

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the European Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription (5s.). Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY, *General Secretary*.

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

VOL. XII.

LONDON, AUGUST 1, 1902.

NO. 1.

Edited by BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

CHANGE OF NAME OF THE SECTION.

The attention of members is called to the following Resolution, which was passed at our recent Convention:

“ Seeing that the European Section as such has done its preliminary work of organisation, and that there now exist four duly constituted Sections of the Theosophical Society on the Continent, and that the application for a fifth is in the hands of the President-Founder, resolved:

“ That this Section do resume its original title of ‘The British Section of the Theosophical Society,’ and that the President-Founder be requested to authorise such non-section-alised Branches of the Society in Europe as may desire to do so, to attach themselves to this Section under the title of ‘British Section.’ ”

As soon as the necessary authority has been received from the President-Founder, effect will be given to this Resolution, and the title of this Section will thenceforward be “The British Section of the Theosophical Society.”

Should, as is anticipated, the Branches of the Society in Belgium and Spain decide to attach themselves with the President-Founder’s sanction to the British Section, they will continue in exactly the same intimate and cordial relationship with our Headquarters as heretofore, and under a further Resolution of the Convention, Señor Xifré and Dr. Mersch will become Honorary Members of our Executive Committee as representing Spain and Belgium respectively.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary.

ARRANGEMENTS AT HEAD-QUARTERS.

Mrs. Hooper having most kindly consented to act for me during my absence in India, I hereby appoint her formally as Acting General Secretary of the Section.

Mr. George Arundale, M.A., LL.B., having offered us his valuable assistance and help in the general work at Headquarters, is hereby appointed Joint Assistant Secretary of the Section.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary.

REPORT OF THE CONVENTION.

With the present issue of THE VĀHAN the Report of the Twelfth Annual Convention of the European Section goes to members.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary.

CLOSING OF SECTIONAL ROOMS.

Members are notified that the rooms at 28, Albemarle Street, will be closed during the month of August for white-washing and repairs, the office only being open once or twice a week for business purposes.

NOTICE.

Unattached members can, if they wish, on joining the Society be put into correspondence with an older member by addressing the Secretary of the Social Committee, 28, Albemarle Street, W.

LETTER FROM THE DUTCH SECTION.

To the General Secretary,
British Section, T.S.,
London.

DEAR MR. KEIGHTLEY,

When our last Convention was held on the 8th June, it was unanimously resolved to instruct the General Secretary to send to our English brothers and sisters a message of hearty good-will and to express to them the hope that in the coming year their Theosophical work may grow and improve.

Looking at the enormous tract of country over which your Government rules either directly or indirectly we cannot shut our eyes to the great possibilities which are placed in your way of bringing to many people and many nations this glorious truth of immortal life and of the Theosophical teaching given us by our beloved teacher, Madame Blavatsky.

We therefore sincerely hope that the British Section may remain one of those large channels through which spiritual knowledge will flow over the world.

With kindest wishes,

I remain, dear sir and brother,

Yours very truly,

W. B. FRICKE.

FRENCH SECTIONAL HEAD-QUARTERS.

We have received an intimation from the French Section that on October 15th next, the Headquarters will be transferred from 52, Avenue Bosquet, to 59, Avenue de la Bourdonnais.

ACTIVITIES.

Revival of Branch.

An application, dated June 20th, was received from L. Deinhard, A. Meebold, E. Dacqué, O. Huschke, Marie Rieper, Alice Sprengel and A. Rieper for the revival of the Munich Branch. The application was granted on June 24th.

New Branch.

July 12th, 1902. Charter issued this day to H. E. Nichol, W. H. Willatt, W. H. Woolf, J. Willatt, E. B. Burton, A. G. Nichol, D. Smith, G. Francis, C. Brodie and M. Dent to form a branch of the Theosophical Society at Hull, to be known as the Hull Branch.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to July 20th:

W. E. F., £1; A. H., 5s.; C. P., 5s.; W. C. W., 5s.; D. S., 10s.; E. N., £1; A. H., £2; M. H. L., £2 10s.; A. L., £1; W. H. G., 15s.; E. J. D., 15s.; H. E. N., £5; A. F. P., £6; J. W. C., 5s.; W. S., 5s.; E. N., £1; A. R. W. A., £1; C. C., 10s.; J. A., 5s.; A. W., £1; M. H., £1; E. S., 5s. Total, £26 15s.

London Federation.

At a meeting of the officials of the Federated Lodges it was decided to form an organised system to provide lecturers for the above Lodges in case of necessity and for external organisations wherever feasible.

Mr. G. S. Arundale was appointed Organising Secretary *pro tem.*, and all communications should be addressed to him at 28, Albemarle Street, W.

FRANCESCA ARUNDALE,
Hon. Secretary.

Blavatsky Lodge.

On July 3rd, the Lodge hoped to have listened to a lecture from Mr. Leadbeater, but unfortunately he was not well enough to deliver his address, and his place was kindly taken by Mr. Keightley, who, on short notice, gave an interesting lecture in which he pointed out the value of the evidence collected by the Society for Psychological Research with regard to abnormal states of consciousness. The writings of the late Mr. Myers upon the subliminal self were pointed to as containing much that could be used in support of the Theosophical teaching as to the consciousness of man. On July 7th, Mr. Mead gave an important lecture on *Theosophic Christianity*; the Lodge room was filled to overflowing, and the lecturer was followed with much interest. Informal meetings of the Lodge will be held every Thursday until it reopens on September 25th with Mrs. Besant's lecture at the Elysée Gallery, Queen's Road, W., details as to which will be duly announced in the September VĀHAN. The meetings during August will (by the courtesy of the West London Lodge) be held at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, Bayswater, at 8.30 p.m. During August the rooms at 28, Albemarle Street, are closed for purposes of cleaning.

S. M. S.

Nottingham Lodge.

For some years a number of unattached members have been quietly studying Theosophical literature, and about two years ago an attempt to form a Lodge was made by Mr. F. A. Johnson. For the time his effort failed, but at the commencement of this year a few friends began to meet for study and discussion at Town Club Chambers in Wheelergate. As the numbers increased it was decided to circularise all who were thought in any

way to be interested in Theosophy, to meet Mr. J. H. Duffell, of Birmingham. About forty were present, and it was decided at once to form a centre. A few weeks later Mrs. Besant promised to lecture on condition that a Lodge was formed, and on May 28th an application for a Charter was signed.

On Monday, June 30th, Mrs. Besant lectured in Derby on "The Meaning and Object of Theosophy." The enquiry meeting next day elicited a large number of enquiries, which were satisfactorily answered. A meeting conducted by members of the Nottingham Lodge is held every Sunday night in Derby.

On Tuesday, July 1st, Mrs. Besant lectured in Nottingham to an audience of about 700 on "The Life Here and the Life after Death."

The enquiry meeting far exceeded the limits anticipated, about 250 attending at the Masonic Hall.

After tea Mrs. Besant addressed the new Lodge.

For the present the Lodge meeting is held every Monday evening at Town Club Chambers. The officers of the Lodge are as follows: President, Mr. Herbert Bradley; Vice-Presidents, Mr. E. C. Smith and Mr. F. A. Johnson; Treasurer, Mr. E. C. Smith; Librarian, Mrs. W. E. Dowson; Corresponding Secretary, Mr. W. E. Dowson; and Business Secretary, Mr. J. V. Paul Mitchell.

J. V. P. M.

Mrs. Besant's Visit to Oxford.

An effort is being made in this ancient university town to start a centre for theosophical study, and on June 20th Mrs. Besant came to give it a public initiation. An audience of 176 had the privilege of listening to her, many undergraduates being amongst the number. The subject was "The Meaning and Objects of Theosophy," and a profound impression was made by the lecturer. On the following Sunday another meeting was held and from the interest shown it is confidently hoped that good progress will be made.

J. WALTER COCK,
Hon. Secretary.

Theosophical Lending Library.

This Library is open to all, whether members of the Theosophical Society or not.

Terms of subscription: three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra.

Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 2.30 to 6 o'clock.

Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

The Library is closed during August.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 8 p.m., in the small room, Foresters' Hall, Bath Street (near Pump Room), when books can be obtained from the Lodge Library. Enquiries should be addressed by letter to Mr. F. Bligh Bond, 16, Brock Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings in the Council Room, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Aug. 3rd, *Reincarnation*; Aug. 10th, *Three Letters on the Nature of Mind*, Brian Hodgson; Aug. 17th, *Jacob Boehme*, Miss Keeley; Aug. 24th, *Death—and after*; Aug. 31st, *Specialisation*, C. E. Smith. Class for study on Saturdays, at 7.30 p.m., at the Pitman Hotel, first floor. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. H. M. Chaplin, Room No. 5, Cobden Hotel.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings in the Theosophical Room, North Parade, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Meetings on alternate Sundays at 3.30 p.m., and on alternate Mondays at 8 p.m., at members' houses, also on each Wednesday following the Sunday meeting, at 15, Old Steine, at 8 p.m. Information can be obtained from Mr. N. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or from Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., at Brooklyn Chambers, St. Augustine's Parade. For further particulars enquiry may be addressed to S. H. Old, at the above address.

BRUSSELS, CENTRALE BELGE. General meetings held in the Lodge Rooms, 170, rue Royale, the first and third Saturdays in the month, at 8.15 p.m. Students' Class, open to all members, the second and fourth Saturdays, at 8 p.m. Reading room open from 3 to 5 p.m. twice a week. For information apply by letter to the Secretary, 21, rue du Vallon.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Regular meetings are suspended during the summer. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. J. Lorimer Thomson, Roseburn House, Roseburn.

EXETER LODGE. Open meetings are held in the Lodge Room, 48, High Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., and on the first and third Sundays of the month at 7 p.m. Meetings for members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.30 p.m.; and on second and fourth Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. Meetings suspended during August.

HAMBURG LODGE. Meetings for members only at 31, Martinallée, Hohenfelde, on Saturdays. Public meetings at the Patriotisches Haus once a month. Enquiries may be addressed to B. Hubo, 31, Martinallée, Hohenfelde.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Aug. 3rd, *Theosophy and the Churches*, Hodgson Smith; Aug. 10th, *Theosophy and Home Life*, Mrs. Bell; Aug. 17th, *Reincarnation*,

C. W. Leadbeater; Aug. 24th, *Esoteric Christianity*, Miss L. Shaw; Aug. 31st, *Matthew Arnold*, A. R. Orage. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

HULL LODGE. Meetings suspended during August.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at the Town Hall Restaurant, on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. G. H. Popplestone, 8, Ashville View, Cardigan Road, Leeds.

LEIPSIK LODGE. Meetings at the "Freia" Vegetarian Restaurant, 8, Nürnbergerstrasse, on the first and third Thursdays of each month, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Informal meetings on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., at 18, Colquitt Street. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold St., Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 7.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill, S.W. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 1, Pentland Street, Wandsworth Common, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Informal meetings will be held (by the courtesy of the West London Lodge) at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, Bayswater, at 8.30 p.m. every Thursday evening during August.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings discontinued for the summer.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings suspended during August. Hon. Sec., F. Horne, 27, Keen's Road, Croydon.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens; Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Class for study on the first and third Saturdays of each month at 8 p.m.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings suspended during August.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings suspended during August. Lodge Room and Library constantly open for the use of members of the Society.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings suspended during August.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., at 57, King Street, City. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 80, Northenden Road, Sale, Cheshire.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 68, Linthorpe Road, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., for study of *The Astral Plane*. Public Lectures on Sundays in the Lecture Room, Co-operative Hall, Corporation Road.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., and on Sundays at 6.30 p.m., at 19, Cornwall Street. Enquiries to be addressed to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at 7.30 p.m., at the Saville Temperance Hotel, Newcastle, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*, and on the last Sunday of the month, at Lily House, off Ocean View, Whitley Bay.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 175.

(Continued from Vol. XI., p. 96.)

M. L. M.—May I ask for an explanation of the terms *positive* and *negative* as applied to the attitude of the human being? I have been told to be "negative towards good, and positive towards evil," and should like to know what that implies. Does not a negative attitude lay you open to evil as well as good?

M. E. G.—The terms "positive" and "negative," though very generally used in theosophic nomenclature, seem to be a source of a good deal of bewilderment. As I understand the expression, "positive against evil" would more properly describe the desired condition. The out-going energy, self-forgetful, desirous of good, pouring forth streams of love and helpfulness, would, without any further action on the part of the entity, form an invulnerable shield against evil, so long as those currents were in activity. "Who is he that can harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good" is a deeply occult truth. Linked also inseparably with this ideal, is the negative attitude towards good; for *self-forgetfulness* opens wide the doorway to the inrushing currents, making for righteousness. Thus, in the conquest of the separate self, the positive and negative attitudes are both attained.

E. A. B.—Perhaps a different wording may make the passage quoted more clearly understood. To be "positive towards evil" means the repelling of evil by the will-force being actively directed against it. "Negative towards good" means the *receptive* attitude of the soul to the higher influences that are always trying to enter it from above. So far from laying one open to evil, this becomes a more effective method of slaying it than even the other; just as a bad thought is more easily and completely got rid of by replacing it with a good one than by directly fighting against it.

G. R. S. M.—The phrase "negative towards good and positive towards evil" is evidently intended to mean receptive to good and non-receptive to evil. There is an appalling "derangement of epitaphs" in much that is written on non-physical subjects, just as there is a vast "scification" of ideas in the domain of physics. But what are we to do when we are forced to use an unknown for a more unknown; what do we mean, in their last analysis, by positive and negative, by good and evil? But all this is a refinement of criticism, quite foreign to the simple didactic purpose of the plain and practical advice of the writer of the sentence under discussion.

QUESTION 176.

A. B.—*How can we explain the first human birth, life, and death? The doctrine of Incarnation and Reincarnation does not seem to clear up the mystery of our first life, and puts the question further back without solving it. We had a first life as human beings. Why then in this first existence were our souls so different? Why did they experience joy and suffering equally mysterious, incomprehensible destiny, illness and physical death? The Christian myth offers us under the somewhat obscure form of the dogma of "Original Sin" a poetic explanation, which I should like dealt with from a Theosophic point of view.*

A. P. S.—The teaching that has been received with reference to the beginnings of human life does indeed put the explanation so far back for most of us that it is difficult to realise the conditions existing when such life began. All who entered on the stage of this world's experience as pitris of the first class were differentiated as human beings in the last manvantara. The pitris of the second class were already distinct reincarnating entities at the close of the lunar manvantara, and did not come into activity in this world till the second round, and had their first experience of this manvantara on other planets. The third class pitris, though reckoned as having attained the human kingdom in the last manvantara, were merged in the lower kingdoms again at the beginning of this one, and during the earlier rounds of this one great numbers of our present human family were not yet in existence as differentiated entities at all. So at once it is obvious that our "first life as human beings" was not a condition of uniformity for all. For some that first life has to be sought for in the record of worlds that have passed away for myriads of ages. For others it is a relatively recent achievement, great masses of the people around us having been born out of the animal kingdom only in this world period, and between those two extreme possibilities, lie an almost infinite variety of others. Leaving aside for the moment, however, the deeper complexities of the problem, it must be remembered that from the moment any new human being is born, so to speak, in the course of the vast evolutionary process, he begins to work with the opportunities of human existence according to his own sweet will. "Why," says the questioner before us, "were our souls so different?" It is not necessary to assume they were different in order to account for the difference of their development. They enter on the stage of evolution in presence of an infinite variety of external circumstance. Each one to begin with may be thought of as a colourless atom of the Logos' consciousness. In view of the ultimate motive of the whole undertaking it does not matter which of these atoms acquires a colour which renders it available for use in the eventual evolution of new Logoi. To the individuality which each in turn becomes, it matters everything no doubt, but as an individuality the choice rests with itself and can never be final as long as ignorance clouds the understanding. Why the present scheme of evo-

lution is associated with suffering is a question to which no sensible student will attempt to give a reply. When he becomes competent to create a solar system himself he will be in time to consider whether he can invent one in which suffering shall play no part. But, meanwhile, the moral to be derived from such inquiries as these is one which may be worth some emphasis. There are limits which it is undesirable for us to attempt to transcend in our study of Nature as carried on from this platform of physical consciousness. There is certainly something within us which is divine, but we shall not on that account be enabled to comprehend the operations of divinity as a whole. We may be able to trace back our origins as far as the animal kingdom, but we shall lose our way if we try to go back much further, or rather if in attempting to go back further we aim at comprehending things in too much detail. The wealth of knowledge that has been accumulated by theosophical students within the last twenty years is enormous, but we have no perfect comprehension even of this planet on which we stand. And we know that our evolution, even in this one round, of this one manvantara, of this one planetary scheme—itsself but a small portion of the solar system as a whole—is carried on during progress through several other worlds of which we know next to nothing. The physical eyesight may be blinded by excess of light, and in the same way the understanding may be hopelessly dazzled by the mystery of divine beginnings. Nor to understand our place in Nature for practical purposes is it necessary to bewilder the mind by attempts to deal with the problem of divine beginnings. Our first human life, though so recent for some members of the human family—recent as the age of planetary systems may be reckoned—is, as regards the older members, wrapped in unfathomable mystery. All we can say with assurance on the subject is that we are all products of the evolutionary system to which we are bound, with infinite possibilities of future development in front of us. If we have suffered and blundered through ignorance in the past, there is no reason why we should go on doing so in the future, now ignorance is gradually clearing away, and no traces of bygone suffering, or blundering, need cling to us for ever.

The only idea bearing on the difficulties stated which I should like to throw into the questioner's mind—in addition perhaps to what he may find in the familiar books—is this:—Humanity emerges in many different ways from the animal kingdom. At the beginnings of this world period it emerged from animal forms of a very low type and entered humanity in correspondingly ignoble forms. Let us not suppose that future humanity, emerging from the relatively exalted animal forms of the present day, will ever have to pass through such humanity as the savage remnants of the third and early fourth races still on the earth represent. New humanity may be evolving from our present animal kingdom continually, but it will incarnate in a correspondingly respectable humanity on another globe in due time, or, in somewhat rare cases, among the advanced

humanity of this world period when powerful kârmic attractions are operative. Some of our animals of the highest types are already reincarnating entities, and their first human lives will thus be already tinged with individual characteristics and even with actual karma.

For the rest I think we may assign the doctrine of "original sin" to the company of such theological imaginings as are concerned with the core of the apple that stuck in Adam's throat, or the temperature of Satan's furnaces.

QUESTION 177.

A. S. F.—A young man was the means of saving his stepmother's life. He thoroughly detests her and the feeling is returned by her untinged by any sense of gratitude. He says he felt impelled to save her by a force not his own and exercised an almost super-human strength and promptness in doing so. What karma would compel a man to do a good deed against his will? Or is this simply a question of the intervention of a Higher Power, which uses the first means to hand to prevent the suffering of one who did not owe a debt of life? How would the event affect both parties in a future life? Would the lady be obliged to perform a like service for her son?

*A. A. W.—*In the case put, supposing that it were possible for a man to be used, as suggested, as the mere blind tool of a higher power, the event would have no effect whatever on either party in a future life. There is no one, I think, who at this time of day would revive the curious extravagance which in ancient jurisprudence required the destruction of the knife which had been used by a murderer and of a runaway horse which had trampled a child to death. Further, we may safely affirm that no karma can compel a man to do a good deed against his will. It is in these last words the interest of the question lies. Is the querist sure that, after all, it *was* against his will? My own belief is that only in that one action did his will—the will of his true Self—come into play; that we may rightly judge him by that one instance of illumination, *not* by the mean and shabby discords of his everyday life. We have here, as I view the matter, two personalities who hate each other for some reason, may be of the present life, may be for some old injury of thousands of years ago. Karma has brought them together—for what purpose? Scripture may tell us; "God desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live." They must meet, again and again, until they have learned "to cast out hatred by love." At the supreme moment, when the fate of incarnations to come trembles in the balance, the young man's true Self (who knows this) makes one last desperate effort and succeeds this once in impressing the lower man with his duty, and the situation is saved. He may well feel that it was a force not his own, so apart is it from all his physical brain can comprehend; the touch of his true Self, to one like him, is that of a God. But it was himself; and he may fairly hope that when they meet

in their next incarnation it will not be as enemies. The critical point is passed; against all the repugnance of the lower self love has conquered; and next time, if such a service be required, neither will find it hard for the other's sake. It is not in the least against this hopeful view that the dislike on the physical plane remains as long as ever; that will pass with the brain which feels it, and will not come back in the next, any more than any other physical injury of the passing life.

I. II.—I am unable to answer the last two questions. One can guess at several results of the action that might come about. Is it not possible that the person who saved the life of the object of his detestation was paying to her a debt of the past? But there is another view to be taken of the action. It is to be hoped that the detestation in question is not very deeply rooted, that it does not form part of the consciousness of the Ego on the mental plane. I suppose it is conceivable that the person in question was made use of by a Higher Power; that is to say, that an impulse to a proper course of action was given from without, and a chance afforded of being "the instrument of karma" in the saving of a life. But I do not think that the man's will was so dominated that he saved his stepmother unwillingly. It is to be supposed that most people (putting aside such an extreme case as being accessory to the death of an object of personal dislike by refusing to save them when it was possible to do so) would in doing an action prompted by hatred, at least admit that their conduct was not right; that means that their conscience disapproves of their action, though it may not make its voice heard to any appreciable extent. Now conscience has been defined as the warning voice of the Ego, that is, of the man himself, working on the plane that is his natural home, and striving to influence his lower bodies to take the wise, in other words the right, course of action. Therefore I think it likely that the motive power of this action was the man himself, who is above all feelings of "detestation" arising from physical and astral plane friction; who, dwelling nearer to the plane where there is no separation, feels instinctively that in acting for the object of his detestation he is really acting for himself, that is to say, for the common life which informs her separated self and his. I do not think it strange that there should be no gratitude; it may be that the causes which have given rise to the detestation are not to be neutralised by one action. Gratitude is a rare virtue. It is very common to find it lacking in one who has received far greater benefits from another than that of the preservation of the life of a physical body. The action of the young man in instinctively saving the life of his step-mother is evidence that there is in all of us a spring of right impulse; that we are most of us better than our every-day life would make us appear. I might suggest it is possible that much thought, not necessarily systematic, had gone before the action. It may be that on many occasions, in many lives, the man had thought of noble

actions, of heroic deeds, had even acted before as he acted on the occasion quoted; all this would surely bear fruit, and sweep aside a dislike born probably to a great extent of the passing circumstances of the present life.

QUESTION 178.

P. R.—What is the true meaning and value of confession and absolution?

A. A. W.—This is a large question, which can only be very summarily answered in the space available here. As a portion of "Esoteric Christianity" I must leave it to one more qualified to speak; but one or two points of practical experience may be useful.

There are confessions — and confessions. H. P. B. has in several places used strong language on the subject, but the evil to which she was referring was not the mere practice of confession, but the abuse of what is known amongst Catholics as "Direction"—often combined with confession, but here to be carefully distinguished. That everyone with any pretensions to a spiritual life should habitually enter into himself at least once a day, should make *to himself* full confession of the day's faults and failures and set himself due penance for the same, is universally recognised by all writers as an actual necessity: by the author of *Esoteric Christianity* as strongly as anyone. That it is good, from time to time, to make such confession to some one else can hardly be questioned by Christians, who read in their New Testament an explicit order to "confess their sins one to another." Whether this "other" should be a priest, specially set apart and educated for the purpose—a qualified *soul-physician*, in short, according to the analogy of bodily sickness—or no, is a question we are (fortunately) not obliged to raise in this connection.

The ordinary Protestant declines this duty altogether; and if you press it, usually replies that he will only confess his sins to Almighty God. Here again I pass the *theological* question. As a matter of practical fact, it is (as far as my experience goes) a rare event when such an one *does* confess his sins to Almighty God. It is the oldest of old jokes that, whilst perfectly ready to confess himself publicly as a "miserable sinner," an ordinary Christian is roused to furious indignation by any suggestion that he has anywhere actually *sinned!* And more; sins look so very different when you have to put them in shape to show to someone else—to tell someone plainly and simply what you have done, to answer honestly and from the bottom of your heart his enquiries as to the motives of your actions, to set in so many words before yourself *and him* all the meannesses and shabbinesses which never showed themselves to you before—all this is a lesson which you can learn no other way. To my mind "Confession" of some kind is an indispensable assistance to our self-examination; and this quite apart from any theological value it may or may not have. The

ordinary Christian method of treating our transgressions as careless housewives do the dirt—"rubbing it about until it is lost"—is quite inadequate for one who wishes to lead the higher life.

Next; as to "forgiveness of sins." Whilst it is quite true that we don't *need* any forgiveness, and that no form of words could give it if we did, this is not a sufficient answer for an enquirer. When a child, after a fit of naughtiness, comes to his mother and prays for forgiveness, with many protests that he *will* be a good boy hereafter, this does not mean that he thinks his mother *hated* him for his naughtiness, or has been *propitiated* by his punishment. If such analysis were possible to his infant mind, he would feel that he had set himself (to his own loss) against the movement of his own little world for a selfish desire of his own, and was sorry. His mother's forgiveness is the recognition of his change of mind—her glad and loving acknowledgment that they are once more one in heart. And he is not quite at ease till she has said, in so many words, that it *is* so and she "forgives" him.

Now, in real truth, the Powers above us *have* this infinite mothers' patience with us, and more; "a love passing that of women." In a true confession we come as the child to say we are sorry; and that henceforth we will live for our selfish pleasure no more, but think and feel and love as They do; and our childish hearts value, and are right in valuing, the "forgiveness" which the priest speaks. We may *know* that the change in us is seen and recognised by the Powers without words of ours or Theirs; but it is, and will be (for most of us) for long a true and lawful happiness to hear the words of forgiveness spoken in Their name and to feel the blessing which a true-hearted and loving priest sends forth upon us as he utters the great mantra over the repentant soul.

There would have been no confusion about this had Christian theologians been content to learn from Christ *alone* what He had to teach of the love of our Father in Heaven. The "Father" of Jesus Christ loves His children with this infinite unwearied patience of which I have spoken, and needs not so much as that Jesus should pray for us to Him, for the love of Jesus is only the love of the Father Who sent Him. But when they, not satisfied with Christ's teaching, proceeded to darken the face of the loving Father with the traits of the jealous, angry, blood-thirsty Jehovah of Ezra, Nehemiah and their successors, they made fatal ruin of the Christian faith. It is hence that come the "mortal sin," the "everlasting hell," the necessity of *priestly* absolution for salvation from it, and all the other developments which give a right to H. P. B. to speak hardly of what, in itself, is a beneficent ordinance. Her indignation was not for the priest who says to the sinner in the words of the Saviour, "Thy sins are forgiven thee—go and sin no more," but for the theological system which binds him (often against his own better judgment—his *knowledge*), to say to his penitent "*This* you must do—right or wrong—go to Hell-

fire for ever"; the system which encourages—nay does its best to force—a soul to give up its own judgment, its own conscience, to the ruling of another, lest the living of its own life should bring it to everlasting destruction. And in this Protestant is as guilty as Catholic. It is but George Fox and some of his earlier followers who have had a glimpse of that deep reverence for the separate and distinct working of the Spirit in each individual soul which is the characteristic of the Wisdom which Christ taught.

E. L.—The true value of confession lies in the fact that it implies (if considered in its ideal sense) a recognition of wrong-doing (without which the first step towards right action cannot be taken) and a renouncing of such wrong-doing. The priest to whom confession is made stands for the moment as the symbol of the penitent's own higher nature, externalised as it were, and in whose presence our avowal of past sins, and promise of future amendment is made. It is a curious and interesting fact that, however degraded the priestly office may be, those holding it keep their lips sealed with regard to confessions of whatever nature. The father confessor, then, is in one sense the sin bearer from the moment that he pronounces the absolution. Penance imposed would seem to be a recognition of the karma which must follow the sin, however the burden of such be shared with one who typifies the Higher Life, the Guide. Confession and absolution apart from this inner significance have a value in that they exist in order to preserve a memory—however slight—of the occult verities which they represent, verities to be acknowledged and comprehended when the newer and more spiritual era is born on earth.

The absolution considered in its true meaning, what is it but the symbol of the karma outworn, the sins and shortcomings expiated, or rather transmuted by Divine Alchemy into those powers which crown each triumphant soul? The lesson has been learnt. The mere physical husk of karma incurred may remain, and have to be faced, but the man is *really free*, freed by that higher nature which is himself. The priest of course is a more or less distorted symbol of the true teacher or Master Who is one with His disciples, Who lifts them towards their freedom even while they must bear the penance, *i.e.*, their kármic liability, and themselves struggle upward.

QUESTION 179.

M.—*What is the reason for difference of colour in races? Is colour the result of past thinking and is the lighter colour a sign of greater advancement?*

G. R. S. M.—I have never come across a satisfactory explanation of the difference of colour

in races; there is always some striking exception which upsets any generalisation on the pigment and climate lines. If there is any lurking assent in the second part of the question to the theological pronouncement "they became black through sin," may I ask whether a brown Indian philosopher is considered by the questioner to be less advanced than an English navy?

F. A.—From some of the Theosophical teachings it seems reasonable to conclude that there is a distinct connection between the stages of evolution in man and his colour, for it is said in the *Secret Doctrine* that there are three great divisions of the human race, the red-yellow, the black and the brown-white, and that the evolution of these races went on *pavi passu* with the developments of geological strata, from which, as well as by climate, human complexion was derived. It is difficult to understand the connection of geological strata with the human complexion, but we may gather that the physical conditions at the beginning of the evolution of the great root-races differed in some important respects.

The third race appears to have been the first to have definite colour, and the phrase "becoming black with sin" seems to refer to some change which took place when generation was connected with the separation of the sexes. The brown-white seems to be the distinctive mark of the Fifth Race, the Aryan, and in this race all shades may be found, from the almost black to the whitest creamy colour. It does not appear that the lighter colour is in any sense a sign of greater advancement, for, as far as we know anything of the process of reincarnation, egos seem to proceed more than once through the various sub-races.

It would appear, from the teaching of the *Secret Doctrine*, that there is a certain type of colour for the root-races, but that the sub-races mix those colours, and it is certainly a fact that the *highest* type of man is to be found with a dark skin, while a very small amount of advancement may accompany the lighter colour.

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the European Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post-free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications for "Activities" must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest.

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription (5s.). Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY, *General Secretary.*

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

VOL. XII.

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 1, 1902.

NO. 2.

Edited by BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

CHANGE OF NAME OF THE SECTION.

As announced in the last issue of THE VĀHAN a resolution was passed at the Convention of the European Section in July, to the effect that the Section be known in future as the "British Section." The change was submitted to the President-Founder for his sanction and the following letter from him has been received:

OOTACAMUND, INDIA.

July 29th, 1902.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY, ESQ.,
*General Secretary, European Section, T.S.,
London.*

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER,

In your official letter of July 8th, you report that the Convention unanimously passed the following resolution:

"Seeing that the European Section as such has done its preliminary work of organisation, and that there now exist four duly constituted Sections of the Theosophical Society on the Continent, and that the application for a fifth is in the hands of the President-Founder, resolved:

"That this Section do resume its original title of 'The British Section of the Theosophical Society,' and that the President-Founder be requested to authorise such non-section-alised Branches of the Society in Europe as may desire to do so, to attach themselves to this Section under the title of 'British Section.'"

In compliance with this resolution you request my sanction to this change of name, and my official authorisation for the Branches in question to remain attached to your Section under its new title.

Believing that the proposed change of title is

desirable, since the comprehensive one of "European" is no longer appropriate in view of the formation of several Sections, and the prospect of others in the near future, I have pleasure in complying with the wishes of your Convention, and give notice that, henceforth, it shall be known under the title of the British Section of the Theosophical Society.

As regards the affiliation of non-British Branches affected by this change I give them permission to attach themselves to either of the European Sections until Sections are formed in their own countries, and request you to so notify them.

Yours fraternally,

H. S. OLCOTT,
P.T.S.

The sanction of the President-Founder having been thus obtained this Section now adopts the title of "British Section." The Branches in Belgium and Spain have been written to with respect to their membership, and a further announcement will be made in the next VĀHAN.

I. HOOPER,
Acting General Secretary.

FORMATION OF THE GERMAN SECTION.

An application for a Sectional Charter signed by the officers of the German Branches having been forwarded to the President-Founder and duly accepted, the German Section now exists as an independent organisation.

The following is a copy of the executive notice issued by Colonel Olcott:

THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY,
PRESIDENT'S OFFICE,
OOTACAMUND, INDIA.

July 22nd, 1902.

The undersigned hereby gives notice that on the application of the officers of the Branches of our

Society at Berlin, Charlottenburg, Dusseldorf, Hamburg, Stuttgart, Hannover, Munich, Cassel and Leipzig, in Germany, and our German Branch at Lugano, Switzerland, he has authorised them to form themselves into a body to be known as the German Section of the Theosophical Society, which shall include Branches in German territory, and German Branches in Switzerland, subject to the provisions of the Society's Constitution and Rules. In testimony whereof he has issued this day to the Presidents of the above named Branches, a Charter, and caused the Society's Seal to be affixed at Adyar. The undersigned appoints Dr. Rudolph Steiner, F.T.S., 95, Kaiserallee, Friedenau, Berlin, General Secretary *pro tem.*, pending the formal organisation of the Section and adoption of By-Laws for its government.

H. S. OLCOTT,
P.T.S.

The new Section starts its career with the best wishes for its future success from the Section of which it lately formed a part.

I. HOOPER,
Acting General Secretary.

NOTICE.

Unattached members can, if they wish, on joining the Society be put into correspondence with an older member by addressing the Secretary of the Social Committee, 28, Albemarle Street, W.

ACTIVITIES.

New Branch.

July 26th, 1902. Charter issued this day to Alfred Weekes, Ernest Mariette, Maud Mariette, Alice Kirby, Henry J. Rogers, S. Forsyth and Annie Aves to form a Branch of the Theosophical Society at Plymouth, to be known as the Plymouth Branch.

I. HOOPER,
Acting General Secretary.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to August 20th: H. and K. D., 10s.; Ss., £1; Brighton Lodge, £1; J., £1; A. F., 10s.; C. B. G., 10s.; B. P. M., 15s.; F. G. G., 2s. 6d.; M. E. G., £1; J. W., £1; E. M. T., 5s.; Anon., £5. Total, £12 12s. 6d.

Informal Meetings.

During the winter it is proposed to have informal weekly discussions in the Smoking Room at 28, Albemarle Street, from 8.30 to 10 p.m. Those willing to take part are invited to communicate with the Acting General Secretary.

Section Reference Library.

We have much pleasure in announcing the presentation to the Library of the following books:—*The Washer of the Ford: and other Legendary Moralities*, Fiona Macleod; *The Sinner and Other Tales*, Fiona Macleod; *From the Hills of Dream. Mountain Songs and Island Runes*, Fiona Macleod; *The Smaller Buddhist Catechism*, C. W. Leadbeater; the Library has also acquired:—*The Dhamma of Gotama the Buddha and the Gospel of Jesus the Christ*, C. F. A. Aiken; *The Eternal Conflict*, W. R. Paterson.

A. J. WILLSON,
Librarian.

North of England Federation.

The next quarterly meeting will be held at Harrogate on September 6th, under the presidency of Mrs. Besant. All members of the Society are cordially invited to attend. Particulars of Federation Meetings and of Mrs. Besant's Lecturing Tour in the North of England and Scotland may be obtained from the undersigned at 7, Ryedale Terrace, Middlesbrough.

W. H. THOMAS,
Hon. Secretary.

London Federation.

Mrs. Besant having kindly consented to take the chair, the next quarterly meeting of the above Federation has been fixed for Saturday, October 11th, at 8 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street, to suit her convenience. Council Meeting at 7.30 p.m. The subject for discussion will be: "Propaganda." *Attention is particularly called to the alteration of date.*

FRANCESCA ARUNDALE,
Hon. Secretary.

Mrs. Besant at Plymouth.

On Sunday, August 10th, Mrs. Besant gave two lectures in the large Co-operative Hall at Plymouth, which were listened to with close attention by fairly large audiences. The subjects chosen were: "The Meaning and Objects of Theosophy," and "Life Here and Life after Death." They evoked considerable interest, as was shown on the following Monday afternoon, when an Enquirers' Meeting was held in the room of the Branch at 19, Cornwall Street. More than sixty people were present, and Mrs. Besant gave many interesting answers to various questions.

At the close of this meeting, Mrs. Besant kindly consented to formally open the newly-formed Plymouth Lodge, and spoke some gracious words of advice and encouragement to its members. A "Centre" was first formed in Plymouth in 1897 as a result of a visit of Mrs. Besant. The pioneers of the movement were Messrs. Weekes and Cock and the Rev. J. Barron, who were present at the

formal inauguration of the Lodge, and they felt much satisfaction at seeing the infant, over whose birth and early days they watched with care, growing so healthily.

E. M.

Blavatsky Lodge.

Informal meetings of the above Lodge have been held during August at 8, Inverness Place, Bayswater. Mrs. Besant's lectures upon *The Evolution of Consciousness* have been discussed. The Annual Business Meeting of the Lodge will be held at 28, Albemarle Street, on Wednesday, September 24th, at 8.30 p.m. Mrs. Besant lectures at the Elysée Gallery, Queen's Road, on Thursday, September 25th. She will also lecture at the same place on October 2nd and 16th; tickets for the course may be obtained at the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place.

S. M. S.

Theosophical Lending Library.

This Library is open to all, whether members of the Theosophical Society or not.

Terms of subscription: three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra.

Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 2.30 to 6 o'clock.

Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 8 p.m., in the small room, Foresters' Hall, Bath Street (near Pump Room), when books can be obtained from the Lodge Library. Enquiries should be addressed by letter to Mr. F. Bligh Bond, 16, Brock Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings in the Council Room, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Sept. 7th, *The Positive Existence of Evil*, Mme. de Steiger; Sept. 14th, *Theosophy in Daily Life*, Mrs. M. A. Nevill; Sept. 21st, *The Philosophy of the Upanishads*, J. H. Duffell; Sept. 28th, *The Mirror of the Self*, Bernard Old. Class for study on Saturdays, at 7.30 p.m., at the Pitman Hotel, first floor. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. H. M. Chaplin, Room No. 5, Cobden Hotel.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings in the Theosophical Room, North Parade, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Meetings on alternate Sundays at 3.30 p.m., and on alternate Mondays at 8 p.m., at members' houses, also on each Wednesday following the Sunday meeting, at 15, Old Steine, at 8 p.m. Information can be obtained from Mr. N. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or from Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., at Brooklyn Chambers, St. Augustine's Parade. For further particulars enquiry may be addressed to S. H. Old, at the above address.

BRUSSELS, CENTRALE BELGE. General meetings held in the Lodge Rooms, 170, rue Royale, the first and third Saturdays in the month, at 8.15 p.m. Students' Class, open to all members, the second and fourth Saturdays, at 8 p.m. Reading room open from 3 to 5 p.m. twice a week. For information apply by letter to the Secretary, 21, rue du Vallon.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Regular meetings are suspended during the summer. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. J. Lorimer Thomson, Roseburn House, Roseburn.

EXETER LODGE. Open meetings are held in the Lodge Room, 48, High Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., and on the first and third Sundays of the month at 7 p.m. Meetings for members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.30 p.m.; and on second and fourth Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. Mrs. Besant will lecture on Sept. 15th, in the Waterloo Rooms, Wellington Street, at 8 p.m., on *Life, and Life after Death*, and will preside at Lodge and Enquirers' Meetings on Sept. 16th, at Shepherd's Hall, 25, Bath Street. At the same address on Sept. 22nd, at 8 p.m., *'Tisixt Two Worlds*, James Wilson.

HAMBURG LODGE. Meetings for members only at 31, Martinallée, Hohenfelde, on Saturdays. Public meetings at the Patriotisches Haus once a month. Enquiries may be addressed to B. Hubo, 31, Martinallée, Hohenfelde.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at the Swedish Gymnasium, Grand Opera House Buildings, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Sept. 7th, 3 p.m., *The Meaning and Object of Theosophy*; 7 p.m., *The Power of Thought*, Mrs. Besant; Sept. 14th, *The Gospel of Theosophy*, Hodgson Smith; Sept. 21st, *Theosophy and the Need of the Times*, W. H. Thomas; Sept. 28th, *Sowing and Reaping*, C. N. Goode. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

HULL LODGE. Meetings at 97, Westbourne Avenue, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at the Town Hall Restaurant, on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. G. H. Popplestone, 8, Ashville View, Cardigan Road, Leeds.

LEIPSIK LODGE. Meetings at the "Freia" Vegetarian Restaurant, 8, Nürnbergerstrasse, on the first and third Thursdays of each month, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings at 18, Colquitt Street. Sept. 10th, at 8 p.m.: *Introduction to the Study of the Philosophy of the*

Vedānta, J. H. Duffell. On Tuesday, Sept. 30th, at 8 p.m., Mrs. Besant will lecture on *Theosophy and Imperialism*, at the Picton Lecture Hall, and will hold a meeting for enquirers in the Lodge room on the following day, at 3.30 p.m. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 7.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill, S.W. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 1, Pentland Street, Wandsworth Common, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Informal meetings will be held at 8, Inverness Terrace, on Sept. 4th, and at 28, Albemarle Street, on Sept. 11th and 18th, at 8.30 p.m. On Sept. 25th Mrs. Besant lectures at the Elysée Gallery, Queen's Road, Bayswater.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings discontinued for the summer.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. For information apply to the Hon. Sec., F. Horne, 27, Keen's Road, Croydon.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Class for study on the first and third Saturdays of each month at 8 p.m.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for young people at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Sundays, at 3 p.m. Resumed September 14th. For information address Miss Daisy Whyte, 7, Lanhill Road, Elgin Avenue, W.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N., on Mondays and Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m. : Sept. 1st, 15th, 22nd, and 29th, *Study of Man's Place in the Universe*; Sept. 8th, *Proportion*, A. J. Faulding; Sept. 27th (first Saturday meeting), *A Balanced Soul was Born*, Miss Goring. The Debating Class reopens on Sept. 27th at 6.30 p.m. Enquirers welcomed on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m. Meetings suspended during September.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., at 57, King Street, City. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 80, Northenden Road, Sale, Cheshire.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 68, Linthorpe Road, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., for study of *Thought Control*. Public Lectures on Sundays in the Lecture Room, Co-operative Hall, Corporation Road.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., and on Sundays at 6.30 p.m., at 19, Cornwall Street. Enquiries to be addressed to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at

7.30 p.m., at the Saville Temperance Hotel, Newcastle, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*, and on the last Sunday of the month, at Lily House, off Ocean View, Whitley Bay.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 176.

(Continued from p. 6.)

A. B.—*How can we explain the first human birth, life, and death? The doctrine of Incarnation and Re-incarnation does not seem to clear up the mystery of our first life, and puts the question further back without solving it. We had a first life as human beings. Why, then, in this first existence were our souls so different? Why did they experience joy and suffering equally mysterious, incomprehensible destiny, illness and physical death? The Christian myth offers us under the somewhat obscure form of the dogma of "Original Sin" a poetic explanation, which I should like dealt with from a Theosophic point of view.*

B. K.—In trying to suggest an answer to this question it seems necessary to make some general statements regarding the fundamental theosophical conceptions bearing on the problem and the terms used in dealing with it, in order that as little misunderstanding and confusion of thought as possible may arise.

First then what is the meaning of "we" or "I"? What am "I"? According to Theosophy "I" am "That": in other words "I," in ultimate analysis, am a "spark," a "portion," a "ray," a "centre"—no form can be used or invented that is wholly accurate and free from objection—of the very life and essence of the Logos, possessing in latency *all* the powers, possibilities, potentialities of the One Universal Life. In this respect "we" are not merely all equal, but we are all absolutely one, for each "centre," "spark" or "ray," has in it equally and at once all potentialities alike—but alike unmanifested, existent only as potentialities within the bosom of the Father, that is, within the highest plane or region of the Universe. And "manifestation" means the calling forth into actuality, the rendering effective, present, operative of *all* these potentialities in each and every plane or condition of the universe, so that each centre ultimately becomes even as the Father, master and lord of all manifestation.

