

GODS  
IN THE  
MAKING



by L. W. ROGERS

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BY  
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By L. W. ROGERS

*Only the foolish seek the paths of ease and  
indolence in a world whose very difficulties are  
designed to change men into gods.*



## GODS IN THE MAKING

No question has more power to stir the depths of our being than the simple one of who we are and whence we came. It is true that such questions are not often asked. Completely absorbed in the affairs of the work-a-day world, engrossed with its business, professional and social life, the thoughts of men rarely leave this narrow stage of existence whose entrance is the cradle and whose exit is the grave.

If, however, one would know something of his origin, something of his real and greater-than-physical self, if he would understand his relationship to the cosmic life of which our physical world is but a reflection, he may take a very simple but effective step in that direction. He may begin to move towards a comprehension of the mystery of being by a thoughtful consideration of the physical universe; for the moment we begin to reason about that which we know we gain new knowledge about that which we do not know. Let him begin with the fact which

he knows best—the fact that he exists, that he thinks and feels and moves, that he walks upon the firm earth. But, precisely, what is the earth? A huge mass of matter that is wheeling ceaselessly through space with a precision so marvelous that its exact distance from any of the celestial bodies, at any given time, may be calculated hundreds of years in advance! There arises in the mind the thought of immensity, of cosmic order, of arrangement, of purposeful activity.

There are, however, those who insist that the universe exists by chance; that no consciousness has planned it and that no intelligence directs it; but the more we think about the subject the clearer it becomes that wisdom is inherent in its manifestations. Energy without intelligence could not produce that which satisfies intelligence—that which intelligence perceives to be the fittest possible result. Even if we postulate original matter and energy, without intelligent direction that energy could neither produce nor maintain the order and balance we see about us. Take the one fact that, as things are wisely ordered in nature, power is possessed in proportion to the intelligence to use it. If it were otherwise the race would perish. Think what would happen if the beasts of the jungle chanced to

have intellects like men; or if a four-year-old boy had the physical strength of his father! If the existing combinations of matter and force were not the result of intelligent planning the world would be topsy-turvy. If blind chance ruled creation there is no reason why cats might not be the size of tigers or why men should be larger than mice!

Everywhere in nature a marvelous balance of consciousness and power is in evidence. Where there is great physical strength, as in the case of the gorilla, there is the lack of intelligence and opportunity that prevents it being widely disastrous. Where there is limited intelligence in higher environments, as with small children, there is lack of the physical strength which alone prevents destruction. This saving principle of balance in nature applies collectively as well as individually. The outlaws, the bandits, do have both the intelligence to plan and the power to execute destructive activities in a complex environment; but they never constitute more than an infinitesimal fraction of any population. In other words, when society as a whole is considered, the law of safe proportions is again in evidence and the number and power of the evil-minded is securely counter-balanced by the far greater number and power of the conscientious.

In wholly different ways than the maintenance of intelligence and power, a guiding wisdom preserves universal equilibrium. A striking example is in the even balance of the sexes. Nature, with all her cleverness and efficiency knows nothing whatever of this subject. Why is it that in all the various races of the earth there are born substantially the same number of males and females and why, after a war that kills males in large numbers, the proportion of male births increases until balance is restored. It remains as great a mystery as life itself. Only the hypothesis that wisdom is inherent in nature can explain it. This balance of the sexes is as carefully preserved in the lower kingdoms as in the higher and it requires little thought to perceive that without it the world would be overwhelmed by various kinds of calamity and ultimate disaster.

It is this marvelous balance which exists in all departments of nature that alone preserves it which prevents wreck and ruin and which is perhaps, the strongest of all evidence that profound wisdom directs and guides the visible universe. It plays force against force and thus holds in check the hand of blind destruction.

Sometimes men interfere and temporarily disturb that balance to their sorrow. A notable



example of that was the introduction of rabbits into Australia, where none naturally existed. Because there was nothing there in nature to counterbalance them they rapidly multiplied into millions and became a destructive crop pest that no agency is now able to eliminate. An animal that in other parts of the world is harmless, because of climatic conditions and natural enemies, became a menace to prosperity and human welfare when men interfered with the natural order and placed it where nature did not produce it. Men threw nature's forces out of balance and must suffer the consequences.

To say that nature is intelligently superintended is not, however, quite accurate. It does not fully present the matter. It is nearer the truth to say that nature is intelligence, or wisdom. An inconceivably exalted order of consciousness pervades the universe and is its very foundation. All that we see in visible manifestation is the result of a mighty Consciousness expressing Itself in various ways to achieve specific results and as marvelously as though some invisible artist could, merely by his thought, change modeler's clay into forms of comedy or tragedy, or into expressions of delicate beauty or rugged strength. All nature is wisdom in man-

*An interesting  
article on this  
subject today  
in the Sunday  
American  
June 1 1922*

ifestation and only because, in our speculations upon her processes, we adopt a working hypothesis too circumscribed to fit her deep and far-reaching purposes, do we fail to perceive the fact. Indeed, it is precisely because that wisdom, though akin to our own, is so immeasurably profound, that we find life the mystery that it is.

