

## LIGHT ON THE PATH.\*

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### ANNOTATOR'S PREFACE.

THE Treatise entitled "Light on the Path," and which is the subject of the following annotations was not written, as one would suppose, by an Aryan Pandit, but by an English Lady, a member of the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society, who had never made a study of the Sástras, nor acquired a knowledge of Sanscrit. These facts are mentioned, not for the purpose of giving an adventitious importance to the work, but merely as an interesting proof that the loftiest moral teachings of our Rishis are sometimes flashed through the minds of people of other races than our own; hence that it behoves us to esteem the utterances of a Teacher for their intrinsic merits, irrespective of their apparent, or alleged source.

The first impression made by the Treatise upon the Asiatic reader is that its author has won the right to our respect; the Rules therein propounded being in perfect accordance with the religious doctrine and philosophy of the Aryans, not only in substance, but also in many instances in the very phraseology employed in their composition. For the purpose of illustrating this remarkable coincidence by means of numerous quotations from the Aryan sacred books; of explaining to the utmost extent of my limited capacity, certain difficult passages in connection with the Rules; and of tracing the relation which those rules bear to one another, so as to enable the reader to form a connected idea of the whole Treatise, as a code of ordinances for the spiritual benefit of mankind,—I have ventured upon the following Annotations. I trust that the same may, to some slight extent, prove useful to students, in helping them to comprehend the Text properly, and facilitating their labours in their progress on the Path of Wisdom.

MADRAS, }  
May 1885. }

P. S.

### LIGHT ON THE PATH.

A Treatise, written for the personal use of those who are ignorant of the Eastern Wisdom, and who desire to enter within its influence.

"What is the value of this wordly wealth to us? What is its advantage? Tell us, O Jâtavêdas,—for thou knowest,—what is the best course for us on this secret passage, so that we may follow the direct Path (Patham) unobstructed."

Further,—“What is the limit, what are the objects, and which is the desirable end, towards which we rush like swift chargers to the battle? When for us will the Divine dawns, the brides of the Immortal Sun, overspread the world with light.” (Rig. Veda IV—V—12 and 13).

Such have been the earnest yearnings of man's heart since the first glimmerings of his nascent thought began to prompt him to seek intuitively for that light which would disclose the Path leading to his final goal, the Absolute Truth; and the object of the present Treatise is to help the earnest pilgrim in the course of his difficult journey, by shedding a light on the path, by means of short Rules, which, by reason of their epigrammatic brevity are admirably calculated to imprint themselves easily and deeply on his mind, and thus serve as a nucleus round which he may gather the result of his own researches and experiences.

The Path here spoken of is the Path of *Rita*, which includes all that is right, true and safe as we find from the following extracts from the Rig. Veda:—"May we, Mitra and Varuna, traverse all the evils on the path of Rita, as we traverse the waters in a ship." (Rig. Veda VII. 65—3).

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"(O Indra, lead us on the path of Rita over all evils." (Ibid. X. 133-6).—Rita also means the universal, unerring Law, (Ibid II. 28-4 and VIII. 12-3).—In short, Rita is conceived as the eternal foundation of all that exists; as Para Brahman itself. (Taitreya Upanishat, Siksha Valli, XII-I. Taitreya Narāyanam XII).

But this Path is not easy to follow. "The wise affirm this to be a difficult path, a sharp knife-edge, hard to walk along. Therefore, arise at once, go to the Teachers, and learn." (Katha Upanishat III-14).

Let it not, however, be supposed that a path so difficult and gloomy, must therefore be worthless. The path, though certainly hard and dark, is the one that leads to that which is extremely luminous and beneficent. An ancient Rishi thus addresses the Supreme in the Rig. Veda. "Dark is the path of Thee who art bright: the light is before Thee":—(Rig. Veda IV, VII-9).

Thus encouraged, let the disciple pursue his toilsome course in order to enter within the influence of the Eternal light, a light, which, though shining with a brightness nothing else can equal, is yet invisible to one whose sight is obscured by things unholy.

"You can never" says an ancient Rishi to an inquirer, "easily know the supreme universal soul. Something else stands between that and yourself. Enveloped in mist and with faltering voice, even the so-called wise walk along rejoicing in worldly things." (Rig. Veda, X. 82-1). To remove this mist and so become able to reach the luminous goal, the disciple must needs have some help and light to guide him on the middle passage. And this our Text offers to furnish,—in imitation of what Sri Krishna did for Arjuna, in the Bhagavat-gita, where he says:—"I will now summarily make thee acquainted with that Path, which the doctors of the Veda call never-failing; which persons of subdued mind and conquered passions enter; and which desirous of knowing, they live the life of purity." (VIII-11).

Now, it must be remarked that the instruction which this Treatise gives to the disciples is professedly based on the principles of the Eastern Wisdom; and this is because the Sun rises in the East, and light must flow from the East to all the quarters of the globe; but it must at the same time be remembered that, "though each religion (in various nations) has its own peculiar growth, the seed from which they all spring is everywhere the same. That seed is the perception of the Infinite, from which no one can escape, who does not wilfully shut his eyes. From the first flutter of human consciousness that perception underlies all other perceptions of our senses, all our imaginings, all our concepts, and every argument of our reason. It may be buried for a time beneath the fragments of our finite knowledge; but it is always there; and, if we dig but deep enough, we shall always find that buried seed, as supplying the living sap to the fibres and feeders of all true faith." (Prof. Max. Muller's Hibbert Lectures).

## I.

These rules are written for all disciples. Attend you to them.