But looking at "manifestation" we see that it is essentially a process, an ordered coming forth, implicated with Time and Sequence. Hence—since the infinite fullness of the One Life can only be expressed by means of infinite variety and in manifestation—it would seem obvious that the *order*, the sequence and succession, according to which the infinite series of latent potentialities inherent in each centre will be called forth and manifested into actuality, must needs be different—more or less—for each. Now this calling forth or manifestation of that which is latent in each centre, and the order and sequence in which it

occurs, depends during the "downward arc," as it is called, entirely upon the differing vehicles, the upadhis or bodies, with which the centre becomes clothed or enveloped. And it is not till the upward arc of evolution has advanced to some extent that conscious choice begins to play any conspicuous part in the process. Indeed, it is only, I think, when the centre appears as man, that is obtains the human causal body as vehicle, that we can speak of *conscious* choice as in actual operation at all on the planes below the highest.

But one half at least of the whole cycle of evolution in our system has already been traversed when the Causal Body is formed and man becomes truly man—when in strictness the "centre," the Divine Spirit or Spark which "I" ultimately am, obtains its first truly human birth.

Now all this agelong process, up to that point, has been occupied in the slow preparation of and partial learning to manipulate the bodies we now use so easily though even still so imperfectly—the physical, astral, mental and causal—and their full mastery and development will occupy the remainder of the present cycle of evolution. But it is these bodies which in their varied building have determined and do still determine the sequence, the order, in which the powers of the centre, the Self in us, shall be called forth. And till the causal body was formed, these other bodies were built *for* us, by the working of the Logos and his agents, far more than they were built *by* us directly and immediately. In them are expressed partially a minor series out of the infinite possibilities which await realisation *in us*, but which the Logos, our Father, had already actualised ere he called this Universe into being from within himself.

Our "first human birth," therefore, is by no means the first putting forth, the first coming into manifestation of that Divine Spark which is our real Self. It but marks a certain definite and very important stage in the process—the point, namely, where the Self in us, the true "I," *begins* to take into its own hands the further course of its unfoldment and to develop the power of conscious choice. But in its long past of slow unfoldment in other forms, it has developed, actualised from within its boundless store, a certain definite series of powers and qualities, which distinguish it *in manifestation* from other similar divine sparks and give to it within the fields of manifestation, a specific, individual character of its own. Thus at any point of time, each centre in manifestation is distinguishable from all others, not in essence or in inmost nature, which in all alike is *That*, but in manifestation, in the actual, realised, developed and operative set of powers and potentialities which it has unfolded and actualised up to that moment. All powers and possibilities of the Infinite All lie latent within each alike, waiting their unfoldment. In the Eternal all are One, there is neither before nor after, neither Time, nor Change, nor Difference. But manifestation implies, nay, *is* all these, and thus long before the hour of our first "human birth" we have become different as manifested, that is finite and limited beings, clothed in partially developed vestures of matter,

which, while they aid, may bring about our unfoldment, also limit and shut us in.

And the problem of Justice? In the sum total, each and all must acquire all and every experience, and the balance swings true and unerring. Time matters not at all, for each centre of the divine Life, ere it becomes "one with the Father" has passed through all places alike and has tasted in equal measure of every cup, has assimilated all experience that goes to make up the Universe of manifestation.

QUESTION 180.

G. P. E.—*Do we, or rather does the Life Wave, actually pass round a chain of seven separate and distinct worlds in each planetary manvantara? Or, is evolution confined to a single planet for an entire minor manvantara, thus completing the circuit of the worlds once only, during the life of the solar system? If the latter question be answered affirmatively, are the seven worlds through which we move in our current manvantara the seven planes or worlds which make up our earth-globe, from the mānasic downwards to the dense physical, and upwards again to the mānasic—"four in and three out"?*

A. P. S.—Old students of Theosophy may well feel some surprise that such a question as this should still be possible. In the earliest epitome of esoteric teaching derived from the highest authority the actuality—the definite separate existence—of the seven globes forming our planetary chain was affirmed with the most unequivocal emphasis. That three of them were physical—Mars, the earth, and Mercury—and four invisible to physical eyes, but none the less separate globes in space having orbits and motions in space around the sun, was also explained in language that admitted of no mistake as to its meaning. The complete evolution of our human family was explained to be accomplished during seven circuits of the Life Wave around these seven globes, each being occupied by the Life Wave seven times. The term "manvantara" is used in many different significations but is most conveniently used to mean the whole series of seven Rounds or circuits round the chain.

Since the first explicit statement to this effect was put forward in the first book on the subject, the actuality of human relationship with the two physical planets of the chain has been further verified by the testimony of persons sufficiently advanced in psychic development to be able under certain circumstances to visit the companion physical globes of the chain in an appropriate vehicle of consciousness. Of course it is much to be regretted that owing to some strange misapprehension doubt was at one time thrown on the original plain straightforward statement concerning the distinct separateness of the various globes of the chain, but this misapprehension has long since been dissipated and both the visible and the invisible worlds that make up the seven of our series may be safely regarded as constituting the theatre of human evolution.

QUESTION 181.

A. W. J. H.—*To what extent is one justified in using exterior aid to reach interior results? I find myself somewhat lacking in executive ability, and an acquaintance claims to be able to reverse this state through a species of hypnotism—"psychitism," I think he calls it—by which he claims to have helped others in various ways. Would it be wise for me to let him make the attempt, or should I strive to overcome the difficulty solely through my own powers.*

G. R. S. M.—If "psychitism" (what a horrible barbarism!) is a species of hypnotism, and such hypnotism means in any way the yielding up of the will to another of like passions with oneself, even temporarily, then I should give Mr. Punch's advice on marriage, and say: Don't. I have never heard of "psychitism"; "psychiatry," the treatment of mental diseases, is a well-known term, and "psychiatrist" would be understandable. We hope, however, that the questioner is not suffering from a mental disease, but only from an imperfection shared by vast numbers, an imperfection we have all to strive to remove by the development of our own will, from within, and not by submission to the will of another from without.

E. L.—I would advise A. W. J. H. to have nothing to do with the "psychitism" he speaks of. It is *injurious* to allow another person to obtain control of your inner vehicles in this way, and even were it not actively hurtful, any improvement resulting would be merely temporary, since actuated from outside, and would only endure as long as the influence were exerted, and in proportion to its strength. Far better that our questioner should set himself to improve his faulty instrument by the means which are open to everyone who in very truth *begins* that work when he *desires* to so improve. Let him practise his feeble executive faculty whenever a chance occurs, not undertaking anything very ambitious at first, but above all having that confidence in himself which goes a long way towards success. His self-initiated effort *must* eventually bring him the fruit he seeks.

B. K.—This is really not a question of "justification"—which implies a moral element, I think—but one of expediency, and the answer must therefore depend upon the view one takes as to the results and consequences which are likely to ensue according as one or the other of the lines of conduct stated in the question is adopted.

Suppose, first, the questioner resorts to the aid of the "psychitism" he speaks of—which seems to denote some method or variety of what essentially is best described as "suggestion," whether imposed with or without the help of the hypnotic trance.

If the attempt fails, he will be no better, and he *may*, not improbably, find himself worse off than before, because "hypnotism" and "suggestion" are exceedingly subtle and dangerous tools to use, and, as with the use of violent poisons in medicine, are apt to do irreparable harm in the hands of the ignorant or partially instructed; while I should be

myself inclined to regard all operators outside the very small number of trained occultists as belonging to one or other of these classes.

If on the other hand the attempt succeeds, what is the actual state of the case? Two answers seem to me possible. First, let us suppose that the man himself, the real Ego underlying the personality, has acquired in the past and therefore now possesses "executive ability," but is hindered from manifesting that ability by reason of some defect in the personality, in the brain, for instance, through which it has to work in this incarnation. Such limitations are, of course, very familiar to every student and we know that they are always the outcome and expression of some karma generated in the past. Now we must remember that the presence of all such limitations has been determined by a Wisdom infinitely greater and more wisely loving than our utmost imagination can realise, and that they have been imposed on the Ego by that Wisdom for the furtherance of the Ego's own evolution, either through the struggle to overcome them, or when this is actually impossible, to teach the Ego a lesson imperatively needed. From this point of view, what must be the result of removing such a kârmic limitation by an *external* agency? Obviously, it seems to me, first to deprive the Ego of the opportunity or the lesson that the Wisdom of karma has set him to learn; secondly and very probably, to "throw back" the kârmic energy at work and store it up for future working out, at some time inevitably *less* favourable than the present. In both events, therefore, it would seem that the true interests of the Ego, the *real* man, are sacrificed to the passing, momentary interests and gratifications of its personality—the instrument which it is using for its evolution in this present life. And this sacrificing of the permanent to the impermanent, of the eternal to the fleeting, is directly opposed to every principle and law of true spiritual life and progress.

It may be objected that the case we are considering is strictly analogous to the removal of some outer physical defect—say a squint, or other congenital deformity—by surgical interference; and that if, as is held to be the case, such surgical interference is right and proper in those cases, then the use of "suggestion" or "psychitism" is equally admissible in this case, since it similarly acts by removing an obstruction, only in this case an obstruction in the brain or nervous system. This objection possesses a certain plausibility, but it seems to me that there are two considerations which invalidate it. First, while we *know* for certain, that *every* human ego has long ago passed through the stage of fully acquiring and developing the powers involved in normal vision and other purely physical functions and activities and therefore cannot stand in need of developing them now, we do *not* know by any means that this is the case with mental and moral powers, with executive ability for instance. Hence while by removing a squint we cannot possibly be depriving the Ego of a needed opportunity for growth, we *may* be doing so in the case in which the Ego has *not* developed

the inner executive power—a case which we shall consider in more detail presently; while should the Ego be already possessed of that power in a great or less degree, then by removing the “obstruction” to its manifestation by external means we shall certainly be depriving that Ego of the growth which it would surely gain by overcoming the obstruction *from within*. Secondly, we must remember that while a surgeon knows thoroughly the physico-mechanical structure of the organism with which he deals and can therefore judge with knowledge and almost certainty the results and effects which his interference will produce—though cases do occur in which all his science proves at fault—this is *not* the case when we try to operate on the far more delicate and complex mechanism of character, mental or moral. No one but a trained oculist would dream of attempting to operate for cataract on such a delicate organ as the eye, and yet quite ignorant people are more than ready to attempt the far more delicate and difficult operation involved in removing such an “obstruction” as we are now considering. Truly do “fools rush in where angels fear to tread.”

Let us now consider the second alternative, when the Ego itself has *not* acquired or developed the power in question. In such a case the attempt to engraft the power on the personality by suggestion or “psychitism” would almost certainly fail, while the result of making the attempt would very probably be to disorder and derange, to a greater or less extent, the exceedingly delicate mechanism through which the Ego expresses itself on the physical plane and thereby sow the seeds of much future trouble later on. And even if some effect in the direction aimed at were produced, this would inevitably be of a merely temporary character, analogous to the momentary strength called out in the body by the use of stimulants. For the powers of the Ego are *only* called forth by effort and by use; we possess in very deed only what we have acquired and developed through *our own* efforts, and therefore the Ego, our real self, would be no gainer by the momentary artificial stimulation which alone “suggestion,” “psychitism” and the like can produce. And the inevitable reaction which would certainly follow, as it does on the use of physical stimulus, would certainly do harm, possibly serious and prolonged injury, to say nothing of the loss to the Ego caused by his failure to make the inner effort required of him to develop from within himself the power and ability which he desires.

For all these reasons, which could be much further elaborated, I should answer the question with an emphatic negative.

QUESTION 182.

S. A. M.—*Why does a good man have to suffer physical misery by mistaken action done from a good motive? For instance: I desire to make a lot of children happy by taking them on a picnic. I take them and there is*

a serious accident. Physical misery is the result where happiness was intended. Would I have to suffer in a future incarnation for this? If so, why? (See Ancient Wisdom, p. 338.)

A. A. W.—I think a little more consideration would have shown the querist that his example is not one of “mistaken motive,” and does not come under the phrase he quotes. His action is good, and his motive also good, and not in the least mistaken. He is not, and cannot be, responsible for the accident which frustrates his intention. It may be worth while, however, to take another case or two, to clear up the point, which is not always without difficulty.

A judge and jury find a man guilty of murder: the judge sentences him to death, and he is hanged accordingly. All is done in good faith and no kârmic responsibility seems to arise. Afterwards it is proved that he was not guilty. This seems to come more nearly under the head of “mistaken motive”; for the idea that he was guilty was a mistake. But if you think further you will see, as it seems to me, that the “motive” was only to do justice, and that the failure of evidence must be regarded as an unavoidable accident, as in S. A. M.’s case.

An Inquisitor finds a man preaching what he considers a “soul-destroying” doctrine, and has him put to death, lest he should destroy other souls as well as his own. Here we have the conditions of the *Ancient Wisdom* statement. His *motive* is good—to save souls; his *action* is mistaken, for you don’t save souls in that way. Hence the result is what Mrs. Besant lays down; his character will be the better for his anxiety for souls, but in his future incarnations he must pay for the useless suffering he has caused. The point has a strong analogy with the case of a man rushing into a burning house to save life—his good motive will not save him from being burnt.

If you assume (as I think you have no right to assume) that in this last case the motive is not to do good to souls but to gratify a natural enjoyment of cruelty—then, of course, the case falls into line with all other such examples, and the man suffers both for the evil motive and the evil results; but no difficulty such as the querist feels can arise.

E. L.—Because a man is “good” this is not necessarily a reason why he should escape the consequences of a mistaken action done with the best of intentions. In the example quoted I would suggest that there is a confusion of thought with regard to a “mistake” being made. The motive of giving healthy innocent pleasure to fellow human beings is a good one. The accident that ensues comes from the introduction of some other element over which the benefactor has personally no control. Events in this world it will be observed are thus often very complex in their working—owing to the continual and vast interaction of kârmic cause and effect taking place. It is in this case in the karma of some or all of these children

to lose their lives, or to be seriously injured. This is a debt which must be discharged. Those Higher Powers who control the operations of Kārmic Law have to take advantage of opportunities for carrying out their work, that of enabling such debts to be paid. On this occasion such an opportunity is given—and taken. It is true it is not pleasant to be selected as one of the agents in such a catastrophe, and it is to be presumed that such an agent is selected for some personal reason, whereby some *personal* karma may be worked off at the same time. The Law of "Divine Economy" would seem to demand that. Possibly in the past he was voluntarily the means of destruction or suffering to a number of human entities connected with him. But assuredly in this instance the event would be the *result* of the past, and not the cause set in motion to be worked out in the future, unless indeed we can imagine a *desire* on the part of the benefactor to injure those benefited, which is incongruous.

B. K.—Whether the good man in the cited case would have to suffer or not must, it seems to me, depend on whether or not he was in any way a contributor, through negligence or ignorance, to the bringing about of the accident.

If we suppose that he was in no way contributory to the accident and had taken all proper care and precaution, then he is in no sense the *cause* of the accident and its results cannot affect his *future* karma, though since he will inevitably suffer, mentally at the least, in the present under the shock, it follows that he is thereby, in the fact of his own present suffering, working off some *past* karma.

If, on the other hand, the good man was guilty of what the law would call "contributory negligence"—as, for instance, by neglecting to take due precautions or make proper enquiries—then to that extent he will be generating or creating fresh karma and will have to pay his debt in suffering, either in this life or the future.

The whole question turns upon whether the suffering is *caused* by the "good man"—whether through ignorance or carelessness, or whether he has no share in its causing, but only is drawn into connection with it by his own past karma, simply as an instrument.

A better illustration, perhaps, may be found in "unwise" charity. Suppose by unwisdom in charity, we weaken the character or destroy the self-reliance of the people we desire to help. It is our own lack of wisdom which is the *cause* of harm to others, our yielding to an emotional *impulse* of charitable feeling without proper thought, or with inadequate knowledge as to *how* we can really help those who excite our pity. The motive is all right, but our action is not wisely taken. The results of our unwisdom return to us in the shape of suffering in order that we may learn to be wise in order to teach us to act only after consideration and thought and with due regard to all the circumstances. We thus develop the power of *really* doing good and not harm; and this is the

only way in which we can learn this great lesson and gain that true wisdom which alone is of lasting and permanent value.

QUESTION 183.

X.—Does suffering always evolve, or can extreme suffering injure the Ego or causal body, and do people who go insane through trouble, real or imaginary, regain their full powers upon the death of the physical body or at the next incarnation?

A. H. W.—The writer understands that suffering, inasmuch as it is a variety of experience, must always make for the evolution of the Ego. He, the man for whom the hour never strikes, exists in the eternal "now," and the everlasting "here," and cannot be injured by any causes operating in the worlds of form and place and time. One thing alone can injure him, spiritual selfishness, the dragging down of the powers of abstract impersonal thought to serve the illusory ends of the personality. This is the great danger of the path of knowledge, and its effects on the Ego are analogous to the tearing away of the lower manas, which has become too closely attached to kâma; but the injury when on the higher plane is infinitely more far-reaching. A tearing away of the lower buddhi, and its isolation by the mental vehicle, is, the writer thinks, the first step upon the left-hand path, a calamity which may be irrevocable for countless ages. But he entertains the hope that, since the Brothers of the Shadow supply the retarding forces by means of which others grow into the light, they, too, in the end, will so work out their gloomy karma, and at last find their path in the Eternal Mercy.

Great sorrow or suffering may indeed, if faced with fortitude and made the best of, be the occasion of a step in evolution. It may drive the consciousness to take refuge in the "inner fortress, where the personal man is viewed with impartiality." It is when the rains descend, and the winds blow, and the floods come, that a man realises that his house has been built upon the sands of emotion and desire.

Insanity, due to real or imaginary trouble is, the writer thinks, fundamentally due to an enfeebled brain and nervous system. This is caused by excesses of some kind in the present or past lives. The regaining of the powers lost will depend on the exhaustion of the kârmic forces, which may or may not coincide with physical death.

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post-free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications for "Activities" must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest.

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription (5s.). Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY, *General Secretary*.

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

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NO. 3.

Edited by BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

BEQUEST.

Under the Will of Miss M. Lowthime, a sum of £250 has been bequeathed to Mrs. Besant for the use of the Theosophical Society. After deduction of the customary duty the legacy amounts to £225; and this sum has been divided equally by Mrs. Besant between the British and Indian Sections.

I. HOOPER,
Acting General Secretary.

NOTICE.

Unattached members can, if they wish, on joining the Society be put into correspondence with an older member by addressing the Secretary of the Social Committee, 28, Albemarle Street, W.

ACTIVITIES.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to September 20th: W. J. B. D., £5; H. W. H., £2 2s.; A. de P., 4s.; P. T., £1 1s.; H. M., £1 1s.; G. H., £1; K. B., 2s. 6d.; C. H., £5; G. A. A., 10s.; A. F., 7s.; A. S., 10s.; Ss. 10s.; Total: £17 7s. 6d.

Informal Meetings.

During the winter it is proposed to have informal weekly discussions in the Smoking Room at 28, Albemarle Street, from 8.30 to 10 p.m. Those willing to attend are invited to communicate with the Acting General Secretary.

London Federation.

Mrs. Besant having kindly consented to take the chair, the next quarterly meeting of the above Federation has been fixed for Saturday, October 11th, at 8 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street, to suit her convenience. Council Meeting at 7.30 p.m. The subject for discussion will be: "Propaganda." *Attention is particularly called to the alteration of date.*

FRANCESCA ARUNDALE,
Hon. Secretary.

Classes at Albemarle Street.

It is proposed to hold two classes at 28, Albemarle Street during the winter months: one for the study of the *Bhagavad Gītā* conducted by Miss Arundale, and the other for the systematic study of Theosophical teachings, directed by Mr. A. H. Ward. These classes are for members only; those who desire to join either should send in their names at once to the undersigned. If sufficient names are received the classes will be arranged and duly announced.

I. HOOPER,
Acting General Secretary.

Section Reference Library.

The following books have been purchased for the Library:—*The Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. 27; *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, F. Max Müller, 1899; *Facts and Comments*, Herbert Spencer, 3rd ed., 1902; *A History of Egypt, from the End of the Neolithic Period to the Death of Cleopatra*, 8 vols., E. A. Wallis Budge; *A Manual of Psychology*, G. F. Stout, 1901; *A Manual of Logic*, 2 vols., J. Welton, 2nd ed., 1901; *Açvaghosha's Discourse on the Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna*, trs. from the Chinese, Peitaro Luzuki, 1900, Chicago; *The Secret of Hegel*, James Hutchison Stirling, 1898.

A. J. WILLSON,
Librarian.

Mrs. Besant's Lectures.

Mrs. Besant lectures in October as follows: 2nd and 16th, Elysée Gallery; 5th and 12th (morning) South Place Chapel; 5th (evening), Brotherhood Church, Southgate; 7th and 8th, Dublin; 13th and 14th, Edinburgh.

Mrs. Besant will visit France, Switzerland and Italy, leaving Brindisi for India, November 23rd.

North of England Federation.

The thirty-fourth Conference was held at Harrogate on Saturday, September 6th, under the presidency of Mrs. Besant. The attendance was a record, delegates and members being present from Manchester, Bradford, Sheffield, Leeds, York, Hull, Harrogate, Middlesbrough, Newcastle, Edinburgh and other places. Mrs. Mead and visitors from Southern Lodges and other Sections were also present.

It was reported that since the last quarterly meeting the Hull Centre had developed into a Lodge, a new Centre had been formed in South Manchester, and a new Lodge at Nottingham consisting of about thirty members.

Miss Shaw inaugurated a discussion on "The Evolution of Consciousness," and was followed by Messrs. Thomas, Firth, Orage, Bell, Dunn and Hodgson Smith, Mrs. Firth, Miss Smith and Mrs. Corbett. Mrs. Besant shortly summed up and dealt with the various points raised.

The Conference was adjourned at 5 p.m., the members proceeding to the Winter Gardens, where, after being photographed in group, they were entertained to tea by the members of the Harrogate Lodge.

On reassembling at 6.30, Mrs. Besant delivered a very powerful address, replete with practical instruction and elevating thought, on "The Laws of the Higher Life"; the lecture was listened to with great attention and the members expressed their thanks at the conclusion of the proceedings for the great help which Mrs. Besant's presence and advice had given them.

In connection with the Federation a lengthy lecturing tour was arranged for Mrs. Besant, during which Harrogate, Leeds, Bradford, Middlesbrough, Newcastle, Glasgow, York, Hull, Sheffield, Manchester and Liverpool were to be visited. A special visit to Edinburgh has also been arranged for October 13th and 14th. Up to the time of writing, without exception, most successful meetings have been held; many were unable to gain entrance at one of the Newcastle meetings owing to the crowded state of the hall. The enquirers' meetings were also well attended, and the result of the tour will certainly be to more widely disseminate Theosophy in the North, and to infuse fresh energy and inspiration into the members whose work there lies. The Northern members feel they are under a very great debt to Mrs. Besant, and desire to convey to others the message which has been helpful to them.

W. H. THOMAS,
Hon. Secretary.

Nottingham Lodge.

On July 28th Countess Wachtmeister gave a lecture in the Oddfellows' Hall, Long Eaton, on "Prayer," followed by an interesting discussion. On Friday, July 29th, a goodly number of members, associates and friends assembled in the Friends' Meeting House. The Countess delivered a lecture on "The Christ." Much benefit has been derived from her visit.

The study of *The Ancient Wisdom* was resumed at the Lodge meetings in September. On the 8th the Lodge was favoured by a visit from Mr. J. H. Duffell, who lectured on "The Theosophists of Islam," and also lectured again on the 22nd.

Preparations are now being made for the tenancy of the new Lodge Room in St. James' Street. The usual Lodge meetings will be held at 7.30 p.m. on Monday, and meetings for students on Fridays at 7.30 p.m. Communications may be sent to the Corresponding Secretary, Mr. W. E. Dowson, 10, Mapperley Road, Nottingham, or to Mr. J. V. P. Mitchell, Friar Chambers, Friar Lane, Nottingham.

J. V. P. M.

Birmingham Lodge.

At a special meeting of the above Lodge the resignation of the Hon. Secretary, Mr. H. M. Chaplin, was reluctantly accepted, he having removed to Wolverhampton. The following resolution was unanimously passed:

"That this meeting wishes to record its very deep appreciation of the services rendered by Mr. H. M. Chaplin to the Birmingham Lodge of the Theosophical Society during the past three years. The members feel that his services have been most ably and unselfishly rendered, and that he has placed them, individually, and collectively, under a great personal debt of gratitude."

BRIAN HODGSON,
Hon. Secretary.

Bristol Lodge.

On Sunday, August 17th, Mrs. Besant gave lectures morning and evening at Colston Hall, Bristol. Both lectures were delivered to a crowded audience and in the evening nearly 500 people were turned away for lack of accommodation. This is the first time Bristol has attained such a success, and it is to be hoped that a repetition will follow at her next visit.

S. H. O.

West London Branch.

The meetings of this Branch will be resumed on October 10th, when Miss Pope will commence a series of lectures on the "Physical Basis of Mind," to which the Council of the Lodge very cordially

invites members of other branches, or visitors. A full syllabus of lectures for the quarter is now ready, and may be obtained from the Secretary. Meetings at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays at 8.15 p.m.

H. W.

Lotus Lodge.

The usual Sunday afternoon meetings for young people were resumed on September 14th, at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W. During October a course of addresses on "Theosophical Conceptions of the worlds we live in," will be delivered, and in November a series on "Theosophical Conceptions of the bodies we use."

Young people, whether members of the Society or not, are cordially invited. Meeting at 3 p.m. Enquiries to be addressed to the Hon. Secretary.

H. W.

Greenock.

Mr. McKechnie, Vice-President, and Mr. Wilson, Secretary, of the Glasgow Lodge, visited Greenock, on Sunday, August 31st, and addressed an audience of about sixty persons. Mr. Wilson took for his subject "The Theosophical Society," and Mr. McKechnie followed with "Our Three Objects."

Two new members were enrolled, and general interest was shown. Countess Wachtmeister visits Greenock in September, and will probably succeed in forming a Lodge, as interest is spreading.

J. W.

Theosophical Lending Library.

This Library is open to all, whether members of the Theosophical Society or not.

Terms of subscription: three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra.

Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 2.30 to 6 o'clock.

Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 8 p.m., in the small room, Foresters' Hall, Bath Street (near Pump Room), when books can be obtained from the Lodge Library. Enquiries should be addressed by letter to Mr. F. Bligh Bond, 16, Brock Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings in the Council Room, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Oct. 5th, *Some Phases of Christianity*, E. Loam; Oct. 12th, *Dreamland*, Edward Carpenter; Oct. 19th, *The Kabbalah*, Mme. de Steiger; Oct.

25th, *Outlines of Christianity*, G. R. S. Mead. Class for study on Saturdays, at 7.30 p.m., at the Pitman Hotel, first floor. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. Brian Hodgson, Room No. 5, Cobden Hotel.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings in the Theosophical Room, North Parade, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Meetings on alternate Sundays at 3.30 p.m., and on alternate Mondays at 8 p.m., at members' houses, also on each Wednesday following the Sunday meeting, at 15, Old Steine, at 8 p.m. Information can be obtained from Mr. N. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or from Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., at Brooklyn Chambers, St. Augustine's Parade. For further particulars enquiry may be addressed to S. H. Old, at the above address.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. For information apply to the President, Mr. W. Kohlen, 12, rue d'Egmont.

BRUSSELS, CENTRALE BELGE. General meetings held in the Lodge Rooms, 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, the first and third Saturdays in the month, at 8.15 p.m. Students' Class, open to all members, the second and fourth Saturdays, at 8 p.m. Reading room open from 3 to 5 p.m. twice a week. For information apply by letter to the Secretary, 21, rue du Vallon.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Public lecture by Mrs. Besant on Oct. 13th, in the Queen Street Hall, at 8 p.m., *Man, the Maker of his Destiny*; Oct. 14th, Enquirers' Meeting in Dowell's Rooms, 20, George Street; Oct. 23rd, Question Meeting, Philosophical Institution's Rooms, 5, Queen Street, at 8 p.m. Lodge meetings for special study are held twice monthly. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. J. Lorimer Thomson, Roseburn House, Roseburn.

EXETER LODGE. Open meetings are held in the Lodge Room, 48, High Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., and on the first and third Sundays of the month at 7 p.m. Meetings for members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.30 p.m.; and on second and fourth Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. Meetings at Shepherd's Hall (Room No. 3), 25, Bath Street, on the fourth Monday of each month, at 8 p.m.: Oct. 27th, *The Symbolism of the Cross*, E. J. Cuthbertson. Meetings for members only: Oct. 20th, *Theosophic Christianity*, J. Wilson. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. James Wilson, 48, Holmhead Street, Glasgow.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at the Swedish Gymnasium, Grand Opera House Buildings, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Oct. 5th, *Spiritual Alchemy*, Mrs. Bell; Oct. 12th, *Twentieth Century Theosophy*, A. R. Orage; Oct. 19th, *Womanhood*, Miss Shaw; Oct. 26th, *Divine Kings*, Hodgson Smith. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

HULL LODGE. Meetings at the Central Temperance Hotel (Jarratt Street entrance), on Sundays, at 7 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at the Athenæum Restaurant, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Oct. 6th, *Dream World and Real World*, Edward Carpenter; Oct. 13th, *The Love of Nature*, E. J. Dunn; Oct. 20th, *After Death*, H. W. Hunter; Oct. 27th, *Reincarnation in the Light of Christian Teaching*, W. H. Thomas. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. G. H. Popplestone, 8, Ashville View, Cardigan Road, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings at 18, Colquitt Street. Mrs. Besant will hold a meeting for enquirers on Wednesday, Oct. 1st, at 3.30 p.m. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C., for the study of Ashvaghosha's *Awakening of Faith*.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 7.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill, S.W.: Oct. 5th, *The Eternal Problem*, Miss C. E. Woods; Oct. 12th, *Esoteric Teachers and Teachings*, A. P. Cattnach; Oct. 19th, *Abnormal States of Consciousness*, Mrs. Hooper; Oct. 26th, Questions and Answers. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 1, Pentland Street, Wandsworth Common, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays at 28, Albemarle Street, W., at 8.30 p.m.: Oct. 2nd and 16th, Mrs. Besant lectures at the Elysée Gallery, Queen's Road, Bayswater, W.; Oct. 9th, Open night for discussion; Oct. 23rd, *What do We mean by Occultism?* G. R. S. Mead; Oct. 30th, *Methods of Study*, Mrs. Corbett. Meetings on Sundays at 7 p.m. (open to members and visitors): Oct. 19th, *What do We mean by "The Christ"?* G. R. S. Mead; Oct. 26th, *The Training of the Will*, Mrs. Corbett.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. For information apply to the Hon. Secretary, F. Horne, 27, Keen's Road, Croydon.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Class for study on the first and third Saturdays of each month at 8 p.m.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for young people at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Sundays, at 3 p.m. For information address Miss Daisy Whyte, 7, Lanhill Road, Elgin Avenue, W.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N., on Mondays and Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Oct. 11th, no meeting; Oct. 13th, *Abnormal States of Consciousness*, Mrs. Hooper; Oct. 25th, *Thomas Lake Harris*, Claude W. Jones. The Debating Class meets on Saturdays at 6.30 p.m. Enquirers received on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m. Bureau workers meet on Fridays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m. A course of lectures will be delivered

by Miss Pope: Oct. 10th, *The Growth of the Cell*; Oct. 17th, *Rise and Development of the Nervous System*; Oct. 24th, *Growth of the Brain*; Oct. 31st, *Education of the Brain*.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., at 57, King Street, City. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 80, Northenden Road, Sale, Cheshire.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Public lectures will be given in the Liberal Club, Didsbury, on Oct. 13th and 27th, at 8 p.m. Lodge meetings on alternate Mondays. Information can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, 38, Bamford Road, Didsbury.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 68, Linthorpe Road, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., for study of *Thought Control*. Public Lectures on Sundays in the Lecture Room, Co-operative Hall, Corporation Road.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., and on Sundays at 6.30 p.m., at 19, Cornwall Street. Enquiries to be addressed to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at 7.30 p.m., at the Saville Temperance Hotel, Newcastle, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*, and on the last Sunday of the month, at Lily House, off Ocean View, Whitley Bay.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 175.

(Continued from p. 4.)

M. L. M.—May I ask for an explanation of the terms *positive and negative as applied to the attitude of the human being?* I have been told to be "*negative towards good, and positive towards evil,*" and should like to know what that implies. Does not a negative attitude lay you open to evil as well as good?

A. H. W.—The writer thinks that the positive attitude should be held under all circumstances, since it is the duty of the Self to try all things and hold to that which is good. But this trying is a continuous process, since all we can know of the ideal good is relative; we have to be ready continually to let the lesser good go for the sake of the greater. By this practice of discrimination the Consciousness ever rises to planes whence the view of the good is wider and wider, till at last the vision dawns that all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds. Then we shall understand that one of the "three truths which are absolute," which has remained silent for lack of speech in theosophic thought. It is thus phrased:—

"The principle which gives life dwells in us and without us, is undying and *eternally beneficent*; it is not heard or seen or smelt, but is perceived by the man who desires perception."

If It is eternally beneficent in truth, It is so *now*,

in every detail; but the man who would perceive must put aside his prejudices, perceptions and personal views. He must transcend the idea of sin which is only the ignorance of the half-evolved, he must sacrifice "the sense of self-respect and of virtue," as a personal illusion which blinds the Self to reality. So can be attained the stature of the Witness, for when the half-gods go the gods arrive.

The negative attitude is that of the medium, the irresponsible mirror of the external or of other selves. It is a habit of mind unwise to cultivate, since the Self has to grow into a centre self-existent, self-conscious, and self-energising, and the sooner it begins to make the effort the better.

QUESTION 181.

(Continued from p. 15.)

A. W. J. H.—*To what extent is one justified in using exterior aid to reach interior results? I find myself somewhat lacking in executive ability, and an acquaintance claims to be able to reverse this state through a species of hypnotism—"psychitism," I think he calls it—by which he claims to have helped others in various ways. Would it be wise for me to let him make the attempt, or should I strive to overcome the difficulty solely through my own powers?*

E. A. B.—The use of hypnotism in such cases is, I should consider, an exceedingly dangerous practice. It is possible that it might give temporary aid in gaining some special result, but at a cost far outweighing any passing advantage; for it means the weakening of one's own individual will power, on which we depend for any real progress and the development of our faculties. This self-development often seems dishearteningly slow, but any gain so made is real, and remains as a permanent possession, not only for the present earth life, but for those to come.

M. E. G.—This question is not put very clearly, for it is an undoubted fact that exterior aid is often most beneficial as a means towards acquiring interior results. Take for example the man who, not able to resist the power of drink, to which he has become a slave, willingly at times places himself in such a position that he has no power to procure that for which he craves. But this exterior aid has in no way entrenched on the citadel of Self. The action and its effects are altogether normal, wholesome, common-sense. Very different appears to me to be the action suggested by A. W. J. H.'s question. Here a direct interference with the integrity of the individuality is proposed, under the specious argument of a means towards growth.

I speak with diffidence upon this subject of "suggestion," because I know there are many who consider it justifiable, but surely so long as there is enough "man" left in anyone, he should fight for himself at any cost, even that of apparent failure in one incarnation, for it has to be done sometime, and no one can substitute a single step of his own

training for the faulty rung of another's ladder. Only in rare cases perhaps might what is here called "psychitism" be permissible; but they are not cases that come in the way of ordinary men and women. I would strongly advise A. W. J. H. to fight for him or herself. The plant raised from the seed may not be a very strong or healthy specimen as plant life goes, but it will have its own roots, and will be infinitely preferable to any parasitic growth.

QUESTION 183.

(Continued from page 16.)

X.—*Does suffering always evolve, or can extreme suffering injure the Ego or causal body, and do people who go insane through trouble, real or imaginary, regain their full powers upon the death of the physical body or at the next incarnation?*

E. A. B.—Suffering, as one side of experience, must always help in the evolution of the ego, though *how much* may depend on the way in which it is met. No suffering, however great, can injure the causal body, as we learn that nothing can really injure it but evil so persistent and extreme that we need scarcely take it into account, though its *growth* may be greatly retarded by the refusal to make due use of our opportunities of progress. Nor would any mere "trouble" be the real cause of insanity, though it may seem, as its starting-point, to be so. The true cause lies deeper; insanity is said to be *always* the result of some evil done in the past (which by no means implies that it must have been done in the present earth-life). Insanity seems also to be of many degrees, differing according to the degree and kind of that past evil; sometimes affecting only the consciousness in the physical body, in which case the sufferer would be free and sane whenever the body was asleep, and of course after death; sometimes, in graver cases, the astral body is also affected, and even the mental; and cases have been known in which the terrible retribution has returned in more than one earth-life. These last, however, are probably rare, and in all cases the evil karma will of course be eventually worked out.

B. K.—The Ego—the self in the *causal* body—can only be affected by such vibrations as can set in motion the matter of the *arūpa* mental plane—the world of *abstract* thought. Suffering, whether physical or emotional, does not act directly upon this and therefore cannot *injure* the Ego in any way. It can—at most—only develop it, by calling out its powers of response: for since the purpose of the Ego in seeking manifestation is the unfolding of its powers and the becoming master and lord of all the three worlds, it must of necessity pass through every variety of experience and among these the two contrasted poles of sensation, pleasure and pain alike, since neither can be manifested without its opposite. And this development even takes place only indirectly, because

during its human evolution the experience gathered by the Ego is modified by the mind before being taken up into the causal body. And it should be remembered that pain and pleasure belong in their nature to the astral plane primarily, where they appear as two of the forms under which the "feeling" aspect of the Self unfolds its powers.

As regards the problem of insanity, it is, I think, a very complex one. In many cases, perhaps the majority, insanity is simply a lesion of the physical (or etheric) brain, though I believe that some few instances have been noticed in which the astral body also seemed to be involved. Whether or not anything of the sort could be traced in very rare instances in the mental body I do not know; but since in all cases alike these three bodies: physical, astral and mental, are disintegrated in the normal course after each incarnation, there could hardly be any carrying over of such lesions to the next incarnation; though, of course, if the karma producing insanity had not been exhausted in the one life, it would certainly operate till it was exhausted either in the next or some later life, though most probably it would then produce a less marked effect, since, at any rate, some part, if not the whole, of its energy would have been already expended.

Such cases, however, must, I should think, be exceedingly rare; for by far the larger number of cases now classed as insanity are due merely to injury, disorganisation or malformation of the physical apparatus through which the consciousness must express itself if it is to manifest on the physical plane.

QUESTION 184.

C. G.—How can we obtain a diagram of the Heavenly Man mentioned in Fragments of a Faith Forgotten on p. 368?

What are the letters of the ancient name for which the name of Jesus is a substitute, mentioned also on the same page?

G. R. S. M.—I am afraid that I cannot throw sufficient light on the subject to make it in any way intelligible to the readers of THE VĀHAN without taking up many numbers of our useful little monthly. I will, however, give the passages from Irenæus (*Adv. Har.*, I. xiv. §§ 3 and 4) germane to the subject and append a few words of explanation. It will be remembered that Irenæus is "refuting the heresies" of Marcus, a kabalistic Gnostic, and quoting from a mystic document of his school. The contents of this document were thrown into the form of an apocalypse or revelation, the inspiration of which is ascribed to the Supernal Four (the Quaternion or Tetrad or Tetractys), one of the highest hierarchies of the Pleroma or ideal world, perhaps the Four into which "the Three fell" in the Stanzas of Dzyan. For this Greatness only reveals itself to mortals in its "female" form, since the world cannot bear the power and effulgence of its "masculine" greatness. In the individual economy it may perchance be

the buddhic glory surrounding the âtmic triad, the three-in-one of the eternal monad, the everlasting ground of man's essential being.

Irenæus then proceeds to quote from the revelation of this Supernal Four, as contained in the Marcasian cryptic MS., as follows (in Keble's translation, "Library of the Fathers," London, 1872):

"Now then I am minded to manifest unto thee the very Truth herself. For I have brought her down from the very mansions on high, that thou mayest look on her unclothed, and discern her beauty, yea, and hear her speak, and marvel at her wisdom. Behold then her head above, the α and ω ; her neck, β and ψ ; her shoulders with her hands, γ and χ ; her bosom, δ and ϕ ; her chest, ϵ and ν ; her back, ζ and τ ; her belly, η and ς ; her thighs, θ and ρ ; her knees, ι and π ; her legs, κ and σ ; her ancles, λ and ξ ; her feet, μ and ν ."

Whereupon Irenæus breaks in with: "This is the body of that 'Truth' which our wizard teaches; this is the figure of the alphabetical element, this the form of the diagram; and he calls this element 'Man.'"

And then, turning again to the MS., he quotes the words of the Revealer to Marcus: "She is the fountain of all discourse, and the beginning of all sound, and the utterance of that is which unspeakable, and the mouth of that still Silence. And this is indeed her body: but do thou, lifting on high the thought of thy mind, hear from the mouth of Truth the self-producing Word, which also conveys the Father."

I have no doubt I could make this somewhat more intelligible by an improved translation, had I the time, but other work of a pressing nature leaves me hardly a spare moment to write a hurried answer. It is evident that Marcus is simply adapting the Greek alphabet to some existing system of kabalistic mysticism; presumably he is substituting Greek for Hebrew or some other letters, or even it may be Egyptian hieroglyphs, which already were but substitutes or labels for certain powers or forces.

And that this is so is evidenced by the following "quotation" from the same document which immediately succeeds the preceding paragraph.

"[Whereupon] the Truth looked upon him, and opened her mouth and spake a Word; and the Word became a name, and it became that name which we know and speak, Christ Jesus: which name as soon as she had pronounced, she became silent."

How much of this is quotation and how much a summary by Irenæus, it is not easy to determine, and therefore we cannot be certain that we have the exact data before us, knowing as we do the proved inexactitude of the Bishop of Lyons in dealing with Gnostic MSS. That it is not a verbal quotation, however, we are quite sure by the way in which Irenæus continues, when he writes:

"And while Mark was looking at her for her to say something more, the Quaternion again coming forward saith, Thou didst esteem as contemptible that Word, which thou heardest from the mouth of Truth" (ap. Stieren)—and here I must

translate from the texts, for Keble has entirely missed the sense—"Yet this name which thou knowest and thinkest thou hast (in it the real name) is not the ancient Name. Thou hast His sound only and knowest not His power. For as to Jesus, it is the Six name (being of six letters) known unto all who are of his calling. But that which is amid the æons of the Pieroma, the Name which exists manifoldly, is of another fashion and another type, known by those only who are kin to Him, whose greatnesses are always with Him."

The "Name" then for which Jesus is a substitute, that Name who has many names, is One who is known only to those who are kin to Him, his legitimate children, those whose greatnesses, whose angels and whose monads, are continually with Him.

QUESTION 185.

J. L.—On p. 337 of *Esoteric Christianity*, writing on the use of the Latin language in the services of the Roman Catholic Church, Mrs. Besant says: "It is not used as a dead language here, a tongue not understood of the people, but as a living force in the invisible worlds. It is not used to hide knowledge from the people, but in order that certain vibrations may be set up in the invisible worlds which cannot be set up in the ordinary languages of Europe, unless a great Occultist should compose in them the necessary succession of sounds."

I shall be very glad to know upon what authority the above statement is based, as the most that the leaders of the Roman Catholic Church claim is that "Latin was adopted as being the universal tongue of early Christendom, and retained because, being a dead language, it was not subject to the changes inevitable in the cases of living languages." Vide Cardinal Gibbon's *The Faith of our Fathers*, pp. 377-380.

A. B.—The statement was made as a matter of fact, not based on authority. Probably only a comparatively few of the Roman Catholic clergy understand the value of the preservation by their Church of the mantra forms. But certainly among those who rule the Church there have been and are a few with occult knowledge, and they have made the preservation of the Latin tongue a matter of Church order. There are many statements in *Esoteric Christianity* which are not based on any authority save that of knowledge, and they are put as simple statements of fact, with no demand on anyone that he should accept them.

QUESTION 186.

W. P.—On meeting some people for the first time why is it that one has such a strong aversion, often without speaking, which when conversation is established is dispelled, although not always while on the other hand one may have a great liking for a person he has not spoken to?

E. L.—The solution of these mysterious aversions and attractions lies in the fact that we are not here for the first time, but have lived very often before, and that in any life we may run across old ac-

quaintances between whom and ourselves a bond has been previously established, whether of dislike or affection. The Inner Man remembers this though the outer remain unconscious. Again, some people surround themselves with a repelling thought atmosphere born of extreme reserve and shyness. This striking against, say, a demonstrative person, who vibrates at a different pitch, so to speak, throws him back. But if some inner note of union be found and struck, once this exterior barrier is pierced the unpleasant sensation will be dispelled. For this reason we should examine such first impressions carefully and not allow them to make us misjudge the person. We should endeavour, as far as possible, to see people as they are, and make sure we are not viewing them through a beclouded mental and astral atmosphere of our own. The impression set up on the opposite or love side is also due to the past tie, and should be as carefully examined.