Wisdom, however, is but one of the attributes of that Supreme Intelligence of which nature is the visible expression. The attribute of power is self-evident and requires no comment. Its oneness, or unity, may be disposed of in simple terms. There is no disagreement about the fact that the sun is the one source of light, heat, energy and life, and that from that original source has come the earth and the other planets of our solar system. All that lives is interrelated. How could it be otherwise if all arise from the one central stream of life that flows from, or through, the sun? A tree, a lake, a mountain, an insect, an animal, a man, have each and all grown from it. All forms of landscape are its expressions and all degrees of consciousness are its manifestations. Springing from the same source and undergoing a varied experience that has resulted in enormous differences, they are

nevertheless all rooted in the one life-stream of common origin.

If all life is one, it naturally follows that the one Consciousness which animates it has the attribute of compassion. If the solar system is the Supreme Being in manifestation then the sun must be to Him as the physical body is to the soul—a focus in the material world through which tangible expression becomes possible.

If all life is one then compassion within that one is axiomatic. A man does not hate himself nor any part of himself. The various kingdoms of nature must be to the Logos what the various members of the physical body are to us. All parts are necessarily regarded with equal benevolence. No such thing as favoritism could exist. All kingdoms of nature must be the same in the sight of the Supreme Being. The human kingdom to Him may be as the hand is to us, and the animal kingdom as the foot is to us. The hand is truly higher than the foot. The hands are extremely complex and perform duties far more intricate, yet the feet are indispensable and it is inconceivable that with any human being there can be any favoritism toward the hand or any discrimination against the foot. Equal goodwill there must be toward every part

of the physical body and the absence of benevolence would constitute insanity. The eyes, ears, all the organs of the physical senses, are constantly on guard in equal protection and defense of every part of the anatomy; otherwise the body would perish. Just as without the impartial goodwill toward the whole body it could not survive, so without the same principle the solar system could not endure. The very sanity of nature establishes the presence of compassion in the guiding intelligence within nature. Only when the individualized fragments that are evolving within the whole have not yet attained the point of the realization of the existing unity can enmity and conflict arise among them. Back of the visible universe, then, is a Supreme Being with the characteristics of wisdom, power and compassion, the source from which we came forth. Of that source of life we are each an evolving fragment, and if we name that source "God" then are we gods in the making.

If that hypothesis is sound—if we are literally of the essential nature of deity, and are destined to go forward stage by stage in the unfolding of the spiritual power which that necessarily implies—it brings into our commonplace life a fact that is all but overwhelming in its tremendous



significance. Such a view confers on man a dignity that lifts him above the petty things of life, and gives him the confidence and courage that enable him to successfully solve the problems of physical existence.

Those of opposite views will doubtless say that the average human being is anything but god-like and that, in the more backward nations, the race is ignorant, cruel and repulsive; that even in its highest types our civilization is marred by callous selfishness, by distressing political corruption, by shocking injustices, and that the civilized world can never really be sure that the horrors of widespread warfare will not at any moment engulf it. All that is quite true but it does not touch the premise laid down. The contention is not that we are gods, but gods in the making. The real question is whether humanity has the *essential nature* that will at last enable it to rise triumphant out of all of its troubles.

What is the first step in that direction? Clearly it is the recognition of the fact that things are not as they should be. The very fact that selfishness disturbs us, that corruption distresses us, that injustice shocks us, that war horrifies us, is evidence of man's divine nature. It is precisely because human beings are gods in the making

that they instinctively shrink from the state of war. That men go to war is no evidence that they desire war. That politicians are corrupt does not prove the dishonesty of the people. That there is injustice, tyranny and oppression does not establish the perfidy of the race. Except in moments of general excitement, of collective aberration, of widespread hysteria, the common conscience of common humanity is a safe guide in the affairs of the world.

If we turn from collective humanity to the individual, we shall find specific evidence of inherent divinity. The depraved portion of the race is always an exceedingly small part of it and the worst specimen among the lawless few is never without some trace of the virtues. There may be no outward indication of it but let some sudden emergency appeal to the God within and there is unexpected response. An incident from real life will illustrate this truth. In a Colorado mining camp, containing some of the roughest specimens of the human family, two men worked at the task of sinking a shaft. The method followed was a primitive one. At the bottom of the shaft one of them worked, with pick and shovel, filling a huge miner's bucket, and his comrade on the surface then hoisted and emptied

it, returning it for another load. The weight was so great that it was drawn slowly upward with a rope and windlass fitted with a ratchet, so that the man who hoisted it could pause occasionally to rest, while brake and ratchet made the load secure. It was dangerous work, for any failure of the mechanism to hold the load would mean certain death to the man below. Rope, crank, brake and ratchet must be always in perfect condition to insure safety. Now in the ratchet there was an unknown flaw and at an evil moment, as the load neared the top, the ratchet snapped and the load started downward. It was one of those awful moments in which a human life hangs in the balance for the hundredth part of a second and a decision for life or death must be made instantaneously. If there were even time to catch up a stick or stone to throw into the cogs, the tragedy could be averted. A comparatively slight impediment would stop the windlass if used at the moment, but nothing would avail if it got under way; unless the cog wheels were choked *instantly* it would be too late. It was either death for his comrade below or sacrifice for the man above, and he did not hesitate. He jammed his arm into the wheels and fed it to the machine until it stopped! A rough fellow he was, wild and

lawless, swaggering in drunken brutality about the camp every night, primitive and profane, as ready to shoot as to gamble, holding all law and order in contempt, a quarrelsome, reckless ruffian, but when he was suddenly confronted by a circumstance that put him to the supreme test, he responded with the heroism of a god.