A disciple is one who seeks to receive instruction from a spiritual Preceptor with all earnestness, faith, and devotion; and it is considered quite unsafe to impart sacred truths to any but such a disciple. "The knowledge of Brahma shall be explained only to a worthy son or disciple," says the Chandogya Upanishad (III. XI-5). "The deepest mystery of the Vedanta," adds the Svetasvatara Upanishad, "is not to be declared to sons or others, whose senses are not subdued," (VI-22). In the Institutes of Manu the Sacred Learning is figuratively represented to have approached a Teacher and said; "I am thy precious gem. Deliver me not to a scorner" (II. 114).

In short, "the real meanings of the sacred texts reveal themselves, to the high-minded, who have an absolute reliance in the Supreme, as well as in the teacher." (Svetasvatara Upanishad (VI. 23). But it is no blind faith that is here exacted. "He alone understands the system of duties, religious or civil, who can reason by rules of logic; and this is agreeable to the scripture,"—Says Manu. (XII-106). I know there are persons who consider that the bulwarks of their Dharma (Religion) would be undermined by the scientific treatment of questions relating to religion, and thus look upon all the philosophical discoveries with horror,

But I know also, on the other hand, that there are other persons who look upon religion as being outside the pale of philosophy, and consider that the discoveries of science are so many weapons of attack against religion.

Both these classes of people are wrong in our humble opinion. True philosophy and Divine Truth are convertible terms, and one cannot be repugnant to the other, although the former must necessarily be subordinate to the latter. The professed object of the religionist is to apprehend the Infinite. On the other hand, the Scientist considers this to be impossible. He derives all his knowledge from sense and reason; and, as every thing that is perceived by the sense or comprehended by the reason is necessarily finite, he does not recognise the idea of the infinite. Mr. Herbert Spencer, in his "First Principles," p. 99 says,—"We are obliged to regard every phenomenon as a manifestation of some power by which we are acted on; and though omnipresence is unthinkable, yet as experience discloses no bounds to the diffusion of phenomena, we are unable to think of any limits to any diffusion of this power,—while the criticisms of science teach us that this power is incomprehensible." But the true religionist would tell the scientist that, although such power is incomprehensible by reason, it is cognizable by spiritual illumination within ourselves. Our conception of the Infinite is formed independently of sense and reason, and with the aid of an inner light, the divine illumination. Thus enlightened, we can perceive and apprehend, what we could not perceive and apprehend by means of our sense and reason alone, in the ordinary acceptance of those terms. This necessary condition of the successful search after this internal light, obstructs the scientists in their further progress in the path of wisdom; and they must, therefore, make up their minds to remedy this great defect, by directing their attention to psychological studies, and apply all their researches and discoveries in physical matters to things metaphysical. There is not the slightest justification for hostility or jealousy between the scientist and the religionist, since they are both labouring in the same direction and with a common purpose, namely, the discovery of truth; and, therefore, the triumph of the one is the triumph of the other. It therefore behoves them both to act with perfect unanimity and harmony, bearing in mind the golden sentiments of a great Oriental Sage who states that, what is really wanted is a "Universal religious philosophy,—one impregnable to scientific attack, because itself the finality of absolute Science, and a religion that is indeed worthy of the name, since it includes the relation of man physical to man psychical, and of the two to all that is above and below them."

One who can conscientiously act upon these principles,—keeping the grand ideal of such a "universal religious philosophy" steadily before him; and honestly endeavouring to realize the same in all its integrity; is a fit disciple; and any sacred knowledge imparted to him is seed thrown on a fruitful soil.

Having thus stated what instruction is proposed to be given, and to whom it is intended to be imparted, the Text proceeds to deliver the following preliminary exhortations for the guidance of the disciples:—

Before the eyes can see, they must be incapable of tears. Before the ear can hear, it must have lost its sensitiveness. Before the voice can speak in the presence of the Masters, it must have lost the power to wound. Before the Soul can stand in the presence of the Masters, its feet must be washed in the blood of the heart.

These Rules relate to the preliminary process which a disciple has to undergo. They inculcate the necessity of restraint of organs, and purity of heart; and exact from him a firmness and steadiness of mind, which gradually develop into moral character, so essential for his further psychical advancement. He, like others, does certainly possess organs of sense and action, and has a right to use them for every legitimate purpose; but it is required that he should preserve an undisturbed serenity of mind at all times and under all circumstances, without allowing any object to produce either emotion or sensation on his calm spirit within; as such emotions and sensations disturb the mind, often shackling it and debarring it from higher and purer pursuits. Whatever may be the consequences,—however serious and however awful,—outward objects and events are to be as if



unfelt and unperceived by the disciple. "He should look on objects as if he were blind, hear sounds as if he were deaf, and view his body as if it were a log of wood." (Amrita-nâda-Upanishad).

But it is no avail that the disciple remains in that frame of mind which is produced by stupefaction, or that he allows his mind to rest in an abnormal and dormant condition. What is required is that he should exercise a *conscious control* over his senses, and acquire perfect mastery over his mind. He should withdraw them within himself, even as a "tortoise draws in all its members within itself." (Bhagavat-gita. II—58). This is what the text requires of a disciple in respect of his various organs. The rule that the eye must be incapable of tears corresponds exactly with what Manu has ordained, namely, "Let him at no time drop a tear." (Manu III. 229); and also with what Sri Krishna said to Arjuna, who was standing before him with eyes overflowing with a flood of tears. "Whence, Arjuna, cometh unto thee, standing in the field of battle, this folly and unmanly weakness? It is disgraceful, contrary to duty, and is the foundation of dishonor. Yield not thus to unmanliness. It becometh not one like thee. Abandon this despicable weakness of heart, and stand up." (Bhagavat-gita II—1-2-3).