M. E. G.—The answer to W. P.'s question would probably lie in the fact that the entities so meeting had almost certainly intimate acquaintance in past incarnations, whether pleasurable or the reverse. "Soul" recognises "Soul" despite temporary kármic disability on the physical plane, engendered perhaps at some period when they were not in incarnation together, thus forming new clothing under which the "soul friend" is not at first sight recognisable. But I think that these sympathies and antipathies may be traced also to very different causes and are often danger signals which should not be disregarded. One's "favourite sin" strongly marked in another is often reason sufficient for a barrier to be unconsciously formed—for the magnetic forces clash without a word being spoken. Pride treads on pride, the self-centred feels ill-used at the approach of another also self-centred, and so on through many forms of self-love. We are all so desperately on our dignity, so hyper-sensitive to the slightest ruffle, that many of us carry about a constant shield against friendship. When these sympathies or antipathies come our way it would be well, perhaps, to look a little closer into them, and try the spirits which arouse them, whether they be of God.

QUESTION 187.

M. B. H.—Mrs. Besant in *Dharma*, p. 31, says: "True, the hunger is in the inner body, but that is outside the centre of consciousness."

(1) Does the inner body here mean the "physical" body—the using up of the tissues of which causes the feeling of hunger; or the "astral" body, the seat of the sensation of hunger?

(2) Can we speak of an animal having "a centre of consciousness," and where is it? Is the "centre of consciousness" here an astral centre? Is a "centre of consciousness" formed by receiving and responding to stimuli? Would not such stimuli always originate in the Not-Self, i.e., outside the (present) "centre of consciousness"?

B. K.—As far as I can see the answers to these points are as follows:—

(1) The “inner body” referred to in the passage quoted from Mrs. Besant’s *Dharma* is the astral body, not the physical. For all sensation, all feeling, belong to the astral body, primarily; but the vibrations of the astral body which constitute the “feeling” of hunger are set up by the reaction on the astral of the physical body, the exhaustion and destruction of the tissues of which, though they do not in themselves form any feeling or sensation—which would be wholly absent if the astral body were for the time separated from the physical—yet indirectly by the condition which they induce in the astral body do give rise to the sensation in question.

(2) Yes: an animal has a “centre of consciousness,” for it is connected with a specific monad by the chain of “permanent atoms,” for details as to which I must refer the questioner to Mrs. Besant’s papers now being published in the *Theosophical Review*.

(3) Essentially the “centre of consciousness” is the Monad, for thence proceeds the Life, one aspect of which is consciousness. But this Monad having “retired into silence and darkness” is in evolution represented by the three permanent atoms which form the Higher Triad—Ātmā-Buddhi-Manas. But in the animal stage this triad even is practically unconscious, and the effective, the working active centre in that stage is the permanent astral atom.

In Mrs. Besant’s papers already mentioned will be found the answer in detail to the remainder of this question, which is too long and elaborate for treatment here.

QUESTION 188.

A. E.—Is not the relation between the Manifested and the Unmanifested Deity the same as between personality and individuality? Is not the Manifested Deity, though perfect if seen from a human point of view, imperfect if regarded from the standpoint of the Unmanifested? Is not the forming and destruction of Universes the process of evolution of the Unmanifested, as it were Its reincarnation into different bodies?

B. K.—To me it seems that this cannot be the case, though I should be the very last to venture to dogmatise or even risk anything like an assertion on a subject so far beyond, not merely our actual knowledge, but even our power of rational specula-

tion. Still if we are to use words at all, they must retain something at least of their usual connotation; and the very word “individuality” essentially implies the presence of definite, definable and distinguishable characteristics—for these it is which constitute an “individuality” when regarded as objective, just as the self-conscious discrimination of the “I,” the consciousness of “self” as distinct from and contrasted with other “selves” seems to me to constitute its essential element of “individuality,” when considered on its subjective side. Now it is precisely the complete and total absence of these specific differentia, of all upon which our thought or perception can fasten, which is implied by the word “Unmanifest.”

It seems to me, therefore, less incorrect to regard the relation between the personality and the individuality as finding its higher analogue in the relation of the individuality to the Manifested Deity, the Logos, rather than in the relation of the latter to the Unmanifested.

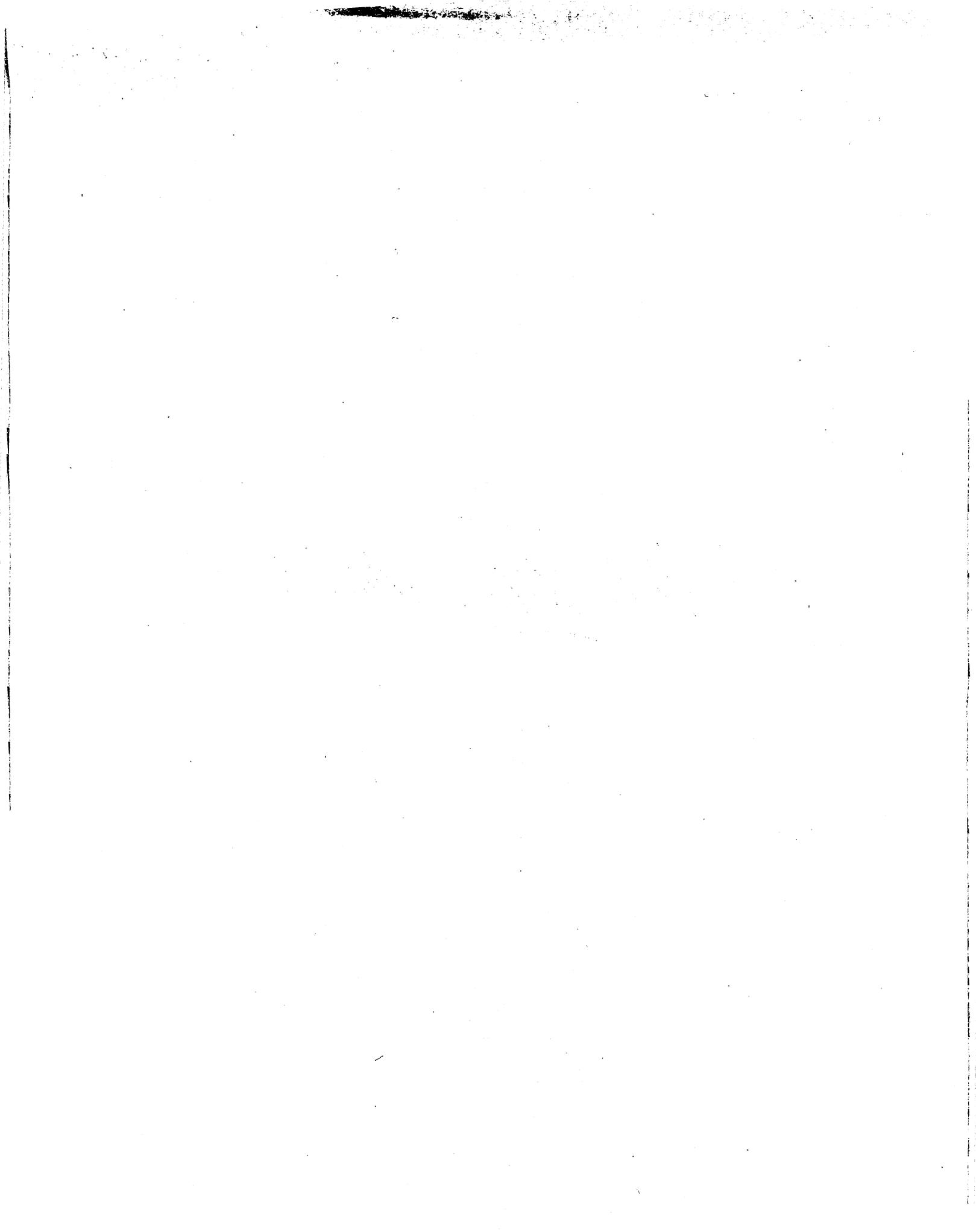
And this view seems strengthened by the fact that just as the Manifested Deity is indeed “imperfect” because “limited,” as regarded from the standpoint of the Unmanifest; so, too, however “perfect” the individuality may be as looked at from the standpoint of the personality, yet the most perfect individuality possible must needs seem to be “imperfect,” because more limited, when realised from the standpoint of the Logos in whom it lives and moves and has its being.

The last paragraph of the question raises points which have formed the subject of prolonged discussion and much controversy in the great philosophical systems of India. To go into these in the space of a VĀHAN answer is obviously impossible and I can only say that so far as my own reading goes no solution of the problem has as yet been propounded which is not open to objections so grave as to cause the student to feel that the problem is one which is quite beyond our range in the present stage of the evolution of our intelligence.

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post-free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications for “Activities” must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest.

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THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

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All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

Vol. XII.

LONDON, DECEMBER 1, 1902.

No. 5.

Edited by BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

RULES OF THE BRITISH SECTION.

At the last Convention of the European Section a resolution was passed empowering the Executive Committee to alter the Rules of the Section in accordance with the change of name.

In view of this resolution the following necessary changes have been made in the Rules.

Rule 1 now reads:—

The British Section of the Theosophical Society is constituted under the Rules of the Theosophical Society.

Rule 9:—

There shall be an Executive Committee composed of not less than seven members, the General Secretary and Treasurer being included; two of its members, in addition to the General Secretary and the Treasurer, shall be residents in the city or vicinity in which the Headquarters of the Section is located; all executive functions of the Council shall be performed by such Committee; it shall be elected annually in Convention, and may fill vacancies occurring by resignation or otherwise, between Convention; its quorum shall be three of its members.

Rule 15:—

The fees and dues to be charged and paid are as follows:—

(a) All applications for membership shall be accompanied by an entrance fee of five shillings, which shall be forwarded to the General Secretary.

(b) The annual dues to be paid by unattached members individually and by every Branch for each member on its roll to the General Secretary's office shall be the sum of five shillings.

(c) Every application for a charter shall be accompanied by a fee of £1 sterling.

I. HOOPER,
Acting General Secretary.

DEATH OF MADAME MEULEMANN.

It is with great regret we announce the loss sustained by the Dutch Section in the sudden death of Madame Meulemann. We, in this country, convey to our brethren in Holland both our great sympathy, and our sense of personal loss, for the interests of one Section are the interests of all. But, nevertheless, we are assured we have still, though unseen, the service and love of that most devoted theosophist, who has for a while passed from her labours on this physical plane.

I. HOOPER,
Acting General Secretary.

NOTICE.

Unattached members can, if they wish, on joining the Society be put into correspondence with an older member by addressing the Secretary of the Social Committee, 28, Albemarle Street, W.

SECTIONAL ROOMS.

The Sectional Rooms at 28, Albemarle Street, will be closed for the Christmas holidays on Wednesday, December 24th, re-opening on Monday, December 29th, at the usual hour, 11 a.m. On Sundays the rooms are not open for the use of members till 3 p.m.

I. HOOPER,
Acting General Secretary.

ACTIVITIES.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to November 20th: M. W. S., £1 1s.; E. F., 5s.; M. M., 10s.; T. J., £2 2s.; T. B. B., £3 3s.; B. O., £1; G. W. B., £2 2s.; G. E. T., £3; E. A. B., £6; T. H., 5s.; F. M. M. R., £1; Ss., 10s.; W. J. L., £4 10s.; B. P. M., 15s. Total: £26 3s.

Section Reference Library.

The following books have been gratefully received for the Library: *Modern Astrology*, Vols. X. and XI.; *The Life and Letters of James Martineau*, J. Drummond and C. B. Upton.

The following have been purchased during the past month: *Journey to Lhasa and Central Tibet*, Sarat Chandra Das, C.I.E.; *Principles of Psychology*, 2 vols., W. James; *Manual of Psychology*, W. James; *An Outline of Theosophy*, C. W. Leadbeater; *Texts and Studies*, Vol. VI., No. 1, Vol. VII., Nos. 1, 2, 3; *The Soul of a People*, H. Fielding; *The Hearts of Men*, H. Fielding; *The Mind of Man*, Gustav Spiller.

R. HOBSON,
Assistant Librarian.

Meetings for Enquirers.

Three meetings for Enquirers and *newly joined* members of the Society will be held by Mrs. Hooper on the following Monday afternoons, beginning at 3.30 p.m. punctually, at 28, Albemarle Street.

The subjects are as follows:—Monday, December 1st, "Death and Rebirth"; 8th, "The Law of Justice"; 15th, "The Building of Character."

Class for the Study of the Bhagavad Gītā.

Miss Arundale will hold this Class, open to members only, at 28, Albemarle Street, at 3.30 p.m., on Fridays, December 5th, 12th and 19th.

Practice Debating Class.

This Class will meet at 28, Albemarle Street, on Thursdays, December 4th and 11th, at 7 p.m. It is a sectional activity, open to all members of the Society, and new members are cordially invited to join.

E. SEEVERS,
Hon. Secretary.

Blavatsky Lodge.

The Lodge is fortunate in obtaining a new lecturer in the person of Mrs. Corbett, who has delivered two very interesting lectures on "The Training of the Will," and "Methods of Study." On November 6th, there was an open night for discussion; the subject was "Cataclysms and the

Moral Order"; at the close of the debate Mr. Mead spoke at length on the topic which had engaged the attention of the Lodge; dealing with it from a very original standpoint.

The Lodge has welcomed two new lecturers besides Mrs. Corbett; both of whom gave to the members a most enjoyable evening.

Miss Lilian Lloyd gave a delightful lecture on "Epictetus," and Mr. G. S. Arundale read a very thoughtful paper dealing with the character and worth of Napoleon I. judged from a theosophic standpoint.

The Sunday meetings for the past month have been well attended; the lecturers have been: Mrs. Hooper, Miss Arundale, and Captain W. B. Lauder.

S. M. S.

North London Lodge.

This Lodge received a visit from members of the Chiswick Lodge, on Saturday, November 1st. Mr. W. C. Worsdell opened an interesting discussion on Socialism, at the conclusion of which refreshments were handed round, and a pleasant hour spent in friendly chat. All present agreed as to the value of such inter-lodge gatherings in helping to draw London members closer together.

W. M. G.

Greenock Centre.

A Theosophical Centre has just been started in Greenock, having rooms at 11, Duff Street. A few weeks ago Messrs. Wilson and McKechnie addressed a well-attended public meeting, and a little later a lecture on Reincarnation, by the Countess Wachtmeister, who was on a visit to the district, aroused considerable interest. The rooms now opened are to be used for the purpose of study, and all weekly meetings are open to the public.

W. S. HENDRY,
Secretary pro tem.

Theosophical Lending Library.

This Library is open to all, whether members of the Theosophical Society or not.

Terms of subscription: three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra.

Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 2.30 to 6 o'clock.

Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., in the small room, Foresters' Hall, Bath Street (near Pump Room), when books can be obtained

from the Lodge Library. Enquiries should be addressed by letter to Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings in the Council Room, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Dec. 7th, *Morals and Dogma*, H. M. Chaplin; Dec. 14th, *Thought*, F. J. Hooper; Dec. 21st, *The Mirror of the Self*, B. Old; Dec. 28th, *The Science of Man*, J. H. Duffell. Conversational class, on Saturdays, at 7.30 p.m., in the Portman Hotel. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. Brian Hodgson, Ivydene, Poplar Avenue, Edgbaston.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays at 7.45 p.m., in the Theosophical Room, Bank Buildings, North Parade: Dec. 2nd, *Theosophy and the Churches*, Hodgson Smith; Dec. 9th, *Man and his Bodies*, A. R. Orage; Dec. 16th, *Self-reliance*, Miss Shaw. For information apply to Mrs. O. Firth, 10, Selborne Terrace, Manningham, Bradford.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Meetings on alternate Sundays at 3.30 p.m., and on alternate Mondays at 8 p.m., at members' houses, also on each Wednesday following the Sunday meeting, at 15, Old Steine, at 8 p.m. Information can be obtained from Mr. N. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or from Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., at Brooklyn Chambers, St. Augustine's Parade. For further particulars enquiry may be addressed to S. H. Old, at the above address.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. For information apply to the President, Mr. W. Kohlen, 12, rue d'Égmont.

BRUSSELS, CENTRALE BELGE. General meetings held in the Lodge Rooms, 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, the first and third Saturdays in the month, at 8.15 p.m. Students' Class, open to all members, the second and fourth Saturdays, at 8 p.m. Reading room open from 3 to 5 p.m. twice a week. For information apply by letter to the Secretary, 21, rue du Vallon.

DIDSBURY LODGE. Public Lectures in the Liberal Club, Didsbury.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Meetings in the Philosophical Institution Rooms, 4, Queen Street, at 8 p.m.: Dec. 4th, *Man—Astral*, Mrs. Drummond; Dec. 18th, *Man—Mental and Spiritual*, Mrs. Stead. Lodge meetings for special study are held twice monthly. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. J. Lorimer Thomson, Roseburn House, Roseburn.

EXETER LODGE. Open meetings are held in the Lodge Room, 48, High Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., and on the first and third Sundays of the month at 7 p.m. Meetings for members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.30 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. Meetings at Shepherd's Hall (Room No. 3), 25, Bath Street, on the fourth Monday of each month, at 8 p.m.: Dec. 22nd, *The Purpose of Theosophy*, J. Wilson. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. James Wilson, 48, Holmhead Street, Glasgow.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings in the Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Dec. 7th, *Civilisations, Ancient, Modern and Ideal*, Hodgson Smith; Dec. 14th, *Faith and Faithfulness*, Miss E. Pickard; Dec. 21st, *The Civilisation of Ancient Egypt*, C. N. Goode; Dec. 28th, *The Future that awaits us*, Miss Shaw. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

HULL LODGE. Meetings at the Central Temperance Hotel (Jarratt Street entrance), on Sundays, at 7 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at the Athenæum Restaurant, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Dec. 1st, *Crude Conceptions of God*, Percy Lund; Dec. 8th, *Man and his Bodies*, A. R. Orage; Dec. 15th, *Karma and the Law of Evolution*, Miss Shaw; Dec. 22nd, *Theosophy and the Occult Arts*. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. G. H. Popplestone, 8, Ashville View, Cardigan Road, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings at 18, Colquitt Street, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C., for the study of Ashvaghosha's *Awakening of Faith*.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 7.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill, S.W.: Dec. 7th, *The Central Teachings of Theosophy*, Mrs. Sharpe; Dec. 14th, *The Power of Suggestion*, P. G. Tovey; Dec. 21st, *The Living God*, D. N. Dunlop. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 1, Pentland Street, Wandsworth Common, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays at 28, Albemarle Street, W., at 8.30 p.m.: Dec. 4th, *The Theory of Evolution; its Position to-day*; H. R. Hogg; Dec. 11th, *What do we mean by "Initiation"?* G. R. S. Mead. Meetings on Sundays (open to visitors) at 7 p.m.; Dec. 7th, *Rejuvenescence in Nature*, W. C. Worsdell; Dec. 14th, *The Theosophic Ideal*, Mrs. Sharpe.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, on Fridays, at 8 p.m.: Dec. 5th, *Myths and their Meanings* (with magic-lantern illustrations), Mrs. Cox; Dec. 12th, *Mithra, a Sun God*, A. A. Harris; Dec. 19th, *Predestination*, W. C. Worsdell.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "West View," 12, Oakfield Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. For information apply to the Hon. Secretary, F. Horne, 27, Keen's Road, Croydon.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Dec. 1st, . . . A. J. Faulding; Dec. 8th, *Mathematics and Ghosts*, S. Jast; Dec. 5th, *Unity and Diversity*, Mrs. Sharpe; Dec. 22nd, *Mental Aberrations*, Alan Leo. Class for study on the first and third Saturdays of each month at 8 p.m.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings at 8, Inver-

ness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Sundays, at 3 p.m. Young people and children are cordially invited. For information address the Secretary, Lotus Lodge, 7, Lanhill Road, Elgin Avenue, W.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N., on Mondays, Wednesdays (Enquirers) and Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Dec. 6th, *Yoga*. R. King; Dec. 8th, *Man's Place in the Universe*; Dec. 13th, *Objects*, G. Taylor Gwinn; Dec. 15th, *Room to let—with or without Power*; Dec. 19th, *Conversazione* at Mornington Hall.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.: Dec. 5th, *Volcanoes and Earthquakes*, A. P. Sinnett; Dec. 12th, *The Power of Suggestion*, P. Tovey; Dec. 19th, *Conversazione*.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., at 57, King Street, City. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 80, Northenden Road, Sale, Cheshire.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Public lectures will be given in the Liberal Club, Didsbury, on Oct. 13th and 27th, at 8 p.m. Lodge meetings on alternate Mondays. Information can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, 38, Bamford Road, Didsbury.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER CENTRE. Meetings for members of the Society on Tuesdays at 8 p.m. Open to non-members on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Information from the Hon. Secretary, West Bank, Park Road, Ashton-on-Mersey.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 68, Lintorpe Road, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., for study of *Thought Control*. Public Lectures on Sundays in the Lecture Room, Co-operative Hall, Corporation Road.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Meetings on Mondays at 8 p.m. Communications to Hon. Corresponding Secretary, W. E. Dowson, 10, Mapperley Road, Nottingham.

OXFORD CENTRE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m., in the office of Mr. Salter, over Lloyd's Bank, Carfax, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Hon. Secretary, W. Cock, 37, Beechcroft Road, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., and on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 19, Cornwall Street. Enquiries to be addressed to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at 7.30 p.m., at the Saville Temperance Hotel, Newcastle, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*, and on the last Sunday of the month, at Lily House, off Ocean View, Whitley Bay.

YORK CENTRE. Meetings on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., in the De Grey Rooms: Dec. 5th, *Theosophy and some Modern Ideas*, O. Firth; Dec. 19th, *The Love of Nature*, E. J. Dunn. Information from E. J. Dunn, Kelfield Lodge, York.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of THE VĀHAN.

DEAR SIR,

In this month's VĀHAN, G. R. S. M. writes questioning the accuracy of a statement in Question 185 to the effect that "Latin was adopted [by the Roman Catholic Church] as being the universal tongue of early Christendom," the authority for which statement is Cardinal Gibbons (*Faith of our Fathers*, pp. 377-80).

In the question, as sent, that statement was not given as a quotation from the book mentioned, but as a synopsis of the contents of the pages to which reference was made. The inverted commas (implying quotation) were not used by me.

As G. R. S. M. states: "Even Macaulay's 'school-boy' knows that Greek and not Latin was the language of 'early Christendom'"; but this knowledge, though it must have been possessed by Cardinal Gibbons, is not evidenced in his book, as the following quotations will prove:—

"When Christianity was first established, the Roman Empire ruled the destinies of the world. Pagan Rome had dominion over nearly all Europe and large portions of Asia and Africa. The Latin was the language of the Empire. Wherever the Roman standard was planted, there also was spread the Latin tongue.

"The Church naturally adopted in her Liturgy, or public worship, the language which she then found prevailing among the people. The fathers of the Early Church generally wrote in the Latin tongue, which thus became the depository of the treasures of sacred literature in the Church" (p. 377).

"As her doctrine and liturgy are unchangeable, she wishes that the language of her Liturgy should be fixed and uniform. Faith may be called the jewel, and language is the casket which contains it. So careful is the Church of preserving the jewel intact, that she will not disturb even the casket in which it is set. Living tongues, unlike a dead language, are continually changing in words and meaning.

"But the Latin, being a dead language, is not liable to these changes" (p. 378).

Other Roman Catholic authors give the same reasons, as I might show by further quotations; but the above will be sufficient to exculpate me from any charge of inaccuracy.

J. L.

G. R. S. M.—J. L. has entirely exculpated himself from any suspicion of having misrepresented Cardinal Gibbons. When I read the last paragraph quoted from p. 377, like the man in the fable, I find myself saying: "Gents, I arn't ekel to it!" Tertullian is the *only* Latin Father who comes within the closing years of the second century; all the rest used Greek!

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 192

(Continued from p. 32)

J. M.—*In Thought Power, p. 118, it is written: "Let the student, when he has been thinking steadily, drop the subject, and as any thought appears in the mind turn the attention from it. . . . If need be, imagine a void, as a step to quiescence, and try to be conscious of stillness and darkness only." What is the object aimed at? In First Steps in Occultism it is said: "In gazing on the ineffable mystery of his own higher nature, he causes the Initial Trial to fall on him. The oscillation between pleasure and pain ceases for perhaps an instant of time, etc." Is there any connection between the above two passages?*

B. K.—The object aimed at in the advice quoted in the question is, I think, to still and quiet the activity of the brain and the lower mind, so that the influence, the inspiration, the illumination radiating from the higher Individuality, may make itself perceptible in waking consciousness functioning in the brain.

I do not think there is any special connection between this advice and the latter quotation, except in so far as this effort may, and generally will, form part of the general initial effort to enter upon the Path—the bringing upon oneself of the initial trial referred to, which always follows sooner or later upon any real, earnest, intense determination to live the higher life. Nor do I think that any formal, outer pledge, or anything of the kind, is indispensable for the bringing upon oneself of the trial in question. It is a question of the inner awakening, the interior, imperative demand of one's inner nature for Light and Knowledge. The outer steps by which one becomes a pledged probationer are effective in proportion to the inner energies and forces at work in one's nature: for in occultism, above all else, it is ever the inner reality, not the outer garment or form, which is the vitally important matter.

QUESTION 193.

M. L.—*When one determines beforehand what one will do at a certain time, is it a mechanical volition that causes us to remember and perform that act, or is it the Higher Self that prompts?*

I. H.—It is my opinion that almost all action must be due to the prompting of the Ego, using the term Ego to imply the thinking individuality, which draws from the "Higher Self," or Monad, the streams of force necessary for its activities. Even when such action is due to an impulse from without, and is, in a sense, automatic, the Ego has probably, I hold, built the type of vehicle which is able to answer that impulse; but I am by no means sure that in every case this would be true. I believe it to be conceivable that under given circumstances, which would be the kârmic result of a distant past, human beings might act in a way not only at variance with their inner tenden-

cies, but also with a bodily automatism, if I may so phrase it; with nothing whatsoever in their present vehicles of consciousness which was expressed by their action. I put this forward as my own theory, from purely outside observation of certain unusual facts of behaviour. This is, however, a by-path, and does not bear on M. L.'s question. I think that in many cases, especially in actions which deal with matters into which little mentality need be thrown, it is quite possible to generate sufficient force to guide the body into the action determined upon without any further prompting of the mind. One makes a note of the fact that a certain thing should be done under certain circumstances; when those circumstances arise the body, whether it be the physical, astral, or mental body, acts quite spontaneously and does the thing decided upon. It would be an interesting point to observe whether, when the Ego had decided upon a certain line of behaviour under given circumstances, if some slight difference occurred which rendered a modification of action desirable, the bodies would require further prompting from the Ego, whether they would merely obey the former prompting automatically, or whether, in the case of the physical body, there is anything of the nature of an acquired separated intelligence which would lead the body to adapt itself to the altered circumstances without prompting.

A. H. W.—The answer to this question depends, the writer thinks, on whether the personal consciousness is unified with that of the Higher Self or not. If it is, then presumably all actions are prompted by the Ego; if not, the remembrance of the act to be performed is probably due to the association of ideas. The sense of time is well developed in many people, the act to be done is associated with a certain hour, when that hour arrives the associated idea of the act to be done appears in consciousness.

QUESTION 194.

A. W. G.—*What is implied by the term "conditionally immortal"? Is that which is capable of losing immortal consciousness the personality which has failed to supply the Thinker with any useful material? The mere blotting out of a useless memory does not appear to me to be a very dreadful thing.*

G. R. S. M.—"Conditional immortality" is a theological term generally employed in connection with the dogma of "soul-saving." The idea is that you have a soul to save; it is not *naturally* immortal, you have to win immortality for it; if you fail, it and with it you "perish everlastingly." This involves us in somewhat of a dilemma, for if we "perish everlastingly," even so the soul is *naturally* immortal, at any rate, in the sense of everlasting. But if "immortal" means not subject to death, as it should mean, then "conditional immortality" would mean that we have to free our selves from the necessity of "death," that is from the necessity of embodiment, for it is only the body or form that perishes, and not the Self. Now

bodies are of many grades; we may free ourselves from the necessity of rebirth in a physical body, but there are bodies psychic and celestial and supercelestial as well. Hence it is that there is progress in immortality; that is to say, absolute immortality pertains to the Self alone, all other forms of immortality are relative, or conditional.

A. B. C.—The meaning of the term would, I consider, depend somewhat upon the context, for we find the expression conditional immortality used in Christian theology in quite a different sense from the way in which it might be used in theosophical books. Judging by the second part of the question the querent is applying it to the possible immortality of the personality. Mrs. Besant, on p. 289 of *Ancient Wisdom* (first edition) uses the expression that the lower nature “can win immortality only by merging itself in the soul,” but I take it that the immortality thus won would be what in another meaning of the term we might call “conditional.” That other sense of the term would have reference to the possibilities of carrying consciousness over different pralayas. We are given to understand that it depends on the grade of evolution attained by the Ego whether consciousness be practically continuous, or interrupted by periods of unconsciousness, across the gulf of which it carries no remembrance. The majority of us, for instance, while bridging by memory the period of sleep, are unable to bridge the gulf of death and remember our past births—in these lower personalities we are therefore mortal. More advanced egos can look back to a series of lives and their personalities may be said to have become immortal in the sense intended by Mrs. Besant in the passage above referred to. But when we come to deal with the incarnations of planets and planetary chains then it might be that comparatively very few in the scale of being had raised their consciousness high enough to carry it over a planetary pralaya. They would be there at the re-awakening, but memory of the past would be non-existent. Still higher of course we can conceive that at a Solar pralaya none but the Solar Logos Himself might keep Consciousness into the great night of Brahmā. This then is, roughly, what I should think a theosophist might mean by conditional immortality—the carrying of unbroken consciousness up to varying limits, not involving the annihilation of the *Life* at any stage but the paralysing of the consciousness at varying stages.

QUESTION 195.

M. S.—*I wish to ask if you will tell me the cause of great depression that attacks me frequently? It is not noticed by others; I pass for being always in good spirits. Is this karma from a past life? Is it possible to get rid of this depression?*

A. B. C.—It is impossible to give definite answers to purely personal questions without knowing the circumstances of the particular case, and those who send such queries to THE VĀHAN

must fain be content with the same kind of vague generalities as the people who send medical questions to the inquiry columns of a weekly newspaper, e.g., the questioner may be suffering from disease of the liver, or perhaps some other unsuspected bodily organ. On the other hand, his astral body may transmit melancholy impressions received on the astral plane, without any particulars as to the cause thereof, and goodness knows there must be horrors enough on that plane in the neighbourhood of this seething mass of cruelty and corruption which we call a civilised community. Yet again, the querent may have reason, as most of us have, for being very dissatisfied with his conscious efforts at self-improvement, and his disapproving Ego may endeavour to impress his physical consciousness. Well, the cure would depend upon the cause. In the first possibility it might be a blue pill, or a changed diet, or the stopping of a gas escape, or more fresh air, or a score of other things on the purely physical plane which react prejudicially on the consciousness. In the second possibility a resolute attitude of real sympathy and helpfulness and a constant remembrance that “God’s in his heaven, all’s well with the world” might work a cure. Lastly, if the cause be as last suggested, the recollection that all onward progress is made up of ebbs and flows, that we cannot advance by leaps and bounds, or grow, like mushrooms, in a single night, but must “make haste slowly,” and take the seasons of light and joy, of darkness and gloom, with equal equanimity when they come, as come they must, might be the most helpful medicine. On this the questioner might see Mrs. Besant’s *Some Difficulties of the Inner Life*. But all such answers can only be suggestions and M. S. ought to be his own best adviser and physician.

E. L.—The depression which the questioner is subject to may arise from one or more causes, or several operating together. To gain the *true* vision of its source would be only possible for one who could see the inner life and read the past. It is sometimes the result of a burden of *unremembered* wrongdoing—that is to say, wrong-doing which is on the verge of being expiated, or is being so, partly in the very depression felt—a burden which is really remembered in the *Higher Self*, but is not clearly recognised in the present life, through the media of *this* physical brain. Or the person may be extremely sensitive to thought-waves of this description coming from others. His surroundings may have something to do with it. Ill-health again is another cause. But is he quite correct in terming it “depression”? There comes to earnest-minded people at a certain stage of evolution a sensation of great loneliness, a hunger which nothing hitherto known or found can satisfy. Such may chafe under this sense of gloom and imagine that, by filling the void with some old delight, they will escape. But if it is the voice of the awaking soul which calls, then I can wish nothing better for such than that it should continue to pierce into the everyday consciousness. If it is merely a passing emotion it

will be satisfied—for the time being—or drowned in the next wave of an opposite nature which rushes over the life. It is said that those who seek the heights are very lonely. But it is only that emptiness which can be filled with the Greatest and Best. Again, when we come into contact with some life greater than our own it seems to me that this sense of depression may be more felt, and that we should rather rejoice that we are able to sense it than strive to avoid it. There is always a world burden which the servants of the Good Law are seeking to bear. It may be that we can in this way play our little part and let some cloud of the darkness rest on us who are growing stronger. If we drive it away it may fall on those weaker, who would be almost overwhelmed by it. It is true that we are not to indulge in pessimism of a morbid nature, nor brood over our personal grievances. We have to distinguish between these two very different causes.

Whichsoever of the above sources may account for the depression spoken of, the safe and wise plan is to meet it with strength, confidence and patience, believing that it is in the dark that we gain our truest strength, and that whether it be the smaller or Greater Shadow that falls on us, it must alternate with the Light.

QUESTION 196.

G. H.—*Would it be wrong for a person who had a mother to maintain and who was gifted with clairvoyance to use that gift as a means of livelihood?*

G. R. S. M.—It would be necessary in the first place to know who the person was, what his (or her) circumstances, what his abilities, what the nature of his clairvoyance, before an answer could be attempted in the special case which the questioner may have in mind. Speaking generally, it might be said that if the person can gain their livelihood in any other way it would be preferable to do so, and to use the dawning of the subtler senses as an opportunity for the development of the best within them. On the other hand, to use such faculties for the support of those who are naturally dependent upon us is a higher thing than to use them for mere selfish purposes.

If the subtler senses are regarded as a means of coming into conscious touch with the higher, and are never willingly used but for this purpose, they become a blessing and not a curse, for they are then dedicated to the service of God. But these senses in themselves are not necessarily spiritual (in a higher sense) as we all well know; in the majority of cases they are psychic, and things psychic differ only in degree of greater subtlety and intensity from things physical.

Again, if you say that clairvoyance should never be used as a means of livelihood, you must clearly define how this differs from any other gift of intellect or intuition. Is the poet, for instance, never to use his poetic gift as a means of livelihood; is a musician never to sell his symphonies; an artist his pictures? Is there not a clairvoyance of ideas,

a formless "seeing"? Is the mystic never to publish; the inspired orator never to speak for fee; the patient student who has ideals and truths to track out in the maze of history and literature never to receive the small royalties which are usually the modest honoraria of his labours; the contemplator of nature never to accept a paid chair of astronomy or physics. What is clairvoyance in its real sense?

The question says "to use that gift as a means of livelihood." If that means to yield oneself up as a psychic tipster for the "markets" and other "events," as a means of gratifying the vanity and curiosity of frivolity, then it is a low way of living, for it is scarcely to be distinguished from prostitution. But if it means something higher and better, then the old saying "the labourer is worthy of his hire," may apply in this case as in all the others we have cited.

QUESTION 197.

J. F. B.—*Every cause has an effect just as every effect has a cause. Consider the case of an old man. At twenty-five he was the complex resultant of a vast number of causes. This resultant now becomes a set of causes the exact effects of which are theoretically knowable. After twenty-five he cannot be master of his destiny since that destiny is predetermined, and, by a simple extension of the premises, he is never master of his destiny. There is apparently a fallacy somewhere, but it is a little difficult to see where. Can any suggestion be made?*

A. H. W.—A fundamental axiom of the Esoteric Philosophy states that "The principle which gives life dwells in us and without us, is undying and eternally beneficent." This is the One Free-Will, and man attains free-will when he has disciplined his emotions and desires into harmony with It. It dwells within him, and is directed to the sole end of evolving him into a centre of consciousness, energy and existence, like unto Itself. The great scheme of evolution is imperfect, truly, at present, but the Eternally Beneficent Will works ever by making the best of every detail as it evolves. So a man in whom It dwells, evolves most quickly by making the best of the details of his destiny, as they arrive. When he has brought himself to accept his destiny, to welcome it and make the best of it, he has harmonised his personal will with the Great Will within and without. Free from attraction and repulsion, free from anger, envy and desire, that man becomes a Witness of the Great Creation, a player of the Great Game.

Hence, the writer thinks, the fallacy suggested in the question lies in forgetting, that though a man has fixed his destiny in the past, yet he is still free to make the best or the worst of it now. He cannot avoid it, but he can modify the mental attitude with which he meets it. A Master does what he wills, a slave does what he must; *will* your destiny, and you become its master; quarrel with it, and you stay its slave.

G. R. S. M.—This is the old squirrel-cage pro-

blem of free-will and determinism. There is no solution as long as you make one or other of the "pair" absolute. If you refuse to do so, you discount their values and look for a solution to that of which they are both the appearances, to that where time is not and when cause and effect cease. This is out of the field of practical politics, no doubt J. F. B. will say, but that is just what it is not, for it is one of the elementary fallacies concerning the Self to exclude it from any thing.

I. H.—It appears to me the questioner is assuming that after twenty-five no fresh causes or forces are applied; that there can be no modifications of the forces at present at work. We must also consider that only a portion of the character can show itself (so it is said) in any given physical body, so that in the man at twenty-five we have not the resultant of the whole of his past, but only of a portion of it; moreover, it is also said that only a certain number of the actions of the past cause the environment of any given life. Thus we seem to perceive the possibility of a continued balancing and modification of causes, leading to balancing and modifying of effects. The resultant of many lives becomes a set of causes "the exact effects of which are theoretically knowable," unless those effects are altered by the playing of another set of causes upon the original cause, *i.e.*, an environment, physical, emotional, or mental, calculated greatly to change the character which is the "resultant" of certain previous experiences; it may be, of a very different nature. Let me take an imaginary case to illustrate a little my meaning. Let us assume our man of twenty-five to be the "resultant" of a set of lives which have produced in him a nature disposed to disregard the sufferings of others; he has reached the conclusion that it is not necessary to regard such suffering; that is the opinion which he has formed as the fruit of his experience; naturally then he will be prompted to act in accordance with his opinion; the "cause" (his character) will tend to produce the effects of suffering inflicted on others, and of increased indifference on his own side; so far, we say the man "cannot help himself," he "is as he is made," and the like. But now suppose that an entirely different experience causes him at the age of thirty to modify his opinion; by opinion, by thought, character is built; therefore our man of seventy is the resultant of all his experience of the past; the lives that are gone, which made the resultant of his character at the age of twenty-five, *plus* forty-five years' experience of a very different nature which have profoundly modified his views. Finally, having received an enormous mass of experience, he is capable of making a definite choice as to the forces with which he will work in the future; he is then on the road to freedom.

A. B. C.—It appears to me that at twenty-five, or any other age a man is fundamentally master of his destiny inasmuch as he is constantly re-

sponding to the outward circumstances (made by his past thoughts and actions) by volitions and actions which are within his own control. Upon the way in which current karma is being met and dealt with depends the future course of events. But a man may be *unconscious* on the physical plane that this is the case and then of course, he will appear to be very much the creature of circumstances. Does not the questioner's difficulty arise from not distinguishing between being consciously and unconsciously master of one's destiny. The moment a man knows the law of karma and realises that his tendencies and circumstances are alike the result of his own past volitions then he can begin consciously to modify himself and his surroundings in any direction he pleases. Although for the majority of us any very radical change cannot take place quickly, yet it is theoretically possible by introducing an opposing energy of sufficient strength to entirely modify the after course of events—just as it is possible entirely to modify the direction in which one has sped a missile by interposing a blow which turns it from its original course. Such instances in actual life are by no means so uncommon as might be supposed (*vide* the history of religious conversions) it is all a question of the sufficiency of the secondary force introduced, and this force may be introduced *consciously* by the man who knows, or unconsciously, as far as the physical vehicle is concerned—in the cases of some religious conversions, but we need not suppose that it is unconscious as regards the real man in his inner vehicles.

E. L.—The questioner has got himself tied up in the manifold intricacies of karmic law. Man is master of his destiny, but only when he *knows* it; using the verb in a very deep and wide sense since it is knowledge, or rather wisdom, that makes us Rulers. A person such as described, who, at twenty-five in this life is the "complex resultant of a vast number of causes," had himself set all these in motion previously, and this life at that period afforded him the opportunity for working such out. Cause is in reality gained with effect. The destiny is predetermined truly, but by the Man Himself. To-day he is wearing the chains of some far-off future, in many cases consciously and deliberately, for to him "it seemeth good." Do we not in our gropings among these dark questions at last hit on the theory that—the one who is behind, and who knows, relatively if you like—chooses these tangled ways, knowing that only by doing so can that vast mysterious purpose of human life be fulfilled in the unit as in the whole, for they cannot be truly seen—judged apart. This Knower, who is He? One aspect of that Godhood in which we exist and grow, the Mind of which our minds are part. The Mind is also evolving—in some strange way by our evolution as individuals as we are evolving by its Presence in us.

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription (5s.) Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY, *General Secretary.*

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

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LONDON, JANUARY 1, 1903.

NO. 6.

Edited by BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

GUARANTEED DONATIONS.

Members who have not yet paid their guaranteed donations towards the expenses of the Section for the current financial year are requested to do so as early as convenient.

The attention of new members is drawn to the fact that their ordinary subscription as members of the Society only covers a small portion of the expenses.

These expenses are met by certain members promising to give a further amount annually.

Any member wishing to join in this fund can obtain a form from the General Secretary.

W. B. LAUDER (*Capt.*),
Hon. Treasurer, British Section.

THE LECTURE ROOM.

The Lecture Room will, till further notice, be arranged as a sitting-room on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons. On these days members can order tea there, as well as in the drawing-room, for themselves and their friends. The library is devoted to reading alone.

I. HOOPER,
Acting General Secretary.

THE LATE MADAME MEULEMAN.

The strong tie existing between members of the Theosophical Society in this country and in England has once more made itself felt, and it is with a deep feeling of gratitude that we tender our thanks to our brothers and sisters in the British Section who have shown so deep a sympathy and so truly shared in our loss. For a great loss it is, to all who knew and loved that kind, genial face

(so well known to many of your readers), that Mme. Meuleman is no longer with us in bodily presence. We especially, who have lived for many years with her under one roof, miss her bright smile and cheery voice. But she herself, the "Piet" who was not only so dear to all of us personally, but who was the life and soul of the Society in this country, the centre round which all seemed to revolve, is not dead but is with us still. And to work on diligently along the same lines, keeping together the centre already formed, so that our personal loss may not react on the Society at large, this we feel to be a sacred trust, and at the same time the only fitting way in which to honour the memory of one who to us was both friend and leader.

Telegrams and letters of sympathy from the President-Founder, from the British, American, French and Italian Sections, from the Harrogate, Blavatsky and North London Lodges, and from many prominent members of the Theosophical Society, among whom are Mrs. Besant, Mr. Leadbeater, Mrs. C. Oakley, Mr. and Mrs. Mead, Mrs. Hooper and Herbert Burrows, as also some hundreds of letters from friends in many lands, testify to the high esteem in which she was held by all who knew her.

A few details may not be uninteresting, as she was so well known to many of your readers.

Mme. Meuleman had been ill a few days with jaundice but no danger was apprehended and on Saturday evening she seemed a good deal better. She urged me to go to bed but I said I should sleep on the sofa in her room. About 2.30 she called me saying she was so cold. I covered her up and sat by her a while and in a few minutes she fell into a quiet sleep holding my hand. After half an hour, seeing that she slept, I gently loosened the fingers and went back to the sofa, getting up now and then to listen if the breathing were regular. In the morning one or two of the inmates came up to enquire, but she was still sleeping, and I thought

that when she woke she would be much better. Between 10 and 11 the doctor came. He looked at her and said to me, "How peacefully she sleeps. It is a pity to wake her, I will come in again." He waited a little and was on the point of leaving when suddenly he went back to her bedside and bent over her. "I hear nothing," he said. The temperature was still normal and it seems as if she must have passed away, while we were both in the room, without a sigh, without even a quiver. Her old enemy, the abscess in the head, had reformed and had touched the brain, producing instant death, a cause totally unconnected with the disease for which the doctor had been attending her. The unexpectedness made it a terrible shock to us all. Only Mr. Meuleman and I were at home at the time, but one by one the others came in and were unable to believe the news. A little before noon we were all assembled round the bed where apparently she lay so quietly sleeping, and we stood there together in perfect silence. The following days there was a constant stream of people bringing flowers and longing to see that well-loved face once more. The chamber of death was a bower of flowers brought by loving hands and a deep sense of peace pervaded the room; many came in sobbing, but grew calm at sight of that peaceful face on which no shadow of suffering rested. On the morning of the 27th, many friends gathered at the headquarters round the coffin that had been placed in the drawing-room and which was entirely hidden by wreaths and flowers.