A little examination of the matter will convince one that such examples of valor are as common in what is called the lower walks of life as in that which is known as the higher. Indeed, it is probably much more common. No tribe is so low in the human scale that it is without courage and a sense of honor. Among those who live nearest to nature, the hazards of life are greater and opportunities for courageous action are more frequent.

And just what is this thing that we call heroism? Two great and godlike virtues are combined in it—courage and self-sacrifice. Without both of them there can be no heroism. Sacrificing oneself for another is the highest expression of unselfishness. "Love is the fulfilling of the law," so taught the Master, and "Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends." Heroism has been well defined as the possession of superhuman quali-



ties. We get the word, itself, from the ancient Greeks who tried to imitate the gods.

Why is it that such lofty virtues appear to be the common property of the race and why are they found in its lowest members? Why is the naked savage of the Australian wilderness, living on a level scarcely above the beasts, subsisting on a diet that includes roots and insects, ready to make war for a principle, brave in battle and capable of making a sacrifice for others? When we find certain exalted virtues characteristic of all classes, and exhibited at all levels of the human race—virtues that no environment can hide and that no savagery can destroy—we are led irresistably to the conclusion that the race is of divine origin. In what other possible way can we account for it? If it were true that mankind is the chance product of a mechanical and senseless cosmos why should godlike qualities be in evidence at the very threshold of the human kingdom? If, on the other hand, the human soul is a fragment of the Supreme Life, why should they not be? If man is of divine origin, if he is really a god in the making, it is most reasonable that even in racial infancy these superhuman qualities will give at least some evidence of their existence within him.

Among those who accept the divine origin of the race there are two widely different views about how man came into existence. Speaking very broadly, one view may be called the theological and the other the scientific. The first is many centuries old while the second is comparatively new, and grew up with the development of modern science. The theological view is that the human race was created substantially as we now see it and that it has been only a few thousands, or possibly tens of thousands, of years in existence. It is the belief that God brought abruptly into being the earth and all that it contains. The other view is that, while the Supreme Being is the author of all that exists, the process of creating the universe was one of very slow, gradual becoming, extending over a vast period of time, representing literally hundreds of millions of years.

It is often assumed that those who accept the hypothesis of evolutionary creation are materialists. No greater mistake could be made. Many distinguished scientists not only regard the existence of a Supreme Being as a certainty but are constantly fortifying that belief with facts obtained by the study of nature. There is also much confusion of thought about the relationship

of evolution to Darwinism, and the fact that the chief tenets of the latter have lost their original standing in the scientific world has led to the erroneous conclusion that the evolutionary hypothesis has also been rejected. A point so vital in dealing with the problem of the origin of the race should be better understood. The relationship between Darwinism and the hypothesis of evolution is very much the same as that between the old geocentric theory in astronomy and the astronomical knowledge of today. The discovery that the ancient postulate was wrong destroyed the erroneous belief that the earth was the center of the solar system but it only put the science of astronomy on firm ground. Just so, the conclusions drawn by Darwin were, in the main, discredited by later knowledge, but that knowledge only strengthened the hypothesis of evolution.

The difference between evolution and Darwinism is precisely the difference between a set of facts and a theory about those facts. The facts about which all scientists agree are that the earth is ages old; that life, as that term is ordinarily understood, began in the water on this planet a great many millions of years ago; that an immense period of time lies between that be-

ginning of water-life and the point at which the forms, through which that life expressed itself, developed the spinal column; that another vast period of time passed before there was any trace of animal life on the land; that from the simple forms of the earlier periods have emerged the existing forms, and that all highly evolved forms have come to their present complexity through millions of years of gradual development.

Darwinism was merely a theory formed from the facts known in Darwin's day. Its two most conspicuous points were, first, that environment and natural selection are sufficient to account for the diversification of life into species and, second, that evolutionary progress could be explained by heredity—by acquired characteristics being transmitted to offspring. Later scientific knowledge has shown that both of these theories are without sufficient foundation in fact, but about the all-important truth of evolution, itself, there is no argument in the scientific world. Whether or not the human physical form developed from a lower type closely related to the monkey seems to be of little importance in view of the fact that our ancestry, according to all schools of scientific thought, must necessarily run back to still lower forms ages before the



monkey existed. It should be clearly understood that there is no debate in the scientific world about the *fact* of evolution but only about precisely why and how lower and simpler forms develop into higher and more complex forms.

The difference between what may be called the theological and the scientific views is tremendous and cannot be too clearly defined in the mind. The one view is that things were originally created what they are now and that they shall thus remain; that a bird, an animal, a man, have always been what they now are and that they will never be anything else; that the lower types of the human race were created savages and will forever remain savages. The other view is that an evolutionary creation has been in progress for ages and that it will continue. That nothing is now, in form, what it has been, nor will it continue to be in the future what it now is; that the whole of the bird creation, for example, has, as the student of biology well knows, evolved from the reptiles; that the evolutionary advance in the human kingdom has been from the mental and moral level of savagery to the present civilization; that if the prehistoric past could be explored the trail would lead backward to the caveman, backward to a humanity

without a single vestige of civilization, back to some numerous but now extinct and unknown animal; and back still farther to the point when that animal, in turn, evolved from a remoter and still lower type.