Then, as to the ear losing its sensitiveness, the rule in the Text is the same as the verse in the Bhagavat-gita, which requires a disciple to "sacrifice the ears and other organs in the fire of constraint." (IV—25) And, lastly, as to the speech of the disciple being incapable of wounding others, I may remind readers of what Manu has said, "All things have their sense ascertained by speech; in speech they have their basis; consequently, he who abuses speech, abuses everything." (IV—256).

Thus, the actions of all the organs and faculties ought to be sacrificed in the fire of self-control. (Bhagavat-gita IV-27), and "he alone will be considered as really triumphant over his organs, who, on hearing, touching, seeing, tasting, or smelling, neither rejoices, nor grieves." (Manu II.—98).

These remarks apply to the five organs of sense and five organs of action (Manu II—90-91); but there is another organ, the eleventh, namely, the heart; which, by its nature includes both sense and action. If therefore the heart is subdued, the other organs of sense and action are also subdued. (Manu II.—92). Hence it is a matter of great importance that the mind should be constantly kept under proper control—"The mind of the man is the cause of his bondage and his liberation. Its attachment to objects of sense is the reason of his bondage; and its separation from the objects of sense is the means of his freedom. He who is capable of discriminating knowledge should, therefore, restrain his mind from all objects of sense." (Vishnu Purana VI-VII-29&c). It is over and over again ordained that in all his actions man should be pure, not only in word and deed but also, more especially, in thought (Manu XI.—232 &c.); but this is a difficult task. One can curb his tongue and hold back his hand more easily than he can check the streams of thought, which are swifter than the flashes of lightning. Even such a great personage as Arjuna complained that "mind is unsteady, turbulent, strong, and stubborn. I esteem it as difficult to restrain it as the wind." (Bhagavat-gita VI—34). Nevertheless, the disciple must try to check the evil propensities of his mind; and he may rest assured that if he is only earnest, persistent and unselfish, there is a fair chance of success. For, "although it is certainly difficult to confine the mind," says Krishna to Arjuna, "yet it can be restrained by constant practice and subjection of worldly desires." (Bhagavat-gita. VI—35). No doubt the task will pain the disciple much, and will even cause his heart to bleed; but he must take courage, and persevere in the attempt. This is the blood in which the Text requires that the feet of the soul should be washed before the disciple can stand in the presence of his Masters. He alone is a true disciple, who can cut the root of evil from his heart, and triumphantly trample upon the blood drawn from it.

And, lastly, the Text says that it is the Soul of the disciple that should stand before the Masters. This means that no mere physical act will be of any avail. The physical body and all that relates to it, including even the knowledge confined to bodily senses, will perish; whereas the Soul is eternal, and the instruction and knowledge, which a disciple ought to seek at the hands of his Masters is spiritual, such as would survive his physical death, and adhere to his Soul,

throughout its numerous transmigrations. Hence, the necessity for the Soul to stand before the Masters, and not simply the physical frame.

With these preparatory rules for securing purity of action and steadiness of mind on the part of the disciple, the Treatise lays down certain practical instructions for his guidance. The following are the first four rules:—

1. Kill out ambition.
2. Kill out desire of life.
3. Kill out desire of comfort.
4. (a) Work as those work who are ambitious.

Respect life as those who desire it. Be happy as those who live for happiness.

Rules 1, 2 and 3 are to be read and understood subject to the qualifications mentioned in the 4th Rule.

The 1st Rule requires that the disciple should kill out ambition. He "should be unexpectant," "free from covetousness," and "devoid of desires," says Krishna (Bhagavat-gita. XII—16-17, &c.) The reason is obvious. When a person proceeds to do an act, with an expectation and hope that it will be followed by a certain pleasing consequence, and the result chances to be as favourable as was anticipated, this very success prompts him to repeat the act frequently with similar motives and desires; and if, on the other hand, the event turns out otherwise than as expected, the pangs of disappointment urge him on to continue to perform the act with renewed vigour, and a stronger determination to succeed; so that, either in the case of success or failure, the result would be the same; namely, the commission of acts again and again with an ardent desire to obtain success and a continued enjoyment of things so obtained, *per fas et nefas*.

While thus the result of every desire for a worldly object is vicious enough in its effects, the evil of ambition (another species of desire), is infinitely greater. Not only does ambition produce the pernicious effects common to all desires, but it has also a most mischievous tendency of provoking jealousy, envy, hatred, and even crime among mankind; for the desire of attaining a superiority in mundane matters over and above all others,—when it is once cherished and allowed to remain,—acquires a tyrannical sway over the man and plunges him into difficulties from which he will not be able easily to extricate himself.

Moreover, the futility of cherishing all kinds of worldly desires is evident from the fact that "a desire is never satisfied with the enjoyment of the object desired, as the fire is not quenched with the clarified butter: it only blazes more vehemently" (Manu, ii—94).

Let the disciple remember that "in every purpose of the senses, are fixed affections and dislikes,—and no wise man should put himself in their power, for both of them are his opponents" (Bhagavat-gita. III-34). And where the only desire "is for the Soul, and where is no other desire; there is no grief."—(Brihadaranyan, Upanishad IV-III—21).