Among the many beautiful wreaths sent by various lodges, the Swastica of lovely roses sent by the British Section and the Seal of the T.S. in white flowers and violets from the Amsterdam Lodge, of which she was Vice-President, were especially noticeable.

After a few appropriate words had been spoken, all formed in procession and paid a last tribute of respect to the earthly remains of a much loved leader by accompanying them to the station. All the outward trappings of woe were wanting, but in that long procession of some two hundred people there was not one who did not mourn a personal friend. The complete absence of ceremonial mourning made the very real visible sorrow all the more impressive. Innates of the Headquarters, delegates of the Dutch Lodges, near relatives and friends, accompanied the body to Hamburg, where the cremation took place, November 28th, at noon, between thirty and forty friends being present.

The organ played "Ein feste burg is unser Gott." No ceremony had been arranged, but when the majestic strains of the Dead March in *Saul* sounded forth, we all rose and stood round the coffin that was hidden under the flowers. Slowly, very slowly, the mass of flowers passed down out of our sight. Till then no word had been spoken. But after it had passed, one after another spoke words of love and loyalty coming from the heart.

Expressed in different ways according to the speakers, one keynote rang out in all: "Let us show our affection and our gratitude to her by

continuing her work, the work of the Masters she served, and by striving after the ideal she ever kept before our eyes."

E. W.

ACTIVITIES.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to December 20th: J. Q., £1; A. J. McF., 3s.; Brighton Lodge, 10s.; W. H. T., £5; A. F. S., £1; E. G., £1; A. V. H., £12 12s.; Hampstead Lodge, £10 10s.; H. and K. D., 10s.; M. B., 16s.; F. L. C., 10s.; S. H., 2s.; M. S. K., £1; A. McD., £5; J. R., 15s.; W. T., 5s.; R. T. P., 5s. Total: £40 18s.

Section Reference Library.

The following books have been purchased during the past month: *Æther and Matter*, Joseph Larmor, M.A., F.R.S.; *The Discharge of Electricity through Gases*, J. J. Thomson, D.Sc., F.R.S.; *Modern Spiritualism*, 2 vols., Frank Podmore; *On an Inversion of Ideas as to the Structure of the Universe*, Osborne Reynolds, M.A., F.R.S.; *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vols. XXX., XXXI.; *The Evolution of Character*, Sarah Corbett, Scholar of Girton; *The Force of Mind, or the Mental Factor in Medicine*, A. T. Schofield, M.D., F.R.C.S.; *Doctor Robert Fludd, the English Rosicrucian, Life and Writings*, J. B. Craven, Rector at Kirkwall.

R. A. HOBSON,
Assistant Librarian.

Meetings for Enquirers.

Four meetings will be conducted by Mrs. Hooper on Monday afternoons at 3.30 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street, W. These meetings are primarily for enquirers and newly joined members. The lectures deal with the subjects in an elementary manner; but it is not intended to exclude older members, who will be welcomed if they wish to attend. The dates and subjects are as follows:—*Jan. 19th*, "Theosophy and Religious Creeds"; *Jan. 26th*, "The Sub-Conscious Self"; *Feb. 2nd*, "Thought Transference"; *Feb. 9th*, "Prayer and Mystical Experiences."

Class for the Study of the "Bhagavad Gîtâ."

Miss Arundale will hold this class, open to members only, at 28, Albemarle Street, on Fridays, January 2nd, 9th and 16th, at 3.30 p.m.

Practice Debating Class.

This Class will be held at 28, Albemarle Street, on Thursday, January 15th, and on the following Thursdays, at 7 p.m. Subject for debate at the

opening meeting: "That the Teachings of Theosophy exercise a beneficial influence on Human Life."

This is a sectional activity open to all members of the Society, and new members are cordially invited to join.

E. SEVERS,
Hon. Secretary.

Science Class.

On Tuesday, January 13th, at 8 p.m. and on the following Tuesdays, Mr. Dyne will hold a class at 28, Albemarle Street, W., for the study of the following subjects: 1. Prof. Bose's *Response in the Living and Non-Living*; 2. *Cranial Psychology and Theosophy*.

This Class is open to all members of the Society, and to non-members on production of a card of admittance signed by a member, obtainable at Headquarters or from members.

E. SEVERS,
Hon. Secretary, Social Committee.

London Federation.

The next quarterly meeting of the above Federation, at which Mr. Sinnett has kindly consented to preside, has been fixed for Saturday, January 17th, at 8 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street. Council Meeting at 7.30 p.m. The subject for discussion will be: "How far is Suggestion justifiable?"

FRANCESCA ARUNDALE,
Hon. Secretary.

Northern Federation.

The thirty-fifth Conference was held in the Theosophical Hall, Harrogate, on November 29th, under the presidency of Mr. G. R. S. Mead. There was a large and representative gathering of delegates and members from Birmingham, Manchester, Harrogate, Middlesbrough, Edinburgh, Sheffield, Leeds, Didsbury, Hull, Bradford and York. The Chairman made sympathetic reference to the great loss the Dutch Section had sustained by the death of Madame Meuleman, and the Conference passed a silent vote of sympathy with the Dutch brethren.

Letters of good wishes were also ordered to be sent to Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater for the success of their efforts in the cause of Theosophy in India and the United States respectively.

A discussion on "What is the Personality?" was inaugurated by Mr. A. R. Orage and taken part in by several speakers, Mr. Mead concluding.

During an adjournment the members were entertained to tea in the Winter Gardens by the members of the Harrogate Lodge.

On reassembling Mr. Mead delivered a most valuable address on "Did Christ live 100 years B.C.?" in the course of which he outlined the results attained to date of a close study made by

himself of the evidence available from outside sources.

Needless to say the lecture was followed with intense interest and at its conclusion the lecturer was warmly thanked for the pleasure and instruction he had given.

Mr. Mead attended a members' meeting the following afternoon and in the evening addressed a large public meeting, taking for his subject "What do we mean by the Christ?"

The Council of the Federation has arranged for the next Conference to be held at Harrogate on February 21st. Mrs. Hooper has kindly consented to preside. It was also decided to amend the name of the Federation to "Northern Federation, Theosophical Society (British Section)."

W. H. THOMAS,
Hon. Secretary.

Blavatsky Lodge.

The lectures on Thursdays since the last issue of THE VĀHAN have been given by Mr. Bellairs, Mr. Hogg and Mr. Mead, who gave the last of the present Session on December 11th.

On December 18th, the Lodge held an informal meeting, at which it discussed "The Uses of Lodge Work." On Monday, December 22nd, it also met informally and discussed "The Significance of Christmas." This meeting was arranged for Monday, as Christmas Day fell on Thursday, and it was thought that so few members would be able to attend.

The third informal meeting will be held on January 1st, after which the regular lectures will begin again and continue through January, February and March.

The latest Sunday lectures have been given by Mr. Arundale, Mr. Dyne, Mr. Worsdell and Mrs. Sharpe. They will be resumed on Sunday, January 18th.

S. M. S.

Birmingham.

The Hon. Secretary of the Extension Committee of Birmingham University was approached early in the autumn with a view to obtaining a course of six lectures on "The Problem of Life in Ancient India," by the well-known orientalist, Prof. J. Estlin Carpenter, of Manchester College, Oxford. He cordially lent his aid to the proposal and was supported by the Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy. It was necessary to form a Committee of Guarantee for the expenses, and upon the leading men of position in the City being appealed to by circular a most gratifying response was received, the guarantee being taken up by the Bishop of the Diocese, the Lord Mayor, leading clerics of the Anglican, the Roman Catholic, the Wesleyan and Unitarian Churches, representatives of the City Council, and a number of other gentlemen. It was hoped that the course would be given in the Spring, but owing to other engagements it has been deemed wiser to postpone it till later.

B. H.

Liverpool Lodge.

On November 5th, Mr. J. H. Duffell gave an interesting lecture on "Theosophy for All." On November 25th, Mr. W. H. Thomas of Middlesbrough gave a lecture on "Theosophy the Need of the Times;" there was a good attendance and much interest was aroused and a number of questions asked. Mrs. Jean B. Gillison read a paper on Mrs. Besant's book on *Thought-Power, its Control and Culture*, on December 10th, in which she gave an idea of the book and the lessons to be drawn from it. The study of *The Ancient Wisdom* has been continued at all the other meetings, in which many interesting points have been elucidated.

J. B. G.,
Hon. Secretary.

Johannesburg Branch.

The Johannesburg Branch of the Theosophical Society has resumed work after the period of inactivity compelled by the war. There are already twelve members and eight associates, and interest is spreading. Address the Secretary, A. J. Hailey, P.O. Box 377, Johannesburg, S. Africa.

"The Lotus Lodge Journal."

This Monthly Magazine on Theosophical lines, for children and young people, is now publishing reports of the Lectures being at present given in America by C. W. Leadbeater, as well as articles and stories from the pens of well-known Theosophical writers, and Outlines of Theosophical Study for older and younger children.

In view of the increased demand for the Journal the Editors have reason to hope that they may be able to start the second year (on March 1st) with a 16pp. printed Magazine, containing occasional illustrations.

The price of the Magazine would be 3s. 6d. per annum post free, and it would be obtainable from the Theosophical Publishing Society, and from all Theosophical book depôts at home and abroad.

The Editors earnestly beg for the support of all Theosophical Society members who are interested in helping young people to understand the Truths of Theosophy.

Any who have not hitherto subscribed to the *Journal*, but who are willing to become subscribers for the second year, would greatly oblige by sending in their names and addresses to the Editors, *Lotus Lodge Journal*, 7, Lanhill Road, Elgin Avenue, London, W., as the Editors would then be able to form some idea of the amount of support upon which they will be able to rely.

It is also proposed to open a guarantors' fund to cover the financial liabilities of the first year of printing, after which it is hoped that the *Journal* may become self-supporting.

D. W.

Theosophical Lending Library.

This Library is open to all, whether members of the Theosophical Society or not.

Terms of subscription: three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra.

Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 2.30 to 6 o'clock.

Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., in the small room, Foresters' Hall, Bath Street (near Pump Room), when books can be obtained from the Lodge Library. Enquiries should be addressed by letter to Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings in the Council Room, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Jan. 4th, *Aspects of Reincarnation*; Jan. 25th, *What is Mysticism?* A. R. Orage. In the Pitman Hotel: Jan. 11th and 18th, Questions. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. Brian Hodgson, Ivydene, Poplar Avenue, Edgbaston.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays at 7.45 p.m., in the Theosophical Room, Bank Buildings, North Parade. For information apply to Mrs. O. Firth, 10, Selborne Terrace, Manningham, Bradford.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Meetings on alternate Sundays at 3.30 p.m., and on alternate Mondays at 8 p.m., at members' houses, also on each Wednesday following the Sunday meeting, at 15, Old Steine, at 8 p.m. Information can be obtained from Mr. N. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or from Dr. King, 30 Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., at Brooklyn Chambers, St. Augustine's Parade. For further particulars enquiry may be addressed to S. H. Old, at the above address.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. For information apply to the President, Mr. W. Kohlen, 12, rue d'Égmont.

BRUSSELS, CENTRALE BELGE. General meetings held in the Lodge Rooms, 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, the first and third Saturdays in the month, at 8.15 p.m. Students' Class, open to all members, the second and fourth Saturdays, at 8 p.m. Reading room open from 3 to 5 p.m. twice a week. For information apply by letter to the Secretary, 21, rue du Vallon.

DIDSBURY LODGE. Public Lectures in the Liberal Club, Didsbury.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Meetings in the Philosophical Institution Rooms, 4, Queen Street, at 8 p.m.: Jan. 22nd, Question evening. Lodge meetings for special study are held twice monthly. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. J. Lorimer Thomson, Roseburn House, Roseburn.

EXETER LODGE. Open meetings are held in the

Lodge Room, 48, High Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., and on the first and third Sundays of the month at 7 p.m. Meetings for members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.30 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. Meetings at Shepherd's Hall (Room No. 3), 25, Bath Street, on the fourth Monday of each month, at 8 p.m.: Jan. 26th, *The Great Law*, A. Wallace. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. James Wilson, 48, Holmhead Street, Glasgow.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings in the Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Jan. 4th, *Involvement and Evolution*, Mrs. Bell; Jan. 11th, *The Civilisation of Ancient India*; W. H. Thomas; Jan. 18th, *Conventionalities*, A. W. Waddington; Jan. 25th, *The Civilisation of Ancient Peru*, O. Firth. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

HULL LODGE. Meetings at the Central Temperance Hotel (Jarratt Street entrance), on Sundays, at 7 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at the Athenæum Restaurant, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Jan. 12th, *Theosophy and the Occult Arts*; Jan. 19th, *Theosophy and Politics*, O. Firth; Jan. 26th, *Ancient Egypt*, C. N. Goode. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. G. H. Popplestone, 8, Ashville View, Cardigan Road, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings (resumed Jan. 14th) at 18, Colquitt Street, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C., for the study of Ashvaghosha's *Awakening of Faith*.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 7.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill, S.W., Jan. 4th, *Christianity of Origen*, A.D. 185-250, Capt. W. B. Lauder; Jan. 11th, *Theosophy on Man's Evolution*, D. N. Dunlop; Jan. 18th, *Rejuvenescence in Nature*, W. C. Worsdell; Jan. 25th, Questions and Answers. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 1, Pentland Street, Wandsworth Common, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays at 28, Albemarle Street, W., at 8.30 p.m.: Jan. 1st, Informal meeting; Jan. 8th, *Ceremonial Initiation in Ancient Egypt; with the recovered Ritual of an Initiation Ceremony*, M. W. Blackden; Jan. 15th, *Changing the Balances*, Mrs. Lauder; Jan. 22nd, *On the Track of the Earliest Christians*, G. R. S. Mead; Jan. 29th, *The Kingly Way in Egypt, 3,700 B.C.*, Mrs. Emery. Meetings on Sundays (open to visitors) at 7 p.m.; Jan. 18th, *Life, One and Indivisible*, Miss Ward; Jan. 25th, *The Virgin Birth*, G. R. S. Mead.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, on Fridays, at 8 p.m.: Jan. 9th and 30th, Study of *Secret Doctrine*; Jan. 16th, *Death and After*, R. King; Jan. 23rd, *The Scientific Basis of Re-incarnation*, W. C. Worsdell.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "West View," 12, Oakfield Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. For information apply to the Hon. Secretary, F. Horne, 27, Keen's Road, Croydon.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Class for study on the first and third Saturdays of each month at 8 p.m.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Sundays, at 3 p.m. Young people and children are cordially invited.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N., on Mondays, and Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Jan. 3rd, Informal Meeting; Jan. 10th, Business Meeting; Jan. 12th, *A Gnostic Gospel*, Rev. A. Baker; Jan. 17th, no meeting; Jan. 19th . . . Mrs. Leo; Jan. 24th . . . Mrs. Hooper; Jan. 31st, *Salvation, what is it?* W. P. Swainson; Jan. 5th and 26th, Class for study.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., at 57, King Street, City. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 80, Northenden Road, Sale, Cheshire.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Meetings on alternate Mondays, at 8 p.m., and public lectures on alternate Tuesdays, beginning Jan. 27th, in the Liberal Club. Information can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, 38, Bamford Road, Didsbury.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER CENTRE. Meetings for members of the Society on Tuesdays at 8 p.m. Open to non-members on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Information from the Hon. Secretary, West Bank, Park Road, Ashton-on-Mersey.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 68, Linthorpe Road, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., for study of *Thought Control*. Public Lectures on Sundays in the Lecture Room, Co-operative Hall, Corporation Road.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 3, St. James' Street, at 8 p.m. Communications to W. E. Dowson, 10, Mapperley Road, Nottingham.

OXFORD CENTRE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m., in the office of Mr. Salter, over Lloyd's Bank, Carfax, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Hon. Secretary, W. Cock, 37, Beechcroft Road, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., and on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 19, Cornwall Street. Enquiries to be addressed to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at 7.30 p.m., at the Saville Temperance Hotel, Newcastle, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*,

and on the last Sunday of the month, at Lily House, off Ocean View, Whitley Bay.

YORK CENTRE. Meetings on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., in the De Grey Rooms; Jan. 9th, *Theosophy and the Need of the Times*, W. H. Thomas; Jan. 23rd, *The Religions of India*, Miss Shaw. Information from E. J. Dunn, Kelfield Lodge, York.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 198.

E. B. H.—May I ask if it is considered in the Society that the evidence in favour of the existence and the attributes of the Tibetan Mahâtmas is conclusive?

A. A. W.—Before directly answering this question I should like to point out that our views as to Mahâtmas have nothing in common with the old-fashioned style of Christian Apology, which is what the querist seems to have in his mind. The conception of a God coming down upon earth and working miracles for the express purpose of making people believe in His teaching is one which is natural at an early stage of mind; and, of course, requires strict demonstration of the actual fact of His having so come and of His actually having worked the miracles, before we can be called upon so much as to take into consideration what it was He taught. The difficulties in the way of producing this “conclusive evidence” of the mission of Jesus Christ have caused the method to be by this time almost completely abandoned by all serious thinkers and teachers of the Christian faith; and we Theosophists have not the slightest intention of placing our belief in Mahâtmas in the false position from which Christians are even now engaged in disentangling *their* Teacher.

The difference is that the Beings who are engaged in the actual ruling of the world according to the design of the still Greater Being Who planned it and gave it its Laws of Life—the Mahâtmas, Great Souls, as they are called in India—the Brothers, as they are named in Tibet—have not the smallest interest in the question whether you or I believe in them or no. Their business is to *rule*—believers and unbelievers alike. A distinction H. P. B. draws is here of much value. She says that whilst it is part of the Doctrine that such Beings, far above us, there *must* be, still we are in no way bound to believe in any *particular* Master A. B., C. D., or the like with whom certain clairvoyants may believe themselves in communication. And the meaning of this statement is that, to our mind, nothing turns on the “conclusiveness of the evidence” on the point. Their existence is not postulated and their powers defined, as proof of the doctrines they have taught us—quite otherwise. What has happened is that a certain amount of information has been given us as to the way in which the world came into being, and the Powers by which it is ruled; information consistent with many things said in the Bible, but which could not be obtained by mere discussion of

its texts; information which is not contrary to anything in the Bible—only to the prepossessions of the limited souls who cannot admit that God can have revealed anything but what they can find there. Thus the Bible speaks of various orders of Angels, Archangels, Powers, Thrones, and the like, and leaves the matter there; a mere piece of curious information, of no use to us as it stands. The Theosophical teaching shows us the great Hierarchy—the Logos whose mind conceived the world and all things therein; then the Seven Spirits of God (named in the Bible) who are charged with the carrying out of the great plan. Each of these has His seven beneath Him and so on, dividing and sub-dividing till we come down to men—the lowest stage, but each charged with his own small share in the great Work of God, and each to become in time capable of higher work, rising from one step to another as the Godhead within him succeeds in more and more completely manifesting itself in him. For those who can take in this great and encouraging thought it makes a new world of life and joy; but we do not press it upon those to whom it does not appeal as a “Gospel,” to be preached “in season and out of season.” The Teacher’s word is always, as Jesus Christ’s—“He that can perceive it, let him receive it”; the others will grow to it in time.

Now, in our view, the Mahâtmas are simply highly progressed men, who stand on a step far above our own, with others similarly above them. We, too, have to reach their level, and pass beyond it. That such exist needs no “conclusive evidence”; we take it for granted that every step above us, as below us, has its own occupants. The only question for us is whether we are satisfied that the Beings with whom our human teachers profess to be in communication are really such Masters as they describe them; and on this point we must judge by their teachings only. We are sure that the beings who speak at an ordinary spiritualistic séance are not Masters, because they have nothing to teach us. As we rise to the higher levels, to such, for example, as those of Mrs. Kingsford in *The Perfect Way*, we find a more perfect vision, though still mixed with much which comes, not from the Teacher, but from the mind of the Seer. Still, we may feel reasonably sure that the revelation contains something of the Truth, and is of value, as is said of the Christian scriptures, for instruction in righteousness. From this to the *Secret Doctrine* is but a question of degree. In H. P. B.’s writings we have a far larger horizon; there is much more Truth given to us, and the Seer through which it comes is conscious of her own imperfections and does not set up for herself the infallibility claimed for his colleague by Mr. Edward Maitland. Those who can receive it at all will, I venture to think, feel that the Theosophical teaching is the highest which has, as a matter of fact, been given to us in these later centuries; and will have no difficulty in recognising as Masters those who have imparted it to us. But this conviction can only be obtained by intelligent and appreciative study of it, not forced

upon an unwilling mind by "conclusive evidence." As to this, the language of all the world's teachers has ever been, and still is, that of Jesus of Nazareth: "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given it."

QUESTION 199.

E. B. H.—Are we to regard the records of the Gospels as historical narratives, or as allegories—the visions of a seer conveying truth in symbol? What proof is there that such clairvoyant visions of the origins of the faith as are described in Mrs. Besant's Esoteric Christianity are not purely subjective?

A. A. W.—Here again the querist is asking for what, by the nature of the case, cannot be given; and if he is inclined to throw the whole aside as "unscientific" for this reason, let him turn to the two valuable articles of Mr. Dyne in the *Theosophical Review* and ask himself where is the "conclusive evidence" for Mendelejeff's Law therein discussed. There is absolutely none; only the fact that, by assuming it, we have a thread on which the facts of nature arrange themselves in such an orderly way, and one by which we may even predict the course of future discovery, and find our predictions verified, that we are convinced of its truth by an argument which is not a logical conclusion but something still more satisfactory.

As between one who sees and one who is blind, the only possible evidence which can be given to the blind man is of this indirect nature. If several seers agree in their description of the landscape, that is a certain presumption in their favour, for if the vision of one was "purely subjective"—in plain English, if he were making it up out of his own head—the others would not be likely to agree. Or, again, the seer might say, "If you move so many steps forwards you will come to a wall—so many more and you will touch a tree—now you are running against a cow," and the like; and if the blind man made the experiment and found the prediction verified he would have again a fair presumption that the other did in truth see the things he could only touch. Something of this latter kind was once done by Mrs. Besant in her paper on "Occult Chemistry" in the *Theosophical Review*. She gave us the results of the investigation of the nature of the atom by the higher senses, and already the manner in which the results of chemistry are approximating more and more closely to her statements is forming a powerful argument in favour of the truth of her own and her friend's vision. I confess I myself should have been very glad if these researches had been followed up more completely; but it may be that they were discouraged just because such a verification of the vision by science would have furnished the "conclusive evidence" which the Powers always refuse to give. They want no unwilling converts. But even granting that our clairvoyants do see the scenes they describe, there is much to be considered before we make their visions the foundation of our view of history, and (to do them justice) no one has pressed these conditions upon us more than

they have themselves done. People who see the same thing in physical life each see it differently, according to their prepossessions. A barrister knows perfectly well that a witness for the prosecution will, with the fullest intention to speak the truth and nothing but the truth, give an entirely different account of an occurrence from that of a witness on the other side; and no one who is not a barrister could believe how different two quite honest stories of an event may be. Something very similar is the case with clairvoyant vision; a seer can only see the thing in his own way, can only express it according to the habitual way of thinking of his own mind; to a man of a materialistic mode of thought, the vision will express itself with hard outlines and sharp divisions which another would not see at all. I should answer the querist that he would not do wisely to take these visions as more than hints for study, suggestions of a possible view. As such they are of much value; nothing of actual information is of so much value to a thinker (and especially to a young thinker) as these sidelights which open out a new range of thought, beyond the so narrow limits which surround us. I myself shall never forget the effect upon my mind, brought up in strictest Calvinistic orthodoxy, of accidentally coming upon W. White's *Life of Swedenborg*. I was not in the least tempted to become a Swedenborgian; but I learned that there was a vast world outside Calvinism—that there was much in that world truer and nobler than any results of Jonathan Edwards' logic—I was a new man! But the revelations of our Seers can never be set forth as an infallible guide; those who cannot do without this must remain in the nursery and schoolroom, where alone such a thing is to be found. Theosophy is for students, for thinkers, who are able to take from teachings and from visions just what they need for their own spiritual progress, no more and no less. To these it will give the needful stimulus to move forwards and not to go to sleep where they stand, will show gleam after gleam of the Path before them, but always leaving it to their diligent research and piercing intuition to find for themselves the spot where next to set their feet. And to such students an occasional false step will do less injury than standing still, waiting for "conclusive evidence" that the next step will bear them.

QUESTION 200.

K.—I have heard it asserted by a Vedāntin student that what we call instinct in animals is the action of *Buddhi* which supplies the place of reason, since animals are not possessed of *Manas*. Is this correct? If so, by what means does *Buddhi* function? Is it not said that this power does not act in separation from *Manas*? The animal, nevertheless, knows its enemy more surely than the man knows his.

G. R. S. M.—I should say that the Vedāntin student referred to was a Westerner and a bold speculator. As far as my reading goes the *buddhi* of the Vedānta is never assigned to animals. It is the thing that the ordinary man is always being

urged to cultivate. Doubtless *buddhi* and all that transcends *buddhi* is latent in the animal and in everything else besides, but it would be a "de-arrangement of epitaphs" to assign the instinct of the animal to *buddhi* in the technical sense in which this term is used in the Upanishads or Gîtâ. That there is a strange correspondence and parallelism between *buddhi* and *kâma* is true, but this is not the same as an identity. The animal feels a good many things that the non-savage man has long ceased to feel, but the knowledge of feeling and the knowledge of intellect are very different things, one is confused, chaotic and primitive, the other discriminating, ordering and evolved. As the mind evolves and man rises through his ancient self to higher things, he regains all the powers which are represented so crudely by the primitive feelings of the animal, but whereas he was as animal unconscious individually and mixed with the mass, now he is conscious and discriminating, he can choose and will. He is master and no longer slave. Still it would be confusing to say that instinct was a manifestation of *buddhi*. Better to say that *buddhi* and the rest are manifestations of the nature of the Self.

E. L.—The Vedântin student, if judged according to the Theosophical interpretation, is incorrect. I should, however, say that he is really referring to the astral action operative in this lower kingdom, and the grain of truth in the statement would be that the astral has a peculiarly close connection with *buddhi* and is said to be its "reflection."

I. H.—Animals are said not to possess the causal body; *Manas* is said to be the "reflection," in the atomic matter of the mental plane, of the manasic "aspect" of the Monad. The action of "buddhi," to which reference is made, I take to mean the prompting of the "Group Soul," the guiding life of the Second Logos working in atomic matter (see Mrs. Besant's articles on "The Evolution of Consciousness" appearing in the *Theosophical Review*; K. will find in those articles a better answer to his question than I am capable of giving).

QUESTION 201.

E. B. H.—*What is the Theosophical theory respecting insanity?*

G. R. S. M.—Theories respecting insanity have been discussed *ad nauseam* in THE VĀHAN, but so far no competent student of alienation or professor of mental pathology who has also some first-hand knowledge of the inner constitution of man, has taken up his pen to explain either in THE VĀHAN or any other Theosophical publication, or for a matter of that in any publication whatever, even those specially devoted to such matters. This is one of the innumerable subjects which is still waiting for its Galileo or Darwin. Our own writers who "see" have repeatedly put forth suggestions

and hints, but no one of them has treated the subject in detail. They can no more treat the subject in detail without a thorough training and vast experience of insanity in the schools and asylums, than can the specialist explain the countless unsolved problems which present themselves, without a knowledge of the vehicles of man and their infinite inter-relations. It cannot be too often repeated that we are at the beginning of things in our Theosophical studies; Theosophy is a change of standpoint and it will take many a long year before the familiar "fields of knowledge" have been properly focussed and brought beneath the exhaustive observation of the seeing scientists of the future.

E. L.—So far as I know, the Theosophical theory with regard to this deeply interesting and complex problem is very little evolved at present, save that I have seen it stated that there are different kinds of insanity proceeding from different causes and varying in intensity. One fairly general form might be that of obsession by various unpleasant and malevolent entities, who would be of stronger type than the unfortunate person upon whose body they seize. Another form might be due to great lopsidedness in the character, a distorting of the sense of proportion, so to speak. I have seen it stated in some Theosophical volume that there is a madness the effects of which are exhausted on the astral plane after death, but there is also a type of a far more terrible nature which persists even on the mental plane. And the particular kârmic cause of such (since of course it is all kârmic) seems in many cases to be that of extreme cruelty exercised in a past life.

Or again, in many instances I am convinced that the hapless person has simply become awake to the astral, is not understood by those around him, and suffers unwise or cruel treatment at their hands, the final outcome being that he is certified a lunatic and consigned to an asylum.

I. H.—It has been said that insanity is the result of actions, or of persistently encouraged tendencies of thought and desire indulged in, in former lives. It is said that, generally speaking, the mischief lies in the physical brain, in which case the sufferer would be sane when released from the body in sleep or at death; occasionally (it is asserted) the trouble lies deeper, and some disorganisation of the astral or even of the mind body is the root of the mischief.

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post-free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications for "Activities" must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest.

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription (5s.). Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY, *General Secretary*.

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

VOL. XII.

LONDON, FEBRUARY 1, 1903.

NO. 7.

Edited by BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

ITALIAN LIBRARY.

The following letter has been received from Mrs. Cooper-Oakley:

THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY,
CENTRAL OFFICES FOR ITALY,
VIA DI PIETRA 70,
CORSO, ROMA.
January 20th, 1903.

To the Editor of THE VĀHAN.

DEAR SIR,

I should be glad if you will allow me to make it known amongst our English-speaking members that a Reference Library, Reading and Writing-room, has been opened in the rooms of the Italian Section Offices, and all members from any part of the world will find there a most cordial welcome.

The Librarian, Miss Swindell, is there from 10 a.m. to 12, and from 3 to 6 p.m. All information about meetings, etc., can be had from her. There is also a Circulating Library attached to the Reference Library, the rules of which can be had on application to the Librarian.

I need hardly add how welcome will be the visits of any members from England.

I am, yours fraternally,

ISABEL COOPER-OAKLEY.

President, Executive Committee, Italian Section.

DEPARTURE OF MR. ARUNDALE.

Mr. G. S. Arundale, whose appointment as Joint Assistant Secretary to the Section was notified in the August VĀHAN, has just left England for India to take up work in the Central Hindu College at Benares, as professor of English. He is thus reluctantly compelled to resign his position in this

Section. He carries with him the most cordial good wishes of his friends here for the success of his new work.

I. HOOPER,
Acting General Secretary.

ACTIVITIES.

New Branch.

January 7th, 1903. Charter issued this day to Miss L. E. Carter, J. R. Anderson, Mme. V. Nyssens, Mlle. V. André, Mlle. L. A. van Bloimstein, H. Jambers and H. Nyst, to form a Branch of the Theosophical Society at Brussels, Belgium, to be known as the Lotus Blanc Branch.

I. HOOPER,
Acting General Secretary.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to January 20th: D. S., 10s.; M. A. N., £1; F. C., 19s.; E. M. M., £1; E. S., 5s.; J. T. D., 10s.; E. M. J., 10; M., 10s.; F. L. J. Z., £2; M. H., 5s.; E. K., £2; W. A. A., £1; M. H., £1 1s.; E. J. G., £1 1s.; M. H. L., £2 10s.; A. L., £1; E. D., £2; N. G., £5; E. S., £1; M. A. B., £2 2s. 6d.; E. T., £4; H. L., 10s.; A. S., 10s.; E. M. T., £1; A. H. W., £3 3s.; Ss., £1; A. L., £1. Total, £37 6s. 6d.

Section Reference Library.

The following books have been purchased during the past month: *The Ancient Wisdom*, A. Besant; *The Doctrine and Literature of the Kabalah*, A. E. Waite; *Santa Teresa, Her Life and Times*, G. C. Graham; *Man Visible and Invisible*, C. W. Leadbeater; *The Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vols. XXXII. and XXXIII.

R. A. HOBSON,
Assistant Librarian.

Afternoon Meetings at Headquarters.

Two "At Homes" will be held at 28, Albemarle Street, on Mondays, February 16th and 23rd, at 3.30 p.m. Mr. Sinnett will answer questions on the first date from 3.30 to 4.30, and it is hoped Mr. Keightley will speak on the second afternoon.

Tea will be served at 4.30. Members of the Society are cordially invited to be present, and asked to help in making the afternoons a success. They may bring friends.

E. SEVERS,
Hon. Secretary, Social Committee.

Meetings for Enquirers.

Mrs. Hooper will hold two of these meetings at 28, Albemarle Street, for enquirers and newly-joined members during February, *i.e.*, on Monday, February 2nd, at 3.30 p.m., "Thought Transference," and on February 9th, "Prayer and Mystical Experience."

The lectures deal with the subject in an elementary manner; but it is not intended to exclude older members, who will be welcomed if they wish to attend.

Class for Theosophical Discussion.

The Practice Debating Class has changed its name to the above. In future the Opener will discuss some Theosophical subject in a short speech, no opposer will be required, and the other members will then deal with the subject.

The subjects to be discussed during February, at 28, Albemarle Street, are:—*Feb. 5th*, "The Divine Origin and Existence of the Universe"; *Feb. 12th*, "The Theosophical Society"; *Feb. 19th*, "Brotherhood"; *Feb. 26th*, "The Joys of Theosophy."

New members are cordially invited to join the class, which meets on Thursdays at 7 p.m.

E. SEVERS,
Hon. Secretary.

Science Class.

Mr. Dyne will continue to hold the Class at 28, Albemarle Street, studying: 1. Prof. Bose's *Response in the Living and Non-Living*; 2. Cranial Psychology and Theosophy; on the following dates, Tuesdays, February 3rd, 10th and 17th, at 8 p.m.

E. SEVERS,
Hon. Secretary, Social Committee.

Mr. Mead's Lectures.

Four further lectures will be delivered in February and March on the most beautiful of the Treatises of Hermes the Thrice-greatest, by Mr. G. R. S. Mead, on Tuesday afternoons, from 5 to 6, in the Lecture Room of the Theosophical Society, 28, Albemarle Street, W.

The course is entitled: "The Theosophy of Egypt in Greek Tradition."

Synopsis of lectures: *Feb. 17th*, "The Over-Mind"; *Feb. 24th*, "God and the Universe"; *Mar. 3rd*, "The God beyond all Name"; *Mar. 10th*, "The Ascension."

Course tickets, 5s. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W. Admission to each Lecture, 2s.

South Western Federation.

The Annual Convention will be held at Exeter on Friday and Saturday, March 6th and 7th. The meetings will be presided over by Mr. Keightley. Circulars of the proceedings will be issued in due course. The attendance of members is cordially invited.

Mr. Keightley will also lecture in the Lodges of the Federation during the week.

J. WALTER COCK,
Hon. Secretary.

37, Beechcroft Road,
Oxford.

Blavatsky Lodge.

The Lodge re-opened formally on January 8th, with a lecture by Mr. M. W. Blackden, on a subject which he has made his own, the ancient initiatory rites of Egypt. The Lodge has reason to be grateful to Mr. Blackden for an exceedingly interesting lecture.

On January 15th Mrs. Lauder delivered a lecture, the title of which was "Changing the Balances"; this is the second time the Lodge has welcomed her as a lecturer.

Miss Ward spoke on Sunday, the 18th; her title was: "Life One and Indivisible." Unfortunately the thick fog prevented the usual good audience which assembles to hear Miss Ward.

S. M. S.

West London Branch.

Under the auspices of the above Branch Miss Emil-Behnke has kindly consented to repeat her lecture on "Breathing," which has recently attracted so much attention in musical circles.

At the close of the lecture there will be a demonstration by means of the Röntgen Rays, when the actual method of correct breathing will be shown. The lecture should prove valuable to all who are aware of the importance of right breathing to health and power, and especially useful to those who have occasion to speak or read in public.

The lecture will be delivered on Friday, February 20th, at 8.15 p.m., in the Elysée Gallery, Queen's Road, W. Tickets, *which must be obtained*

beforehand, may be purchased from the Hon. Secretary, at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., or from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W., price 1s. each.

H. W.

Lotus Lodge.

The first annual business meeting of the above Lodge was held on January 18th. Miss Daisy Whyte's resignation of the Secretaryship, owing to her departure from England, was accepted with many regrets, and Miss Marguerite A. Sidley was elected to the post. All communications in reference to Lotus Lodge work should in future be addressed to her at 3, Nassington Road, Hampstead Heath, London, N.W.

M. A. S.

Theosophical Lending Library.

This Library is open to all, whether members of the Theosophical Society or not.

Terms of subscription: three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra.

Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 2.30 to 6 o'clock.

Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., in the small room, Foresters' Hall, Bath Street (near Pump Room), when books can be obtained from the Lodge Library. Enquiries should be addressed by letter to Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings in the Council Room, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Feb. 1st, *The Bhagavad Gītā*, J. H. Duffell; Feb. 8th, *The Early History of the T.S.*, Mme. de Steiger; Feb. 15th, *Freedom of Being*, R. Upadhyayji; Feb. 22nd, *The Teachings of Gautama, the Buddha*, Miss J. Keeley; Feb. 28th (Saturday), *Thoughts are Things* (with lantern illustrations), Miss Ward. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. Brian Hodgson, Ivydene, Poplar Avenue, Edgbaston.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays at 7.45 p.m., in the Theosophical Room, Bank Buildings, North Parade: Feb. 3rd, *The Problem of Sorrow*, E. E. Marsden; Feb. 10th, *Some Crude Conceptions of God* (with lantern slides), Percy Lund; Feb. 17th, *The Influence of Zoroastrianism on Christianity*, Baker Hudson; Feb. 24th, *The Future*

that awaits us, Miss Shaw. For information apply to Mrs. O. Firth, 10, Selborne Terrace, Manningham, Bradford.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Meetings on alternate Sundays at 3.30 p.m., and on alternate Mondays at 8 p.m., at members' houses, also on each Wednesday following the Sunday meeting, at 15, Old Steine, at 8 p.m. Information can be obtained from Mr. N. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or from Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., at Brooklyn Chambers, St. Augustine's Parade. For further particulars enquiry may be addressed to S. H. Old, at the above address.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. For information apply to the President, Mr. W. Kohlen, 12, rue d'Egmont.

BRUSSELS, CENTRALE BELGE. General meetings held in the Lodge Rooms, 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, the first and third Saturdays in the month, at 8.15 p.m. Students' Class, open to all members, the second and fourth Saturdays, at 8 p.m. Reading room open from 3 to 5 p.m. twice a week. For information apply by letter to the Secretary, 21, rue du Vallon.

DIDSBURY LODGE. Public Lectures in the Liberal Club, Didsbury.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Meetings in the Philosophical Institution Rooms, 4, Queen Street, at 8 p.m.: Feb. 5th, *Phrenology*, Keith Murray; Feb. 19th, *Karma*, Miss Furnell. Lodge meetings for special study are held twice monthly. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. J. Lorimer Thomson, Roseburn House, Roseburn.

EXETER LODGE. Open meetings are held in the Lodge Room, 48, High Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., and on the first and third Sundays of the month at 7 p.m. Meetings for members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.30 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. Meetings at Shepherd's Hall (Room No. 3), 25, Bath Street, on the fourth Monday of each month, at 8 p.m.: Feb. 23rd, *Character*, J. P. Allen. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. James Wilson, 48, Holmhead Street, Glasgow.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings in the Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Feb. 1st, *The Civilisation of Ancient Peru*, O. Firth; Feb. 8th, *Involution and Evolution*, Mrs. Bell; Feb. 15th, *The Rise and Fall of Nations*, Hodgson Smith; Feb. 22nd, *Mystic Experiences*, Mrs. Hooper. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

HULL LODGE. Meetings at the Central Temperance Hotel (Jarratt Street entrance), on Sundays, at 7 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at the Athenæum Restaurant, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Feb. 2nd, *An Outline of Human Evolution*, E. J. Dunn; Feb. 9th, *The Theosophy of Plato*, Miss McNeile; Feb. 16th, *Tomlinson Holbrooke Jackson*; Feb. 23rd, *Telepathy and Mind Mechanism*, Mrs. Hooper. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. G. H.

Popplestone, 8, Ashville View, Cardigan Road, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings (resumed Jan. 14th) at 18, Colquitt Street, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C., for the study of Ashvaghosha's *Awakening of Faith*.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 7.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill, S.W.: Feb. 1st, *Theosophy of Plutarch*, Miss Forster; Feb. 8th, *Auto-Hypnotism*; Feb. 15th, *Life One and Indivisible*, Miss Ward; Feb. 22nd, Questions and Answers. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 1, Pentland Street, Wandsworth Common, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays at 28, Albemarle Street, W., at 8.30 p.m.: Feb. 5th, *Rationalism and Religion*, Herbert Burrows; Feb. 12th, *Earthquakes and Volcanoes*, A. P. Sinnett; Feb. 19th, *The Book of Elxai*, G. R. S. Mead; Feb. 26th, Open Night for Discussion. On Sundays, at 7 p.m. (open to visitors): Feb. 1st, *The Virgin Birth*, G. R. S. Mead; Feb. 8th, *Physical and Occult Science*, Herbert Burrows; Feb. 15th, *Sound, the Builder*, G. Dyne; Feb. 22nd, *The Riddle of the Universe—Two Answers*, Miss Ward.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, on Fridays, at 8 p.m.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N., on Mondays (study class) and Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Feb. 7th, *Unconscious Theosophists*, W. M. Green; Feb. 9th, *An English Mystic of the 18th Century*, Miss Ewing; Feb. 14th, *Reincarnation from the Outside Thinker's Standpoint*, Mrs. Pooley; Feb. 21st, *Occultism*, Robert King; Feb. 28th . . . A. J. Faulding. The following debates will take place on Saturdays at 6.30 p.m.: Feb. 7th, *Spiritualism*; Feb. 14th, *Conscription*; Feb. 21st, *Imperialism*; Feb. 28th, *Mental Healing*.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.: Feb. 6th, *Epictetus*, Miss Lloyd; Feb. 13th, *The Theosophy of Emerson*, Miss E. Severs; Feb. 20th, *Breathing* (with Röntgen Ray demonstrations, see special notice), Miss Emil-Behnke; Feb. 27th, *Modern Theosophy*, Miss Ward.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "West View," 12, Oakfield Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: Feb. 3rd, *The Symbolism of Ritual*: (2) *The Supreme Sacrament*, L. Stanley Jast; Feb. 10th, *Rejuvenescence in Nature*, W. C. Worsdell; Feb. 17th, *Varieties of Religious Experience*: (2) *Saints versus "Strong Men"*, Philip Tovey; Feb. 24th, *Karma*: (a) *The Operation of Law*, L. Stanley Jast, (b) *The Gods as Agents*, Fred Horne. For information apply to the Hon. Secretary, F. Horne, 27, Keen's Road, Croydon.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on

Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Feb. 2nd and 16th, *Will, Desire and Emotion*, Mr. and Mrs. Alan Leo; Feb. 9th, *The Riddle of the Universe*, D. N. Dunlop; Feb. 23rd, *The Training of the Will*, Miss Corbett. Class for study on the first and third Saturdays of each month at 8 p.m.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for children and young people at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Sundays, at 3 p.m.: Feb. 1st, 8th and 15th, *The Bodies we use*, G. Dyne; Feb. 22nd, *Study of Man and his Bodies*. For information address the Hon. Sec., Miss M. A. Sidley, 3, Nassington Road, Hampstead Heath, N.W.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Meetings on alternate Mondays, Feb. 2nd and 16th, at 8 p.m., at 38, Bamford Road, Didsbury, and public lectures in the Liberal Club: Feb. 9th, *Sun-Worship, a Forgotten Faith*, M. H. Staniforth; Feb. 27th, *Telepathy and Mind Mechanism*, Mrs. Hooper. Information can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, 38, Bamford Road, Didsbury.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER CENTRE. Meetings for members of the Society on Tuesdays at 8 p.m. Open to non-members on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Information from the Hon. Secretary, West Bank, Park Road, Ashton-on-Mersey.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 68, Linthorpe Road, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., for study of *Thought Control*. Public Lectures on Sundays in the Lecture Room, Co-operative Hall, Corporation Road, at 6.45 p.m.: Feb. 1st, *Divine Kings*, Hodgson Smith; Feb. 15th, *Influence of Zoroastrianism on Christianity*, Baker Hudson.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 3, St. James' Street, at 8 p.m. Communications to W. E. Dowson, 10, Mapperley Road, Nottingham.