The idea of our animal origin will not seem in the least repulsive if it is rightly considered. As a matter of course, the development of consciousness, at any point of its evolution, is congruous with the form through which it is at that time being expressed. Such consciousness as we *now have* has never been expressed through an animal form nor even through the body of a savage. Precisely as our present state of consciousness is satisfied with the human body and our present environment (politely called "civilization") so our much lower state of consciousness, ages ago, was satisfied with the animal body and environment. It could then conceive of nothing higher. When, in the immensity of the future, we have risen above the human level to the superhuman we shall have even more reason to feel repelled at the thought that we were ever so low as the human kingdom than we now have to feel annoyed that we were once only at the animal stage. The flaw in the popular thought on that point is that it values too light-

ly the lower kingdoms and fails to recognize the fact that all stages of life are equally necessary.

To put it differently, there is no more reason to feel repelled by the fact that the foundation of our mental and moral being was laid in lower forms than there is for an adult to be sad because he was once an infant with hardly a glimmer of common sense. The most distinguished and dignified ruler was once a baby whose chief ambition was to succeed in putting his toe into his mouth! People sometimes say it is too much to believe that the human mind could have been the animal mind even though it was a million years ago. The contrast is too great, they think. Go out into the park of a great city on a fine Sabbath day and watch the passing throngs. The dignified city or national official, the alert man of the world, the judge with grave demeanor, the millionaire family with its jewels, its footman and its equipage, the financier, the author, the fastidious patrons of fashion—mark them well and then reflect that only a few decades ago they were all babies creeping about on the carpet, delighted with a red rattle to shake, a cat's tail to pull, or a dirty crust to munch! Select the greatest geniuses of the earth, the most famous inventors, the ablest scientists, the

shrewdest statesmen, the most distinguished linguists, and only a fraction of one century ago they were all babies whose chief amusement was to rattle a spoon in a dish and whose vocabulary of gurgling imbecility consisted of "Goo, goo!" The difference between that and their present attainments is much greater than the difference between the mind of a dog and the intellect of a man.

Each kingdom in nature marks the point attained in climbing the evolutionary ladder and one rung is not more important than another. The very highest is of no more value than the lowest. Each is an integral part of the whole and without the lowest the highest could not have been attained.

If we think of the origin of the human race, of the millions of souls that now exist, we must first imagine the one Supreme Consciousness as creating a condition within Itself which produced that manifestation of Itself that we call matter, and of the Supreme life being involved in that matter as billions, not millions, of tiny seeds sown in soil. The analogy, however, is by no means perfect. A seed quickly grows into a plant; also, the sparks of the Supreme life grow into gods, but the process requires a period



as much longer as a god is greater than a plant—a period of literally millions of years. Let us try to trace the process of that evolutionary growth from spiritual infancy to spiritual manhood, and understand precisely in what way nature calls the latent divine power into activity, as the savage slowly evolves into a civilized man and at the civilized stage slowly changes from the commonplace human being into a god with wisdom, power and compassion that is far beyond his present comprehension.

The difference between a savage human being and a superman is enormous; yet they clearly have characteristics in common. It is like the difference between infancy and maturity—great, yet it merely represents the change from the potential to the actual. Savages as well as supermen have mind and heart qualities. The difference between them, though tremendous, is nevertheless a difference of degree alone. The superman has wisdom that comprehends deep secrets of nature. The savage understands little but he *reasons* about it. The Australian black men, of the lowest type, probably are as near as human beings can be to the animal kingdom. Even in that part of the great island continent where the white man wears ordinary clothing,

which sometimes includes an overcoat, the savages wear no particle of clothing whatever from birth to death. Mud huts serve for shelter, and their food includes insects such as grasshoppers and locusts. Expert in action, they catch small fish with their hands and eat them alive as they catch them, precisely as a cat would. Yet, in a limited way, these savages reason accurately and hunt skilfully. To locate the wild bee store of honey they contrive with a twig and a tiny bit of gum from a tree, to stick a flake of wild cotton on a bee as it alights at the edge of a stream. As the bee flies to its home the savage notes the direction. He then goes a distance down the stream and repeats the process. The second bee also flies straight to the home tree. The savage now knows by the flight of the two bees, traced by the bit of cotton through the air, not only in which direction the bee tree is located but, on account of the different angles of the courses taken by the bees he also knows about how far away it is, and he finds it without the least difficulty. His reason has saved time and exertion. He also studies the habits of the wild fowl and, unlike the white sportsman, needs no gun nor ammunition to capture them.

These savages are apparently about as kind to each other as we are. They have a tribal

patriotism, as the white man has a national patriotism and they are brave enough to do battle in defense of their miserable homes. They have certain tribal customs, the violation of which by another tribe will bring on a group duel with clubs and spears, in which a selected number of perhaps twenty from each tribe will fight out the appeal to arms instead of resorting to general warfare.

It is by no means certain that civilized peoples have not something to learn from these savages. What a pleasant improvement it would be on modern warfare if we could select a limited number to fight it out and chose them from among those most directly concerned with the cause of the war! If we could only select the fighters from the incompetent statesmen, the useless politicians and the conscienceless profiteers, war might become a really enjoyable spectacle! Under that plan honor would be quickly satisfied, the war would be over in a few minutes and the casualty list would probably stand at nothing.