But at the same time, it is not expected or desirable that the disciple should remain inactive: nothing is more useless than an inert, colourless character. "Work as those work who are ambitious," says our Text, "Perform the settled functions," says Sri Krishna. "For the journey of thy mortal frame may not succeed by inaction. Action is preferable to inaction" (Bhagavat-gita III—8)—but the action must be passionless, performed without regard to its consequences. (Ibid V—10). We must be quite careless of events, and contented with what comes to pass—(Ibid XII—18-19). The busy world is engaged in action from various motives, but a wise man should abandon them all, and perform his actions as a matter of duty—(Ibid III. 9). Where, thus, actions are done without motives and intentions, and without regard for their consequences, the cause for misery and sin vanishes, and no evil effects follow; for the actions come down to the level of natural events, and do not affect the agent. Actions bind man, and lead to various complications, only when they are done with certain motives and with regard for their consequences. But deprive the action of such motive, and you deprive it of its binding nature. Then practically action becomes inaction; and man preserves inaction in the midst of action.—(Bhagavat-gita. IV—18). In fact, action and inaction resolve themselves into an identical idea.

The person who performs the action, but renounces all interest therein, is likened to the leaf of lotus, which is un-

affected by the water in which it lives—(Bhagavat-gita. V. 10). This passionless activity is a virtue which ought to be cultivated and practised by all who desire to attain perfection; and this is what is ordained in our text, Rules 1 and 4.

Then Rule 2 in the Text demands that the disciple should "Kill out desire of life."

Why should we desire life? is it for the sake of our Soul? No. The soul is unborn, indestructible, and eternal, while the body in which it dwells is born, destructible, and transitory—(Bhagavat-gita. II.—18). So that, birth and death are predicated of the body, and not of the soul. As the soul is not born, it is not subject to death. "When the Soul quits its mortal frame, it enters into others, which are new, even as a man throws away his old garments and puts on new ones"—(Ibid, II-22.)

Thus, the Soul is not affected by what is called death, and no wise man need be concerned about death on account of the soul.

Nor should one desire life for the sake of the Body. The body had a birth, and must have a death; for "death is certain to all things that are subject to birth; and re-birth to all things that are mortal:—Wherefore, it doth not behove thee to grieve about that which is inevitable"—(Bhagavat-gita. II.—27). Further, we all know that many are the pangs attending birth; and many are those which succeed to birth; many are the sufferings to which one is subject during childhood, and many during manhood and old age—(Vishnu Purana. VI, V.); so that none should grieve to shake off the mortal frame which is productive of so much pain; nor should the body be coveted for the sake of the worldly honors which it can procure for us; for, as a matter of fact, it is not the body, but something else, that secures such honors for us. When Sri Rāma expressed his surprise at the great honor which certain people were bent upon doing him when he was on his way home from the deserts, for the purpose of receiving the crown and governing the country, while a short time previously, the very same people had treated him with utmost indifference; his physical body being the same all the while,—his brother Lakshman remarked, "Rama, it is the position and not the body that is honored—Then you were a helpless wanderer in the deserts, and now you are an absolute sovereign."—(Ramayana, entitled Kavitā-ratnākara.)

Nor is there the slightest justification for desiring life for the sake of our relatives and friends whom we leave behind when we die. Mark well that they do not grieve for our death, and there is no need for us to grieve on their account. As was very truly and most forcibly remarked by the Sage Yajñavalkya to his consort Maitreyi,—Behold! not for husband's sake the husband is dear, but for the sake of oneself dear is the husband. Behold! not for the wife's sake is the wife dear, but for the sake of the self, dear is the wife. Behold! not for the sons' sake are the sons dear but for the sake of the self are the sons dear" and so on.—("Bṛihad-āraṇyaka-Upanishad-II. IV.—5.) Indeed, "in the man's passage to the next birth, neither his father, nor his mother, nor his wife, nor son nor Kinsman, will bear him company. The only thing that adheres to his soul is the effect of his Karma (action)" (Manu IV.—239, &c). Could it be otherwise? The wheel of life is passing on in interminable revolutions and the migrating soul is assuming and casting off a series of bodily existences in alternate succession; and during the interval of each of such existences, it forms associations with souls, who are as much temporary sojourners as himself, until he is cut off from them all by the hand of death; even as millions of birds flock together on a huge banian tree, and scatter themselves in all directions at the sight of an archer's bow, or on hearing the report of a sportsman's gun.

Separated once, they may not associate together ever afterwards, or if reunited at all, it will probably be under different conditions altogether. Our father in the present birth may become our brother or son in the next; and our mother may become our sister or daughter or some other person, in the most incongruous manner. Or it may be that our re-birth takes place in the family of those who were utter strangers to us during our prior births; or in a country which we never thought of. Under such circumstances, is it a matter of very great surprise that our attachment to persons formed during one state of existence does not extend beyond the term of such existence, except in special cases which need not be noticed here?

In this state of things, what then is there that should induce us to desire life? Nothing; literally nothing. For

those who can realize this grand idea, death loses all its weight of horror; and they look upon death with extreme indifference.