OXFORD CENTRE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m., in the office of Mr. Salter, over Lloyd's Bank, Carfax, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Hon. Secretary, W. Cock, 37, Beechcroft Road, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., and on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 19, Cornwall Street. Enquiries to be addressed to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

SOUTHAMPTON CENTRE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m., at Capt. Forbes' Nautical Academy, Albion Place. Enquiries should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, Miss Green, Laverton House, Hill, Southampton.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at 7.30 p.m., at the Saville Temperance Hotel, Newcastle, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*, and on the last Sunday of the month, at Lily House, off Ocean View, Whitley Bay.

YORK CENTRE. Meetings on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., in the De Grey Rooms; Feb. 6th, *Theosophy and Literature*, A. R. Orage; Feb. 20th, *The Gospel of Theosophy*, Hodgson Smith. Information from E. J. Dunn, Kelfield Lodge, York.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 194.

(Continued from p. 38.)

A. W. G.—What is implied by the term “conditionally immortal”? Is that which is capable of losing immortal consciousness the personality which has failed to supply the Thinker with any useful material? The mere blotting out of a useless memory does not appear to me to be a very dreadful thing.

S. C.—It is evident that no part of the nature of man can be immortal except that which identifies itself with the One Life. Probably when H. P. B. spoke in the *Key to Theosophy* of the personality being conditionally immortal, she referred to a very advanced stage of spiritual development, when it has identified itself completely with the individuality, and through that with the One Life, so that it becomes a mode of expression for the Divine Energy, and has no separate purpose of its own. The Ego makes a series of experiments in this direction, and one—the last—is attended with success, so that no further experiment is needed.

QUESTION 195.

(Continued from p. 39.)

M. S.—I wish to ask if you will tell me the cause of great depression that attacks me frequently? It is not noticed by others; I pass for being always in good spirits. Is this karma from a past life? Is it possible to get rid of this depression?

A. H. W.—On reading the exhaustive replies to this question it strikes the writer that in the very wealth of suggestions may lie more puzzlement than help. He believes that it is much more likely that the cause of the depression is physical rather than astral, mental, or moral. Everyone who is ill experiences more or less depression. Has the questioner performed the Yoga that is pain-destroying with respect to his physical vehicle? Are there no little excesses which might account for his condition? It must be remembered that *too little* is just as much excess as *too much*, and that the perfect way lies along the razor-edge between, just as much in the case of the physical manifestation of the Self as in any other.

The futile asceticisms of centuries have at least served to demonstrate that if you want a sane mind free from depression, you *must* have a healthy brain. Do you obey the gospel of physiological righteousness? Have you attained the perfect harmony in action which that gospel inculcates? When you have done this it is a hundred to one that your depression will cease to exist. It may be the karma of a past life, but it is much more likely to be the ignorance of the present. Nature does not often wait so long to chastise him who is so foolish as to flout her, for as a man sows from day to day so must he

also reap. Unless you have been laboriously trained for the work, you will *not* be your best adviser and physician, *because you cannot know*. Your best chance is to consult a common-sense doctor and do as he tells you.

QUESTION 197.

(Continued from p. 40.)

J. F. B.—Every cause has an effect just as every effect has a cause. Consider the case of an old man. At twenty-five he was the complex resultant of a vast number of causes. This resultant now becomes a set of causes, the exact effects of which are theoretically knowable. After twenty-five he cannot be master of his destiny since that destiny is predetermined, and, by a simple extension of the premises, he is never master of his destiny. There is apparently a fallacy somewhere, but it is a little difficult to see where. Can any suggestion be made?

S. C.—Yes, there is a fallacy, because a man is something more than a set of causes and effects; he is these, *plus* a free will of his own, which ceaselessly modifies them. The causes and effects form a system which seems complete in itself, yet it is not so; the life behind acts through the causes and effects, and enables them to continue in operation. If it should cease, they also would cease instantly. The existence of free will and its work in modifying conditions at any moment cannot be logically proved. It is an ultimate fact of consciousness, and belongs to the region of metaphysics. But logic comes to our aid in reminding us that the absence of free will involves the absence of moral responsibility in human beings, and although such absence has sometimes been propounded as a theory, it may be doubted whether any man ever lived who really believed in it.

QUESTION 200.

(Continued from p. 48.)

K.—I have heard it asserted by a Vedântin student that what we call instinct in animals is the action of *Buddhi* which supplies the place of reason, since animals are not possessed of *Manas*. Is this correct? If so, by what means does *Buddhi* function? Is it not said that this power does not act in separation from *Manas*? The animal, nevertheless, knows its enemy more surely than the man knows his.

A. H. W.—The writer holds that “*Buddhi*” is essentially the tremendous stream of energy which represents the Logos in its locality on the Buddhic plane of space. Omnipresence, Omnipotence and Omniscience are there represented as the “Eternal Man.”

Thence the three waves of life pour on to the lower planes of space, and form first the atomic worlds, then the molecular worlds, and then the protoplasmic organisms, in order. The Rays of Life into which the third wave differentiates manifest their powers through the vehicles held together

by the molecular attractions of the second wave, and the one Force playing through the sub-planes of matter beats upon those vehicles and awakes the powers of the in-dwelling Ray.

It is in this sense that Buddhi functions on the plane of instinct. It is the Great Creative Energy ever stimulating the astral vehicles in the direction of preserving the individual body, and of propagating the species. It stimulates the Ray which is playing through the permanent mental and astral atoms which form the focus of the group soul to which animals belong, and although there is little action on the mental plane, yet all animals, of the vertebrate type at least, have some little power of memory and anticipation, and therefore some little trace of a mental body.

The Life Ray passes from the permanent buddhic atom to the permanent mental atom as the "finest thread of Fohat." Thence it passes to the astral and physical permanent atoms through which it vivifies the astral and physical bodies of the animal group. The experiences conserved in the astral group soul ever impel the forms to avoid enemies and seek friends, these severally being physical forms which past experience has shown to be painful or pleasant. A man's friends and enemies are generally on an astro-mental plane, not on an astro-physical, the opportunities for error are hence infinitely greater and mistakes more often made. But that animals *know* their enemies more surely than a man knows his, the writer profoundly doubts; the cases do not appear to him to be in any way comparable.

S. C.—The Buddhi which functions through Manas is the intellectual discrimination between good and evil, a quality and an attainment of the individual man; and this should not be confused with the universal soul of nature, which guides evolution in all the lower kingdoms. As *The Secret Doctrine* puts it, Buddhi is unconscious in the animal so far as this plane is concerned. An infant carried by his mother finds his way more surely from one place to another than an older child who is learning to guide his own steps.

QUESTION 201.

(Continued from p. 48.)

E. B. H.—What is the Theosophical theory respecting insanity?

A. A. W.—I am sorry that the only discussion of this interesting matter to which I can refer the querist is contained in some old numbers of THE VĀHAN; Question 355 (May, 1897), 381 (November, 1897), and 446 (August, 1898). In the latter of these C. W. L. distinguishes four classes of insanity, according as the defect is in the physical brain only, the etheric, the astral or the mind-body. He says: "Those belonging to the first and second types would be quite sensible when out of the body in sleep, and of course they would also be all right as soon as they were dead: and, fortunately, these are much the commonest kinds

of insanity. But the third type would not recover perfectly till they reached devachanic levels, and the fourth type not until they returned into the causal body; so that in both these cases the men would still be lunatics on the astral plane." As to the origin of lunacy, he says: "I think we may assume that it is always a kârmic penalty, and one of the heaviest that a soul can have to pay, since it means the possession of an unworkable instrument, and consequently either the partial or total loss of an incarnation." In the second answer to which I have referred, A. B. tells us that its origin "appears to be the kârmic result of grave crimes committed against knowledge and bringing serious ills to others," and this, not so much ordinary wrong-doing under the influence of passion, as "crimes committed against light and against knowledge, especially those which drag back a soul progressing in the higher life." "Let us suppose (he says) that an ego has definitely entered on the pathway which leads to discipleship, and is within measurable distance of that condition; another ego—prompted by envy, by lust, or by any other evil feeling, or by some deeper motive into which the mental element largely enters—allures or tempts the rapidly advancing soul, and thus causes it to fall from the point it had attained, and perchance entails on it many a weary incarnation ere the lost ground is recovered; such a criminal reaps as harvest the appropriate fruit of insanity, during which his own ego, tethered to a body physically capable of serving it as its vehicle or expression, suffers on the astral plane all the tortures of important longing to progress."

I have copied this much, as few of our readers are likely to be able to refer to the originals. There is very much of value in the twelve volumes of THE VĀHAN practically completely wasted; and it is much to be regretted that a selection of the more important answers has not been published in a volume before now. Short of this, a full Index would be most useful to the careful souls who have preserved and bound up their sets.

QUESTION 202.

E. T.—Ought not an Ego, awaiting reincarnation on the astral plane, to be visible to ordinary clairvoyants, and if so, why are not all clairvoyants at one with Theosophists as to the doctrine of reincarnation?

G. R. S. M.—Does an Ego await reincarnation on the astral plane? It is generally stated that Egos await re-birth in the heaven-world, and that is beyond the so-called astral. Why do not clairvoyants agree on a million and one other points besides the one mentioned by the questioner? Simply because clairvoyance is an extension of sense and not necessarily of knowledge. Clairvoyance is of every grade, and knowledge is of every degree; it is only the higher clairvoyance that goes hand in hand with knowledge, and it is only the highest, the "eye of the mind," that sees on the plane of the Ego and understands its nature and its life record. To understand the *origin* of that Ego,

however, we require something higher still than anything which can be rightly called clairvoyance; it is a state where subject and object, as understood by the mind, cease to be distinguished and opposed. The ordinary clairvoyant, who cannot see beyond the psychic realm, is necessarily dependent upon those with whom he is able to communicate, for his information. If he live in Brâhmanical or Buddhist lands, he hears much to confirm his belief in reincarnation from his ex-carnate co-religionists, the ascending and not the descending souls. In France Spiritists as a rule believe and are informed by their ex-carnate friends in the doctrine of reincarnation, because the influence of Allan Kardec is still strong in their circles. Here and in America among Spiritualists things are mixed. From all of which we learn that we get no more certain information about such a transcendent doctrine as that of reincarnation from the "spirits" than we can from those in incarnation. The "spirits" disagree, the "clairvoyants" disagree, the non-clairvoyants disagree; have always disagreed, and will continue to disagree for many an age to come. The proof of the Self is its own nature, and the proof of the Ego is its own nature. The belief in reincarnation is not knowledge; the knowledge of reincarnation can only be possessed by the few. For the rest of us, the many, if we believe, we should see to it that we base our belief on the best reason and observation of which we are possessed. Let us see we get our values as just and true as we possibly can, and then the disagreements of clairvoyants will not appear to be so strange, but very natural.

A. H. W.—The writer thinks that the average Ego, one going round the wheel of births and deaths in the normal way, would draw round him on the astral plane merely a vague cloud of the astral matter in which his last personality was accustomed to function. This astral cloud would not be a vehicle of consciousness, for that had faded out at the end of the last devachanic period. The new astral cloud would await the stimuli derived through the new physical body, to be formed again into an astral body and brain; before this its powers would be potential not actual. Hence an ordinary clairvoyant would see nothing suggesting a human being, and would therefore get no idea of the fact of reincarnation.

We learn of course, of the disciple awaiting in his astral body immediate reincarnation, but such cases are so few that it is not likely that the ordinary clairvoyant would be aware of one; or that he would be able to distinguish such an entity from the ordinary incarnate dwellers in those regions.

To the writer's mind the doctrine of reincarnation does not depend for its acceptance on the dicta of any clairvoyant, but on its inherent reasonableness. It is the only theory which adequately explains life. It is the one idea which reconciles all the great religions and explains all the philosophies. It brings the conception of the evolution of the mind into accordance with the biological

evolution of the body. A key which makes sense of a cypher is inevitably the key of that cypher, so is the doctrine of reincarnation the key to life's great riddle.

S. C.—An ordinary clairvoyant would not necessarily be able to perceive, and recognise as such, an ego awaiting reincarnation. In the first place it would be necessary for him, before he could do so, to be gifted with astral, and not merely etheric sight, and in the second place he would, even if so gifted, only observe those astral beings, and astral phenomena with which he was to some extent in touch. The mere fact of astral sight does not involve an intelligent comprehension of the nature of astral objects, any more than the possession of physical sight necessarily involves a perception and an understanding of the phenomena of physical science, and the capacity, for example, to distinguish an ignorant man from a man of genius. In the astral, as in the physical, we have to learn not only to see, but to understand what we see.

E. L.—No; the "ordinary clairvoyant" is untrained, and could not distinguish or even see an "Ego" in the confusion of fragmentary glimpses he obtains of the plane referred to. To do this would require real knowledge, which could only be acquired under training.

A. B. C.—Very little detail has been given as to the appearance and condition of those Egos who are passing through the astral plane on their way to take up a new physical vehicle, but from what has been written (and the querent will find the subject dealt with in the chapter on Reincarnation in *The Ancient Wisdom*) it would appear that the astral vehicle in which the Ego would be clothed would be very germinal, and hence not at all the conspicuous object which would be likely to attract the attention of the "ordinary clairvoyant."

The astral body of each incarnation "grows with our growth," and is said to be a more or less glorified replica of the physical. It is not stated that a man's astral vehicle is fully developed before the physical one begins to be built. The *germs* are there, which represent the sum total of his possibilities of expression in the emotional part of his nature, but the vehicle itself is moulded and modified during the entire earth life by (a) the Ego himself and (b) the moral environment in which he finds himself. Personally I conceive of the germinal astral body as being little, if any, larger or more conspicuous than the germinal physical body, which, as we know, begins as a microscopic cell. I do not, therefore, see any inherent probability of its being noticed by any untrained clairvoyant. Even the physical plane is seething with forms of life which utterly escape the notice of the great majority of the human race, and I can never help a feeling of astonishment when people raise difficulties which obviously arise so entirely out of our very limited knowledge of the astral plane. An impression seems abroad that if a person only happens to be clairvoyant he has the wellsprings of knowledge of the whole universe at his command! Surely a fatal mistake. The clairvoyant

needs a trained mind and trained powers of observation as much as, or more than, he needs them for accuracy of statement here, and, still further, he has the added difficulty of translating all his observations into terms of another dimension when bringing them through to his physical consciousness. He needs to know what to look for and where to seek it, and, although astral plane conditions do, we are assured, very much minimise the limitations of time and space, yet such limitations are not transcended and to expect *complete* observation and description of that region from any one observer is about as reasonable as if we expected a cyclopædia of the African Continent from a returned militiaman.

That the seers of ancient days made some study of the conditions prior to re-birth is evidenced by the current beliefs among the Greeks on this subject, and the enquirer will find in *Lucifer*, vol. xx. p. 324, a most interesting story translated from Plutarch of the experiences of at least one untrained psychic who "saw the souls of those that were to come into this world a second time."

I. H.—This is a question which I find myself more than usually incompetent to answer. Certain counter questions suggest themselves. Would there be signs, observable by one whom we call an "untrained clairvoyant," whereby to distinguish the astral body of a soul returning to reincarnation from that of the body of, say, a newly-born child who had died soon after birth and was also, presumably, awaiting reincarnation? I take it such souls would not be in a state to give information on the question of their position. I think clairvoyants do sometimes assert that they "see" very young children who have recently died. In the case of the person who has left the body and is not going to take the devachanic rest, would the untrained clairvoyant interpret the signs (if such were observable) which would denote the position of that soul? Would it not be needful for the person so waiting to give him, or her, the requisite information? We hear statements concerning the rearrangement of the matter of the astral body after death, but if this were seen, would the significance of what was observed be necessarily grasped? I should think it likely that in the case of the soul returning to birth in the normal course, the "astral body" is exceedingly small, and might not be visible except to specialists in such observation.

A. P. S.—There are only two or three people that I know of in the Society who could answer this question from personal observation and I am not one of them, but on general principles the answer is easily given. Egos coming into reincarnation would be so unlike anything an ordinary clairvoyant could recognise as a human entity that they would probably escape his observation altogether. Their old astral vehicles would have disintegrated a thousand years previously, there or thereabouts. Their devachanic existence has, so to speak, washed the Ego clean of all traces of the

last personality. There is nothing to recognise except for the clairvoyant who can freely discern and comprehend the phenomena of the mânasic plane. Finally, although a good many theosophical doctrines are construed too literally very often, and their significance exaggerated, it would seem to be difficult to exaggerate the extent to which the astral plane is saturated with appearances which are not what they seem, to the perpetual confusion of the "ordinary clairvoyant." In reference to what they see and to what they do not see, ordinary clairvoyants are the victims of endless delusions, accounting for the enormous discrepancy in the teaching of different schools of spiritualists, and the various seers who have each, no doubt, in the most conscientious spirit, endeavoured to enlighten this world concerning the "next."

QUESTION 203.

E. B. H.—To what plane does the "pure consciousness" of the Hindu sages belong?

G. R. S. M.—To the plane of "pure consciousness." But what does such a term mean? What does pure matter, pure spirit, pure good, pure evil, pure unconsciousness mean? If the questioner means Kaivalya; then this connotes the same idea as Nirvâna or Moksha. All such terms are relative not absolute; they mean practically "freedom from the necessity of rebirth." When we reach this freedom, we can discuss the more transcendent problems with some faint hope of escaping from the inarticulate babbling of babes which men call metaphysics. But just as in the West "God" has for the most part been created in the image of man, so in India Nirvâna and Moksha have been envisaged by the mystics as the Absolute, the end of all ends and the source of all sources. That is because they had no conception of what a just appreciation of the physical universe can teach us of the vastness of the problem. Their general view of Moksha is as far beyond the actuality as the western general view of God falls short of the dignity of the ruler of a single system of that infinite physical cosmos. To what plane indeed shall we assign "pure consciousness"? What *is* consciousness, and what in such a connection a "plane." It is beyond us at present, for so far as we know we have not even met with a Nirvâni, much less realised in any dim way what a so transcendent state can mean.

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post-free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications for "Activities" must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest.

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription (5s.) Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY, *General Secretary*.

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

VOL. XII.

LONDON, MARCH 1, 1903

NO. 8.

Edited by BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

SECTION LIBRARY.

It having been found that little use is made of the Library and Smoking Room after 8 p.m., these rooms, and the drawing-room, will, until further notice, be closed at 8 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Friday and Saturday evenings. If this arrangement is inconvenient to systematic students to whom the evening hours are indispensable for study, they are requested to inform the General Secretary.

NOTICE.

Unattached members can, if they wish, on joining the Society be put into correspondence with an older member by addressing the Secretary of the Social Committee, 28, Albemarle Street, W.

ACTIVITIES.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to February 20th: M. A. L. G., 5s.; C. D., £2 2s.; F. L. B., £1; London Lodge, £9; F. W. S., £1; A. C. P., £6; A. B., £10; H. P. P., 10s.; D. S., 10s.; C. M., £10; M. A. N., £1 1s. Total £41 8s.

Section Reference Library.

The following books have been gratefully received for the Library: *The Song of the Cross and the Chant of the Labour of Satan*, James Macbeth; *Light on the Hidden Way*.

The following books have been purchased during the past month: *Life of Louis Claude De Saint-Martin*,

A. E. Waite; *The Little Flowers of Saint Francis of Assisi*; *Personal Idealism*, edited by H. Sturt; *Obermann*, Étienne Pivert De Senancour; *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*, F. W. H. Myers; *The Life of St. Teresa of Jesus*, Written by *Herself*, translated by David Lewis.

R. A. HOBSON,
Assistant Librarian.

“At Home.”

An “At Home” will be held at 28, Albemarle Street, on Monday, March 2nd, at 3.30 p.m., at which Mr. Sinnett will answer questions. Tea will be served at 4.30.

Members of the Society are cordially invited to be present and may bring a friend.

E. SEVERS,
Hon. Secretary, Social Committee.

Class for Theosophical Discussion.

This Class will continue to hold its meetings at 28, Albemarle Street, at 7 p.m., on the Thursdays in March.

E. SEVERS,
Hon. Secretary.

Class for Study.

The circle for the discussion of Theosophical questions meets at 28, Albemarle Street, on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m., under the direction of Mr. A. H. Ward

Meetings for Enquirers.

Mr. Keightley will hold five of these meetings for members and their friends, at 28, Albemarle Street,

beginning on Monday, March 9th, at 3.30 p.m. He proposes to take Myers' *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*, as the subject for the afternoons, and the five meetings will be devoted to the Introduction, Disintegration of the Personality, Genius, Sleep and Hypnotism.

E. SEVERS,
Hon. Secretary, Social Committee.

Mr. Herbert Burrows.

On Wednesdays, March 11th and 25th, from 3 to 4.30 p.m., Mr. Herbert Burrows will be at 28, Albemarle Street, and will be pleased to see any members or their friends who would like to have a talk with him on the subject of his recent lectures given to the Blavatsky Lodge: "Rationalism and Religion," and "Physical and Occult Science."

"The Lotus Journal."

The *Journal* of the Lotus Lodge, which has hitherto been issued to its subscribers in type-written form, will appear in future as a printed publication, its original form having been so much in demand. *The Lotus Journal* is especially intended for children and young people. The subscription is 3s. 6d., single copies 3d. It may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W., or from the editor, 7, Lanhill Road, Elgin Avenue, W.

The contents for March include a portrait and sketch of Mrs. Besant; "Life after Death," Part I., C. W. Leadbeater; a story by Michael Wood; "Science Notes," by Max Gysi; and "Our Different Bodies," Part I., by E. M. Mallet. Those interested in the spreading of Theosophical ideas among children are invited to support the *Journal*.

Blavatsky Lodge.

The list of lecturers during the past month has comprised the names of Mr. Mead, Mrs. Emery, Mr. Burrows, and Mr. Sinnett.

It is the first time the Lodge has had the opportunity of hearing Mrs. Emery; the subject of her lecture, "The Kingly Way in Egypt, 3,700 B.C.," is one to which she has devoted special study.

The Sunday lecturers have been Mrs. Hooper, Mr. Mead, Mr. Burrows and Mr. Dyne. After March 29th the Sunday lectures will cease until May 3rd.

On April 2nd, 9th, 16th and 23rd the regular Lodge meetings will be suspended, but on these dates informal meetings will be held at the usual hour. On April 2nd it is suggested that the meeting shall take the form of a social gathering, which new members of the Lodge are specially invited to attend, at which the programme for the remaining three meetings may be discussed.

S. M. S.

Birmingham Lodge.

The Birmingham Lodge has had the privilege of entertaining the Swâmi Upadhyay from the 14th to the 18th of February. The Swâmi, who is in England upon a mission on behalf of the Vedânta philosophy, is passing from one University to another with a view to dissuade the authorities from imbuing the religious missions with the idea that Hinduism should be uprooted in favour of the various Christian creeds. He gave an admirable exposition of the real bearing of the Vedânta philosophy and greatly impressed his audiences. At the Public Meeting on the 14th February, Prof. Muirhead made a most appreciative contribution to the discussion, and subsequently introduced the Swâmi to Principal Sir Oliver Lodge in order to aid him in his mission.

We heartily commend this able exponent to all students of the Vedânta, and trust that he will be induced to remain among us permanently.

B. H.

Chiswick Lodge.

On February 13th Mrs. Hooper addressed a large meeting at the above Lodge and took for her subject "Abnormal States of Consciousness." Great interest was shown and questions were asked and answered.

M. C.

Theosophical Lending Library.

This Library is open to all, whether members of the Theosophical Society or not.

Terms of subscription: three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra.

Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 2.30 to 6 o'clock.

Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., in the small room, Foresters' Hall, Bath Street (near Pump Room), when books can be obtained from the Lodge Library. Enquiries should be addressed by letter to Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings in the Council Room, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: March 1st, *The Cult of Healthy-Mindedness*, Miss Edith Ward; March 8th, *Christianity in the Light of Theosophy*, Miss Bell; March 15th, *The Dangers of Spiritualism*, Mme. de Steiger; March 22nd,

The Mirror of the Self, B. Old; March 29th, *Thinking*, J. H. Duffell. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. Brian Hodgson, Ivydene, Poplar Avenue, Edgbaston.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays at 7.45 p.m., in the Theosophical Room, Bank Buildings, North Parade: March 3rd, *The Evolution of Morals*, Rev. R. Roberts; March 10th, *Theosophy and Politics*, O. Firth; March 17th, *Theosophy's Wider Outlook*, Mrs. Bell; March 24th, *The Power of Thought*, A. R. Orage; March 31st, *Crozier's Criticism of Theosophy*, Rev. Rhondda Williams. For information apply to Mrs. O. Firth, 10, Selborne Terrace, Manningham, Bradford.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Meetings on alternate Sundays at 3.30 p.m., and on alternate Mondays at 8 p.m., at members' houses, also on each Wednesday following the Sunday meeting, at 15, Old Steine, at 8 p.m. Information can be obtained from Mr. N. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or from Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., at Brooklyn Chambers, St. Augustine's Parade. For further particulars enquiry may be addressed to S. H. Old, at the above address.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. For information apply to the President, Mr. W. Kohlen, 12, rue d'Egmont.

BRUSSELS, CENTRALE BELGE. General meetings held in the Lodge Rooms, 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, the first and third Saturdays in the month, at 8.15 p.m. Students' Class, open to all members, the second and fourth Saturdays, at 8 p.m. Reading room open from 3 to 5 p.m. twice a week. For information apply by letter to the Secretary, 21, rue du Vallon.

DIDSBURY LODGE. Public Lectures in the Liberal Club, Didsbury.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Meetings in the Philosophical Institution Rooms, 4, Queen Street, at 8 p.m.: March 5th, Question evening; March 19th, *Symbolology—The Cross*, E. J. Cuthbertson. Lodge meetings for special study are held twice monthly. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. J. Lorimer Thomson, Roseburn House, Roseburn.

EXETER LODGE. Open meetings are held in the Lodge Room, 48, High Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., and on the first and third Sundays of the month at 7 p.m. Meetings for members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.30 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. Meetings at Shepherd's Hall (Room No. 3), 25, Bath Street, on the fourth Monday of each month, at 8 p.m.: March 23rd, *The Ministry of Angels*, J. F. M'Kechnie. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. James Wilson, 48, Holmhead Street, Glasgow.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings in the Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: March 1st, *The Power of Thought*, Miss Hilda Smith; March 8th, *The Civilisation of Ancient*

Persia, Baker Hudson; March 15th, *Life and its Responsibilities*, W. Bell; March 29th, *The Civilisation of Ancient China*, A. O. Eaves. A series of public lectures by representatives of the various Churches, on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., in the Theosophical Hall, on "Unity with Diversity in the Christian Churches." Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

HULL LODGE. Meetings at the Central Temperance Hotel (Jarratt Street entrance), on Sundays, at 7 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at the Athenæum Restaurant, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: March 2nd, *Symbolism*, C. Smythe; March 9th, *The Work of the S.P.R.*, Rev. A. H. Lec; March 16th, *Theosophy and Music*, Miss Whitehead; March 23rd, *Search for God in Nature*, Percy Lund; March 30th, Symposium on William Blake. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. G. H. Popplestone, 8, Ashville View, Cardigan Road, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings at 18, Colquitt Street, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C., for the study of Ashvaghosha's *Awakening of Faith*.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 7.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill, S.W.: March 1st, *Awakening of Faith*, J. M. Watkins; March 8th, *Theosophy of Plutarch*, Miss Forster; March 15th, *Mind and Soul*, W. Becker; March 22nd, *The Religion of Healthy-Mindedness*, P. G. Tovey; March 29th, Questions and Answers. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 1, Pentland Street, Wandsworth Common, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays at 28, Albemarle Street, W., at 8.30 p.m.: March 5th, *The Philosophy of Professor Green*, Mrs. Corbett; March 12th, *Dreams*, Miss L. Lloyd; March 19th, *Ideals and the Ideal*, B. Keightley; March 26th, *Practical Ideality*, B. Keightley. Meetings on Sundays (open to visitors) at 7 p.m.: March 1st, *The Needs of our Age*, B. Keightley; March 8th, *Socialism in the Light of Theosophy*, W. C. Worsdell; March 15th, *There is no Death*, Mrs. Sharpe; March 22nd, *The Problem of Civilisation*, B. Keightley; March 29th, *The Uses of Prayer*, Mrs. Corbett.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, on Fridays, at 8 p.m.: March 6th and 27th, Study of *The Secret Doctrine*; March 13th, *Seven, Mystically and Scientifically*, G. Dyne; March 20th, *Mythra—a Sun God*, A. A. Harris.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "West View," 12, Oakfield Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: March 3rd, *The Symbolism of Ritual: 3. The High Ceremonial*, L. Stanley Jast; March 10th, *Yoga*, R. King; March 17th, "Varieties of Religious Experiences": Professor James' Final

Analysis, P. Tovey; March 24th, *Rhythm*, S. F. Weguelin-Smith; March 31st, *Swedenborg*, W. P. Swainson.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: March 2nd, 16th, and 30th, *Will, Desire and Emotion*, Mr. and Mrs. Leo; March 9th, *Volcanoes and Earthquakes*, A. P. Sinnett, March 23rd, *Mystic Experiences*, Mrs. Hooper. Class for study on the first and third Saturdays of each month at 8 p.m.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for children and young people at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Sundays, at 3 p.m.: March 1st, 8th, 15th, and 22nd, *The Bodies we use*, G. Dyne; March 29th, "*Man and his Bodies*." All children are cordially invited. For information address the Hon. Sec., Miss M. A. Sidley, 3, Nassington Road, Hampstead Heath, N.W.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N., on Mondays (study class) and Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m.: March 7th, *The Theosophy of Emerson*, Miss E. Severs; March 9th, *Jesus in Egypt*, Rev. A. Baker; March 14th, *The Seal of the T.S.*, L. Stanley Jast; March 21st, *Psychic Experience*, Mrs. Hooper; March 28th, J. W. Sidley. Debating class on Saturdays at 7 p.m.: March 7th, *Brotherhood Ideals in Practice*; March 14th, *Asceticism*; March 21st, *Tolerance v. Interference*; March 28th, *Trusts or the People*.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.: March 6th, *Life in Metals*, G. Dyne; March 13th, *Theosophy and the Training of Children*, Mrs. Corbett; March 20th, *Service*, J. M. Watkins; March 27th, "*Varieties of Religious Experience*."

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Meetings on alternate Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 38, Bamford Road, Didsbury, and public lectures in the Liberal Club. Information can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, 38, Bamford Road, Didsbury.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER CENTRE. Meetings for members of the Society on Tuesdays at 8 p.m. Open to non-members on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Information from the Hon. Secretary, West Bank, Park Road, Ashton-on-Mersey.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 68, Linthorpe Road, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., for study of *Thought Control*. Public Lectures on Sundays in the Lecture Room, Co-operative Hall, Corporation Road, at 6.45 p.m.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 3, St. James' Street, at 8 p.m. Communications to W. E. Dowson, 10, Mapperley Road, Nottingham.

OXFORD CENTRE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m., in the office of Mr. Salter, over Lloyd's Bank, Carfax, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Hon. Secretary, W. Cock, 37, Beechcroft Road, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., and on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 19, Cornwall Street. Enquiries to be addressed to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

SOUTHAMPTON CENTRE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m., at Capt. Forbes' Nautical Academy, Albion Place. Enquiries should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, Miss Green; Laverton House, Hill, Southampton.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Meetings at 7.30 p.m., at the Vegetarian Café, Nelson Street, Newcastle: March 4th, *Theosophy and Religious Creeds*, Mrs. Hooper; March 13th, *The Great Breath*, J. H. Duffell; March 27th, *Heredity and Theosophy*. Meetings on the last Sunday of the month, at Lily House, off Ocean View, Whitley Bay.

YORK CENTRE. Meetings on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., in the De Grey Rooms; March 6th, *Telepathy and Mind Mechanism*, Mrs. Hooper; March 20th, *Theosophy and Politics*, O. Firth. Information from W. H. Sanderson, 5, South Esplanade, York.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 204.

L. E. T.—*If the better housing, etc., of our poorest working classes would attract more highly evolved Egos to incarnate in our large towns, what would become of the less advanced souls? Charity is, I believe, better organised on the Continent, but this nation is reputed to be specially sympathetic towards the poor and suffering, which is a quality they may stand in need of, even more than of the mere fact of charitable relief. Should we not, therefore, hesitate before we furnish conditions which may drive souls into an environment which they may be less helpfully and sympathetically dealt with?*

G. R. S. M.—*If only our questioners would consider more carefully the protases of their conditional clauses, perhaps the apodoses might take care of themselves. Does better housing, etc., attract more evolved Egos to incarnate? There is an old story that when many Egos had been nicely nursed and paternally provided for by an almost perfect system of patriarchal government in one of the ancient civilisations of antiquity, they were promptly in their next birth shipped off into the bodies of very rude and savage tribes to give them (the Nestlé's milk babes) some backbone, while at the same time they distributed the milk of human kindness, in homœopathic doses we must suppose, among the ferocious tribesmen. "Charity," I should say, is not better "organised" on the Continent, in the sense of the questioner. On the other hand, the more charitable institutions we establish in this country the more we want. "Charity" is not the cure for this state of affairs. Our hospitals, for instance, are all charitable institutions. Hospitals are necessities; why not recognise this and let them be supported by the state as they are on the Continent? The more workhouses we establish the more we want; they have not made that mistake on the Continent;*

there are no workhouses in India. Children are expected to look after their parents in their old age, in return for the care bestowed on them in their youth. In this country we have long forgotten this ancient duty.

After rambling on so far, I again read the question, and now perceive that I don't understand quite what L. E. T. wants to know. Briefly the case seems to me to be this? Mankind in the mass is not intelligent; we are learning a lesson, slowly profiting by experience, trying painfully to win our way to a state of affairs where there shall be fair conditions for all. This is what we are doing or trying in some dumb pitiful fashion to accomplish. As for the "souls," as we cater for ourselves and seek to improve matters, so we cater for them. If the idealistic conditions of a patriarchal government are ever again realised, I suppose then the "less advanced souls" will be so smothered with kindness that they will royally sleep until the animals overtake them again, and then they will have to fight for it, and so evolve whether they like it or not.

A. B. C.—This question involves more assumptions than most theosophists would be prepared to grant, but without going into any side issues it seems best to deal with the fundamental misconception that it is possible for us to upset the arrangements of the Lords of Karma by anything we can do physically, morally or mentally to help the evolution of the human race. When will students of karma learn that their "business is with action only, never with its fruits"? Now there is only one *rule* of action possible for the real student of the Gupta Vidya, that is to work *with* the law of evolution, *i.e.*, the Will of the Logos, so far as he understands it. He may make mistakes in detail, but if this be his *motive* he may safely go ahead and do all he can by voice, or pen, or purse, or work in any direction for the uplifting of humanity and all that is below it. If the making of better dwellings for the poor be within his power by all means let him do it with all his heart, and with no fear that he will inconvenience the Lords of Karma, or drive some unfortunate Ego to incarnate on that unknown "Continent where charity is better organised but souls are less sympathetically dealt with." (The existence of those continental conditions is one of the assumptions which one cannot grant.) The Ego will go where conditions best make for its future development and the duty of helping to make *all* conditions, physical, astral, and mental, tend to betterment is one that is laid on the shoulders of us all.

E. L.—We may be quite sure that the "less advanced" will be provided for even if we do what is only our most obvious duty wherever the opportunity presents itself, *i.e.*, of promoting the improved physical conditions in order to meet the needs down here of those Egos whose karma of most acute physical degradation and misery may be worn out. And I think if L. E. T. looks around him (or her) he will be only too sadly sure that

the lower conditions necessary for the less evolved are likely to exist in plenty for some time to come and (by that very fact) to be needed. Nor do I quite see why improved physical conditions should necessarily imply a lack of consideration and sympathy in those who organise them and deal with the younger souls coming into such. Is it the old question of "interference with karma" which is (quite unnecessarily) troubling our questioner? Such a possibility will be out of our province for a considerable time to come.

I. H.—I do not think we are justified in doing a wrong in order that we may deal sympathetically with the wronged. People have quite sufficient sorrows with which we can sympathise, even though we may provide them with sanitary dwellings. If we can build up a great and noble nation, then the whole world is the richer and better for our building. All civilised nations (not England alone) should provide civilised conditions of life, which shall enable "evolved" souls to find their fitting surroundings; but each nation is responsible for the conditions it provides, and will reap the reward of its actions in this, as in all other respects. So I think. If it be a fact that *individual* citizens in England are sympathetic, though very painful and demoralising conditions of life are to be found in the cities where such people dwell (and this I do not doubt to be the case), I do not think we should encourage the "slum landlord" because (possibly) there may be in another country equally culpable "slum landlords" and less compassionate citizens. After all, if charity be better organised on the Continent, then there is some quality in our brethren across the channel which is more effective in dealing with misery than our sympathy. Moreover, "charity" is after all very largely (though not wholly) a sign of something wrong somewhere. In a truly civilised nation of "evolved" souls there ought not to be the necessity for charity on so large a scale. I think the soul of a savage who finds fairly congenial environment in a civilised nation, would surely be able to gain as helpful experience in less complex surroundings. Even if this is not so, it seems as though he might be helped equally effectively by drawing out the dormant higher faculties, rather than by fostering and rendering more objectionable a part of his nature which he has already developed. Besides, I am disposed to think it is of more importance to the world at large to build a high type of national character, and a nation that is civilising and intellectualising power in the world, than to provide degraded conditions in order to sympathise with the unevolved when they "find their own place," and find there most grievous suffering. Pain might be thus gradually lessened; and, after all, we do not learn solely through pain, and are not, I think, save under exceptional circumstances, justified in inflicting or increasing it.

B. K.—The clue to the difficulty which seems to exercise the questioner's mind may perhaps be found—as indeed also the solution of numerous

other social and political problems—in a consideration of the bearing on individual life of “collective karma.” It is quite true that of the actual method and mode of working of kârmic law we know little or nothing; and hence to seek for the solution of a problem in the still more recondite conception of “collective” karma, may seem a vain attempt to explain *ignotum per ignotius*. But our teachers have not infrequently spoken of collective karma and so we are justified in believing that the term corresponds to some actual reality and that the sense of the words used in some measure conveys a notion, however dim and imperfect, of what is intended. It may therefore be useful to attempt—at least speculatively—to work out the notion a little and to endeavour to see its bearing upon the life around us.

If we compare two well-marked and clearly localised civilisations—for example Imperial Rome under the early Cæsars and London at the present day—we shall obviously find a number of points of resemblance and an equal or greater number of points of contrast. Taking thus the general environment only, and putting aside all those questions of relative social, pecuniary or civil status which belong more particularly to the narrower environment of any particular Ego, we shall readily see that all the Egos taking birth in Rome say between 50 and 100 years A.D. will come under the influence of one type of general environment, while those born in London between 1850 and 1900 A.D. would find themselves subjected to general environmental influences in some respects resembling but in other respects widely differing from those of Imperial Rome. And we may roughly class these differences under the two heads of difference in external, material surroundings and difference in the prevailing feeling or “spirit” of the age. As a simple illustration of each class, consider the multiplicity of hospitals, asylums, and similar institutions intended to alleviate human suffering which existed in London during the last half-century, as contrasted with the almost complete absence of such in Imperial Rome, illustrating the contrast on the material side; while on the more subjective or inner side we might compare the sympathetic feeling, to which reference is made in the question, which has called these institutions into existence with the spirit in Imperial Rome which found expression in the gladiatorial shows of the Coliseum.

Now this general environment, whether material or subjective, is obviously not the direct outcome of the karma of any single individual, nor indeed *immediately* the outcome even of the present action of those Egos who are born into it. Clearly we are here in presence of the working of the law of collective karma.

It is quite true that it is the individual karma of a given Ego which brings him to birth in that environment and under the sweep of that special phase of collective karma. But it seems to me that we can here trace two distinct kârmic factors: one which brings a given Ego to birth in association

with a number of others at such and such a time and place; the second which determines the depth of colouring, so to speak, both on the material and the subjective sides, of the environment into which those associated Egos are born.

For instance—to elaborate the above illustration—we can see that both on the material and the subjective sides, in respect of indifference to human suffering and its alleviation or infliction, there has been a marked change from the time of Imperial Rome to our own day. But this implies that the collective karma, in that special direction, has been largely lightened; and if we look ahead instead of behind us, we may, I think, infer that when the kârmic wheel has again revolved, the progress in this same direction will be still greater.

If now we generalise these inferences, it appears that what may be called philanthropic effort operates not only on the karma of the individuals concerned, but that it also tends, as it were, to lessen the total momentum of the forces at work to produce suffering. The effect of this would be that while all the differences of individual karma would still have their full operation and manifestation, the *average* weight of suffering would be diminished for all Egos alike.

To deal now directly with the question as put, I should incline to say that our efforts to provide better housing, etc., for the poor would not result in attracting a different class or level of Egos into incarnation, but in the improvement of the general average environment into which are born all those Egos whose collective kârmic ties unite them with our own nation or race. For we must remember that it is the ties existing between the Egos and groups of Egos from the past which link them into those larger collections called nations and races, so that the effect of a general all-round raising and improvement of enviroing conditions will operate to assist and hasten their evolution, rather than to cause them to be born elsewhere.

As far as I can see, it is largely by this all-round improvement that the growth of the less developed is aided, and it is in this direction, it would seem, that, in the words of *Light on the Path*, we are one and all called upon to strive “to lighten the heavy karma of the world.”

G. L. S.—This question seems to be based on the fallacy that the Law of Karma can only work properly if not interfered with—that, in fact, it is very apt to go wrong and get into quite a muddled state unless left alone or handled in a judicious way by human beings. When once it is clearly understood that, act as we may, we merely carry out that law and cannot by any possibility obstruct it, then the difficulties raised in this and similar questions all disappear. If sympathy with our fellow creatures impel us to ameliorate their condition in any way, say by the removal of slums, we need have no fear that by so doing we are making the world too wholesome a place or unduly restricting the scope of evil karma. Of course, if we could help people to become wiser, that would be

doing them a still greater service than merely bettering their environment; but in any case the more assistance we can give to backward souls, the greater and not the less is our sympathy with them likely to be.

S. C.—It is not the duty of the citizens of any nation to refrain from improving the physical environment, lest backward souls should wander on the astral plane, seeking rest and finding none. Our anxiety should be to provide sufficiently good accommodation for these entities, and the opposite danger is not one that need be considered. We never know what kind of souls are seeking reincarnation; our duty, as in ordinary charity, is to strive to benefit all, knowing that the kârmic law will prevent our doing so in any particular case where such help has not been earned. It would not be possible to drive any soul into an environment which it had not deserved.

A. H. W.—The less advanced souls would, the writer thinks, have to seek a less "advanced" environment elsewhere, in which they would find the stimulus of starvation still present to force them into active effort. There is no reason to think—since man is man—that they would not find in that environment the sympathy they required to help them on their way, though perhaps it might not take the form of "charitable relief." After all, to subsist on charitable relief is to be a parasite on society, and involves the kârmic return of every benefit enjoyed sooner or later. We shall, therefore, be wise to do the best we know all round, and trust the great harmony of the universe to adjust the perfect balance, as it inevitably must.

The great evolution of society is really utterly beyond the scope of any little hesitations we may have one way or the other. It is like a great organism, always dying, always being born, creeping slowly, slowly, up the great ladder of the ever-becoming. As in the living cell, there are currents moving in it, some one way, some another, all are a sign of life, and all make for progress in the end. Looked at from the one-life point of view it is a tragedy of blood and tears, the strong trample upon the weak, the unworthy prey upon the deserving, the wise are ruled by fools; but from the Eternal standpoint all is well, everyone is receiving his deserts, such experience is necessary, every action is inevitable and depends upon the stage of evolution of the agent. Free-will is the power of self-restraint from action, action is the result of the external stimulus of necessity, for "the Self neither acts nor causes to act, Nature however energiseth."

QUESTION 205.

M. A. S.—*Is all suffering kârmic? If the purpose of suffering be the calling out from the Ego the capacity for mastery of the three worlds, it would appear that to conquer suffering would be a means of partially attaining that result; but then you interfere with karma and push the suffering on to a future incarna-*

tion. Is it better to remain passive and endure? But this is the attitude of despair, which cannot be a good habit of mind.