It is not easy to imagine those Australian savages evolving into supermen—into masters of wisdom and compassion but we *can* understand that they can improve, that they can strengthen

any virtues they now have no matter how feeble those virtues are. We can understand that *given time enough*, those savages will slowly awaken to a desire for something better than their present animal-like life. As they see more and more of the white race, dissatisfaction with their present life and environment will arise. Occasionally one of their number who has accompanied some traveler as his servant will return with strange stories of the world outside their wilderness. Little by little the desire to imitate civilized people will grow, and a few generations later they will be using tools instead of empty hands and building with boards instead of with mud. Huts will finally give way to houses. Subsistence upon wild roots, insects and game will eventually be superseded by very primitive agriculture, and agriculture in turn will be followed by simple manufacturing. In a few centuries, perhaps, they will have risen to a stage in evolution corresponding to that of the American Indians. As agriculture and manufacturing increase, trade naturally develops, and then tribal boundaries and differences begin to disappear. As centuries pass the tribes evolve into a nation, schools are established and minds and morals enter upon the stage of purposeful

development. It is not too much of a tax upon the imagination to see those Australian savages changing, in a period of perhaps many thousand years, to a civilization somewhat resembling our own. It is merely a matter of allowing time enough for mental and moral evolution.

But here we are confronted with a problem. We can see the reasonableness of evolutionary development. We know that by the experiences of life we evolve clearer insight and understanding, greater wisdom in dealing with affairs, and gradually become more proficient mentally and a little stronger morally; and so we have no doubt that the small mental and moral store of the savage can also be increased by experience; but equally well we know that such growth is exceedingly slow. We know that even at our stage of evolution where the necessity for growth is recognized, an experience must be repeated again and again before it results in a permanent change of character, and that with the average human being desire is so much stronger than will that year after year his best intentions fail to hold their own against it. We are well aware, too, that a civilized environment does not change a savage into a civilized man. Only thousands of years of the experiences of life could do that.



If the individual savage could only remain so forever we could account for civilization easy enough.

A vital point in our problem is that the old theory of mental and moral heredity finds no support in the experiments of investigators and is not recognized by the scientific world. The Darwinian theory, which set up the hypothesis that acquired traits are transmitted to offspring had to be abandoned because, after a half century of testing, it failed utterly to agree with the facts observed. There is a certain sort of physical heredity but not heredity of mental or moral qualities. The family resemblance is handed down to posterity, but the son of a genius is not a genius and the sons of a saint may be renegades. Among savage tribes certain mutilations, such as making holes through the nose and elongating the lobes of the ears, have been practiced for countless generations but the babies in these tribes are always born with normal features. The Chinese custom of confining the feet of the girl babies of the aristocracy in tiny shoes so that when grown a woman had the foot of a baby, was continued for centuries but the children of these women always had feet of normal size. The descendants of a philanthro-

pist are not necessarily even generous and the children of an athlete are not born athletes. The most striking fact that has emerged from the ceaseless scientific search for the truth about the human being is that every individual evolves qualities and capacities but does not transmit them to others. If, then, the savage cannot stay long enough to evolve the traits of civilization within himself and if he cannot get it from his parents, how are we to explain civilization? With these two facts before us—first, the almost imperceptibly slow growth of mentality and morality in the race and, second, the fact that what the parents acquire is not transmitted to offspring, how is the undoubted fact of evolution explained? How are we to account for the rise of savages to civilized life in ten thousand years, or in even a million years, if each of them remains here but sixty or eighty years, or at most a hundred years. Modern science is today searching, searching, searching for a solution of that problem. Think for a moment of what a problem it is! The fact of evolution is positively established but no theory ever put forward by scientists to show *how* the race evolves has been able to explain it. It is now admitted that the hypotheses of Goethe and Lamarck and Darwin

and Wallace and Weismann are all inadequate, but some of those hypotheses have been distinctly useful. They have set hundreds of scientists to work on the problem, and the most impressive thing that they have found out is that there is no evidence to support the theory of mental and moral heredity. How, then, does the race evolve? In the case of our Australian savage, for example, if it takes a man several thousands of years to attain the civilized level, then in a lifetime only a start can be made in the work. Even if it took but a few hundred years to evolve to the civilized state, only a tenth of the necessary development could occur in an ordinary lifetime. Therefore each savage dies just when he is beginning to move toward the civilized stage and, according to popular belief, passes on into eternity. The deaths are made good by births, but if the baby savage is just as savage as his father was when he was born, he will get no farther toward civilized life than his father did. The popular belief is that they all come as savages and go as savages and, if that is true, they have been passing on thus for millions of years to populate invisible regions.

If a human being arriving here as a baby savage is just beginning existence and if at death

he passes either to extinction or to eternal life elsewhere, and cannot transmit what little mental and moral improvement he has made to his descendants, it is perfectly clear that the race could never have risen from savagery to civilization. How, then, can we possibly explain the evolution of the race and why are scientists so completely baffled in their search for the evolutionary method? The difficulty lies in the fact that their definition of the human being is too materialistic. They are trying to explain life in terms of matter instead of explaining evolution in terms of life and consciousness.

If we put together a few of the points already discussed we shall have made a start toward understanding how human evolution takes place. Grouped together, these points are, that the human soul is an individualized center of consciousness within the universal life; that it is literally a fragment of the Supreme Consciousness. That its relationship to the source of life is like that of a seed to the plant which produces it; that man is a potential god and has latent within him all the attributes and powers of the Supreme Being; that through evolutionary development these are being slowly brought into expression

and that in this ages-long process he will evolve from a potential god to an actual one.

