate internal evidence in them of their author's intimate acquaintance with the higher *lamaistic* teachings, into which she claimed to have been initiated."

This is a valuable tribute, although it is in part misleading, as Mme. Blavatsky did not claim to have been initiated into the teachings of Lamaism, strictly so called, but into a far older and more universal school. Further, Mme. Blavatsky has much to say, and not in a favourable sense, concerning the school of Buddhism, or Lamaism, to which the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* belongs, and of the schools in Sikkim in which it is studied; for example, under the headings, "Tassissudun," and "Dugpas," in the *Theosophical Glossary*. Further, the very intelligent Japanese Buddhist, Ekai Kawaguchi, author of *Three Years in Tibet*, gives a candid description of Padma Sambhava, the founder of the school to which the text under review belongs, which supplies ample justification for Mme. Blavatsky's strictures. The Japanese pilgrim brings forward sound evidence to show that Padma Sambhava was a sensualist and a libertine, who based his teachings on the "self-expression" of the lower nature. Yet the book under review describes this same Padma Sambhava as "the first teacher in Tibet to expound the *Bardo Thödol*," and the Great Guru for all devotees who follow the *Bardo* teaching, that is, the teaching contained in *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*.

On page 60, the editor of this translation writes: "I was unaware when I wrote *The Fairy Faith* that Huxley held—as he did—the theory of human incarnation to offer the best explanation of even ordinary physiological and biological phenomena." This sentence gives the impression that Huxley accepted the teaching of reincarnation, and, therefore, the teaching of conditional immortality, of which it is a part. A careful reading of the passages referred to, in *Evolution and Ethics* (pages 61-2, 95, 1894), does not bear this out. Huxley says: "Like the doctrine of evolution itself, that of transmigration has its roots in the world of reality; and it may claim such support as the great argument from analogy is capable of supplying." This is far from a real acceptance of reincarnation; and that Huxley wholly failed to understand the cognate doctrine of liberation, is clear, when we find him describing one who has entered the path in these terms: "All that remained of a man was the impassive, extenuated, mendicant monk, self-hypnotised into cataleptic trances, which the deluded mystic took for foretastes of the final union with Brahma."

The editor further brings out fully that the teaching with which he is concerned is a development of the Tantrika system. What Mme. Blavatsky said of that system can be learned from the *Theosophical Glossary*, where its dangers are sufficiently set forth. All this inspires serious misgiving regarding the contents of the Tibetan text translated and commented on, in this book; and a deeper study of the text confirms these misgivings. The process

described is based on a partial insight into the earlier stages of Kama Loka, into which the average man enters on departing from the body. Before death, the Tantrikist who comes to perform the last rites, seeks to establish a mesmeric or hypnotic hold on the astral personality of the dying man, and to maintain this hold after the astral man has left the body and entered Kama Loka. Then a sustained effort is made to arouse the consciousness of the deceased astral man, first, with the hope that, taking advantage of the passage between two illusions, he may wake up to reality and enter "Nirvana"; and second, should this first objective fail, to arouse him to a realization that what he is experiencing in Kama Loka is wholly a projection from his own passional, emotional and mental nature, and thus to aid him to strip off some of the trappings of illusion. It is quite possible that, given a strong mesmeriser and an astral man whose whole thought during life had been imbued with this teaching, a certain success, at least in the second purpose, might be attained; though, even so, it could mean no more than the exchange of one kind of illusion for another. It is evident that the result, in the long run, would be profoundly injurious to the soul concerned, since what is proposed is a forcible intrusion on the normal process of spiritual gestation. Consequently, while it is a satisfaction to find an acknowledgment of Mme. Blavatsky's profound knowledge in a book issued by the Oxford University Press, one cannot but regret that this vindication is connected with doctrines that are more than equivocal, emanating from a school which she herself so sternly criticized.

J.

*Purposive Evolution*, by Edmund Noble; Henry Holt and Company; price \$5.00.

The author undertakes to show that purposive evolution is the link between science and religion and that the whole of evolution, including organic evolution, is the result of a purpose, inherent in the character of the universe. This purposiveness works out by what might be called a series of emanations: first, ether, dynamic, uniform, containing within itself the promise and potency of all later manifestation; then what we call inorganic matter, also dynamic, produced not uniformly throughout the whole substance of the ether, but at centres of manifestation immensely distant from each other, and represented by the stars and stellar systems. Here the purposiveness of the universe manifests itself, for example, in our solar system, where a law of harmony evidently reigns, perpetually readjusting such aberrations as those which affect the movement of the moon, and ever bringing them back to normal order. Then, in the fulness of time, organic life appears, pushed forward by the same inherent thrust; and this forward pressure generates the favourable variations on which natural selection then operates.

It is at once evident that very much of this thought closely follows the lines laid down in *The Secret Doctrine*. But the approach to the thought of that great work is even closer. Edmund Noble is ready to believe that not our planet only, but other planets throughout the whole stellar system may be inhabited, and that some of these celestial inhabitants may be far higher than man. Thus he writes: "Meanwhile we are far from having the right to assume that life has reached its zenith point in man. The cosmos is wide enough, the stars are numerous enough, to encourage the belief that in countless planets other than our own the power behind the evolutionary process may have lifted matter to heights of intelligence and efficiency that outtop our own levels as we outtower the life forms farthest beneath us." This brings us back to Huxley, who said there might be beings as much higher than man, as man is higher than the black beetle.