While the desire of life is thus deprecated, it is not inculcated that man should desire death. Our Text, while advising the disciple to kill out desire of life, exhorts him to respect it as those who desire it; and this is exactly what the great Law-giver Manu has ordained:—

"Let not man wish for death, nor let him wish for life—Let him abide his time, as a hired servant expects his appointed wages"—(Manu. VI.—45) All that is required is that man should be indifferent to life or death, pleasure or pain. (Maha Bharata, Aswamedha parva. XIX.—4). He should patiently remain encased in the body until a severance is effected by the course of nature in due time;—until the stored-up energy of that one birth exhausts itself; and he should all the while mould his actions in such a manner as to counteract the pernicious influences incidental to the connection of the soul with the body. Let him not try to shake off the body; but try to shake off the mortal coils which bind him. Nothing is gained by putting an end to bodily existence, with the expectation of avoiding the evils resulting from it; for, when a person gets rid of one body "he is again liable to conception and birth; again he is merged with the embryo, and he repairs to it when about to be born; then he dies,—as soon as born, or in infancy, or in youth, or in old age,—death sooner or later being inevitable; and then he is born again, and again and so on"—(Vishnu Purana. VI. V). And during all these transmigrations, the effects of his actions adhere to him unceasingly. So that, the annihilation of the present body does not lead to the annihilation of his misery. The real merit, therefore, consists not in trying to be freed from the body in which we are enveloped for the time being, but in trying to avoid being embodied again, and for ever. Then we avoid death as well as birth. And then we are said to have become immortal. This is the final goal; and the attainment of this ought to be the sole aim of every wise being. "Where else could man, scorched by the fires of this world look for felicity were it not for the shade afforded by the tree of emancipation?" (Vishnu Purana. VI. V).

And, lastly, the third Rule requires the disciple to kill out the desire of comfort. This can be easily comprehended by those who can correctly understand the first and second rules respecting ambition and desire of life. We should kill out desire of comfort in the same sense in which we kill out desire of life and ambition; that is, while we kill out the desire of comfort, we are required to be as happy as those who live for happiness. How can this be? What is the line of conduct which one has to adopt in order to be happy without desiring comfort? The solution of this question is given by the Sage Manu; who declares, that—"he who seeks happiness should be firm in perfect content; and check all desires. Happiness has its root in content; and discontent is the root of misery"—(Manu. IV.—12). Birth, wealth, and rank have all their comforts and discomforts. There is nothing in this world, which we can point to as being the source of real and unmixed comfort. He alone is comfortable, who feels satisfied with that condition in which he is, for the time, placed—(Vishnu Purana. I. XI.—22); and who, like *Dhruva* can declare, "I wish for no other honor than that which my own Karma can obtain for me"—(Ibid I. XI.—29).

In conclusion, let the disciple remember what Krishna has said to Arjuna:—"He is worthy of my love, who neither rejoiceth nor grieveth, nor envieth; who does not covet; who has forsaken all concern in good or evil; who is the same in friendship or hatred; in cold or heat; in pain or pleasure; who is unsolicitous about the result of actions; and who is pleased with whatever cometh."—(Bhagavat-gita. XII.—17. 18).

And thus, the first four Rules, given in our Text, indicate the necessity of dispassionate work; unconcerned life, and uncoveted comfort.

But there are people who cannot appreciate the most beneficial effect of these rules. Being carried away by currents of desires, they are entangled in chains of action, perforce with extravagant expectations. Not that they are unacquainted with the fact that human desires and comforts can never be fully accomplished; and that the physical body does not exist eternally. Bitter experience of every-day life makes us all aware of these blunt facts; and yet people persist in a course of action most prejudicial to their own interests. Surely, there must be something which urges them to such a course of conduct. What is it? Arjuna.

demand of Krishna a solution of this same problem. "By what," he asked, "is man propelled to commit sins? He seems as if he were unconsciously impelled by some secret force"; to which Krishna replied:—"Know, that it is the enemy, *Kama* (desires and works with motives), and *Krodha* (a sense of envy and revenge); and this enemy is the offspring of the carnal principle, the primary cause of sin"—(Bhagavat-gita. III.—37-38). This carnal principle is in the man's own heart, and must be sought out, and eradicated. And this is what our Text directs the disciple to do in the following words:—

(4—b). Seek in the heart the source of the evil and expunge it. It lives fruitfully in the heart of the devoted disciple, as well as in the heart of the man of desire. Only the strong can kill it out. The weak must wait for its growth; its fruition; its death. And it is a plant that lives and increases throughout the ages. It flowers when the man has accumulated to himself innumerable existences. He who will enter upon the path of power must tear this thing out of his heart; and then his heart will bleed; and the whole life of the man seem to be utterly dissolved. This ordeal must be endured; it may come at the first step of the perilous ladder, which leads to the path of life; it may not come until the last.

This root of evil exists of course in the heart of the man of desire; but it is firmly seated in the heart of the disciple also; for it is the root of a plant which germinated not yesterday or to-day, nor after the disciple has become a disciple. But it is an old thing, nurtured and strengthened during the long series of man's existences; and it will continue adhering to him unless it is torn out with a strong force.

It certainly is not an easy task for one to disentangle himself from the influences of the body in which he is actually dwelling for the time being; and the task becomes infinitely more difficult when the evil to be eradicated happens to be one that has taken root for ages. "The struggle of the base animal nature against any attempt to curb and subdue it, is one from which only the grandest souls can hope to come out victorious. And even to them, the task is almost hopeless, unless they have secured the needful aids of a Teacher, a pure place, seclusion from the busy world, and a natural power of self-mastery." But the difficult nature of the task affords no excuse for its abandonment. As the Soul can never hope for felicity so long as it remains under the influence of evil, sooner or later the root of evil will have to be cut down; but, considering that delay only tends to allow the root to gain strength and become more firmly fixed, thus rendering its eradication all but impossible, it behoves every person to set about this all-important work as early as possible. "Arise," says the Katha Upanishad "Awake; get great teachers, and attend at once. The wise say that the path is as difficult to go upon as the sharp edge of a knife." (III—14). Anticipating that the disciple might be inclined to put off the difficult task for fear of wounding the heart in the attempt to execute the work, the Text gives him the following advice:—

(4—c). But, O disciple, remember that it (bleeding of the heart caused by the act of cutting down the source of evil) is to be endured; and fasten the energies of your soul upon the task, live neither in the present nor the future; but in the eternal. The giant weed cannot flower there; this blot upon existence is wiped out by the very atmosphere of eternal thought.