If we put aside the erroneous idea that man is a material being, beginning existence at birth and ending it at death, and regard him as what he really is, an eternal spiritual being undergoing an ages-long evolution in visible and invisible regions, we shall be in a position to understand racial progress. If he is a portion of the Supreme Life he has eternal existence. An immense period of evolution lies behind him and also before him and his term of life here in a physical body shrinks at once to the mere incident that it is in the soul's career. What is its reasonable relationship to the whole journey of evolution that begins when the spark of the supreme life is evolved in matter and ends when the soul at last rises from the human to the superhuman level? The longest physical life compared to the vast evolutionary journey is, of course, very much less than one day compared to a lifetime. To concern ourselves only with a physical life will no more explain the eternal man than knowing what a certain person did on a particular day will give us his life history. We must know about the remainder of his life in order to gain any real knowledge of him, and to comprehend



man's evolution we must know something of his life beyond his brief physical career. There is a well-known method by which science works from the known to the unknown. A theory is constructed that seems to embrace the probable facts and then it is tested by as many facts as we know in order to determine whether it is a reasonable hypothesis. Let us construct a theory that will explain the mystery of how, although the traits acquired by experience here cannot be transmitted from parents to children, the race nevertheless steadily grows in mental and moral worth. It should not be difficult to do that for the terms of the problem are simple. If it is established that the soul can evolve only by experience and that many thousands of years' experience are required for his human evolution, and he remains here less than a hundred years, then he must either get the experience elsewhere or return here for more of it. It must necessarily be the one or the other. But where else *could* he get the experience furnished by material life? Obviously, nature would not duplicate this world in the life beyond. That would not be in alignment with the wisdom which is so conspicuous in her economy. Granting immortality, if the life beyond were but a repetition of this one, why

did not nature arrange for us to remain here forever? Why pass on to something else that is the same? That other life, being superphysical, must, in the very nature of things, be a higher phase of existence than this. It must be to us one as manhood is to childhood. What, then, would be the reasonable thing? If we have ~~us~~ done with race childhood here shall we pass on to live there the life of adults permanently, or only to a vacation among spiritual adults and then return to resume mental and moral growth in this world of material things?

If it were not for the erroneous notions upon the subject of man's nature and constitution that have been dinned into our ears from infancy the idea of going at the time of death and returning in another birth would not seem to be a strange one. Let us look farther into that belief. If we have a very great deal to learn by our association with matter and have learned but a small part of it in "three score years and ten" it may be asked why it is necessary to pass on at death. Why not stay until our mental and moral evolution is finished? Good reasons at once occur to the mind. The monotony of such a plan would be intolerable. It is change and variety that make life endurable. One may greatly enjoy reading

but if he were obliged to read continuously it would become unbearable. When weary we thoroughly enjoy sleep; but how monotonous it becomes if we are confined to bed for even a few days! Many of us keenly enjoy our work but too much of it becomes a tyranny. Under the most favorable conditions the average human being cannot attend school continuously more than three months without a rest and each year he must have a prolonged vacation. That is a world-wide custom established by centuries of experience. The same rule necessarily applies to the whole of the journey in human evolution. If, at the least, it takes tens of thousands of years to evolve from the savage to the superman it is impossible that the work could be done continuously. As in the case of the student, who furnishes a good comparison because he is undergoing a process of mental evolution, there must be vacations periodically or the continual strain would destroy health and sanity. If it be established that a prolonged period of physical plane experience is necessary to change the human being into a superman then periods of rest or "vacations" from the work become a necessity as a matter of course; and that is undoubtedly just what death is—a temporary cessation of the strenuous life in a physical body.

If that is a reasonable assumption, can a future return to physical life be a purpose of continued sentient existence is accomplished? It is surely no more mysterious than the soul's previous arrival here at birth in this life. It would seem that the difficulty which people have in seeing the reasonableness of our return is that the mind has been filled with a false teaching of the sudden and miraculous creation of the soul—a view that disregards evolution altogether and that is hostile to all natural laws. If we once see the soundness of the idea of the immanence of God, of the truth that the soul is literally a fragment of the Supreme Life involved in matter, and therefore of its immortality and its pre-existence, all the difficulties would vanish.

Before the soul appeared here at birth in this life it must have long existed. How did each of us come into possession of the baby body that grew into the adult form we now occupy? Here we must consider for a moment precisely what the body is. We know, of course, that it is a mass of organic matter so arranged as to enable the consciousness or soul to use it as an instrument of action—as a mechanism by which knowledge can be gained; but what is this mass of

matter, in its specific relationship to a particular soul?

Before that can be rightly understood we must free the mind from the illusion that life and matter are separate and distinct things. Nature knows no such division. Life and matter are one and inseparable. They are but varying expressions of the one eternal energy that we know by many names, among which are light, heat, consciousness, mentality. They are but different manifestations of one thing, as various fruits are the products of one soil.

When that source of being expresses itself in form, we know it as matter. When it shows forth as consciousness we call it life. When that life manifests itself through a low type, as in the animal kingdom, we name it instinct. When it expresses itself through the human form we call it intelligence, and when it reaches its highest level we know it as spirituality; but always it is the one life, varying in its manifestation according to the medium of its expression.

There is perhaps no simpler way of putting it than to say that matter is the lowest expression of life. Some schools of thought declare that there is no matter; but that is a confusing way of



putting the idea. There is unquestionably something that we have named "matter"; therefore matter exists and is known to the physical senses. The difference between life and matter is, in one aspect, like the difference between snow and water. Snow can be transformed into water and water can be converted into snow. They are different forms of the same element. Likewise life and matter are but different expressions or manifestations of the one thing that is the basis and foundation of the universe, and that is variously named First Cause, God, Oversoul, Supreme Being. The physicist can probe into matter as far as the electron, a mere center of force. If his process of disintegration could be carried far enough matter would reach the point where it is indistinguishable from life. Therefore, in one sense it is true that there is nothing but life in the universe.