A. P. S.—Probably all suffering is kârmic in the sense that it could not come about unless there were some kârmic causes leading up to it somewhere in the background of the sufferer's former lives. But though not purposely engendered by higher powers with that end in view, it may become the agency of moral development when people bear it in a courageous spirit, not in "the attitude of despair" but with the idea that even suffering shall not destroy their conviction that on the whole the world must be governed by a just Providence, and that Evil is the anomalous condition of things—Good the condition towards which all things, even temporary evils, are tending. It is not necessary to assume that *per se* there is any purpose in suffering. Theoretically evolution might be worked out without it, but the conditions under which the authors of the system to which we belong have had to work, have been such that they have not been able to arrange things so that suffering shall be entirely excluded from the experience of mankind.

E. L.—All suffering is kârmic, since it, like all else, is composed of cause and effect. Not only suffering but its opposite has to be conquered, and such conquering appears to lie in the fact, not of ceasing to *feel* these vibrations, but in becoming master of them and feeling them at will as your service of human interests requires. Most people are the prey of their feelings and are governed by *them*, which has to be grown out of. True, such mastery means ultimately the rulership of "the three worlds." "Karma" can be *modified* but not upset or interfered with in the sense meant by the questioner. It would be beyond our power to do so. *If* we conquer suffering we cannot push that suffering on to a future incarnation. The expiation has been finished, the strength gained.

No, I do not counsel passivity—until the effort to oppose or avoid what honestly seems evil is felt to be vain. You will develop some power or learn some lesson in such a struggle even if it be mistaken, but let your "resignation to the inevitable" be made in faith of highest good being wrought by Those who serve your highest interests, and not in rebellion or that hard fatalism which cramps the heart. Then you will acquire that true balance which eschews extremes in that it is not ruled by them.

I. H.—Presumably everything is kârmic, taking the word in its widest sense, or the widest sense we understand. If we have conquered suffering we have certainly mastered a portion of life, but I take it that it is one thing to conquer, and another to evade. M. A. S. has apparently evasion, rather than conquest in mind, when he speaks of pushing the suffering on "to a future incarnation." To put off the day of reckoning is not to pay the debt. To remain passive and endure does not seem to me to be necessarily the

attitude of despair. Despair is, as the questioner says, "a habit of mind"; endurance does not mean despair (necessarily). One does not despair in the dark, if one knows the sun will rise at the appointed hour; but one must *endure* it; one can, it is true, light a lamp; and one can lighten and "conquer" suffering by endurance and knowledge. By the bye, if, in order to master the three worlds, one must conquer suffering, must one not also conquer joy?

QUESTION 206.

G. H. T.—*What is the meaning of the term "great renunciation"? One who reaches Nirvāṇa can surely have no "self" left. If this is the case how can there be any self-denial?*

G. R. S. M.—The Great Renunciation is, I believe, not really a renunciation of Nirvāṇa; for Nirvāṇa does not happen to be a sort of super-celestial Monte Carlo, or even a New Jerusalem, or anything of that kind. Nirvāṇa in its true sense is a state of being, for in a VĀHAN answer I decline to go into the subtle metaphysics of mystic transcendentalism, and ring the changes on "is" and "is not" and the rest. For all practical purposes Nirvāṇa connotes the freedom from the *necessity* of incarnating again on this earth. There are some, by no means all, we are told, who, when they have won this freedom, of which they cannot be deprived, for it is a natural state, of this very freedom and free-will determine to reincarnate again *on earth*. This is what we are told the "great renunciation" really means, for the self-limitation to a body of earth means the voluntary suffering of a transcendent "passion," of which none but the Christs of humanity can have the slightest understanding. It is a "passion" or "suffering," and yet the realisation of an exquisite love which is more divine than even the greatest bliss of the Nirvāṇī who is content to be free, if indeed there be any who are so content, for there are other economies of service not connected with this earth in which the Nirvāṇī can share, and who shall say that there is any taint of selfishness in that service which is perfect freedom?

E. L.—Personally I have always understood the term Great Renunciation to apply to the surrender of Nirvāṇa itself, as far as that individual was concerned. But in order to be able to surrender one must have had a touch of such Consciousness, and yet remain strong enough in his resolution—even under the throes of such mighty life—to come out of that momentary experience of It, and voluntarily return to the old hard way, to tread it with the race whose consciousness he has thus quickened. It is true that he has no "self" left as *we* understand it. But there are *higher* renunciations than that of the Personal Self, and

these are dimly foreshadowed on the Path, which is alike that of the Soul's triumph and Its Martyrdom. And as our language on these occasions fails us so utterly we can only use the old terms, trying through them to catch some glimpse, however vague, of the fact that this individual capacity for grasping and experiencing, whether of joy or pain, must increase enormously before it can vanish altogether.

I. H.—I believe the phrase is taken as meaning the renunciation of some condition of consciousness the nature of which we cannot grasp; remaining in touch with humanity, linked to a "form," however subtle. But how can we tell what this really means? How can we even guess at it? I think we cannot. I do not think we can speculate as to what form of "Self" may or may not be left when Nirvāṇa is reached. If we think of "Self" as really gone—nothing remaining save a Unity in which knower and known are absolutely one, I must confess it seems to me we have reached a stage of thought when all our words mean nothing.

S. C.—This expression seems to be an outcome of the grateful feelings of disciples (gifted with more devotion than intellect) towards their Divine Teachers—feelings which made them realise vividly that a stupendous sacrifice had been made by these Great Ones, and which caused them to forget that the step in question was the only one possible. There does not appear to be any justification for it from an intellectual point of view, because we may suppose that the Divine Beings who do not make the "great renunciation" are engaged in equally useful work. It appears to be rather a mistake to put forward the giving up of Nirvāṇa as the highest ideal for all, and involves a slur on those whose nature fits them for other fields of activity.

Erratum.—In answer by "A. A. W.," Question 201, p. 54, "capable," three lines from the end of the first paragraph, in the quotation from "A. B.," should be "incapable."

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post-free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications for "Activities" must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest.

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription (5s.). Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY, *General Secretary*.

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

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NO. 9.

Edited by BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

ACTIVITIES.

LETTER FROM THE FRENCH SECTION.

PARIS, le 20 Mars, 1903.

*A Monsieur le Secrétaire Général
de la Section Britannique.*

CHER MONSIEUR,

La Section Française, réunie en Assemblée générale le 15 Mars, a décidé par acclamation d'adresser un message de cordiale sympathie à tous les membres de votre Section et en particulier à son très estimé Secrétaire Général.

Bien fraternellement à vous,

CH. BLECH, *fils,*

Le Secrétaire du Comité de la Section Française.

LETTER FROM THE NEW ZEALAND SECTION.

January 23rd, 1903.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER,

At the meeting of the New Zealand Section in Convention assembled it was resolved to send you warm brotherly greetings and every good wish for the New Year.

I am, dear Sir and Brother,

Yours fraternally,

HAROLD LARGE,

pro General Secretary.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY, ESQ.,
General Secretary British Section.

NOTICE.

Unattached members can, if they wish, on joining the Society be put into correspondence with an older member by addressing the Secretary of the Social Committee, 28, Albemarle Street, W.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to March 20th: C. B. I., £6; L. S., 5s.; H. L., £1; H. and K. D., 10s. 6d.; O. H., 10s.; F. G., £10; A. P. C., 10s.; J. E. H., £5; W. B. and E. L., £6; C. J. B., £2; J. G., 10s.; Ss., £1; I. F. B., 5s.; E. J. C., £1 1s.; K. B., £2; B., 10s.; M. M. C., £1 1s. Total £38 2s. 6d.

Closing of the Sectional Rooms.

The rooms of the Section will be closed at Easter for cleaning purposes from and including Thursday, April 9th to April 19th. The Blavatsky Lodge, however, holds informal meetings on both these dates.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary.

Section Reference Library.

The following books have been gratefully received for the Library: *Khāli*, Walter van der Elbe; *All These Things Added*, James Allen; *Conjugal Love*, E. Swedenborg.

The following books have been purchased during the past month: *The Prolegomena to Ethics*, T. H. Green; *Ancient and Modern Physics*, T. E. Willson; *Jeanne D'Arc*, edited by T. Douglas Murray; *The Spirit of Islam*, Syed Ameer Ali; *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, F. Nietzsche; *A Literary History of Persia*, E. G. Browne, M.A.

R. A. HOBSON,
Assistant Librarian.

London Federation.

The next quarterly meeting of the above Federation, at which Mrs. Hooper has kindly consented

to preside, has been fixed for Saturday, April 25th, at 8 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street. The subject for discussion will be: "The Utility of a Cult." Council meeting at 7.30 p.m.

PHILIP TOVEY,
Hon. Secretary.

Northern Federation.

The thirty-sixth Conference was held at Harrogate, on February 21st, under the presidency of Mrs. Hooper. There was a good attendance of delegates and members from Harrogate, Manchester, Middlesbrough, Liverpool, Sheffield, Leeds, Didsbury, Hull, Bradford and York.

The proceedings were commenced with a discussion on "Policy and Methods of Propaganda." Mr. Percy Lund, President of the Bradford Lodge, introduced the subject, and many of the members present also spoke.

At the evening session Mrs. Hooper delivered an address on "The Value of Diversity," in the course of which she dealt upon several aspects of Evolution that are sometimes overlooked. The proceedings terminated with a hearty vote of thanks to Mrs. Hooper.

The Harrogate Lodge kindly entertained the members to tea during the afternoon and to refreshments after the Lecture.

In connection with the Federation Mrs. Hooper also made an extensive Lecturing Tour among the Northern Branches, in the course of which she visited Leeds, Harrogate, Didsbury, Manchester, Liverpool, Middlesbrough, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Hull and York. At each town she was heartily welcomed and her Lectures were listened to with great interest by good audiences.

The next Conference is fixed for May 23rd, when Mr. Bertram Keightley has kindly consented to preside.

W. H. THOMAS,
Hon. Secretary.

South Western Federation.

The eighth annual Convention of the above was held at Exeter on Friday and Saturday, March 6th and 7th, Mr. Keightley presiding.

The series of meetings commenced on Friday at 8 p.m., when Mr. Keightley addressed a large and attentive audience on "What should we live for?" Col. Montague was the chairman. The lecture was followed to the end with unflagging interest.

The business meeting was held on the following day at 3 p.m. A very gratifying feature of this gathering was the number of delegates present from other Lodges and Centres of the Federation, although the distance some had to travel was great. This also shows that Theosophists are gradually awakening to the necessity of co-operation and organisation to further the work. The members present distinctly felt the great help and value of such an annual gathering.

The reports from the Lodges and Centres at Bath, Bournemouth, Bristol, Cardiff, Exeter, Oxford, Plymouth and Southampton were very satisfactory, several new members having joined during the year. Interesting suggestions were exchanged with regard to the manner of conducting the meetings of Lodges. After the business was completed Mr. Keightley addressed the members on "The training of an Occultist." The speaker showed in a very clear manner the difference between a Theosophist and an Occultist. A few questions were afterwards put which again threw further light on a recondite subject. The meeting then adjourned for friendly conversation, social intercourse and to partake of the hospitality of the Exeter members.

At 8 o'clock a public meeting was held, presided over by Col. Montague, at which Mr. Keightley devoted nearly two hours to very careful answering of numerous questions that had arisen from his lecture of the previous evening or during the course of study.

This Convention was certainly the most successful one ever held in the West.

J. WALTER COCK,
Hon. Secretary.

Blavatsky Lodge.

Owing to the absence of Mr. Mead from England during some weeks from March 15th, he delivered his lecture, "The Riddle of Epiphanius," on February 26th. Mrs. Corbett lectured on March 5th, Miss Lilian Lloyd on the 12th, and Mr. Keightley on the 19th; Mr. Keightley also kindly consented to lecture on the 26th, the date which was originally fixed for Mr. Mead. The Sunday lecturers have been Miss Ward, Mr. Keightley, Mr. Worsdell, and Mrs. Hooper. The last speaker lectured instead of Mrs. Sharpe, who was unfortunately prevented by illness from speaking on March 15th.

Informal meetings of the Lodge will be held every Thursday evening in April save the last, when the Lodge re-opens with the usual syllabus of lectures. The Sunday lectures will cease until the first Sunday in May.

S. M. S.

Bath Lodge.

After a long and trying illness the President of the Bath Lodge, Mr. Edwin Hill, passed from this plane on March 19th. In his early life he was a disciple and student of that great mystic Swedenborg. Later on he turned to spiritualism, but for the last ten years he had been a devoted student of the deeper spiritual verities of Theosophy. With increasing years these teachings had almost filled his life, and his home has been open to Mrs. Besant, Mr. Leadbeater, and other prominent leaders of the movement. He established the Centre from which the Bath Lodge originated,

and the members will see to it that he did not work in vain.

M. K. S.

Chiswick Lodge.

On March 6th, Mrs. Mallalue gave the above Lodge a lecture on Reincarnation. On the 13th Mr. Dyne took for his subject, "Seven, Mystically and Scientifically," and on the 20th, Mr. A. A. Harris lectured on "Mithra—a Sun God." Visitors and members showed much interest in the subjects, judging by the questions and discussions which followed.

M. C.

Hampstead Heath Centre.

It is proposed to start a Centre at Hampstead Heath, for which a lending library is now being formed. If any members have spare copies of books, magazines, or pamphlets, and would send them to Miss Kathleen Shaw, Stanfield House, Hampstead, N.W., they would be very gladly received, or a temporary loan of books would be welcomed.

K. S.

Theosophical Lending Library.

This Library is open to all, whether members of the Theosophical Society or not.

Terms of subscription: three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra.

Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 2.30 to 6 o'clock.

Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., in the small room, Foresters' Hall, Bath Street (near Pump Room), when books can be obtained from the Lodge Library. Enquiries should be addressed by letter to Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings in the Council Room, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: April 5th, *The Poems of Ernest Crosby*, C. E. Smith; April 12th, Debate on Reincarnation; April 19th, *Some Theosophic Facets*, B. Old; April 26th, *The Dangers of Spiritualism*, Mme. de Steiger. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. Brian Hodgson, Ivydene, Poplar Avenue, Edgbaston.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays at

7.45 p.m., in the Theosophical Room, Bank Buildings, North Parade. For information apply to Mrs. O. Firth, 10, Selborne Terrace, Manningham, Bradford.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Meetings on alternate Sundays at 3.30 p.m., and on alternate Mondays at 8 p.m., at members' houses, also on each Wednesday following the Sunday meeting, at 15, Old Steine, at 8 p.m. Information can be obtained from Mr. N. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or from Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., at Brooklyn Chambers, St. Augustine's Parade. For further particulars enquiry may be addressed to S. H. Old, at the above address.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. For information apply to the President, Mr. W. Kohlen, 12, rue d'Egmont.

BRUSSELS, CENTRALE BELGE. General meetings held in the Lodge Rooms, 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, the first and third Saturdays in the month, at 8.15 p.m. Students' Class, open to all members, the second and fourth Saturdays, at 8 p.m. Reading room open from 3 to 5 p.m. twice a week. For information apply by letter to the Secretary, 21, rue du Vallon.

DIDSBURY LODGE. Public Lectures in the Liberal Club, Didsbury.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Meetings in the Philosophical Institution Rooms, 4, Queen Street, at 8 p.m.: April 2nd, *Self-Reform*, Mr. Allan; April 16th, *The Osirian Myth*, W. F. Miller; April 30th, *Atlantis*, W. Armstrong. Lodge meetings for special study are held twice monthly. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. J. Lorimer Thomson, Roseburn House, Roseburn.

EXETER LODGE. Open meetings are held in the Lodge Room, 48, High Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., and on the first and third Sundays of the month at 7 p.m. Meetings for members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.30 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. Meetings at Shepherd's Hall (Room No. 3), 25, Bath Street, on the fourth Monday of each month, at 8 p.m.: April 27th, *The Mystic Element in the Celtic Legends*, Rev. M. Parker. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. James Wilson, 48, Holmhead Street, Glasgow.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings in the Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: April 5th, *Theosophy and Music*, Miss Whitehead; April 12th, *What is Theosophy?* Miss Shaw; April 19th, *Healing Agencies*, D. S. Ward; April 26th, *The Civilisation of Japan*, C. N. Goode. Lodge meetings on Thursdays and Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 23, East Parade, for the study of *The Astral Plane* and *The Path of Discipleship*.

HULL LODGE. Meetings at the Central Temperance Hotel (Jarratt Street entrance), on Sundays, at 7 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at the Athenæum Restaurant, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. G. H. Popplestone, 8, Ashville View, Cardigan Road, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings at 18, Colquitt Street, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C., for the study of Ashvaghosha's *Awakening of Faith*.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 7.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill, S.W.: April 5th, *Recent Psychological Research*, Bertram Keightley; April 12th, *What is a Christian?* April 19th, Questions and Answers; April 26th, *Ghosts*, Miss Kane. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 1, Pentland Street, Wandsworth Common, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays at 28, Albemarle Street, W., at 8.30 p.m. Informal meetings April 2nd, 9th, 16th and 23rd. April 30th, *The Theosophy of the Pauline Epistles*, Rev. J. J. B. Coles. Sunday evening meetings suspended till May.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, on Fridays, at 8 p.m.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "West View," 12, Oakfield Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: April 1st, *Swedenborg*, W. P. Swainworth; April 8th, *The Value of Environment*, H. T. Muggeridge; April 15th, *Rhythm*, S. F. Weguelin-Smith; April 22nd, *Imagination*, A. J. Faulding; April 29th, *The Riddle of the Universe*, D. N. Dunlop.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: April 6th, "*And a Balanced Soul was Born*," Miss Goring; April 13th, no meeting; April 20th, *The Great Event*, A. J. Faulding; April 27th, *Initiation*, Mrs. Leo. Class for study on the first and third Saturdays of each month at 8 p.m.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for children and young people at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Sundays, at 3 p.m.: April 5th and 19th, Study of *Man Visible and Invisible*; April 12th, *The Great Event*, A. J. Faulding; April 26th, Study of *Man and his Bodies*. For information address the Hon. Sec., Miss M. A. Sidley, 3, Nassington Road, Hampstead Heath, N.W.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N., on Mondays (study class) and Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m.: April 4th, *Animal, Plant and Metal Life*, G. Dyne; April 6th, 20th, and 27th, Class for Study; April 22nd, *Socialism in the Light of Theosophy*, W. C. Worsdell; April 29th, Discussion on Reincarnation.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m. Recommence on April 17th. Syllabus in preparation.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., at 16, John Dalton Street, Manchester. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 80, Northenden Road, Sale, Cheshire.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, April 20th and 27th, at 8 p.m., and

drawing-room meetings at 3.30 p.m., April 7th, and 21st, at 38, Bamford Road, Didsbury. Information can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, 38, Bamford Road, Didsbury.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER CENTRE. Meetings for members of the Society on Tuesdays at 8 p.m. Open to non-members on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Information from the Hon. Secretary, West Bank, Park Road, Ashton-on-Mersey.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 68, Linthorpe Road, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., for study of *Thought Control*. Public Lectures on Sundays in the Lecture Room, Co-operative Hall, Corporation Road, at 6.45 p.m.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 3, St. James' Street, at 8 p.m. Communications to W. E. Dowson, 10, Mapperley Road, Nottingham.

OXFORD CENTRE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m., in the office of Mr. Salter, over Lloyd's Bank, Carfax, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Hon. Secretary, J. Walter Cock, 37, Beechcroft Road, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., and on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 19, Cornwall Street. Enquiries to be addressed to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

SOUTHAMPTON CENTRE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m., at Capt. Forbes' Nautical Academy, Albion Place. Enquiries should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, Miss Green, Laverton House, Hill, Southampton.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Meetings at 7.30 p.m., at the Vegetarian Café, Nelson Street, Newcastle: April 3rd, *Ancient Egyptian Knowledge*, J. Taylore; April 17th, Business Meeting; April 24th, *Theosophy*, J. Watson. Meetings on the last Sunday of the month, at Lily House, off Ocean View, Whitley Bay.

YORK CENTRE. Meetings on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., in the De Grey Rooms; April 3rd, *An Outline of Human Evolution*, E. J. Dunn; April 17th, *Theosophy and Modern Psychology*, A. R. Orage. Information from W. H. Sanderson, 5, South Esplanade, York.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 205.

(Continued from p. 64.)

M. A. S.—*Is all suffering kârmic? If the purpose of suffering be the calling out from the Ego the capacity for mastery of the three worlds, it would appear that to conquer suffering would be a means of partially attaining that result; but then you interfere with karma and push the suffering on to a future incarnation. Is it not better to remain passive and endure? But this is the attitude of despair, which cannot be a good habit of mind.*

B. K.—The difficulties raised in this question

are instances, I think, of that confusion of thought which is apt to result from the asking of questions without a clear conception of the standpoint from which the question is put, or a definite recognition of the point of view from which an answer is given.

Thus the question: Is all suffering kârmic, may be asked from the standpoint of the individual, or from the wider and more abstract point of view of Nature as a whole. And the answer must depend on the standpoint. In the case of the individual, one would first point out that there are several other points to be made clear before any definite answer is practicable. For instance, does the question refer to actual suffering felt as such, or does it refer to conditions and environment which to the mind of the questioner seem to involve suffering? *e.g.*, the conditions of life of an Esquimaux would seem to us to involve much suffering, but as a matter of fact it is very doubtful whether to a normal Esquimaux they bring anything like the same amount of felt suffering as ordinary middle-class life does to a European.

Now, as regards environment and conditions these are certainly definitely in all cases the results of karma: individual and collective. But how much actual suffering the individual will feel as the result thereof is not *primarily* a question of karma as determining that environment, but involves also the kârmic elements expressed in the character which the individual has built up for himself, and also—a most important factor—the way he uses his will, which is certainly free within limits, in relation to his own character as well as to his surroundings. Thus karma may bring two Egos into almost identical circumstances and surroundings; but the one will suffer keenly thereunder, the other very little. Or again, under circumstances which press equally painfully on each of two Egos, the one may so use his own (limited) free-will upon his own mind and nature, that he will actually feel much less suffering than the other, who uses his will differently.

Taking now the other side of the problem, the broader, philosophical side, we should have to say that since suffering is certainly an effect and every effect must have a cause, therefore all suffering must have a cause, which is the same as saying that all suffering is kârmic, since karma is simply the law of causation or sequence.

To pass now to the latter part of the question. To “conquer suffering” may be taken in either of two senses: (1) as meaning to render oneself insensitive, so hard and unresponsive that nothing is felt at all. And one school of asceticism at least in the East works on these lines. But that means becoming dead to *all* feeling, joy or pain alike; and indeed, if pushed to its logical conclusion, this view will lead to the effort to reach blank unconsciousness, when it is found that the old opposition of pain and pleasure re-appears again and again in ever subtler forms on each plane of consciousness. (2) Or again we can “conquer suffering” in the sense not of ceasing to feel it, but in the sense of growing strong and balanced enough to remain

unswayed and unaffected by it. And that is the true way to “conquer suffering.” It is not a merely passive attitude, a simple enduring of pain, but a gaining of such power over our consciousness, over our attention, over the mind, that we ourselves, the inner centre of consciousness which is ourselves, can remain perfectly calm, and do *perfectly* every duty, perform every operation of consciousness unaffected by the pain which may be raging in one or another of its vehicles.

Nor is this an attitude of despair. For we know that the suffering is only temporary, we can see and understand its beneficent purpose and we assimilate its message, accept the gift it brings us with the same welcome readiness and alacrity with which we receive its opposite.

But all this means that we have “let go” of our personalities to a great extent, that we no longer identify “ourselves” with the separated consciousness which ever oscillates between the pairs of opposites, but are learning, however slowly, to live in the Eternal.

A. H. W.—All suffering and all joy are kârmic, for karma is the law of the conservation of energy holding good on all planes. The totality of everything that happens, good, bad and indifferent, to each and all is karma; every effect has its cause, and in its turn becomes the cause of further effects; so the “homogeneous” becomes the “heterogeneous” and synthesises back again into the “homogeneous.” The worlds of manifested life stream out from the One, and at the end of the great day draw in again, each centre of consciousness bearing its sheaves of experience with it. Suffering and joy equally call out from the Ego the powers of mastery, for the two are really the same thing—the impact of the environment upon the entity. To conquer suffering is not to push it away, but to accept it and make the best of it; it is the experience we have brought upon ourselves, the lesson which we have to learn, the result of ignorance of the golden mean of moderation. We have to hope for the best and prepare for the worst, to “trust in God *and* keep our powder dry,” for Heaven helps those who help themselves.

You cannot interfere with your karma. You have made it in the past and have to go through with it now; but there are two ways of doing so. You may “go quietly” with a good grace, or you may go kicking and screaming like a naughty child being taken to bed, but you will most certainly have to go. If it hurts you it is because you are clinging to something or somebody, and the only way is to let go, “renouncing by Manas all desires born of the imagination.” So long as you desire you can never be satisfied. So long as you cling you can never be free. Don’t be feebly passive and enduring, but active and making the best of it; there is always something to learn, always someone to help, always perfection to strive after. Thus have I heard.

G. L. S.—Potential suffering is potential karma

and therefore all actual suffering must be kârmic too. Present capacity to suffer is the result of past evolution, past action. Capacity to conquer suffering is likewise a result of that evolution. Let us not be afraid then to conquer suffering when it can be done, nor to endure it when it cannot be conquered, in the latter event taking care to learn the particular lesson which it brings us. In any case do not let us fall into the error of supposing that we can interfere with karma. That is quite impossible, whatever be our course of action or whatever attitude we may choose to assume.

S. C.—There are so many kinds of suffering that it is almost impossible to give a general answer to this question. Some kinds of pain are a necessary part of a curative process, as surgical operations are meant to be; and it would be unwise to “conquer” or defer these, even if it were possible to do so. Other kinds, we may suppose, such as the tortures of the ascetic, are wholly unnecessary, and fulfil no useful purpose. Since the object of the great law is the training of human beings, and not the revengeful infliction of pain, it follows that those painful experiences which are beyond our power to avert, must be of a curative nature; those, however, which we inflict upon ourselves, and those which we might avert if sufficiently determined, have no such wholesome effect; in experiencing these we are working against the law, not in harmony with it.

QUESTION 207.

B. E. H.—To a young man, especially if he is away from home, it may be very helpful in many ways to join a Congregational or other church. Can he take this step consistently if he is a member of the Theosophical Society, and therefore in sympathy with its objects? If so, ought he to make his beliefs known to the church, even though this should cause unpleasantness and misunderstanding? In the denomination mentioned, one is not, of course, bound to any particular form of belief.

S. C.—There can certainly be no objection to a member of the Theosophical Society joining a Congregational or any other church if he wish to do so. Every church is or may be one expression of theosophic truth. As has been frequently stated, Theosophy includes and explains all religions, calling attention to that which is their common basis; and there are many advantages in being connected with some particular church; it gives the opportunity of taking part with others in the spiritual life, and of sharing in any particular philanthropic or social work in which the members of the church may be engaged. Probably it would not be necessary to try to explain the whole of one's belief. An attempt to do so would in many cases give a very erroneous impression, and so would really be more untruthful than an attitude of more reserve. The wider view of truth which is helpful to one's self is not necessarily helpful to others. In order that truth may be spoken, two conditions are necessary—knowledge in the speaker

and power of comprehension on the part of the hearer. Truth is truth in relation to the hearer, as well as to the speaker, and that which is not understood or is misinterpreted is not wisely and truthfully spoken. Sincerity is a much deeper and more subtle quality than is generally supposed, and is not to be gained by crudely announcing our own view in our own way, without regard to any tie or mutual understanding previously established with others. That which appears on the surface to be sincerity is often largely composed of narrowness—an ignorant assumption that that which is right for us must be right for all. Is B. E. H. sure that it would be *possible* to make his beliefs known to the church? “Unpleasantness and misunderstanding” could not surely be the result of his success in doing so, but of his failure in the attempt.

The point at issue is an important one, for it involves the whole question of wise and unwise propaganda work. We have yet to recognise that the putting forward of ideas, which cannot in the very nature of things be understood by one's hearers, but must be misinterpreted, is more untruthful than silence; that it is not simply a failure to help, but a hindrance to progress, and an impediment to the establishment of any real understanding between the speaker and his audience.

I. H.—There can, as I think, be no insincerity involved in joining any church so long as the inner attitude of those who join it be truthful and reverent. By this I mean that the church member, who is also a member of the Theosophical Society, is truthful in his attitude if he thinks the church in question is indeed a channel by which spiritual help (which is not the exclusive gift of any one organisation, but may flow forth through any and all), may be received by him and his fellow members according to their capacity of reception. If he thinks thus he is an honest member of the church and the Theosophical Society. By reverence I mean the attitude of mind which sees not only the spiritual truth but also the limited form in which it is presented, as holy and worthy of respect. It is likely that no two minds receive the same truth in precisely the same way; therefore it would be inevitable that, with the best intentions in the world, the minister of every church, while he believes himself to be preaching a doctrine which swerves not from his canon of orthodoxy, is in truth preaching a faith as many sided as the minds of his congregation. He is preaching “one Christ,” the universal Christ manifesting in many forms, and all alike divine. If there should be “unpleasantness and misunderstanding” because B. E. H. made known, or tried to make known, his views, it would arise from the fact that the congregation would be deceived rather than enlightened by his efforts to be truthful. It is not always by what is called “plain speaking” that truth is served; the fact that this is often not perceived leads to the subtlest forms of self-deception; it has led before now to a person who is liable to deceive both himself and others, thinking himself a sincere champion of truth. If

B. E. H. wavers in his belief that the church he proposes to join can be and is a channel of help for many, if he is unable to believe that behind the form, and partially expressed through it, is the Universal Life, then an element of untruth may creep in; but here the danger lies in the inner life, not in the uttered word; in the mental attitude, not the outward expression, or attempted expression, of the views of B. E. H. To take a personal example: gladly and reverently would I participate in the rites of any Church; in the Eucharist of the Christian, in the rites of Hindu, Buddhist, or Mohammedan, if my fellow-worshippers would admit me to such rites; I would do this *because* I believe that all such rites are efficacious to those who take part in them with "faith" (that much-misunderstood word); in the hour that I took part in them believing them to have no value for anyone I should sin against truth; I do not think the fact that I believe all to be of equal value for those to whom they are the recognised channel of spiritual power, is inconsistent with my further belief that they are not indispensable to the spiritual growth of all. In conclusion, I would suggest that if B. E. H. feels any lingering suspicion that to join a church is inconsistent with membership in the Theosophical Society, is, in short, a dishonest action, then, whether he is right or wrong in the view, I should advise that he does not permit any VĀHAN answers, nor considerations of help that may accrue, to influence him in his decision against such a step. If he decides to join a church then it may well be that his wider view of truth may be helpful to his fellow-members; but I would suggest that the interests of falsehood rather than of truth are sometimes served by putting forward views by the medium of that veil of truth—the spoken word. For a member of the Theosophical Society to join a church to put forward a "wider view" to those whose present views are wide enough for their needs, and therefore truth for them, would, I think, be an error; we must remember that our widest views are narrowness in the eyes of those who can see much more than we.

QUESTION 208.

K.—*Why do we die prematurely? If the Ego, being spiritual, is stronger than matter, why does it not drive out disease and overcome accidents? As it is, disease seems to drive out the Ego, which is an ignominious position.*

S. C.—Cases of "premature" death appear to arise from two very different causes:—

(1) The Ego has made all the progress it is possible to make in one particular body, and therefore voluntarily gives it up in order to take a body more suited to his needs. This may happen in middle age or even in early life, and to a casual observer it will then appear that there is a mistake somewhere, though this is not really so. The disease of the body may be the Ego's instrument, not his foe; it may be a means by which he rids

himself of a form which has become an impediment to evolution.

(2) The other case is where the Ego has not yet learned to use disease as an instrument. The object of our lives on earth is to learn to gain control of evil, of matter and of disease; and this power only comes by slow degrees after many fierce conflicts. The Ego by entering upon a series of earth lives deliberately places himself in an "ignominious" position, in order that he may ultimately attain to a position of power. Repeated failure is the necessary preliminary to success.

I. H.—Do we die prematurely? That is to say, is not an apparently premature death the dropping of an instrument which has ceased to serve the needs of the Ego? Is spirit stronger than matter? Is not the office of matter to show the possibilities of spirit? Are not both spirit and matter the twins that show the Power, which is ourselves, which tries to make itself known through both? Is it not possible that we have voluntarily placed ourselves in an "ignominious" position in order to learn the use of our tools; disease and "sin" are a part, as I think, of the creation of the Ego *learning* to create; they are the inharmonious results of a "'prentice han'" trying to draw forth harmony from the lyre of life; so long as there is one scholar in the world who has not learnt his lesson, who has not learnt to express himself truly through his instruments of expression, thrills of "pain" and "disease" and "evil" will be felt in the complex form which is the instrument of the unfolding life; when I thus speak of "the form," I mean not one human frame expressing or failing to express the life of an Ego attached to it, but the "body corporate" of the World Soul expressing the life of all. Clumsy workmen break their tools, and cut their fingers—and learn in the process. Spirit and matter are alike the expressions of the Man within; at first he expresses himself inadequately through both; but the perfect wielding of the powers of spirit and matter is attained by the lessons learned through the blunders and bad workmanship of which disease is one of the manifestations. It is true that great saints have been victims of disease, but that brings in a very subtle question which seems to be rooted in the mystery of "vicarious suffering."

QUESTION 209.

J. T. D.—*It is a matter of daily experience that in order to get rid of something that is on the mind we have to give it utterance. Set down in a letter, or composed in an article, or communicated to a friend, the thing is done with and we are tormented no more. It seems that the act of giving it utterance ought to intensify the problem, the mood, the disturbing thought, whereas experience shows that utterance relieves it, exhausts it. Now, what is the exact psychological process that we have gone through? Is it true to say that before we can conquer a mood, a passion, a distraction, a worry, we must first express it in speech or writing,*

or art or action? How does the translation of thought into action exhaust the thought? Is it for a time only, in accordance with the law of alternation?

I. H.—I should be disposed to traverse the statement that we *have* to give utterance to what is in the mind in order to get rid of it; some people do certainly find it needful to do so, but I think all are not compelled to take this course. I believe (and if I express myself very unscientifically I beg the scientific to forgive me) that it is possible to transmute the energy generated by thought and manifested as a “mood,” “passion” or “distraction,” either by transmuting it into action, or into another method of thought. Thus I believe it would be true to say we *need* not express it as action, but that one way of getting rid of it would be so to express it; provided that in the process of expression, we did not receive (if I may so phrase it) a back wash or reaction of thought which generated further mental energy along the original lines. Say that one is strongly possessed by an idea, perhaps one judges it to see whether it may be usefully expressed; after arriving at a conclusion one proceeds to transfer the mental energy to another plane, *i.e.*, one expresses one’s thought in action, speech, writing, art; in short, by any suitable means. If then the action does not strongly react upon the mind as in the case of a physical habit, for example, the force is worked out, and done with; if a similar expression must take place in the future, it will be necessary to generate more mental energy. It may be noted that this energy may be generated in the inner regions of our being so that the process may be far advanced before our brains are aware of it, and it comes pouring forth as a strong force “from nowhere,” impelling to action. I do believe that there is a certain cyclic action, a mechanical action of the mind body, by which “dead and gone” methods of thought sometimes reassert themselves and prompt to action; but this occurs when one is more or less off guard, it is not like the strongly obsessing, highly vitalised power of a dominant thought pouring into the brain. I believe that it is possible to transmute this thought energy in the brain, or perhaps, on its own plane, before it has manifested as action; this is a question of mind control, and the power of compelling mind and brain to think along other lines and transmute the energy generated into a form judged by the thinker to be more desirable.

QUESTION 210.

X.—*Could a detailed explanation be given as to what is meant by mastery over thought as spoken of in The Voice of the Silence?*

In the ideal condition when thought is perfectly controlled, how does the process work from moment to moment? Is the idea of control constantly present in the mind?

It would be interesting to have a vivid picture of the mental life for one day of a man who had attained perfection in thought-control.

The psychology books say that voluntary attention can only be maintained for a few seconds at a time, and must then be renewed.

Is this condition transcended on the path at an early stage, and is the initiate then able to generate voluntary control for indefinite periods of time?

I. H.—I should suppose that one who had attained a high power of thought control could generate “voluntary control” for lengthy periods of time. But this I do not know. I know, however, that it is possible for an ordinary person, not one who is “on the Path,” to maintain such control for more than a few seconds, and without the “idea of control” being constantly present in the mind. The object aimed at is, I suppose, an automatic obedience of brain and mind like that rendered by the hand in writing or the organs of speech in utterance, when it is not necessary to think constantly “how it is done.” As one writes one does not say constantly: “I write.” So one should not have to remind oneself: “I control my mind,” “I concentrate my mind,” “I meditate,” “I contemplate,” “I pray.”

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post-free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications for “Activities” must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest.

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription (5s.) Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY, *General Secretary.*

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

VOL. XII.

LONDON, MAY 1, 1903.

NO. 10.

Edited by BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

“WHITE LOTUS” DAY.

The usual meeting in commemoration of the work of Mme. Blavatsky will be held at 28, Albemarle Street, on Friday, May 8th, at 8.30 p.m. Flowers will be gladly received on the morning or afternoon of that date.

NOTICE.

Unattached members can, if they wish, on joining the Society be put into correspondence with an older member by addressing the Secretary of the Social Committee, 28, Albemarle Street, W.

ACTIVITIES.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to April 20th: H. B., £3; R. C., £50; W. D., 5s.; A. T. O., £1 1s.; J. C., 5s.; C. W. G., £1; E. R. McN., 5s.; J. T. P., 10s.; E. A. B., £10; A. W., £1; J. D., 5s.; J. H., £4; W. S., £1; H. M. K., 5s.; J. M., 12s.; A. H., £5; L. S., £5; E. de M. M., £2 2s.; W. S.-E., £2; W. V., £1 1s.; M. H., £1; F. S., 5s.; A. M., 5s.; E. W., £2 2s.; G. L. S., 10s.; A. B. W., 10s.; P. W. G. N., £2 2s.; G. T., £10; A. C., £1 1s.; M. D., 5s.; J. B., £5; I. M. T., £4; E. W., £10; T. C. S., £1; J. G., 5s.; T. J., 10s.; J. L. T., 10s. Total £127 16s.

Section Reference Library.

The following book has been gratefully received for the Library: *Esoterisches Christentum*, A. Besant.

The following books have been purchased during the past month: *The Astral Plane*, C. W. Leadbeater; *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. XXXIV.; *American Hero-Myths*, D. G. Brinton, M.D.; *Essays of an Americanist*, D. G. Brinton, M.D.

R. A. HOBSON,
Assistant Librarian.

Meetings for Enquirers.

These meetings (open to members and their friends) will be resumed on Monday, May 4th, at 3.30 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street, W., when Mr. Keightley will continue his study of *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death*, dealing on May 4th with “Sensory Automatism,” on May 11th with “Phantoms of the Dead,” on May 18th with “Sensory Automatism.”

E. SEVERS,
Hon. Secretary Social Committee.

“At Home.”

An “At Home” will be held at 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Monday, May 25th, at 3.30 p.m., at which Mr. Sinnett will answer questions on Theosophical subjects. Tea will be served at 4.30.

Members of the Society are cordially invited to be present and may bring a friend.

E. SEVERS,
Hon. Secretary Social Committee.

Bradford Lodge.

On Saturday, April 4th, some members of the Bradford Lodge held a Reception in the Lodge Room to meet Mr. Playford, of Johannesburg. More than sixty members and friends attended, members coming from Harrogate, Leeds, Manchester, Didsbury and York. Mr. Playford gave

a short address on the work in South Africa, and the afternoon was most pleasantly spent.

During March and April there has been an "At Home" held every Friday afternoon in the Lodge Room, and in the evening a class for the study of Mr. Leadbeater's *Outline of Theosophy*. Both of these have been well attended.

F. F.

Bristol Lodge.

In addition to the usual weekly meetings of the Lodge there has been much activity in the way of lectures.

On March 3rd, Mr. Bertram Keightley delivered a lecture on "What should we live for?" at the Hannah More Hall, to an appreciative audience of ninety persons. Again, on March 15th, Mr. Keightley kindly lectured at the Men's Open Meeting, Oakfield Road Church, for the Rev. Dr. Warschauer.

On March 31st, Mrs. Lauder lectured to members and friends in the small room at Hannah More Hall, the subject being the *Bhagavad Gîtâ*. This lecture was much appreciated.

SYDNEY H. OLD,

Hon. Secretary.

Theosophical Lending Library.

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Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 2.30 to 6 o'clock.

Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,

Librarian.

Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., in the small room, Foresters' Hall, Bath Street (near Pump Room), when books can be obtained from the Lodge Library. Enquiries should be addressed by letter to Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings in the Council Room, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: May 3rd, *Some Theosophic Facets*, B. Old; May 10th, *Devotion*, R. V. Khedkar; May 17th, *Karma*; May 24th, *Shri Shankarâchârya*, Miss J. Keeley; May 31st, *Yoga*, J. H. Duffell. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. Brian Hodgson, Ivydene, Poplar Avenue, Edgbaston.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays at

7.45 p.m., in the Theosophical Room, Penny Bank Buildings, North Parade, for the study of *Thought-Power*. In May Mr. Keightley will lecture on Myers' *Human Personality*. For information apply to Mrs. O. Firth, 10, Selborne Terrace, Manningham, Bradford.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Meetings on alternate Sundays at 3.30 p.m., and on alternate Mondays at 8 p.m., at members' houses, also on each Wednesday following the Sunday meeting, at 15, Old Steine, at 8 p.m. Information can be obtained from Mr. N. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or from Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., at Brooklyn Chambers, St. Augustine's Parade. For further particulars enquiry may be addressed to S. H. Old, at the above address.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. For information apply to the President, Mr. W. Kohlen, 12, rue d'Égmont.

BRUSSELS, CENTRALE BELGE. General meetings held in the Lodge Rooms, 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, the first and third Saturdays in the month, at 8.15 p.m. Students' Class, open to all members, the second and fourth Saturdays, at 8 p.m. Reading room open from 3 to 5 p.m. twice a week. For information apply by letter to the Secretary, 21, rue du Vallon.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Open meetings in the Philosophical Institution Rooms, 4, Queen Street, at 8 p.m.: May 14th, Question evening. Lodge meetings: May 8th, White Lotus Day; May 21st, *Successive Life Waves*; May 28th, Business meeting. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. J. Lorimer Thomson, Roseburn House, Roseburn.

EXETER LODGE. Open meetings are held in the Lodge Room, 48, High Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., and on the first and third Sundays of the month at 7 p.m. Meetings for members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.30 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. Meetings at Shepherd's Hall (Room No. 3), 25, Bath Street, on the fourth Monday of each month, at 8 p.m.: May 25th, *The One Religion and its many Forms*, J. Graham. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. James Wilson, 48, Holmhead Street, Glasgow.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings in the Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: May 3rd, *The Path of Initiation*, Mrs. Bell; May 10th, *The Training of Children*, Hodgson Smith; May 17th, *Two Modes of Thought*, A. R. Orage; May 24th, *Life and Religion*, Bertram Keightley; May 31st, *The Purpose of the Theosophical Society*, Miss Shaw. Lodge meetings on Thursdays and Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 23, East Parade, for the study of *The Astral Plane* and *The Path of Discipleship*.