It is necessary not only to cut out the root of evil at any sacrifice, but also to take care that the seed does not germinate again. The removal of this seed cannot be complete so long as man delights to live in the present or even in the future. "Worldly happiness is transient, because it is the effect of works which are themselves transient; and what is firm is not obtained by what is not firm"—(Katha Upanishad II—10). Let us suppose the case of a good man in the worldly sense; he will be happy during his present existence—(Manu II—5); and on being born again after death, he may even pass into happier families—(Bhagavat-gita VI—41); and possibly too, he may enjoy bliss in heaven for some time—(Ibid IX—20). But all this is transient; for, when he has partaken of that happiness for a while in proportion to his virtue, he again sinks into mortal life (Ibid IX—21); and again enjoys or suffers according to the life he leads (Vishnu Purana VI-V).

It will thus be perceived that one that lives in the present or in the future can obtain no substantial felicity. There is every possibility of the evil root springing up again, so long as there is a possibility of the soul continuing to be enveloped in the physical body. So that, he alone can be free from danger who lives in the eternal. There is no soil there in which the evil weed can grow, much less bear fruit. Hence it is that the Text particularly enjoins upon the disciple the urgent necessity of living in the eternal. By the eternal is meant that supreme condition in which the Soul enjoys perfect exemption from the ever-continuing rotation of returning existence: emancipation from the bonds of birth—(Bhagavat-gita.) This is eternal; this is the final goal of the Soul; this alone is the source of Divine happiness which effaces all other kinds of felicity; and this is the *Absolute* and *Final*—(Vishnu Purana. VI-V).

(To be continued.)

*As to Rule 5.*—The elementary particles of which bodies are composed and the souls which inhabit the bodies, are all in one Supreme Soul; and the Supreme Soul is in them all. While Divinity has a divided and separate existence in each individual, it has also an undivided existence pervading the whole universe, including the souls individually and collectively. (Bhagavatgita VI, 29, and XIII, 17). So that this universal soul is said to be both finite and infinite,—being present, as well in the individual as in the universal. (Vyashte and Samishte Rupa.) See Vishnu Purana VI—V. It is therefore preposterous to suppose that any one individual is separate from the rest of mankind. Multitudes are nothing else but the aggregations of units. Men are to be viewed collectively; and when so viewed, no person can appear as anything but a part of the whole. As all that belongs to the realm of the mind is thus of a kindred nature, one can comprehend within himself, not only his own self, but all others; and in all these, comprehend the supreme likewise. Mr. Herbert Spencer observes that “every phenomenon exhibited by an aggregation of men, originates in some quality of man himself..... The characteristics exhibited by beings in an associated state, cannot arise from the accident of combination, but must be the consequences of certain inherent properties of the beings themselves.”

Thus it is that the lot of one embodied soul is cast with all those who are similarly embodied; and the good or evil of the individual unit is the good or evil of the world as a whole. The *Karma* of one individual is thus inextricably interwoven with the *Karma* of all. The disciple should try to realize this idea very carefully. If he chooses to shun his less fortunate neighbour for no other reason than that he is a sinner in some respects, his vanity is simply unpardonable. Remember, O disciple, that the soul of your neighbour was primarily as pure as your own; its union with the body was brought about in exactly the same manner as that of your own soul with your own body; and the final goal which it ought to be his earnest endeavour to reach, is the same as yours. Hence, he is your brother pilgrim, struggling to push himself forward on the right path, although it may be that he feels weary of the miry way, and his progress in the great journey is retarded, owing to his conscious or unconscious violation of those moral laws, which it might have been your good fortune to obey and respect. He is therefore entitled more to your sympathy than hatred. Sin, which makes him the object of your dislike, might have been yours yesterday or might be yours to-morrow. Even were it otherwise; even if we are to suppose,—what our daily experience tells us to be a rare phenomenon, viz., that in purity and wisdom you were superior to all your neighbours in by-gone times, you are so now, and you will be so ever hereafter,—even then, consider how immeasurable is the gulf between you and those whom you recognise as your superiors; and how deplorable would be your condition if, on account of superiority alone, these should shun you. Take care lest by despising your inferiors, you should, in your turn, be despised by your superiors; besides bearing other consequences of your overbearing conduct—for, it is a fact to be steadily borne in mind that, if you allow the idea of separateness from any so-called evil person or thing to grow up within you, you will, by so doing, create a *Karma*, which will bind you to that person or thing, until such time as your soul shall come to recognise that it cannot be so isolated from the rest.

Even from another standpoint, it seems to me that it is utterly absurd to talk of one individual remaining isolated from all others.

This is what I said in my pamphlet on Theosophy in 1883:—“Nature requires that living beings should love one another, co-operate with and assist one another. The birds of the air and beasts in the forest all move about in groups large and small; and sympathize with their respective species in the most remarkable manner. Even the little ants and bees exhibit such strong attachments of brotherly love that, in their busy and hurried movements, they stop to exchange kind courtesies and friendly whispers to one another; they make a common home, store common food, and revenge the attack on one as the attack on all! And yet can it be said that man alone on the face of the earth is devoid of such brotherly feeling, or that he does not stand in need of sympathy from his fellow-creatures at all? No! Man,—boasting of being, as he is, the master-piece of the created

### —♦— LIGHT ON THE PATH.\*

WRITTEN down by M. C., Fellow of the Theosophical Society, London, 1885; and annotated by P. Sreenivas Row, Fellow of the Theosophical Society, Madras, 1885.