Much more might be quoted, regarding what we should call the alternation of Manvantara and Pralaya, the law of cycles and the law of Karma. The approach to Buddhist thinking is marked throughout the book, though Edmund Noble has not carried his thinking as far as did the Buddhists regarding the possible continuity of consciousness through a chain of reincarnations. He is rather a mystically inclined speculative philosopher than a mystic.

J.

# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION NO. 338.—*Years ago there was an article in the QUARTERLY on the "Lesson of the Garbage Pail." I understand from it that we are always to do our work exceedingly well, as if we were doing it for our Master's inspection. But how can a person do this, when there is never time in any day to do all its duties even imperfectly? We read, "In Occultism duties never conflict." Perhaps an explanation of this would solve my problems.*

ANSWER.—There is always time for every real duty, and to do it perfectly. That we perform some particular duty imperfectly, is because of some fault within ourselves,—such as wrong self-identification, mixture of motive, laziness, inertia, love of comfort, fear, and so on down the scale. These same faults operate to confuse us, so that we are constantly failing to see clearly as duties those things which are really duties, and are constantly regarding as duties things with which we are not in the least obliged to concern ourselves. We fail to discriminate intelligently. Moreover, in the manner of performing a duty, we often waste time and energy with the result that we feel hurried and crowded, and *think* that we have not time to do all that we know we should do.

C. R. A.

ANSWER.—The sentence "there is never time in any day to do all its duties even imperfectly," suggests a harassed and unmethodical mind. The remedy is detachment and order. No intelligent employer will ever give an employee more work than can be done in the appointed time. The Lords of Karma are intelligent employers. They never impose more work than can be well done; but they may seem to do so, in order to compel detachment and orderliness.

J.

ANSWER.—I imagine that even if we had unlimited time for the performance of any or all of our duties, we should still feel that we could and should have done a great deal better, since we must always see an ideal standard beyond even our high-water mark of attainment. Time, therefore, is really of little account. I confess that I used to experience great difficulty in accepting the statement, "In Occultism duties never conflict," because I had hourly proof to the contrary,—or so I thought. I have since come to feel, however, that when I begin to know something about occultism, I shall probably have no further difficulty in sorting out my duties. Before we have any real conception of what occultism means, I am sure that we often mistake the unnecessary for the important; we assume that something is a duty, when in reality it is but an inclination. No wonder that there is conflict! When we have reached the point where we can recognize the difference between a duty and a caprice, and what is more, when we have the sense to *act* on this recognition, I think the millennium will have come.

T. A.

ANSWER.—The querent may find it helpful to divide the occupations of any one day into the following groups: 1. Duties which must be done *by me*. 2. "Duties" which I am accustomed to think must be done by me, but which could conceivably be performed by someone else. 3. "Duties" which I am accustomed to think must be done, but which I really do from force of habit, from obedience to conventions, or from undue regard for the real or imagined opinions of someone else. Such a division, if made with entire honesty, clears the decks, removing much

of the supposed "conflict" between duties,—and proving that there is available more time than may have been suspected, for the careful and complete performance of such real duties as remain.

J. G. G.

ANSWER.—It is true that real duties do not conflict, and also true that we ought to do our duties as perfectly as possible, *taking into consideration all the circumstances of the case*. Let us assume that a mother, who does her own housework, has a sick child. It is her duty to sweep a room which requires an hour to do thoroughly. In half an hour it will be time to prepare her child's dinner. What ought she to do? Obviously she ought to sweep the room as best she can in half an hour. When the time comes to prepare the dinner, that becomes the mother's duty and sweeping the room ceases to be so. Those duties do not conflict. Had there been no sick child, her duty would have been different. Then the room should have been thoroughly cleaned, as if for the inspection of her Master. Discrimination between apparently conflicting duties is in itself a most important duty and, like all duties, a means of growth.

J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—It has been said that he who does the best he can does enough for the Masters. In the "Lesson of the Garbage Pail," the aspirant was granted by Karma a free half-hour during which he had nothing to do except to clean the pail as thoroughly as possible. But let us suppose that during that interval the house had caught fire. He would have instantly dropped the pail and given the alarm. There would have been no conflict of duties. One duty would have been superseded by another. Our true duty consists in undertaking a work and in completing it if possible. But it is equally our duty to stop whatever we are doing when we are called to another task.

S. L.

# T·S·ACTIVITIES

## 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 28th, 1928, 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 15th.
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 meeting of the New York Branch of the T. S., to which delegates and visitors are cordially invited.
6. On Sunday, April 29th, at 3:30 P.M., there will be a public lecture. 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. Following the lecture, tea is served at 64 Washington Mews, to delegates, members, and the friends they wish to invite.

ISABEL E. PERKINS,  
*Secretary, The Theosophical Society.*  
P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York.

March 20th, 1928.

### MAURICO DE LA CUEVA

We learn with deep regret from Mr. González Jiménez, of the death at an advanced age of Mr. Maurico de la Cueva, one of our best members in Venezuela. He was a friend of Mr. Domínguez Acosta with whom he first read Theosophy, and they joined the Society together. Mr. González writes that he was a man of great energy, his voice never silent when innocence was sacrificed; and that he was loved and respected by all, friends and enemies alike. We lose in him an example of the virile defence of righteousness, and of genuine charity.

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# 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.