HULL LODGE. Meetings at the Central Temperance Hotel (Jarratt Street entrance), on Sundays, at 7 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at the Athenæum Restaurant, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. G. H. Popplestone, 8, Ashville View, Cardigan Road, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings at 18, Colquitt Street, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C., for the study of Deussen's *Elements of Metaphysics*.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 7.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill, S.W.: May 3rd, *Life of Organised Societies*, A. P. Cattanaach; May 10th, *Nirvāna*, L. Stanley Jast; May 17th, *Life One and Indivisible*, Miss Ward; May 24th, Questions and Answers; May 31st, Closing address by D. N. Dunlop. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattanaach, 1, Pentland Street, Wandsworth Common, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays at 28, Albemarle Street, W., at 8.30 p.m.: May 7th, *The Philosophy of Hindu Devotion*, Swāmi Upadhyay; May 14th, *Concerning the Idea of Karma*, G. R. S. Mead; May 21st, *The Druidic "Three Worlds,"* Mrs. Hooper; May 28th, *What Modern Theosophy stands for*, Miss Ward. Meetings on Sundays (open to visitors): May 3rd, *Thought and Action*, Bertram Keightley; May 10th, *The "Sliding-scale" of Morality*, Mrs. Sharpe; May 17th, *Patience*, Bertram Keightley; May 24th, *The Gnosis of Early Christendom*, G. R. S. Mead; May 31st, *Life in Metals*, G. Dyne.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, on Fridays, at 8 p.m.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "West View," 12, Oakfield Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: May 6th, *The Theosophical Basis of Ethics*, Mrs. Raphael; May 13th, *Among the Babylonians*, Mrs. Lauder; May 20th, *Thoughts are Things*, Miss Ward; May 27th, *Prof. James' Final Analysis*, P. Tovey.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Class for study on the first and third Saturdays of each month at 8 p.m.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for children and young people at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Sundays, at 3 p.m.: May 3rd and 17th, Study of *Man Visible and Invisible*; May 10th, . . . Mrs. Whyte; May 31st, Study of *Man and his Bodies*. All children are cordially invited. For information address the Hon. Sec., Miss M. A. Sidley, 3, Nassington Road, Hampstead Heath, N.W.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N., on Mondays and Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.: May 6th, *Human Personality and Inspiration*, Miss F. M. M. Russell; May 11th, *Rāmakrishna*, Rev. A. Baker; May 13th and 27th, *Reincarnation*; May 20th, *The Theosophy of Plutarch*, Miss Forster. Other Monday evenings, Class for study.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.: May 1st, *The Hindu Ideal of the Divine*, Swāmi Upadhyay; May 8th, No meeting (White Lotus Day); May 15th, *The Upanishads and the Systems of Indian Philosophy*, B. Keightley; May

22nd, *Service*, J. M. Watkins; May 29th, General meeting and conversazione.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., at 16, John Dalton Street, Manchester. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 80, Northenden Road, Sale, Cheshire.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, May 11th and 25th, at 8 p.m., and drawing-room meetings at 3.30 p.m., May 5th and 19th, at 38, Bamford Road, Didsbury. Information can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, 38, Bamford Road, Didsbury.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER CENTRE. Meetings for members of the Society on Tuesdays at 8 p.m. Open to non-members on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Information from the Hon. Secretary, West Bank, Park Road, Ashton-on-Mersey.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 68, Linthorpe Road, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., for study of *Thought Control*. Public Lectures on Sundays in the Lecture Room, Co-operative Hall, Corporation Road, at 6.45 p.m.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 3, St. James' Street, at 8 p.m. Communications to W. E. Dowson, 10, Mapperley Road, Nottingham.

OXFORD CENTRE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m., in the office of Mr. Salter, over Lloyd's Bank, Carfax, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Hon. Secretary, J. Walter Cock, 37, Beechcroft Road, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., and on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 19, Cornwall Street. Enquiries to be addressed to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

SOUTHAMPTON CENTRE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m., at Capt. Forbes' Nautical Academy, Albion Place. Enquiries should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, Miss Green, Laverton House, Hill, Southampton.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., at the Vegetarian Café, Nelson Street, Newcastle. Meetings on the last Sunday of the month, at Lily House, off Ocean View, Whitley Bay.

YORK CENTRE. Meetings on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., in the De Grey Rooms; May 1st, *Karma*, C. N. Goode; May 15th, *Reincarnation*, W. H. Sanderson; May 29th, *What Theosophy is not*. Information from W. H. Sanderson, 5, South Esplanade, York.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DEAR MR. KEIGHTLEY,

I should be glad if you will bring before the Executive Council the suggestion that it would be greatly to the advantage of a numerous section of members of various London Lodges if the business meeting at the forthcoming Convention of the British Section could be held in the afternoon instead of morning of the Saturday fixed for this

year's gathering. I have frequently heard that the morning hour prevents the attendance of a number of business men whose City engagements preclude their absence from business at that time. I know of many cases where this is a bar to attendance at our annual gathering, and I think it is a pity the Section should thus lose the presence of business people at its business gathering. The question of course affects London chiefly, but I am inclined to think that even from more distant Centres a certain proportion of members would find it more easy to be present on Saturday afternoon. Perhaps there may be some way of obtaining an expression of opinion through THE VĀHĀN.

Yours faithfully,

EDITH WARD,

President West London Branch.

The General Secretary would be much obliged if members and Branches would kindly communicate to him their views on the above subject, not later than May 15th, in order that they may be laid before the Executive Committee of the Section.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 206.

(Continued from p. 64.)

G. H. T.—*What is the meaning of the term "great renunciation?" One who reaches Nirvāna can surely have no "self" left. If this is the case how can there be any self-denial?*

A. H. W.—The writer understands that the "great renunciation" is the refusal of one who has attained perfection, freedom from re-birth, omniscience, to remain quiescent in that condition. He chooses to return to earth to help with his great powers the evolution of the race. That such a course is regarded as a painful sacrifice is due to the Eastern assumption that the wheel of birth and death is in itself a misery, that only pains endure, while pleasures light and fly, that the unchanging is fundamentally better than the ever-becoming, that eternal inertia is more desirable than perpetual evolution. This view is held, the writer thinks, because "tamas" is more marked in the East, and "rajas" in the West. Most of us in the West feel that "ceaseless, changeless, timeless bliss" would be profoundly wearisome; the idea of ever-becoming wiser, stronger, more alive, more able to help and comprehend, is to us greater. But doubtless both these views are illusory. The exquisite "Sattva," the perfect harmony with all that lives and breathes, and with the Immanent One, will resolve these discords; and the man who has attained it will work, or rest, as he may best fulfil the one great purpose of the Logos.

There can indeed be no self-denial for one who has reached the heart of the Supreme Self; for him the personal astral self has long been dead. He has used up the experiences of the three worlds, and takes his place on the golden ladder to whisper the word of Wisdom into the ear of those who

tread the Path behind him. So he hands on the help given to himself in the past, and in his own turn knows the joy of him who said "For this my son was dead and is alive again, he was lost and is found."

B. K.—What is really meant by the "great renunciation" can only be dimly shadowed forth for us by those who possess the deepest insight into "real" knowledge. But as a very humble contribution to at least some preliminary clearing up of what the question itself means, I may perhaps venture to point out that like the corresponding word "Mukti," the term Nirvāna is used in a variety of senses and with very different implications.

For instance, if we take Nirvāna in the sense here used as implying the perfect, complete, absolute union of the individual with the Logos, such that no faintest, most remote shadow of difference remains between His will and that of the individual, then obviously there *can* be no renunciation whatever, simply because, since my will is absolutely one with His, there remains nothing to renounce.

But if we take Nirvāna in the sense of a Cosmic plane of consciousness, and the attainment of Nirvāna as meaning the establishment of consciousness on a certain most exalted, spiritual level, which can be and is attained as the result of evolution (as for instance in some of our books it is said that our present evolution is five-fold and that the highest plane concerned with that evolution is the Nirvānic), then obviously the above does *not* apply, and we find such statements as those of *The Secret Doctrine*, which speaks of "Nirvānees" from other systems being brought again into manifestation under the kārmic law in connection with our own evolution, as exercising choice and self-will, as acting in opposition to the law and in consequence falling under kārmic penalties.

Objection may perhaps be taken to my using the word "obviously" above. But I think myself warranted in employing it by the facts that on the one hand the whole range of the older Buddhist scriptures invariably speak of Nirvāna as a "place of no return," a condition from which there can be no compulsory return to manifestation or birth in any region of the manifested Universe; while on the other hand there stands the unanimous and concurrent testimony of the Hindu Scriptures and their most revered expounders to the effect that perfect or complete Mukti—Mukti from which there can be no compulsory return—can never under any circumstances be attained as the result of karma or action; or, in other words, as the outcome of evolution through whatever unimaginable sequence of systems and universes we regard that evolution as having been carried on, or whatever the stupendous heights of glory and knowledge which the Jīva may have attained in the course of that evolution.

As to the solution of these problems, it does not seem to me that we are in any position to give even an approximately definite answer: nor do I think it likely that we shall be so, for anything like

a full solution must, it would seem almost certain, involve the mysteries of the higher initiations. But one point may perhaps be touched upon again to which brief reference has already been made. It is that such solution as we really need for our practical guidance would seem to lie in the identification of the individual will with the divine will; or to put the same thing in another form, in the elimination from the individual will of that element of self-seeking which is the essence of separativity. For, on its practical side, the attainment of Nirvāna or Mukti is always connected essentially with the final "putting an end to pain" or complete escape from suffering. And we can, I think, see, even here and now, that once the individual will has ceased utterly to seek aught for itself, or to move otherwise than as it is prompted by the divine will which forms its innermost heart, then the individual as such must have passed "beyond the pairs of opposites" and have finally entered into that perfect peace for which all conditions, whether of manifestation or withdrawal, are alike.

QUESTION 209.

(Continued from p. 72.)

J. T. D.—*It is a matter of daily experience that in order to get rid of something that is on the mind we have to give it utterance. Set down in a letter, or composed in an article, or communicated to a friend, the thing is done with and we are tormented no more. It seems that the act of giving it utterance ought to intensify the problem, the mood, the disturbing thought, whereas experience shows that utterance relieves it, exhausts it. Now, what is the exact psychological process that we have gone through? Is it true to say that before we can conquer a mood, a passion, a distraction, a worry, we must first express it in speech or writing, or art or action? How does the translation of thought into action exhaust the thought? Is it for a time only, in accordance with the law of alternation?*

A. A. W.—The querist's experience has the support of Goethe, who tells us in his autobiography that his writing of *Werther* had just this very purpose—to have done with certain thoughts which, once written down, troubled him no more. Nevertheless I think he is too hasty in generalising from his own experience. Others (of whom I myself am one) find that, for them, the act of giving utterance to a feeling *does*, as he says, intensify the mood and does *not* relieve it. I fancy the distinction of the two classes lies in the amount of creative energy belonging to them. A man who is full to overflowing of this creative power, as was Goethe, must from time to time relieve the tension by a discharge. It is not, as I take it, a question of conquering passions or worries at all, but simply the "relieving the necessities of nature" on the mental plane. And this done, naturally what he has said or written has no longer a personal interest to him—I do not suppose Goethe ever read a line of *Werther* after the proof sheets were out of his hands. But to say that, by writing it down,

he had conquered his personal Wertherism would, I think, be wholly unjustified. He had created and was, for the time, at ease, the next time the need took him he would probably create something quite different; but I do not see that, in the moralist's sense, he had conquered anything. In the other class, the man is not full of creative energy—his nature is to be silent; he has to task himself to laboriously drag something out of his mind to communicate to others; and this action, equally naturally, intensifies the feeling within himself. I think this is much the commoner case. I am accustomed to say that I can endure anything, provided only that I can keep it to myself; and I find that to formulate it in words, even to the most sympathetic listener, is a very distinct and serious weakening of my power of resistance. And the world is full of preachers and teachers whose only ground for their energetic convictions is that they have preached and taught them so long that they have been conquered by them. Instead of "exhausting the thought by expression," in J. T. D.'s phrase, they have become its slaves.

B. K.—The question raised is a very interesting one and it would be exceedingly useful to know what the higher clairvoyance could tell us on the subject. Meanwhile, lacking such direct information and express observation, it may be useful to state some ideas that present themselves on the subject; reminding the reader, however, that it is speculative and not matter of knowledge. First, then, I incline to think that the "torment" we mentally experience from some insistent thought, or mood, or problem, is essentially analogous to what happens when some small sore place or some itching spot obtrudes itself upon our consciousness, as at times it can do, so intensely that even a severe acute pain seems preferable. In that case we have physically some comparatively trifling disturbance in the physical harmony on the one side, while mentally we have the attention attracted to and focussed upon the disturbance in an exaggerated manner. To me it seems that the principal feature in what happens is the fixation of the attention, which seems to be perpetually drawn back to the tender spot, and the reason why so trifling a physical disturbance comes so entirely to fill our consciousness seems to me to lie just in this involuntary fixation of the attention, *i.e.*, this focussing of the consciousness upon it. If then we can divert the attention, the disturbance drops back to its proper, natural level of intensity and we forget it more or less completely. Now I have often found it possible to do this by taking up a book which attracts and interests me. At first, I find my attention recalled to the tender spot a few times, but eventually as the attention, the consciousness, is swept along in the direction of the fresh interest by its natural attraction, the tender spot is forgotten for the time and finally when one lays down the book it has ceased to be prominently noticeable, owing, I believe, to two reasons: (*a*) the attention has been removed from it and directed into another channel, and (*b*) the attention has also to some ex-

tent been "dispersed" more or less instead of remaining focussed and concentrated upon the one thing.

Now when the tormenting object is a mental or emotional one, an idea, problem or mood, I believe it is exactly like a small—or large—sore place, which, as it were, checks and interrupts the flow of consciousness and so gradually—in the absence of any other equally strong and vivid competing interest—focusses the attention more and more exclusively upon itself. Now if in any way we can restore the normal flow of consciousness and unfocus the attention from that tormenting object, it will sink back into the general level and cease to plague us. Now in the effort to express it in speech or writing, I think we succeed in doing so because our attention is partly (at first) turned to the speaking or writing needed and thus becomes in part detached from the tormenting idea or mood. Then, gradually, as the concentration of attention is relaxed, consciousness resumes its flow, we attend still more to the words, etc., we are using, to the person we are talking or writing to, to the question of whether we have made ourselves clearly understood, and so on, till by degrees consciousness is flowing normally, our attention having become detached from the tormenting idea and scattered in various directions.

We might have brought about the same result—I have often done so—by taking up a book that interests us, by entering into an interesting conversation, by engaging in some occupation that attracts us. How far these or any other method will be permanently successful will, it seems to me—as in the analogous physical case—depend in part upon the intensity of the disturbance and in part on our own power to control the attention.

I do not know whether "action" exhausts "thought" in a strict dynamical sense. Action does certainly involve the expenditure of some at least of the energy embodied in the thought; but what may be the quantitative relation involved I have no idea. But at any rate the energy embodied in any given thought is clearly finite, and unless renewed (from whatever source) must be capable of complete expenditure and therefore of exhaustion, though I much doubt whether such expenditure of energy as is involved in speaking or writing can be considered adequate to the exhaustion of the thought-energy concerned. Rather I am inclined to think that the turning away of the attention is the essential factor, and that "action" comes in mainly as a means of diverting and scattering the attention.

C. M.—It is certainly a matter of daily experience to most of us that to give utterance to something on the mind is a relief, but it is also a matter of daily experience that relief to one person may be obtained only at the cost of anger or annoyance to another.

If the disturbance thus set up cannot be controlled by that other person, and he *must* relieve his feelings by giving utterance to the thing that is now upon his mind instead of his neighbour's, it is not difficult to see that utterance has not exhausted it;

it is still "the thing" there to be dealt with, and may very likely be handed on to many more people, with increased volume, and power of injury.

I do not know the "exact psychological process," but I do know that to have to express a worry is not to conquer it at all; it is to be conquered by it. There is no question of conquest until we no longer want to express it (that is the only safe time to express it if it is still there!). It is only then that the worry has ceased on the mental plane.

It is also a matter of experience that refusing steadily to think of the thing that worries, in time exhausts the wish to do so. It takes a long time and means many a failure, but mental power is gained in this way. None can be gained in the other. It is at best a refuge for the man who is helpless with the misery of worry, and at worst it hands on that worry and makes things worse all round for other people.

A. R. O.—Every idea that comes to the door of the mind knocks there until either it is admitted or driven away. So long as it remains knocking it is "on" the mind. The "relief" may thus arise from one of two causes; from the incorporation of the idea with the mind, or from its complete rejection. The process of incorporation takes place when the idea is attached to one of the motor centres—speech for example. It is then "expressed," and becomes simply one of the many constituents of the mind. Rejection results when every motor centre is inhibited towards it.

QUESTION 210.

(Continued from p. 72.)

X.—*Could a detailed explanation be given as to what is meant by mastery over thought as spoken of in The Voice of the Silence?*

In the ideal condition when thought is perfectly controlled, how does the process work from moment to moment? Is the idea of control constantly present in the mind?

It would be interesting to have a vivid picture of the mental life for one day of a man who had attained perfection in thought-control.

The psychology books say that voluntary attention can only be maintained for a few seconds at a time, and must then be renewed.

Is this condition transcended on the path at an early stage, and is the initiate then able to generate voluntary control for indefinite periods of time?

A. A. W.—A "detailed explanation" of the whole question of mastery of thought would obviously extend far beyond the limits of a VĀHAN answer; and there is less need for the attempt, as in Mrs. Besant's little book on *Thought Power, its Control and Culture*, the querist will find full detail on all the points he names. It is curious that one who takes an interest in the subject should not have enquired what has already been printed concerning it.

C. M.—A detailed attempt at explanation might be given, but it could hardly be within the compass of an answer in THE VĀHAN.

One way to find an answer would be to read the *Bhagavad Gītā*, compare it with the *Voice of the Silence*, and then try to think out the meaning for oneself. It would be very imperfectly done, but it is good training, and would, among other things, make one more alert to look out for an answer in the next book one reads on the subject.

It is not easy to say how the "process" works in an ideal condition of thought, as we are so very far removed from it, but *perfect control* would argue, I think, freedom from the necessity to spend energy on that particular thing—that would have been gradually gained in the course of training for perfection—and the attention could now be turned to something not yet under perfect control.

The time at which this condition of control of thought is gained must differ with each man: it is dependent on his karma and past training. No one can tell what he can do until he tries, and very few try.

S. C.—We must first consider the meaning of the expression "voluntary attention." There are three stages in the acquirement of concentration, involuntary attention, voluntary attention, and contemplation proper, which partakes of the nature of both. In the first the mind follows desire, in the second it fights desire, in the third the mind and the desire nature are unified by a higher force. Ordinary psychology books, such as those of Professor James, deal with the two first stages only. The third stage belongs rather to the superhuman than the human stage of development.

Voluntary attention means attention sustained in opposition to the forces of the desire nature, which tend to draw the mind from the point in question, so that renewed efforts of will are needed at short intervals, each separate will effort being overpowered by the opposing forces in a few seconds. Involuntary attention, on the other hand, is that which is directly prompted by the desire nature; there is therefore no conflict, and it may be sustained for long intervals without any conscious effort of will. Involuntary attention is attention to that in which we are deeply interested, and has no direct connection with mind control, but the power of involuntary concentration is a necessary preliminary to voluntary concentration. In the early stages of development in the individual and in the race, even the faculty of involuntary concentration is lacking. We daily see instances of this, *e.g.*, the preference of uneducated people for an entertainment of the music-hall type, where there is constant variety, to any drama where there is an unbroken thread of interest from beginning to end. It may be observed in passing that an important element in the education of children is the direct training of the faculty of involuntary attention, and that the ease or difficulty of inducing a child to take a sustained interest in any subject, is an important clue to the stage of development of the Ego from an intellectual point of view.

With regard to voluntary concentration, it cannot be practised with any success, until *some* power of involuntary concentration has been already gained, and it is even then a sufficiently

difficult undertaking to tax human powers to their utmost. This being the case, it is generally best to make use of involuntary concentration so far as it will go, and to do this we must arouse in ourselves and others the kind of interest and stimulus which is the basis of this kind of work. This prepares the way for voluntary concentration, which comes in by degrees; our most fascinating subjects of study do not always appear equally attractive. The necessity of the voluntary stage is clearly recognised by Professor James; he says that the bringing back the mind over and over again to an unattractive subject lies at the root of the development of will and character.

Just as long practice in involuntary attention, our first stage, is necessary before the practice of voluntary attention, our second stage, can be even attempted, so there must be steady and continued practice of voluntary concentration before contemplation, the third stage, can be in any degree understood. It is, therefore, a subject difficult to treat from our ordinary human ignorant point of view; but, reasoning from analogy, it would seem that there must be a kind of concentration which is at the same time voluntary and involuntary; voluntary in the sense that it is started and maintained by that which is inmost in the man; involuntary in the sense that the desire nature is in perfect harmony with the endeavour made. In this condition a man may "grow as the flower grows, unconsciously." Like the flower he is unconscious of growth, but, unlike the flower, he is vividly conscious of what he means to do.

"Is the idea of control constantly present in the mind?" If one may venture to speculate, it would probably not be exactly the idea of control that would be constantly present, but a firm and definite purpose, which would drive away, by means of its own inherent energy, anything not in harmony with itself. The word control suggests conflict, and the nature being harmonised, there is no conflict. In contemplation proper, the earnest involuntary attention of childhood to a fascinating idea is combined with the fully developed purpose of maturity, and we must conclude that in the ideal condition, when thought is perfectly controlled, this balance between the voluntary and involuntary is sustained without any interval through every moment of life. This is a condition which is superhuman rather than human.

At the stage of development when a man has not yet passed the threshold between the human and the divine, but *has* developed the definite purpose of passing this threshold, steady practice in both voluntary and involuntary concentration aids his work. He has to acquire the power, if not already acquired, of long-sustained attention to that which interests him, and also the power of bringing back his mind, time after time, to an unattractive subject. Many means are suggested for acquiring these powers, but probably each man has to acquire them in his own way. They are the key on the intellectual side to his further development, as devotion is the key on the moral side. It is not possible for him, however, to con-

trol his thought without any break, and this point has not been made sufficiently clear in Theosophic literature. Injunctions thrown out broadcast, to know what we are thinking at every moment of the day, are likely to mislead the ignorant, and to lead either to undue discouragement or to a complete misapprehension of the meaning of thought control. For example, confusion sometimes arises between involuntary attention and contemplation rightly so called; yet the difference is sufficiently obvious to anyone who takes the trouble to analyse mental states. In the former the incentive comes from without, in the latter from within.

QUESTION 211.

H. V. S.—As my very clearest and highest conception of God as the almighty, all-pervading, first cause and only source of all, is always met with the assertion that man has “free” will, I ask: On what plane does man’s will start?

I am aware that the solution must be found in the consideration that man as a part of God must partake of His free-will, must even be the representer in some way of this will, but I do not know how to express this.

Free-will in the common sense would place man outside God. I think it is the term “free” that bewilders.

A. A. W.—Our querist has hold of the right idea, that man’s free-will must, somehow or other, be God’s free-will, to be possible at all. His difficulty lies here—that he has not made his own the Theosophical doctrine of the double mind: the Buddhi-Manas, whereby the higher powers communicate with him, and the Kāma-Manas whereby the attractions of the physical world play upon him. It is a fundamental defect of the older presentation of the doctrine of the Seven Principles that it takes no account of this division, the most important of all. The physical body, the desire body which feels the impression made on the physical senses by the objects around it, and the Kāma-Manas—the portion of the true Mind which is put down into these lower vehicles to gain experience by them, which thinks and reasons over the perceptions given it, form together a whole, as to which the word “free-will” is altogether inappropriate. If you go no farther than this (and modern psychology goes no farther than this) there can be no such thing as free-will. An action of this determined by anything but motives ultimately of the physical plane, is impossible; for Kāma-Manas knows nothing but what the senses give it.

But, to the Theosophist, all this is not the Man at all. It is only, so to speak, a reflection of the real Monad, Ātmā-Buddhi and the Higher Manas, whereby the spark of what the querist would call

God is individualised—one man separated (for the time) from his fellows. And the lower self which is incapable of free-will is only the true Man’s means of learning from the world and of acting upon it. Now this Higher Man is free in the fullest sense—the attractions of the physical world have for him no meaning whatever—he does not need to resist them; for him they have no existence. He knows only the needs of the true soul; and when he succeeds in impressing His will on the lower self, this is quite regardless of this lower self’s pleasure or pain.

The point of this view is that we no longer regard free-will as an innate power or a “gift” received from outside. It has to be *developed*, life after life, by the continued efforts of the Higher Ego to rule the lower. As Mr. Leadbeater very rightly says, the majority of mankind have as yet developed almost no will at all.

A good example was given in a question in THE VĀHAN a few months back, where the querist described himself as having been driven, as it seemed to him, by a force outside himself to save the life of a person he particularly hated, and who fully reciprocated the feeling. I then replied to him that that action, which seemed to him against his will, was very probably the only time in his life he had ever exercised his *real* will at all.

H. V. S. will, accordingly, find that we Theosophists do *not* meet him with the assertion that man has free-will. On the contrary, I would say that this is the goal of his evolution. His will becomes free in proportion as he succeeds in making his lower mind and body obedient to the Higher Ego which transmits to him the Divine Will; entirely regardless of the “motives” with which modern science concerns itself. And when this freedom—from the wants and desires of his lower self—is complete, his reunion with God is accomplished, and his long pilgrimage ended. Of the bearing of this doctrine on theology, this is not the place to speak; we will only fully agree with the querist that free-will in the common sense *would* place man outside God, which is impossible. But when our will is finally one with God’s will we shall then, and only then, realise fully that “His service is perfect freedom.”

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post-free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications for “Activities” must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest.

THE VĀHAN



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription (5s.) Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY, *General Secretary.*

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

Vol. XII.

LONDON, JUNE 1, 1903.

NO. 11.

Edited by BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

SUBSCRIPTIONS TO THE SECTION.

Members are reminded that the financial year of the Section ended on April 30th, and subscriptions for the year 1903-4 are now due.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary.

THE CONVENTION.

The Thirteenth Annual Convention of this Section (the first under the title of "British Section") will be held in London on Saturday and Sunday, July 4th and 5th. It is expected that Col. Olcott will preside.

On Friday evening, July 3rd, there will be a Reception at 28, Albemarle Street, from 8.30 to 10, for members of the Society only.

Refreshments will be provided.

The Convention will meet in the Banqueting Hall, St. James's Restaurant, Regent Street, W., on Saturday, July 4th, at 2.30 p.m. The change in the usual time of the business meeting has been made by the Executive Committee in accordance with the general feeling that the afternoon is more convenient for many members, especially those engaged in business, and attention is particularly called to it.

Among the important special business to be dealt with is the question of the subscription to the Section, and the subjoined letter from the Treasurer embodies a proposal to be placed before the Convention. The representation of unattached members at the Convention will also be discussed, the letter from Mr. Jackson suggesting a scheme to secure this representation. As the matter is one of some difficulty, any members who may have definite views on the means of carrying out some

such suggestion are invited to place them before the General Secretary.

On the same evening at 8.30 the First Annual Meeting of the Federation of the European Sections will be held in the Banqueting Hall.

On Sunday evening at 7, there will be a Public Meeting of the Convention in the Small Queen's Hall, at which addresses will be given. Particulars will appear in the next issue of THE VĀHAN.

All delegates (except Presidents of Branches present in person) and proxies should bring their credentials in writing. Branches are reminded that they may send one delegate (in addition to the President or his representative) for each twenty-five members.

All Branches should send in a correct list of their members at least ten days before the Convention for the revision of the registers, and the Reports of the Branch Secretaries should be sent at the same time.

With this issue of THE VĀHAN the account of receipts and expenditure and the Convention agenda are sent to members.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary.

THE FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN SECTIONS.

The First Annual Meeting of the Federation of European Sections will be held in the Banqueting Hall, St. James's Restaurant, on Saturday, July 4th, at 8.30 p.m., and representatives of the various Sections will address the meeting. The scheme for the future meetings of the Federation will be decided upon. Members of the Society may bring friends to this meeting, but it is not intended for the general public.

THE FUNDS OF THE SECTION.

28, ALBEMARLE STREET,

May 11th, 1903.

DEAR SIR,

In forwarding the usual Abstract of Receipts and Expenditure for the past year duly audited, I beg to draw attention to the fact that the expenditure for the year exceeds the receipts from ordinary sources by the sum of £60 17s. 8d. The balance in hand, excluding the Reserve Fund, is £214 16s. 10d., from which has to be deducted £112 10s., the bequest from the late Miss Lowthine, which the Executive Committee consider should not be used towards defraying ordinary expenses, but for the more permanent benefit of the Society. The net balance therefore is £102 6s. 10d. as against £163 4s. 6d. on April 30th, 1902.

I also estimate that under the present system there will be a further reduction in the receipts during the current year of at least £100, owing to shrinkage in the guaranteed donation account. The amount guaranteed in 1899, when the fund was started, was £600 per annum. I have carefully gone through the list as it now stands and do not think we can count on more than £450 at the outside from that source during the current year; and as members who have lately joined do not show any desire to contribute towards the expenses of the Society in this way, I think we must look forward to further shrinkage in the future. Under the circumstances I think that the time has come when the Society should be put on a sound financial basis. I do not think that it should depend so largely as it does now on its donation list, but that the amount derived from subscriptions should approximate more nearly to the actual and necessary expenses of its upkeep. The subscription at present stands at 5s. per annum, out of which each member receives THE VĀHAN, cost and postage of which is charged at 2s. 6d.; a further 1s. 3d. (25% of the subscription) has to be paid over to the General Headquarters at Adyar under the General Rules of the Theosophical Society. This leaves a balance of 1s. 3d. only to the credit of the British Section, which is of course totally inadequate. I would therefore suggest and will, if the Council approve, move the following alterations to the Rules of the British Section at the ensuing Convention:

Rule 15a.—To strike out the words “accompanied by an Entrance Fee of 5s.”

Rule 15b.—Substitute for existing rule the following: The amount of subscription to be paid by members unattached to any Branch shall be £1 per annum, and by each Branch for each member on its roll, 10s. per annum.

These dues to be payable at the General Secretary's office on May 1st in each year.

Rule 18.—To insert the words “reduce or” before the word “remit.”

These alterations to have effect from May 1st, 1904.

The effect of these alterations would be:—The entrance fee would be abolished. The unattached members would pay £1 per annum, which is the amount of the subscription that members who are unattached to any Section pay to the General Treasury at Adyar under Rule 27 of the Rules of the Society, and the subscription of members who belong to Lodges, and have expenses in connection with those Lodges, would be 10s. per annum.

These alterations, if approved of by the Convention, whilst not doing away with the necessity for the Donation List if the work is to be carried out efficiently, would, I consider, place the Section on a sound financial basis. I would point out, in this connection, that the French Section, which was, so to speak, the child of this Section, has lately raised its subscription in order that it might not be so dependent on the voluntary contributions of a few of its members. I think that the British Section cannot do better than follow its example.

I would in conclusion point out that under Rule 18 the Executive Committee has power to remit, and I propose to add the words “to reduce,” the dues in special cases; which would enable them to deal with any cases where the proposed alterations would entail hardship.

Yours sincerely,

W. B. LAUDER,

*Hon. Treasurer.*THE GENERAL SECRETARY,
BRITISH SECTION.

The Executive Committee has had this report under consideration, and after careful examination and discussion has resolved unanimously to adopt it and to recommend to the Convention the adoption of the changes in our Sectional Rules proposed by the Treasurer.

It was strongly felt that the present basis of our financial arrangements was unsound and unsatisfactory; that it was very undesirable that the Section should be dependent upon donations for meeting its regular current expenses; and that an increase in the annual subscription seemed the best way of putting matters on a permanent, a sound and a satisfactory basis.

The power of the Committee to reduce or remit the subscription will enable any cases of hardship among our present membership to be met, and will also meet the case of desirable applicants whose means are too straitened to allow them to pay 10s. per annum. After all, the amount of even the increased subscription is not large, and I believe there are very few people who take any earnest interest in the studies which occupy us who could not readily afford to pay it.

If the proposed alterations in the Rules are carried, the regular income of the Section will be brought up to the level of its ordinary current expenditure; and if, as we most earnestly hope and urge, the generosity of members continues to maintain the Donation Fund at anything like its present level, it will be available for undertaking branches of work which we cannot at present even

consider, such for instance as providing the means of maintaining a travelling lecturer, whose services would be always at the disposal of Branches for longer or shorter periods, and who would devote his or her entire time to the work.

It is therefore requested that all Lodges will give the above facts and proposals very careful consideration before Convention meets and will specifically instruct their Delegates or Proxies as to the sense in which the Lodge vote shall be cast.

The same applies also to the proposals contained in the following letter, which will come up for consideration and either adoption, modification or rejection.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary.

REPRESENTATION OF UNATTACHED MEMBERS.

DEAR SIR,

With regard to the voting of members at the Convention, it seems to me that the fundamental principle of equity demands that each member of the Society, whether member of a Lodge or "unattached," shall be entitled to one vote. The only condition that I would impose is that such member, in order to secure for himself the right to vote, shall have paid his subscription for the year ended in the previous April.

The present plan of allowing each Lodge one vote, with an additional vote for each twenty-five members, seems to me to be somewhat artificial, and only approximates to, without securing, a representation in proportion to the number of members represented; whilst the deprivation of any vote at all in the cases of "unattached" members is, to say the least, arbitrary.

I would suggest, therefore, that in future each Lodge should send only one delegate, who would have as many votes as there are *bona-fide* members of the Lodge, and that "unattached" members who are present (either personally or by proxy) at the meeting should have one vote each. This would provide for the due representation of every member of the Society, without distinction; it would secure for each Lodge a representation in exact proportion to its roll of members and would obviate the present anomaly of a Lodge with, say, *twenty-five* members possessing as much voting power as another Lodge with *forty-nine*; and it would remove from the minds of a large number of members of the Society who happen for the time being to be unattached to any Lodge the present feeling of dissatisfaction by reason of their disability to take any effective part in the business proceedings of the Society.

There would not appear to be any difficulty in carrying out these suggested proposals, as all that is necessary is for each member present at the meeting to record in a division the number of votes to which he or she is entitled.

Yours sincerely,
THOS. JACKSON.

ACTIVITIES.

New Branch.

May 12th, Charter issued this day to Joseph P. Sleigh, Lionel Wood, W. R. Potter, A. R. Hemsted, J. W. Crowcroft, James H. Duffell and Joyce Sleigh to form a Branch of the Theosophical Society in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, to be known as the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Branch.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to May 20th: D. S., 10s.; O. L., 3s.; K. K., £2 2s.; E. D., 10s.; A. O. P., £6; A. E. T., £1 1s.; M. C., £1; A. G. B., £2 5s.; I. H., £2; W. T., £1 1s.; L. T., £1 6s.; A. G. T., 5s. 6d.; H. R., £1; T. J., 5s.; F. T., 5s.; E. A. B., £6; A. B., (share of profits on Mme. Blavatsky's books), £27 5s. 4d.; Mr. and Mrs. G. A. W. C., £1 10s.; W. B. L., £2 5s.; L. M., £2 2s.; M. K.-W., £2; A. J. V. R., £5; G. M. F., £2; E. M., £1 1s.; F. C., £1; G. P. E., £5 5s.; Ss., £1; E. P. D., 10s.; New Zealand Section, £1; G. A. A., 15s.; A. C. A., £1 15s.; F. S., £1; A. S., 15s.; A. R., £1 0s. 10d. Total £82 17s. 8d.

Section Reference Library.

The following books have been gratefully received for the Library: *The Elements of Metaphysics*, Dr. Paul Deussen; *Chambers' Twentieth Century English Dictionary*, edited by Rev. Thomas Davidson.

The following books have been purchased during the past month; *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. XXXV.; *The Divine Cloud*, edited by Rev. Henry Collins; *The Pathway to Reality*, R. B. Haldane, LL.D.; *The Art-Work of the Future*, Richard Wagner; *A Book of Spiritual Instruction*, Blossius; *The Fiery Soliloquy with God*, Master Gerlac Petersen; *The Other Side of Death*, C. W. Leadbeater; *Life of Richard Wagner*, Glasenapp and Ellis; *Religion and Art*, Richard Wagner; *Via, Veritas, Vita*, James Drummond, M.A.; *Commentary on the Qur'an*, Vol. IV., Wherry; *Sons of Francis*, A. Macdonnell; *Amiel's Journal*, translated by Mrs. H. Ward; *The Rhetoric, Poetic, and Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle*, translated by Thomas Taylor; *The Adi Granth*, translated by Dr. Ernest Trumpp.

R. A. HOBSON,
Assistant Librarian.

Meetings for Enquirers.

These meetings (open to members and their friends) will be resumed on Monday, June 15th, at 3.30 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street, W., when Mr. Keightley will continue his study of *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*, dealing on June

15th with Trance, Possession and Ecstasy; on June 22nd with the Epilogue, and on June 29th with the book generally considered in relation to Theosophical conceptions.

E. SEVERS,
Hon. Secretary Social Committee.

"At Home."

An "At Home" will be held at 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Monday, June 8th, at 3.30 p.m., at which Mrs. Hooper will answer questions on Theosophical subjects. Tea will be served at 4.30.

Members of the Society are cordially invited to be present, and may bring a friend.

E. SEVERS,
Hon. Secretary Social Committee.

London Federation.

The quarterly meeting of the Federation of London Lodges was held at 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Saturday, April 25th, Mrs. Hooper presiding. The subject for discussion—"The Utility of a Cult"—was opened by Mrs. Leo, and several speakers followed.

No meeting of the Federation will be held in July, its place being taken by the Annual Convention of the Section.

PHILIP TOVEY,
Hon. Secretary.

Blavatsky Lodge.

On April 30th the Lodge re-opened with a lecture from the Rev. J. J. B. Coles; on May 7th, Swâmi Upadhyay lectured on "The Philosophy of Hindu Devotion." These lectures aroused interest and some discussion; both lecturers were new to the Lodge. On May 14th Mr. Mead spoke to a very full meeting "Concerning the Idea of Karma." The Sunday lecturers have been Mr. Keightley and Mrs. Sharpe.

S. M. S.

Sheffield Lodge.

The Annual Meeting of the above Lodge was held on May 6th, when the officers for the ensuing year were elected. The Secretary's report exhibited a most satisfactory year's work, and the Treasurer's statement showed a small balance in hand, although the expenses for the year had been exceptionally heavy. Attendances of members had been exceedingly good, an increasing interest being taken in Lodge study.

C. J. B.

Bath Lodge.

On Wednesday, April 22nd, Miss Ward visited Bath and delivered a lecture on "The Cult of Healthy-mindedness."

There was a large attendance, as the occasion had been chosen for opening the new Lodge Room at 2, Argyle Street, and many members and friends of the Society were present. Miss Ward congratulated the members on their enterprise, and pointed out the advantage of having a room permanently available for reading and study.

At the close of the lecture, which was greatly appreciated, two of the audience joined the Lodge.

There is the nucleus of a good library in connection with the Lodge, and a generous member lately contributed a copy of Myers' *Human Personality*. We have also to acknowledge gratefully a gift of eight books from Miss Ward.

M. K. S.

Glasgow Lodge.

The Glasgow Lodge held its annual meeting on May 11th; Alexander Wallace, President, in the chair. The report showed an increase of activities during the Session and a better attendance at meetings. Messrs. McKechnie and Wilson attended the Convention of the European Section, and also visited Greenock twice and lectured there to fairly good audiences. The most prominent item in the past year was the visit of Mrs. Besant in September, accompanied by Mrs. Mead and Countess Wachtmeister. Two public meetings were held, and one Lodge meeting, fairly well attended. The Lodge also received visits from Mr. Cuthbertson, of Edinburgh, and Mrs. Hooper. Two new members joined during the year and two members resigned. The membership remains at twenty-two.

The Treasurer's report showed a small deficit for the year.

The Librarian's report stated that the books had been fairly well used during the session, and a number of new books and pamphlets had been added.

The office-bearers for the ensuing session are: *President*, Alexander Wallace; *Vice-President*, James Wilson; *Secretary*, John P. Allan; *Treasurer*, W. S. Stewart.

After Mr. Bertram Keightley's lecture on June 10th, meetings will be suspended until October. On resuming, Lodge meetings will be held on the second Monday in each month, and public meetings on the fourth Monday for the study of *The Other Side of Death*.

Correspondence should in future be sent to Mr. John P. Allan, 5, West Regent Street.

J. W.

Theosophical Lending Library.

This Library is open to all, whether members of the Theosophical Society or not.

Terms of subscription: three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra.

Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 2.30 to 6 o'clock.

Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., in the small room, Foresters' Hall, Bath Street (near Pump Room), when books can be obtained from the Lodge Library. Enquiries should be addressed by letter to Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings in the Council Room, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: June 7th, *The Work of the Brahma Somaj*, V. R. Shinde; June 14th, *Thought and Action*, Bertram Keightley; June 21st, *The Dangers of Spiritualism*, Mme. de Steiger; June 28th, *St. Paul*, Brian Hodgson. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. Brian Hodgson, Ivydene, Poplar Avenue, Edgbaston.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays at 7.45 p.m., in the Theosophical Room, Penny Bank Buildings, North Parade, for the study of *Thought-Power*. For information apply to Mrs. O. Firth, 10, Selborne Terrace, Manningham, Bradford.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Meetings on alternate Sundays at 3.30 p.m., and on alternate Mondays at 8 p.m., at members' houses, also on each Wednesday following the Sunday meeting, at 15, Old Steine, at 8 p.m. Information can be obtained from Mr. N. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or from Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., at Brooklyn Chambers, St. Augustine's Parade. For further particulars enquiry may be addressed to S. H. Old, at the above address.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. For information apply to the President, Mr. W. Kohlen, 12, rue d'Egmont.

BRUSSELS, CENTRALE BELGE. General meetings held in the Lodge Rooms, 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, the first and third Saturdays in the month, at 8.15 p.m. Students' Class, open to all members, the second and fourth Saturdays, at 8 p.m. Reading room open from 3 to 5 p.m. twice a week. For information apply by letter to the Secretary, 21, rue du Vallon.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Regular meetings suspended for the summer. Mr. Keightley will lecture on June 8th on *Human Personality*, and will address a Lodge meeting on June 9th. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. J. Lorimer Thomson, Roseburn House, Roseburn.

EXETER LODGE. Open meetings are held in the Lodge Room, 48, High Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., and on the first and third Sundays of the month at 7 p.m. Meetings for members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.30 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. Meetings at Shepherd's Hall (Room No. 3), 25, Bath Street, on the fourth Monday of each month, at 8 p.m.: May 25th, *The One Religion and its many Forms*, J. Graham. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. James Wilson, 48, Holmhead Street, Glasgow.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings in the Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: June 7th, . . . ; June 14th, *Knowing and Doing*, W. Bell; June 21st, *Roman Civilization*, Oliver Firth; June 28th, *How to appreciate Good Music*, H. E. Nichol. Lodge meetings on Thursdays and Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 23, East Parade, for the study of *The Astral Plane* and *The Path of Discipleship*.

HULL LODGE. Meetings at the Central Temperance Hotel (Jarratt Street entrance), on Sundays, at 7 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at the Athenæum Restaurant, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. G. H. Popplestone, 8, Ashville View, Cardigan Road, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings at 18, Colquitt Street, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays, at 8 p.m., at Miss Wood's, 125, Victoria Street, S.W., for the study of Deussen's *Elements of Metaphysics*.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 7.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill, S.W. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 1, Pentland Street, Wandsworth Common, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays at 28, Albemarle Street, W., at 8.30 p.m.: June 4th, *The Descent of Man*, W. C. Worsdell; June 11th, *Concerning the Doctrine of Reincarnation*, G. R. S. Mead; June 18th, *What do we mean by "Matter?"* Bertram Keightley; June 25th, *A Theosophical View of Phrenology*, G. Dyne. On Sunday, June 7th, at 7 p.m. (open to visitors): *The Cult of Healthy-Mindedness*, Miss Ward.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meeting at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, on Friday, at 8 p.m.: June 12th, *Death and After*, R. King.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at Sunflower Hotel, George Street, East Croydon, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.: June 3rd, *The Things that Matter*, L. Stanley Jast; June 10th, . . . Miss C. E. Woods; June 17th, *Reincarnation*, F. Horne; June 24th, *The Bearing of Science on Ethics and Revelation*, Rev. E. S. Lang Buckland.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: June 8th, *Esoteric Teachers and Teachings*, A. P. Cattnach; June 15th, *The Divine in Nature and in Man*, D. N. Dunlop; June 22nd, *The Scientific Basis of Reincarnation*, W. C. Worsdell; June 29th, *The Awakening of Faith*, J. M. Watkins. Class for study on the first and third Saturdays of each month.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for children and young people at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's

Road, W., on Sundays, at 3 p.m.: June 22nd, *St. Francis of Assisi*, Miss E. M. Mallet. All children are cordially invited. For information address the Hon. Sec., Miss M. A. Sidley, 3, Nassington Road, Hampstead Heath, N.W.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N., on Mondays and Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.: June 3rd, *Spiritualism*, G. Taylor Gwinn; June 8th, *Some Social Problems*, A. J. Faulding; June 10th, General Meeting; June 17th, *The Despondency of Arjuna*, Rev. A. Baker; June 24th, *Reincarnation, IV*. Other Monday evenings, Class for study.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.: June 5th, *Predestination*, W. C. Worsdell; June 12th,; June 19th, *Prof. James and Mrs. Besant on Consciousness; a Comparison*, H. G. Parsons; May 26th, *Some Striking Parallels*, Miss Ward.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., in Room 38, 16, John Dalton Street, Manchester. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 80, Northenden Road, Sale, Cheshire.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, June 8th and 22nd, and meeting for enquirers (gentlemen only), on Tuesday, June 9th, at 8 p.m., and drawing-room meeting on Tuesday, June 16th, at 3.30 p.m., at 38, Bamford Road, Didsbury. Information can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary at the same address.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER CENTRE. Meetings for members of the Society on Tuesdays at 8 p.m. Open to non-members on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Information from the Hon. Secretary, West Bank, Park Road, Ashton-on-Mersey.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 68, Linthorpe Road, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., for study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Public Lectures on Sundays in the Lecture Room, Co-operative Hall, Corporation Road, at 6.45 p.m.: June 7th, *The Human Personality, its Survival after Death*, Bertram Keightley; June 21st, *Reincarnation*, W. H. Thomas.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 3, St. James' Street, at 8 p.m. Communications to W. E. Dowson, 10, Mapperley Road, Nottingham.