Now the Treatise proceeds to point out what *other* things are to be avoided by the disciple.

5. Kill out all sense of separateness.
6. Kill out desire for Sensation.
7. Kill out hunger for growth.

8. (A). Yet stand alone and isolated, because nothing that is embodied, nothing that is conscious of separation, nothing that is out of the eternal can aid you. (B). Learn from sensation and observe it, because only so can you commence the science of self-knowledge, and plant your foot on the first step of the ladder. (C). Grow as the flower grows, unconsciously, but eagerly anxious to open your soul to the eternal. But it must be the eternal that draws forth your strength and beauty, not desire of growth. For in the one case you develop the luxuriance of purity; in the other, you harden by forcible passion for personal stature.

These Rules form one group. Rule 5 is to be read with clause A. of Rule 8; Rule 6 with clause B of Rule 8; and Rule 7 with clause C of Rule 8.

\* (Continued from page 210 of the *Theosophist* for the month of June 1885.)

works, and of being endowed with rational and moral faculties, compares very unfavourably with other living beings in this respect. Unlike other creatures, man is utterly incapable of moving about for several years after he is ushered into the world; he cannot eat or digest raw food; sorely needs external covering and artificial dwelling; and urgently requires weapons of defence or attack. All this necessitates the application for help from numerous quarters; and nothing can be gained unless there is a cordial co-operation on the part of all.

A sense of separateness, moreover, engenders exclusiveness and selfishness, which are the most fertile sources of evil and misery; and hence the text requires that this sense should be killed out, as by so doing, the disciple benefits both himself and others. The sacred works enjoin the necessity of rooting out the evil of separateness, and of maintaining brotherly love among mankind without any distinction whatsoever—(vide Manu IV, 238-246; V, 46-47; VI, 75; Bhagavatgita; Mahabharata Anusasana XXIII, 28; &c. &c.).

But, while this line of conduct is the best that we can pursue in our concerns of worldly life, we ought not, for a moment, to lose sight of the fact that all this is worldly and therefore transient. Everything that is embodied has its end: even the enjoyment which such good behaviour would procure for us in the heavens is nothing but transitory, (Bhagavatgita IX, 21, &c.). Indeed the whole universe having once existed is again dissolved, and is again reproduced in alternate succession (*Ibid* VIII, 19). Consequently conduct like this, however certainly it may be beneficial to the extent of gaining for us a step in the ladder which leads us upwards, can never of itself afford a complete help—For, as stated in the text, “nothing that is embodied; nothing that is conscious of separation, nothing that is out of the eternal can aid you,” and this is quite reasonable. Man, that is the man who is true to himself, ought to look for happiness which is unchangeable, and such happiness can only proceed from that in which there is no change. If such a thing can be found, it is only thence that man can obtain an unalterable happiness; and it must consequently be the sole object of his aspirations and actions. What is that eternal thing? That alone is eternal which, upon the dissolution of all things else, is not itself dissolved.” (Bhagavat-gita, VIII, 20.) It is the soul. True, we do not find the soul in a sphere different from matter, but in the same. Nevertheless, as the soul shows itself in every respect absolute and independent, while matter is everywhere finite and dependent, we are compelled to consider the soul as the cause on which the existence of matter, in its various forms, depends. Hence we ought to look upon the soul as “dearer than a son; dearer than wealth, dearer than everything else; because it is eternal.” (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad I, IV—8.) It behoves the disciple therefore to “be always delighted with meditating on the great soul. Sitting fixed in such meditation, without needing anything earthly, without one sensual desire, and without any worldly companion, let him live in this world seeking the bliss of the next,” (Manu VI, 49).

This is what our Text (Rule 5) means when it says that the disciple should kill out sense of separateness; but at the same time stand alone and isolated, and live in the Eternal; that is, in other words, to love and respect mankind, and to endeavour to reach the Eternal. The former is Universal Brotherhood and the latter is Theosophy;—the former constitutes a step in the ladder, and the latter leads the disciple up to the top of the ladder.

The 6th Rule refers to sensation. As perception is a special kind of knowledge, so sensation is a special kind of feeling. Every sensation is a change in the state of the mind, produced by the impression made upon it through the medium of the organs of sense; and every such change in the mental state disturbs calmness of the spirit within, and leads to unfirmness, so fatal to spiritual progress. Not only should all outward impressions be unperceived, but should also be unfelt. (Bhagavat-gita, V, 21.)

We should further remember that sensation means not only the effect that outward actions produce on ourselves, but also the effect which our own actions produce upon others. As we avoid receiving any impression from outward objects, so we should avoid doing anything for the sake of

producing a sensation or an effect upon the minds of others. We should simply do that which is right, and that as a matter of duty, and utterly regardless of the effect which our action would produce on us or others. “A placid conquered soul remains the same in honor or dishonor, in pain or pleasure, in heat or cold. That person is distinguished, whose resolutions are the same, whether he is amongst his friends and companions, or in the midst of his enemies; amongst those who love or those who hate, or in the company of saints or sinners.” (Bhagavat-gita VI, 7, 8, 9.)