What, then, from this viewpoint is the physical body? It is only a *material manifestation* of an individualized portion of the universal life. It is a center of consciousness that is tangibly expressed and the tangible part of it, that we call physical, must necessarily be an exact expression of its inward or spiritual self. At any given point of its evolution the outward part of the

self (the body) must correspond to its inner or spiritual characteristics; for it is the life, the consciousness, the inner self which is clothed with the tangible part of itself.

We must, therefore, regard the soul and its body as having a fundamental relationship which is deep and inviolable, for the mass of matter in which it expresses itself (the body) is a part of itself, a phase of its being, a manifestation of itself that changes, indeed, for all things are constantly changing, but which changes only as the soul, whose expression it is changes from year to year as evolution slowly proceeds.

When and where the soul appears in the material world can have no relationship to what we call accident. We use the word "accident" to indicate an occurrence in which there is absence of purpose or intention—a purely fortuitous event. Only a materialist could use the word in relation to the origin of the consciousness of a human being and its subsequent career. If our solar system is the result of plan and purpose there is no place for the purely accidental within it. The *apparently* accidental event is merely a result, the cause of which we are unable to locate or comprehend.

In the long evolutionary journey through the lower kingdoms and in the early period of our human evolution we must, of course, have associated together in various ways that would give rise to appropriate future results, and would bring certain souls into certain future relationships, very much as human association works out in daily life. Many people whom we meet here we shall not meet again because we set up no cause which will bring it about. Others whom we meet we shall meet again either occasionally or often as the case may be, because of some natural attraction to them, or because of some mutual interest that was discovered, or because, for business, professional or purely social reasons, we did or said something which will bring us together again. Now, if, as every evolutionist who is not a materialist must believe, the soul, the individualized consciousness, is ages old and has slowly developed to its present estate, then association with each other must have gone on, and must be going on, quite apart from physical life. We cannot escape the belief that souls, under such circumstances, would naturally drift into great divisions, and lesser groupings, corresponding to races, nations, and even families. These associations and established relationships

of the past must necessarily operate as causes that help to determine the present nation, family, environment and circumstances of any particular person. When the soul appeared here in a baby body it came to the family where it entered physical life because it had certain ties with some other soul, or souls, in the family group, or because there were obligations to be paid or benefits to be received, or because there were certain lessons there to be learned, or because, all things considered, it was a better place than any other for it to enter the material world. The arrival at that time and place is the inevitable result of all the previous complex causes related to that soul.

The mere taking possession of the baby body before birth does not seem to be a very remarkable matter. In the phenomenon of mediumship, which is now too well attested by many responsible investigators to be lightly dismissed even by the most skeptical, we have an illustration of the facility with which a so-called "dead" person takes temporary possession of the physical body of another and speaks through it. There is the difference, however, between birth into a physical body and trance possession of a body, that in the latter case the discarnate

soul that speaks through the physical mechanism of another is using for the moment a mature body while the soul that arrives here as a baby is using a nascent physical body as its instrument of expression. The intellectual difference between early childhood and manhood does not represent a change in the soul by a growth of the body through which the soul is expressing itself. When we arrived here at birth we, the real self, the soul, the consciousness, were only very partially here. We were still functioning chiefly on inner planes whence the soul comes. A fragment of our true self, to so speak, came through to the material world to animate the baby body. But we, the true self, continued for a time in the invisible world, the habitat of the soul. Little by little, as the infant body grew, more and more of our life and intelligence came down into it. For many years the slow growth of body and the gradual increase of the intelligence that could be expressed through it, continued. As the brain developed and matured the soul expressed more and more its mental and moral qualities; not because it was evolving them thus swiftly but because the growth and increasing maturity of its physical body made it possible to express more of them. To put it differently, the body is

born in a day but the soul spends many years in the process of arriving in the material world, for it can come through into expression only as the brain develops through the years of childhood.

Thus we began our physical world pilgrimage only a little while ago. We shall remain here a few years longer. This body will die and we shall pass on. Where? The annihilation of the individualized consciousness is impossible if we are of the essential nature of the deity. Do we go to some heaven—some ecstatic state of consciousness to remain forever? Why? If life here has made but a slight change in us why come here at all if we are leaving at death to live forever in celestial regions? Is it not more reasonable to believe that death is merely the temporary cessation of life in a physical body—a rest period after the strenuous activity, the turmoil, the work, the anxiety, the physical and mental strain, of this trying sort of experience? If so, if the soul at death is deliberately withdrawing from a physical instrument that, for various reasons no longer well serves its purpose and because, too, the time for rest has come, why should it not return to material life when the period of rest is over? It is no more wonderful that we



should do so again than that we are here now. A second birth, or a hundredth birth, is no more marvelous than a first birth.

And thus goes forward nature's work of changing men into gods: a life here in the physical world, long or short, as may be determined by all foregoing causes; then the death of the physical body, which releases the soul from the material world; then a period of life in the spiritual realm where the experience gained through the physical body is transmuted into wisdom and skill, thus lifting the soul to a higher point in evolution; then the return here by the same process by which we arrived in this life; again the gathering of experience which can be only very partially assimilated here while constant activity engrosses the mind; then again the release that we misname death, the complete transmutation, on inner planes, of the experiences accumulated here and, with increasing wisdom, power and compassion the return again for still more experience which shall lift us a stage higher toward the level of the gods. Thus we return repeatedly to the material world.