OXFORD CENTRE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m., in the office of Mr. Salter, over Lloyd's Bank, Carfax, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Hon. Secretary, J. Walter Cock, 37, Beechcroft Road, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., and on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 19, Cornwall Street. Enquiries to be addressed to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

SOUTHAMPTON CENTRE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m., at Capt. Forbes' Nautical Academy, Albion Place. Enquiries should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, Miss Green, Laverton House, Hill, Southampton.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., at the Vegetarian Café, Nelson Street, Newcastle. Meetings on the last Sunday of the month, at Lily House, off Ocean View, Whitley Bay.

YORK CENTRE. Meetings on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., in the De Grey Rooms; June 5th, *Thought and Action*, Bertram Keightley. Information from W. H. Sanderson, 5, South Esplanade, York.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 211.

(Continued from p. 80.)

H. V. S.—*As my very clearest and highest conception of God as the almighty, all-pervading, first cause and only source of all, is always met with the assertion that man has "free" will, I ask: On what plane does man's will start?*

I am aware that the solution must be found in the consideration that man as a part of God must partake of His free-will, must even be the representer in some way of this will, but I do not know how to express this.

Free-will in the common sense would place man outside God. I think it is the term "free" that bewilders.

C. M.—Free-will is that which gives the casting vote in a choice of action. Man's free-will is on the lower mental plane, and only as he gradually identifies himself with his higher will, can freedom of will be said to cease. It is the ignorant, struggling mind that chooses wrongly, the higher is at one with God's will and could only choose that his lower mind shall obey that will.

Chapter IV. of the *Seat of Authority in Religion*, by J. Martineau, deals with this question, and I strongly recommend the questioner to read it. I quote from it: "So that over us, as moral beings, are set other laws than those which are embodied in our animal organism and in virtue of which we eat and drink, and sleep and wake, and laugh and weep, and fear and fight, and herd in gregarious masses; viz., laws to which our assent is asked, and to which we render, if at all, an elective obedience. We are committed to the disposal of no imperious and over-mastering spontaneity of force, but of a clear consciousness of relative worth among the claims that bid for us; and this revelation of authority, this knowledge of the better, this inward conscience, this moral ideality—call it what you will—is the presence of God in us. . . . Far from encroaching on our proper personality, the second or spiritual divine element addresses itself to *minds* alone, and pre-supposes the co-presence with it of our will as a responsible subject and an effective power. . . . God's part is done when, having made us free, He shows to us our best: ours now remains to pass on from illumination of the conscience to surrender of the will. And thus we obtain at once the separating line between the divine and the human in that moral and spiritual life which involves the com-

munion of both ; the initiative of all higher good is with God ; while it rests with man to be the organ of its *realisation or its loss*. If, as there dawn upon us purer lights, be it of truth or of duty, which promise to dissipate the lazy mists that fold us round, we refuse to lay ourselves open to them . . . we do that we can to be 'without God in the world.' . . . If, on the other hand, we freely give ourselves away to the true, the beautiful, the right, and reverence them as above us and entitled to the sacrifice, then, whether we know it or not, we place ourselves at God's disposal, and become fellow-workers with Him."

E. M. G.—In answering this question it seems to me to be necessary that we should consider for a moment the great law of dualism under which not man only, but every part of the universe, moves while in manifestation. To use the simplest and most ordinary of the names which have been given to the great dualities, we see in spirit and in matter, two *apparently* opposing aspects of one great force, working in two *apparently* opposing ways. Matter—as far as Science has as yet traced its existence—is bound by laws and subject to limitations, and its action under given conditions may be counted upon and pre-determined : Spirit is not bound by any laws that are perceptible to our senses, its action cannot be counted upon nor can its motions be pre-determined. Let H. V. S. study Mrs. Besant's *Evolution of Life and Form*, if he is not already familiar with it. With the teaching there given clearly in his mind, he will realise that while upon the descending arc of the involution of spirit into matter, the former was ever more and more deeply enswathed by the latter upon every plane, so that the law of obedience to pressure from environment, under which law matter worked, became gradually the principle of growth for the Monad ; and in the lower kingdoms we see evolution carried on by an almost automatic response to such pressure and the "free spirit" is for the time dormant and apparently powerless.

But in man the Monad has striven upwards through the three lower kingdoms, in each setting free one of the buried powers of spirit, until upon the lower mental plane there takes place its union with its Higher Self, that which is the direct reflection of the Divine Being, and man as an individual is *potentially* complete. This brief glance at the making of man's dual nature seems helpful if we are to realise how he is *free* in that true Self which has never been subject to the law of material evolution ; and how apart from that Self he is bound by the strong coercion of circumstances and environment, against which, as a merely material organism, he might struggle in vain. It would seem then that man's "freedom" depends upon the extent to which he is able to bring to bear upon his lower life the untrammelled motions of that Higher Self. For upon the plane where that is consciously existing the dualities are blent in oneness, and neither *necessity* nor *choice* exists. When man has learned to live in direct touch with his true Self and to respond to its promptings,

he is free on every plane ; until such time he may and does come into more or less touch with It through religious ordinances and by that which is expressed by the Christian doctrine of Grace, and thereby may rise to co-operate with that Will which is perfect freedom.

E. A. B.—I agree with H. V. S. that the term "free" will is bewildering, when used in an unqualified sense. We must all be conscious of a certain (or uncertain ?) amount of free-will, but this—a divine attribute in itself—is in us limited by the great Law that sweeps us onward in our evolution, whether we consciously work with it or wilfully even for a time retard it. The limits may be wide, but we cannot overpass them. Our freedom is at every step limited by karma, the law of cause and effect. We may always make a choice, but only within the possibilities of our present conditions, and these have been determined by our past. Well for us that it is so, for supposing such a thing as absolute free-will possible at our present stage, it could only mean chaos. But the will-power itself is always growing and evolving within these limits, and as we gain experience through innumerable mistakes and their consequences, it gradually develops both in force and in purity, and we dare to look forward to a time when it will become truly one with the Supreme Will. Then, and then only, will "perfect freedom" be attained.

S. C.—Yes. "Free-will in the common sense would place man outside God." Free-will in the common sense is obsessed with the idea of separation. But what is it to be free? Is it not to be ourselves, to fulfil our own nature? And what are we? We are God. "Thou art That," as the Upanishads put it. Free-will is the opportunity to do that which is for our own interest. What kind of actions are for our own interest? Precisely those which are for the interest of others. The true purpose of life is neither to grasp or to give, but to do that which is for the benefit of all. So long as this is not seen, we are in the position of the kitten that pursues its own tail, or of the infant that benevolently offers a biscuit to its foot. Actions which are performed with the idea of giving in the background of the mind prevent a man from learning the true nature of free-will.

Free-will in man starts from the time when he becomes a man, and no longer a mere animal ; but the whole of the human stage of evolution is required for him to learn what his freedom means. It is not learnt by argument, but by experience and action, and it is almost impossible to put forward any theory on the subject which is not misleading from some point of view.

A. H. W.—The writer thinks that "free-will" starts from the plane of the Eternal Ego, the man for whom the hour never strikes, who lives in the Eternal now and the Everlasting here, beyond the time and place of the three worlds. When the conscious "I" in a man ceases to identify itself

with the personality, and realises itself as the Eternal man, the re-incarnating pilgrim, he attains the point of view whence the things-that-are are seen as they really are, he begins to grasp the great scheme of evolution, and to understand the way to help it on. So "free-will" comes to him, the will to help the world, and to be perfect. He begins to be free to inhibit his personality from responding to the stimuli of the three worlds by which it is conditioned. Physics, physiology and psychology all unite in demonstrating that in their realms—the three worlds—there is no room for either free-will, immortality, or the God of theology. Here causes and effects run in a continuous stream, and the personality is absolutely conditioned by its environment. There seems no getting away from that. Free-will appears to be the power of self-restraint, "the Self neither acts nor causes to act, nature however energiseth." Free-will thus restrains all actions which the experience of the lower worlds prompts, except those which harmonise with personal perfection and the evolution of the race; these are not restrained, hence the individual "becomes a mere force for good in the world."

Free-will is generally supposed to be the power of doing as you like; this is the personal illusion, it is really yielding to the strongest impulse of personal thought, emotion or desire, it is being goaded by the outer worlds—necessity. Really there is one Free-will in the universe which causes all things, it wells up within a man through his Ego, and beats upon his personality from without in the guise of experience. The force within we call "free-will," the force without we call necessity. When a man is harmonised the inner energy controls his personality and reproduces itself harmonically in his lower vehicles; in this way they are brought into harmony with the outer energy, which is identical with the inner, and so the individual is at peace with his environment, whatever it is, and recognises the Eternal Beneficence beneath the storm and stress of the great process of evolution.

In this way it seems possible to reconcile the finding of science with mystic religion. There is no free-will in the three worlds and the vehicles conditioned by them. The personality is not immortal, for it has to be eliminated, only the memory of it remains. The God of popular theology, extra-cosmic and anthropomorphic, becomes the Immanent One, That of which the totality of things is the Manifestation. So it is said: "The principle which gives life dwells within us and without us, is undying and eternally beneficent, is not heard nor seen nor smelt, but is perceived by the man who desires perception."

That perception is the one thing needful, the

pearl of great price, to buy it a man must go and sell all that he has, all his prejudices, powers, preconceptions, personal loves and hates, the whole personal illusion in fact, for "He that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal."

QUESTION 212.

C. E.—*Is it known whether in the descent to re-birth the law that force always works along the line of least resistance is in any way fulfilled? Where the mental affinity, and consequently the attraction, is greatest, the resistance which the embodiment itself offers is obviously least.*

A. A. W.—The short answer is that if it is a law, it must be fulfilled. It is, however, well to point out that, as we are taught, these laws of heredity and the like do not work out *blindly* their results, but that they are only the means whereby the Powers above provide for the needs of karma. The confusion of thought and language whereby even writers on philosophy allow themselves to speak of an observed mode of succession (which is all a "law" really means) as having somehow power to *cause* that succession, is at the present time so universal that it is needful to emphasise this point. The Lords of Karma by the intelligent use of the law of heredity and other "laws" produce a suitable body for the reincarnating soul. But the soul's descent into it cannot be regarded as a matter of "mental affinity and attraction" only. In many cases (perhaps in most), it is a body to which the soul is *not* attracted, a means of kârmic punishment instead of reward; the soul takes it, not as water flows away through any chance crack it may find, "along the line of least resistance," but guided, and, if necessary, forced to that body and no other, by the active, intelligent Will of the Powers concerned. Of course, in a sense, it follows the line of least resistance; for in any other direction it would find itself stopped. But I am not sure that the querist is clear that this is the result of a living Will, not of chance or "law"; a Will which overrules all affinities or attractions in its way.

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post-free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications for "Activities" must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest.

THE VĀHAN



A VEHICLE FOR
THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription (5s.) Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY, *General Secretary.*

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

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LONDON, JULY 1, 1903.

NO. 12.

Edited by BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

THE CONVENTION.

With this number of THE VĀHAN a programme of the Convention and Federation of the European Sections goes to the members. Attention is called to the fact that the Business Meeting of the British Section will be held in the Banqueting Hall, St. James' Restaurant (Regent Street entrance) at 2.30 p.m., on Saturday, July 4th, instead of in the morning as heretofore.

The meeting at the Small Queen's Hall, on Sunday, July 5th, at 7 p.m., is free to the public. Cards notifying this meeting are printed, and can be obtained from the General Secretary. It is hoped that members will do what they can to fill the Hall.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary.

SUBSCRIPTIONS OF UNATTACHED MEMBERS.

A slip is enclosed with this issue of THE VĀHAN in those copies which are being sent to unattached members of the Section asking them to sign and return at once an expression of opinion on the proposal made by the Treasurer to raise their subscriptions to £1. Unattached members have at present no voting power at the Convention and it is thought desirable that as far as possible their views should be obtained and laid before the Convention.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary.

LETTER FROM THE SCANDINAVIAN SECTION.

MR. BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary of the British Section.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER,
At the meeting of the Scandinavian Section

in Convention assembled, it was resolved to send you warm brotherly greetings and good wishes for your Theosophical work.

For the Annual Convention,
ANID KNÖS.

THE PRESIDENT-FOUNDER IN GENEVA.

During his stay at Geneva from June 7th to 12th, Colonel Olcott visited the three local lodges, Dharma, Unité and the Philalethes, belonging to the French Section. Every evening of this memorable visit was occupied by a meeting attended by a crowded gathering, during which the venerable President-Founder expounded the principles on which the Society stands, and answered the numerous questions asked. The first meeting took place at the residence of Countess Prozor and included the three branches. The next in the same house (where the Colonel was a guest) included visitors. On the 9th the Philalethes were similarly favoured; on the 10th the Colonel spoke in the usual place of meeting of the Unité, Mrs. Erath's Salon, and on the 11th at the usual gathering of the Dharma. It is pleasant to record a most interesting exchange of views between Colonel Olcott and Father Hyacinth, now settled in Geneva and deeply interested in the Theosophical movement.

W. METFORD.

DEATH OF MISS SHAW.

It is with profound regret that we announce the passing away of Miss Louisa Shaw, our well-known and much-beloved worker in the Theosophical movement at Harrogate.

Miss Shaw had gone, in company with Mr. Hodgson Smith, to visit our fellow-members at Amsterdam, where they arrived on Friday, June

5th; on Saturday morning Miss Shaw fell, at about 6 o'clock, from her window, and was taken to a hospital in an unconscious state; she recovered consciousness later and was able to speak with her friends; but she passed away early on Monday morning. Miss Shaw was unable to say how the accident occurred; she was in the habit of rising early, and opening her windows, and it is thought she overbalanced herself in trying to do so; the window was a French one, opening outwards, and the balcony rail was very low. Miss Shaw's loss will be deeply felt by all who knew her kindly heart, excellent sense, high ideals, and profound devotion to Theosophy. This common sorrow will bind us the more closely to our brethren in Holland. We insert below an account of the Memorial Services and a sketch of the life and work of Miss Shaw.

On Wednesday, June 10th, 1903, a Memorial Service for Miss Louisa Shaw was held in the Theosophical Hall in Harrogate, at noon.

About 200 people were present, including many of our own members; representatives from the Bradford, Middlesbrough, Leeds, Hull, and Didsbury Lodges, and from the York Centre, and also many of those who had known and loved her in the town. On the platform, facing everyone, was placed a large portrait of Miss Shaw and all around were grouped masses of white flowers and plants, and on a table on the right were rose-coloured flowers, all of which were gifts from members of the Harrogate Lodge and others.

Soon after the clock had struck twelve Beethoven's "Funeral March," played by Mr. Nichol, broke the silence.

Then followed a short address from Mr. Thomas, in which he said that all had met together that afternoon to spend a little while in communion with one who had passed away from this plane. She had gone because her work here was finished, because there was other work needing her, and no one would be more ready and willing to respond to that call than she. He then read a message which had just come from our Dutch brethren, who were holding the funeral service at about the same time in Amsterdam; the message was:

"We are with you in loving thought and sympathy. This common pain only draws us nearer to each other. All Dutch and English friends."

Mr. Thomas then dwelt on the importance which Theosophists attached to thought, and as there could be no separation between friends on the thought-plane, it was fitting that we should spend some few moments in silent thought and meditation.

When this had been carried out Mr. Thomas read an inspiring passage from Epictetus on the nature of the Divine Life in man.

Mr. Nichol then played Wagner's Pilgrims' Chorus from "Tannhäuser," and as the notes grew louder and louder in a song of triumph it seemed as though there stole over the room an indefinable atmosphere of peace and joy and calm.

Following this came the playing of Handel's Largo by Mr. Dunn on the violoncello.

In the silence which ensued, Miss Eliza Pickard, a cousin of Miss Shaw, spoke, saying that she had frequently been brought into consciousness of Miss Shaw's thought vibration in her new expanded condition, and the impression which came to her from sources with which they were both in harmony, was that there were some present who were preparing for a further spiritual unfolding, a deeper and fuller first-hand knowledge of spiritual reality, and the startling event which had just happened would be used as a help towards this. There were certain soul conditions necessary for such experience, an elasticity of mind and yet firmness, combined with a condition of yielding with the yieldingness of the willow as well as the strength of the oak.

Those who were found in such a soul condition might be used by the spirit of God for wider and fuller usefulness, and those who were conscious of a very strong link with their dear one who had gone would find from time to time a sense of her nearness when they were at their best. After a few minutes' pause Miss Head read some lines from Sir Edwin Arnold's "Song Celestial," and again there was silence, broken by the playing of Chopin's "Funeral March," by Miss Whitehead.

When the last notes had died away, Miss Hilda Smith read "Crossing the Bar," and then Mr. Thomas closed the meeting, which had lasted just an hour.

M. B. H.

I have been asked to write a short notice of Louisa Shaw because we were close and intimate friends for twenty years, and during the last twelve years co-workers and comrades in the Theosophical Society. From the time she joined the Theosophical Society she gave herself unreservedly to its work, and Theosophy became to her increasingly the life of her life. She was brought up as a member of the Society of Friends, and was educated at Ackworth School, where she afterwards became a teacher, and the experience and discipline there were of great use in the work of her later years.

She was strenuous, practical, self-controlled, mystic, devoted and sympathetic, and she poured out her life in joyous love and service to others. Her strenuousness was very marked; she took great pains in whatever she had to do, and spared no trouble to do each duty as well as she could, throwing her whole energy into everything she did. For the last seven years she was the Secretary of the Harrogate Lodge, and used often to say how she loved the work, and all know how capably and efficiently and joyfully she did it. Indeed, ever since our Lodge was formed she has been its heart and the motive force being ever ready to go or to stay, to do or to forbear where Theosophy was concerned; always giving or sharing

her best. I was always *sure* of her, knowing her to be entirely reliable, steadfast and true, ever looking for the good in all with whom she came in contact, and thus her personal influence was powerful and widespread. With these qualities she combined great practical ability, a shrewd business sagacity, and a capacity for executive administration.

In addition to her work in the Lodge and the Society, she was an active partner in a large and flourishing business, and she brought her loving sympathy into her business and into her contact with those she employed, as she brought her business training and her financial skill to bear upon the work of the Lodge. She was very reticent in speech where the foibles or vices of others were concerned, and was a harmoniser and peacemaker in her thoughts, speech and action.

She had also a strong vein of mysticism; lower happenings and outer circumstances were to her but hints and symbols of unseen and higher realities. In the soul itself she believed the great drama was enacted, and outward events were to her only indications of internal states of her consciousness. She looked upon the members of the Harrogate Lodge as actually parts of herself, one with her and she with them; and this feeling deepened and extended towards the close of her life, and took in all who in their own way were working for the good of humanity. In width of sympathy she was—as far as my experience goes—unrivalled, and the great wave of feeling which passed over the Lodges in England and Holland when the news reached them that she had passed away from the physical plane, shows how she was loved and appreciated. She shrank from none, she helped all; for all were parts of herself. The Harrogate Lodge she dearly loved as a mother loves her promising son, and the work of the Theosophical Society was ever before her mind more especially during the last few days of her life.

In the last paper she wrote on "The Purpose of the Theosophical Society," she put forth her latest views and convictions, and her conversation during our last days together was chiefly about the Society and its work.

Our friendship was never disturbed by the difference of our opinions, we trusted each other completely, and always worked harmoniously together. And now there is no touch of sorrow or gloom for her removal; for she made herself what she desired to be: an instrument for the Master's use, and her work here having ended she has gone, I believe, to other and higher activity where the strenuous energy, the earnest devotion, the loving sympathy and the mystic intelligence will be more widespread and effective. Already the effect has been to draw the members of the Harrogate Lodge closer together, and to unite the Lodges of Holland and England in deepest sympathy and common love. Let us rejoice that a pilgrim has passed over to the other shore.

HODGSON SMITH.

ACTIVITIES.

New Branches.

June 5th, 1903. Charter issued this day to Miss E. M. Green, Miss J. E. Dowland, Mrs. Whiston, Miss C. Hollick, Miss F. Alvey, Miss G. Pickthall, and A. H. Barrow, to form a Branch of the Theosophical Society in Southampton, to be known as the Southampton Branch.

June 15th, 1903. Charter issued this day to E. J. Dunn, Miss Ella M. Browne, Zechariah Waite, Mrs. E. P. Browne, Miss Edith G. Knocker, Edward Hunt, W. C. Close, and Mrs. Eleanor Wright, to form a Branch of the Theosophical Society in York, to be known as the York Branch.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to June 20th: Mr. and Mrs. C. N. G., £1; A. D., 7s.; P. T., £2 2s.; A. H., 5s.; M. C. G., £1 1s.; B. S., £10; E. B., 16s.; E. F., 5s.; C. B. W., 10s.; W. A. A., £1; W. J. L., £1; M. G., 15s.; E. K. M., £1 1s.; E. M. H., £5; A. J. V. R., £1; P. P., £2 2s.; J. E. C., £1; F. R. G., 15s.; W. H. G., 15s.; E. F., £5; W. E. F., £1; A. F., 16s.; A. A. McM., 5s.; G. G., 15s.; W. B. and E. L., £3; U. B., £2; C. P., 5s.; W. K., £5; H. E. N., £5; E. J. D., 15s.; A. H., £2; A. H., 2s. 6d.; A. A. M. de P., £2 2s.; V. S., 2s. Total, £58 16s. 6d.

Section Reference Library.

The following books have been gratefully received for the Library: *Chinese Moral Maxims*, compiled by J. F. Davis, F.R.S.; *A Guide to Conversation in the English and Chinese Languages*, Stanislas Hernisz, M.D.; *Handbook of the Chinese Language*, J. Summers; *Dictionary of the Chinese Language*, Rev. R. Morrison; *The Golden Bough*, J. G. Frazer, D.C.L.; *Clavicula Solomonis, a Hebrew Manuscript*, described by H. Gollancz, M.A.

The following books have been purchased during the past month: *Elements of Theosophy*, L. Edger, M.A.; *Encyclopædia Biblica*, Vol. IV.; *The Constitution of the Earth*, A. P. Sinnett; *Die Sāmkhya-Philosophie als Naturlehre und Erlösungslehre*, J. Dahlmann, S.J.; *Genesis des Mahābhārata*, J. Dahlmann, S.J.; *Das Mahābhārata als Epos und Rechtsbuch*, J. Dahlmann, S.J.; *Buddha. Ein Culturbild des Ostens*, J. Dahlmann, S.J.; *Nirvana. Eine Studie zur Vorgeschichte des Buddhismus*, J. Dahlmann, S.J.; *Der Idealismus der Indischen Religionsphilosophie im Zeitalter der Opfernystik*, J. Dahlmann, S.J.

R. A. HOBSON,
Assistant Librarian.

"At Home."

An "At Home" will be held at 28, Albemarle Street, W., at 3.30 p.m., on Monday, July 6th, at

which Mr. Keightley will answer questions on Theosophical subjects. Tea will be served at 4.30.

Flowers for Convention.

The Secretary of the Social Committee would be grateful if members with gardens would send her some flowers for use at Headquarters during the Convention. She would be glad to have the flowers by the morning of Friday, July 3rd.

Northern Federation.

The Thirty-seventh Conference was held at Harrogate, on May 23rd and 24th, under the presidency of Mr. Bertram Keightley. There was a good attendance of delegates and members from Bradford, Didsbury, Harrogate, Hull, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Middlesbrough, Sheffield and York.

The series of meetings commenced with a discussion on "Theosophy and the Training of Children," in which many members took part. Afterwards Mr. Keightley addressed a very interested audience on "Human Personality."

The afternoon of the 24th was spent in listening to a very excellent programme of music kindly provided by some of the members, and the proceedings terminated with the evening lecture by Mr. Keightley, on "Life and Religion."

In connection with the Federation Mr. Keightley also made an extensive lecturing tour among the Northern Branches, visiting Birmingham, Bradford, Didsbury, Manchester, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Hull, Leeds, Liverpool, Middlesbrough, Sheffield and York. For this work and all the help so freely given by Mr. Keightley during the Conference, the Northern Federation tends a hearty vote of thanks.

The next Conference is fixed for July 18th and 19th, when Mrs. Cooper-Oakley has kindly consented to preside. Members of the Society are cordially invited to attend.

GERTRUDE SPINK,
Hon. Secretary.

Blavatsky Lodge.

On May 21st, Mrs. Hooper spoke on "The Druidic 'Three Worlds.'" Miss E. Ward was the lecturer on the 28th; her subject was "What Modern Theosophy stands for." The speakers on June 4th, 11th, and 18th, were Mr. W. C. Worsdell, Mr. Mead, and Mr. Keightley; their subjects were: "The Descent of Man," "Concerning the Doctrine of Reincarnation," and "What do we mean by 'Matter'?"

There will be no lectures after July 9th until the first Thursday in October, but informal meetings will be held on Thursday at the usual hour, at 28, Albemarle Street, on July 16th, 23rd, and 30th, and on each of the Thursdays in September. It is suggested that on some of these

occasions, at any rate, members who care to come should have the opportunity of bringing questions.

The Sunday evening lectures are also suspended for the present, but it is hoped that on the first Sunday in October they will begin again.

S. M. S.

Theosophical Lending Library.

This Library is open to all, whether members of the Theosophical Society or not.

Terms of subscription: three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra.

Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 2.30 to 6 o'clock.

Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., in the Lodge Rooms, 2, Argyle Street, when books can be obtained from the Lodge Library. Enquiries should be addressed by letter to Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings in the Council Room, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: July 5th, *A Communist Settlement*, C. E. Smith; July 12th, *Public Education*, Brian Hodgson; July 19th, *"Ancient Wisdom"*; July 26th . . . J. H. Duffell. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. Brian Hodgson, Ivydene, Poplar Avenue, Edgbaston.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays at 7.45 p.m., in the Theosophical Room, Penny Bank Buildings, North Parade, for the study of *Thought-Power*. For information apply to Mrs. O. Firth, 10, Selborne Terrace, Manningham, Bradford.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Meetings on alternate Sundays at 3.30 p.m., and on alternate Mondays at 8 p.m., at members' houses, also on each Wednesday following the Sunday meeting, at 15, Old Steine, at 8 p.m. Information can be obtained from Mr. N. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or from Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., at Brooklyn Chambers, St. Augustine's Parade. For further particulars enquiry may be addressed to S. H. Old, at the above address.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. For information apply to the President, Mr. W. Kohlen, 12, rue d'Égmont.

BRUSSELS, CENTRALE BELGE. General meetings held in the Lodge Rooms, 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, the first and third Saturdays in the month, at 8.15 p.m. Students' Class, open to all members, the second and fourth Saturdays, at 8 p.m. Reading room open from 3 to 5 p.m. twice a week. For

information apply by letter to the Secretary, 21, rue du Vallon.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Regular meetings suspended till October. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. J. Lorimer Thomson, Roseburn House, Roseburn.

EXETER LODGE. Open meetings are held in the Lodge Room, 48, High Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., and on the first and third Sundays of the month at 7 p.m. Meetings for members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.30 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. Meetings at Shepherd's Hall (Room No. 3), 25, Bath Street, on the fourth Monday of each month, at 8 p.m. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. J. P. Allan, 5, West Regent Street, Glasgow.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings in the Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: July 5th, *Gothic Civilisation*, Baker Hudson; July 12th, *Reincarnation*, Miss Hilda Smith; July 19th, *The Struggle between Religion and Catholicism in Italy*, Mrs. Cooper-Oakley; July 26th, *Autocracy, Aristocracy, Democracy*, Hodgson Smith. Lodge meetings on Thursdays and Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 23, East Parade, for the study of *The Astral Plane* and *The Path of Discipleship*.

HULL LODGE. Meetings at the Central Temperance Hotel (Jarratt Street entrance), on Sundays, at 7 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at the Athenæum Restaurant, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. G. H. Popplestone, 8, Ashville View, Cardigan Road, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings at 18, Colquitt Street, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays, at 8 p.m., at Miss Wood's, 125, Victoria Street, S.W., for the study of Deussen's *Elements of Metaphysics*.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 7.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill, S.W. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 1, Pentland Street, Wandsworth Common, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays at 28, Albemarle Street, W., at 8.30 p.m.: July 2nd, *What is a Monad?* Bertram Keightley; July 9th, *Concerning the Concept of the Logos*, G. R. S. Mead.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings suspended during the summer.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at Sunflower Hotel, George Street, East Croydon, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: July 6th, *Variety of Religious Experiences*, P. G. Tovey; July 13th, *Theosophy in the Stoic Teaching*, S. F. Weguelin-Smith; July 20th, *Some Views of an Early Christian*, W. B. Lauder; July 27th, *What do we mean by an Avatar?*

Mrs. Leo. Class for study on the first and third Saturdays of each month.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for children and young people at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Sundays, at 3 p.m.: July 5th, No meeting; July 12th, Mrs. Hooper. Lodge closed July 19th and 26th, and during August. All children are cordially invited. For information address the Hon. Sec., Miss M. A. Sidley, 3, Nassington Road, Hampstead Heath, N.W.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N., on Mondays and Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.: July 1st, *The Suffis*, J. M. Watkins; July 8th, *Reincarnation*, V.; July 13th, *Telepathy and Mind Mechanism*, Mrs. Hooper; July 15th, *The Theosophy of Emerson*, Miss E. Severs; July 22nd, *Reincarnation*, VI.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings suspended during July and August.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., in Room 38, 16, John Dalton Street, Manchester. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 80, Northenden Road, Sale, Cheshire.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. With the exception of a special Lodge Meeting on July 13th, at 38, Bamford Road, Didsbury, all Meetings will be suspended during the Summer. Information can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary at the above address.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER CENTRE. Meetings for members of the Society on Tuesdays at 8 p.m. Open to non-members on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Information from the Hon. Secretary, West Bank, Park Road, Ashton-on-Mersey.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 68, Linthorpe Road, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m. Public Lectures on Sundays in the Lecture Room, Co-operative Hall, Corporation Road, at 6.45 p.m.; July 12th, *Karma*, Baker Hudson; July 26th, *Modern Psychical Research*, A. J. Orage.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 3, St. James' Street, at 8 p.m. Communications to W. E. Dowson, 10, Mapperley Road, Nottingham.

OXFORD CENTRE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m., in the office of Mr. Salter, over Lloyd's Bank, Carfax, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Hon. Secretary, J. Walter Cock, 37, Beechcroft Road, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., and on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 19, Cornwall Street. Enquiries to be addressed to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

SOUTHAMPTON LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m., at Capt. Forbes' Nautical Academy, Albion Place. Enquiries should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, Miss Green, Laverton House, Hill, Southampton.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Meetings on the last Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m., at Lily House, off Ocean View, Whitley Bay, and class for study on

Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 80, Saville Street, North Shields.

YORK LODGE. Meetings on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., in the De Grey Rooms. Information from W. H. Sanderson, 5, South Esplanade, York.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 212.

(Continued from p. 88.)

C. E.—*Is it known whether in the descent to re-birth the law that force always works along the line of least resistance is in any way fulfilled? Where the mental affinity, and consequently the attraction, is greatest, the resistance which the embodiment itself offers is obviously least.*

A. H. W.—The writer thinks that the impersonal and abstract mode of expressing the mystery of being which this question illustrates is probably more near the truth of things than the personal and anthropomorphic imagery in which much Theosophical teaching is clothed. That action and re-action are always equal and opposite, that a man puts out energy in a certain direction and to that extent alters the balance of the Universe, which must be restored inevitably by the return of the re-action, is cold and hopeless to the type of mind which loves to attribute its joys and sorrows to some outside agent, some adored Lord or Master who loveth whom he chasteneth. The two points of view might be called passive and active. The active regards a man as energised and ever growing from within, continually assimilating experience, and continually modifying the lower vehicles in response to it, till perfection and harmony are attained. The passive looks to the without, and anthropomorphises the forces of Nature which form the environment into entities, Builders, Elementals, Devas, Lords of Karma, all of which are figured as interfering from outside, as building the body into which the soul is forced often against its will, as giving powers, as imposing limitations, as inflicting punishments or conferring rewards. Yet all these entities are said to act strictly in uniformity with the Good Law of absolutely just action and re-action on which the Universe is built; which so far as Science can see appears to be absolute for microcosm and macrocosm alike. But if all these entities by their joint action simply fulfill the Good Law, the necessity for conceiving them as separate or different from the Law seems to vanish; and with this disappearance goes the uncomfortable idea that a man is a pawn on a board, moved and modified, cuffed and caressed, lured on and put off by innumerable Fairy God-mothers who may be neither all-good nor all-wise.

The anthropomorphic view is doubtless attractive, and it may well be necessary at certain stages of evolution. If our fate is in the hands of a conscious entity, only possibly conceived as a magnified-self, then there is always the subconscious notion that he may be in some way got at, propitiated, pleased, and that therefore he may

let us down easy and not enact the uttermost farthing. Our idea of mercy is being let off something unpleasant which we deserve, a sort of discount for cash; while our idea of justice is something which will keep other people in order, and let us have our way.

But really, the writer conceives, Mercy and Justice are identical, mercy which is unjust is unmerciful, justice which is unmerciful is unjust, the golden mean which includes both is perfect impartial fairness all round, in point of fact the Good Law and nothing else.

For aught we know, the whole congeries of Builders, Elementals, Devas and others, may be nothing but streams of the One Energy personified by the thought of anthropomorphising seers. It is to be remembered that theoretically all these classes of entities are distinct from the Masters of Wisdom, who are *Men*.

QUESTION 213.

J. F. McK.—*Is it necessary that every ego in the course of its incarnations should pass through every experience, including both vice and virtue?*

Has every individual alive to-day, as a certain passage in Light on the Path would seem to imply, at some time or another in their past, committed murder, theft, and all the other crimes in the calendar?

G. R. S. M.—Here again the question is what do we mean by *ego*? What incarnates; is it the soul or the mind? In my opinion—which is not knowledge, as any reader of Plato is well aware, for opinion pertains to “soul” and not to “mind”—the “man,” the true humanity, “passes through every experience,” and yet does not do so, for (*pace* Kant) it contains in itself the categories of time and space, and is not determined by them. This “man” is not separate or individual in any physical or psychic sense, but is both same and other, and therefore truly human in the ideal sense of the term. It is the great mystery, the sphinx of the ages. “Man,” however, when looked upon as “soul” is a separate individual, and soul presumably has a beginning in time and space; this “soul” may perhaps be regarded as “ego,” but it is a *continuum* of sense at best, and does not pertain to the truly immortal world, and will therefore be dissolved in time. This “soul” is equally a most difficult concept to grasp, but its proper understanding will hardly be facilitated by describing it in *physical* terms. It is brooded over by the “mind,” and it gives “life” to “form,” or perhaps, more correctly, is the “mover” of the “moved,” that is, “body.” If, however, the question is asked: Does the soul—the human soul or soul brooded over *most directly* by mind—have to pass through all experiences?—the answer would seem to be that as only all souls can pass through all experiences, a separate soul does not do so, but develops along a special line of experience, this experience, of course, including both vice and virtue, for virtue in its true sense means the at-oneing of the *will* of the soul with the *will* of the

mind, the true humanity, while vice means the persistence in the *dharma* of the animal as animal.

It seems that when a man wins to that *siddhi* or power which is called *punarjanmasmr̥iti*, or the memory of past births, that he can as easily "see" the past of another as the past of his own soul, and therefore that the "memory" *acquired* is the memory of many other lines of evolution besides that of his own soul-*continuum*. It has also been said that in the course of the long evolution of man towards union with that great Mind which we call the Logos, there is a moment when the man is still apart, worshipping and aspiring, and then a moment when he is that Logos regarding the aspirant as His beloved. But when this consummation is reached, the man does not feel that he has acquired anything new, or has *attained*; he *knows* that he has been the Logos all the time. So, too, with every lesser extension of consciousness and knowledge we may acquire, when we have acquired it we have ever been it. As an ancient writing says: "This race of men is never taught; but when the time is ripe its *memory is restored* by God." And we, as men, have it in our own hands to retard or hasten this ripening.

A. R. O.—It would be a very hard fate surely if every one of us were doomed to pass through every experience. We could not even profit by our own mistakes to the extent of not repeating them, nor even, which is more absurd, by the mistakes of others! I suppose there are a number of what may be called types of experience; they may be the abstract ideas. And since by virtue of our divinity we have each the germ of the ideas in us, it follows that it would be possible to rise to the ideas by means of one experience only of each idea. For example, the idea of triangularity might conceivably be reached after experience of one or a few triangles. One purpose of meditation, is in fact, to reduce the number of examples necessary to awaken the idea: and thus to quicken evolution. I do not suggest that one experience is enough for most of us. We are not like the American statesman who declared he had made as many mistakes as most people, but never the same mistake twice. On the other hand, were this treadmill conception true, there would be neither end nor possible hastening of evolution which is absurd.

QUESTION 214.

X.—*In Thought Power, its Control and Culture, Mrs. Besant gives the three aspects of the Self as "Knowing, Willing and Energising." How does Willing differ from Energising? Why is Desire included in Will? Are they not essentially different? Is not the ordinary classification of consciousness—Knowing, Feeling and Willing—more adequate?*

S. C.—There is no reason why X. should not adopt, for purposes of his own study, the threefold classification which happens to appeal to him as most adequate and most helpful. The theories put forward in theosophic books are not meant to be obstacles but ladders. None of the threefold classifications which are in use contain the whole

truth on the subject. They are only temporary modes of thought, useful in pursuing different lines of study. In the same way, we sometimes classify the objects around us into solids, liquids, and gases; sometimes into animals, vegetables, and minerals; but no one thinks of asking, "Why do you take the latter classification? Is not the former more helpful?"

If X. will refer to Mrs. Besant's article on "The Evolution of Consciousness," in *The Theosophical Review* for August, 1902, p. 537, he will find that she herself does not by any means adhere to one method of describing the threefold division of consciousness, but uses a different method of description according to the matter in hand. The threefold division is there given as Will, Wisdom, Activity, while in *The Evolution of Life and Form*, it is stated as Existence, Intelligence, Bliss; and in *The Three Paths* as Devotion, Wisdom, Action. The student will, of course, have discovered that these different descriptions are not contradictory, but belong to different stages of evolution and different sets of planes of consciousness.

X. would perhaps find the division given by Bhagavân Dâs more to his mind. This writer in *The Science of the Emotions* states the three aspects as Cognition, Emotion, and Will, where action is included in Will, and he remarks that the distinction between Volition and Action is not made in the East as it is in the West. Bhagavân Dâs evidently considers that willing does not differ from energising, and he also treats desire and will as belonging to different aspects. Comparing his division with that given by Mrs. Besant in *Thought Power*, we find that they both state the three divisions as Cognition, Desire, and Action, but Mrs. Besant places Will as the root of Desire, while Bhagavân Dâs places it as the root of Action. I would suggest that these interpretations are both true, and not only so, but that Will lies at the root of all three aspects, and is the basis alike of Cognition, Desire, and Action.

I take it the division given by Mrs. Besant in *Thought Power* is meant chiefly for practical purposes, and in relation to the three lowest planes of nature, the mental, the astral, and the physical. In relation to higher planes, it would be necessary to state the matter somewhat differently. The activities carried on on the three lower planes respectively, are Thought, Desire, and Action. If X. does not agree with the statement that will is at the root of desire (there is no suggestion that will is the same as desire), let him leave out this point, as it does not affect the main argument. He may also, like Bhagavân Dâs, consider willing and energising to be the same thing. The purpose of *Thought Power* is practical. How are we to rule Thought, Desire, and Action in ourselves by means of the Will? Any mould of thought which furthers this object is useful.

QUESTION 215.

X.—*In Thought Power, its Control and Culture, p. 3, Mrs. Besant says: "When the Self is still, then is manifested the aspect of Knowledge."*

*How can Knowledge be a state of passivity?
Do not self-conscious beings (as distinguished from
animals) definitely put forth their energy in order to
know?*

S. C.—Here as before we are not obliged to accept statements which do not help us, or which confuse our minds instead of enlightening them. But there is no assertion that knowledge is a state of passivity. Being still is not the same as being in a state of passivity. The eyes perceive an object best when they are quite still, not when they are restlessly moving about, and the same is true of the mind. In every act of knowing we have the knower, and the known; if the knower must hold himself at rest in order to know, it is still he, and not the known, who accomplishes the work in hand. The knower builds up images of the known within himself, and this act is knowledge.

As X. suggests, activity of mind is a necessary condition of knowledge at the human stage of development. There is an earlier stage of consciousness, less active in its nature, which can hardly be called knowledge. There is also a later stage, of which we know so little, that we are hardly able to say whether it is active or passive or both. The state of mind, for example, of any great artist engaged in creative work, appears to be at the same time active and passive. Inspiration and genius have a passive side as well as an active, and it would almost appear that a great genius is passive in so far as he is a knower, and only becomes active when he communicates his knowledge to others.

QUESTION 216.

E. B. H.—What is the Theosophical explanation of the theory that man possesses two minds, the Subjective and Objective, and that the Objective mind is alone capable of inductive reasoning, the Subjective mind being completely controlled by suggestion?

G. R. S. M.—Perhaps some of the difficulties connected with the theory of mind may disappear if we can agree on a nomenclature, or at any rate cease to fight about words, and pay more attention to the ideas of which they are the symbols. As far as my own studies go, I know of no more useful basis on which to erect a philosophy of mind than the ancient division of things into things "sensible" and things "noumenal." *Ex hypothesi*, the mind (the true "man"), belongs to the noumenal world. In relation to the phenomenal world or things sensible, no matter how phenomenally "subjective" or subtle such objects of sensation may be, the mind has the power of analysis and synthesis, it reasons; in relation to things noumenal, it "perceives" these not as objective or as "other," but as itself or the "same." According to this theory, the use of physical or

phenomenal or "sensible" expressions, in dealing with the mind as mind, is involved in much confusion, and at best can only be looked upon as the employment of "symbols" or "analogies." A nearer approach to a correct representation of the nature of mind is to use such expressions as connote energies or abstractions or ideas. What, from this point of view, an "objective mind" may be I have no conception, when the mind is above all else "subject" and not "object." "By mind alone is mind perceived"; soul, according to this scheme of things, is not mind, but belongs to the "sensible." The "soul" turned towards the mind is what is called by modern Theosophy the "higher manas"; turned to things of sense, the "lower manas"; mind itself is called "buddhi." The soul is a "sensible" thing, and belongs to the sensible world. This is the tradition handed on along the line of what we call "Platonic" thought, and it is also, I believe, the same tradition in idea as that taught in India and elsewhere; the trouble is with the terms chosen by translators. *Nous* and *psyche* appear to be not the *manas* and *kāma*, but the *buddhi* and *manas* of our colleagues.

A. R. O.—Where has such a theory been stated, and what were the definitions of subjective and objective minds? If by these terms the abstract and concrete minds of Mrs. Besant's terminology are meant, then it is not true that the objective mind is alone capable of inductive reasoning. And it is not true for the simple fact that neither the concrete nor the abstract minds reason at all, either inductively or deductively. The Thinker alone thinks and reasons. Looking down into the concrete mind, as into a mirror, and examining there the images derived from experience, the thinker may endeavour to awaken in himself the abstract ideas of the higher "subjective" mind; that is induction. But also from his position, midway between the concrete and abstract worlds, he may, if he choose, look up into the abstract world of ideas, and imagine its effects in the concrete world; and this is deduction. So far from being controlled by suggestion it would be more true to say this of the concrete than of the abstract mind.

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