On the evolutionary road every god-in-the-making can travel rapidly or slowly. He may loiter along the way, life after life, for an enor-

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mous cycle of time or he may swiftly finish the journey in the merest fraction of the normal period. Many specific rules have been given for quickening the pace but there is a general principle that may be applied by anybody without specific study and without much planning. It is simply to live a life of strenuous activity, with as little thought of oneself as possible. Activity and progress are very closely related in the material world. Heroism is the highest expression of physical life and there is no heroism without action. One can't sit in a rocking chair in the shade and be a hero!

The strenuous life, however, must not be permitted to drift into mere accumulation of money, or of its equivalents, for in that direction lies spiritual defeat. The result of making material gain the chief aim of life is that if the quest is not successful there will never be time for anything else. The man will go on trying to accumulate a fortune until he dies. On the other hand, if he is successful, that very success is liable to remove the average man from useful pursuits and make him worthless to the world for the remainder of his life. The penalty for such a course is that he loses the opportunity for soul growth that comes to all who are usefully active. He also loses his liberty. As certainly as there

are "prisoners of poverty" there are also prisoners of wealth. The luxurious family is full of them. These people have accumulated wealth enough to enable them to lapse into perpetual indolence. Look them over and the illusion that luxurious idleness is desirable will vanish! The program is something like this: Lie about in the sun parlors and corridors, read the latest novels, go out motoring, dress and dine and dance. The next day, gossip in the corridors, read novels, go motoring, dress and dine and dance. Then again the deadly monotony of chatter and novels, motoring, dressing, dining and dancing; and so on and on year after year toward life's twilight until the chatter becomes gibberish, the dance a hobble and death mercifully drops the curtain.

Poverty is not desirable, but it is better than wealth that arrests the development of the soul. Poverty at least compels activity of mind and body. It evolves resourcefulness. It develops skill in action. It awakens sympathy. It stimulates the sense of human interdependence. It leads to varied experience and to get experience is the purpose of physical existence. Wealth that takes a man out of the game of life is a curse. It hedges him about with social restric-

tions, cultivates vanity, stimulates pride, limits initiative and narrows his field of experience. If we apply the same principles outside the human race and thus get rid of the personal factor, it is easy to see how it works. Compare a lap dog with a common cur. Like a man who has made his fortune and retired to the luxurious life of nothingness, a lady's lap dog has perfect comfort and infinite leisure. Its material wants are guaranteed for life. It will be protected from the winds of adversity. No rude members of the canine race can disturb it. It is as secure as its rich master. Both economically and socially it has reached the goal. It has no problems to solve, nothing to desire, nothing to do and nothing to think. The body is torpid and the brain is at rest. It needs only a tombstone!

The stray cur on the streets is a thousand times more fortunate. He is engaged in the evolutionary game of development. He is finding his food and fighting his battles. From morning to midnight he is mentally busy and physically active, declaring war, negotiating peace, figuring out his menu and locating his provender! His personal problems are numerous and pressing, including the ever-present one of retaining a whole hide; and the result is that he evolves

alertness, courage, sagacity and endurance. he succeeds in attaching himself to some one, will also rapidly develop loyalty and devotion and altogether will probably live more and evolve more, mentally and morally, in a year than the lap dog of luxury will in its lifetime. The same principle applies to human evolution. Neither poverty nor great wealth is desirable but poverty has its compensations while wealth has its dangers. The circumstances that regulate mental and moral development are the real conditions for the human being.

One splendid service of Theosophy is that it teaches definitely, precisely, the principles by which one may go swiftly forward in his evolution and have almost immediate proof of their potency. With thought, emotion and action we may work to a definite plan and become that which he would be. Would you have a useful, peaceful life? Would you be free from defilement? Would you be a stranger to Calumny? Would you make sure that Slander's lying lips shall never speak your name? Then check every criticism of the conduct of other people; refuse to listen to Gossip's frivolous chatter, and evil reports will shun you and seek their own intimacies even as slimy reptiles seek the swamp.

Would you stimulate others to seek the light, to live an exalted life and move swiftly forward toward spiritual illumination and power? Then put aside the trivial things of life. Think and live as a god yourself and you shall see the miracle of the divine fire kindled in other men.

Would you be fearless and walk the ways of earth unharmed and unafraid? Then be yourself harmless in thought and action. Feel loyal friendship for every human being and the cities of the earth shall be peopled with your friends.

Would you be a fortress of strength in times of stress and storm, when the flood of falsehood overwhelms the facts, when Calumny masquerades as Truth, when those about you are helpless and dismayed, when Intuition's flame burns low and baffled Intellect seeks in vain the way through a tangled maze of lies? Then think and feel a passionate loyalty to Truth in the most trivial things of life, and you shall be her champion in her hour of need and tear the mask from Slander's hideous face that all the world may know her.

"But that means ceaseless effort through all one's life," cries the timid. It does; but the thoughtful will understand. Only the foolish



will seek the paths of ease and indolence in a world whose very difficulties are designed to change men into gods—a world in which every obstacle develops strength, in which every effort will become future power. The wise will joyously accept life as it is and use its troubles and its trials, its vexations and defeats, to evolve the giant strength of soul that shall finally break the last restraining bond and, triumphant over death itself, become a god whose wisdom and power shall guide and guard the weaker ones on life's tempestuous way.