But sensation is not without some advantage. Whenever we see a display of sensation, we ought to observe it closely and draw a moral from it; for this is one of the best means of knowing human nature, and of trying to mould our own character by adopting all that is good and rejecting all that is evil in the world around us. “Even from poison,” says Manu, “may nectar be taken; even from a child, gentleness of speech; even from a foe, prudent conduct, and even from an impure substance, gold.” (II, 239.)

This is what our text means when it says that the disciple should kill out desire for sensation, but should learn a lesson from it. But he must, at the same time, be extremely cautious in this respect. Man is prone to imitation; and this propensity is strong in children, and even at a more mature stage of life, a spontaneous or deliberate imitation is experienced by all men, so that it has a very great influence on man's conduct; and hence great prudence and self-control are necessary.

The 7th Rule (with the last clause of Rule 8) requires the disciple to kill out hunger for growth; which means the growth of the body, power, rank, wealth, wisdom, and everything else. What is deprecated is that growth which has worldly things for its object. The remarks made in the foregoing pages with reference to desire and ambition, may advantageously be recalled to mind in considering the spirit of this Rule. It must also be borne in mind that the growth for its own sake,—and not for the sake of appearance, nor with a special object,—is commendable. Mark well the illustration of the Flower given in the text. A flower grows, but it is not conscious that it is growing, nor is it growing for the sake of show nor for any other cherished purpose. It grows, and grows most eagerly too, simply to expose its petals to the air as it were. The growth of the disciple must be somewhat similar. He should grow, in due course, as a matter of duty, without the least show or ostentation, but only to open his soul to the air of wisdom. As it is nature, and not a desire of growth that draws forth the strength and beauty of the flower, so it must be the eternal, and not a desire of growth, that should draw forth the disciple's strength and beauty, and increase them. All that is eternal is the source of pure bliss, and therefore when man's strength and beauty are drawn forth by the eternal, he develops them into the perfection of purity,—while on the other hand, when our strength and beauty are drawn out by a desire of growth in a worldly point of view, we desire only a most transient pleasure, which is not worth having, and which moreover, when repeated, has a tendency to create a habit of indulgence in strong passions which are highly prejudicial to real spiritual advancement—for “the mortal becomes immortal and attains the supreme, only when all the desires cherished in the heart cease and all the bonds of the heart are broken in this life.” (Katha Upanishad. VI, 14 & 15.)

Here we come to the end of the Rules (1 to 8) which declare what a disciple shall not desire, in order that he may be virtuous; but before proceeding to consider the other rules, it is, I think, necessary to impress upon him the circumstance that although some good results would flow from virtue, *however practised*, yet to become efficacious, the virtue must be practised *cheerfully*, and *not with reluctance* or pain. “All sense of restraint,—even if self-imposed is useless,” says an Oriental author, for whom we have a great respect,—“not only is all ‘goodness’ that results from the compulsion of physical force, threats or bribes (whether of physical or so-called spiritual nature), absolutely useless to the person who exhibits it, its hypocrisy tending to poison the moral atmosphere of the world, but the desire to be good or pure, to be efficacious, must be spontaneous. It must be a self-impulse from within, a real preference for something higher; not an abstention from vice because of fear of the law; not a chastity enforced by the dread of

public opinion; not a benevolence exercised through love of praise or dread of consequences in a hypothetical future life."

Nor is a disciple required to eschew his physical desires from any sentimental theory of right or wrong. The prohibition is grounded on the following good reasons as explained by the author from whom I have just above quoted:—"According to a well-known and now established scientific theory, man's visible material frame is always renewing its particles; he will, while abstaining from the gratification of his desires, reach the end of a certain period, during which those particles, which composed the man of vice, and which were given a bad predisposition, will have departed. At the same time, the disuse of such functions will tend to obstruct the entry, in place of the old particles, of new particles having a tendency to repeat the said acts. And while this is the particular result as regards certain vices, the general result of an abstention from gross acts will be (by a modification of the well-known Darwinian law of Atrophy by non-usage) to diminish what we may call the relative density and coherence of the outer shell (as result of its less-used molecules); while the diminution in the quantity of its actual constituents will be made up (if tried by scales and weights) by the increased admission of more ethereal particles."

Above all, the disciple should particularly remember what has been already hinted, namely, that the rule for the abandonment of worldly desires, refers, not only to deeds but more especially to thoughts. To use the words of the aforesaid author again, the disciple "must beware especially of impure and animal thoughts. For science shows that thought is dynamic; and the thought-force evolved by nervous action expanding itself outwardly, must affect the molecular relations of the physical man. The inner men, however sublimated their organism may be, are still composed of actual, *not hypothetical*, particles of matter, and are still subject to the law that an action has a tendency to repeat itself; a tendency to set up analogous action in the grosser shell they are in contact with, and concealed within. And, on the other hand, certain actions have a tendency to produce actual physical conditions unfavourable to pure thoughts; hence to the state required for developing the supremacy of the inner man."

In a word, "it is of no use to abstain from immorality so long as you are craving for it in your heart; and so it is with all other unsatisfied inward cravings. To get rid of the inward desire is the essential thing; and to mimic the real thing without it, is bare-faced hypocrisy and useless slavery."

It is with conditions like these that a disciple is required in Rules 1 to 8 of our Text to *abstain* from certain desires; and now the Text proceeds to declare what desires are to be *entertained* by the disciple. Here it is to be remarked that the desires prohibited are those which have worldly things for their object; and that the desires sanctioned are such as have a tendency to purify the soul, and pave the way for the disciple's progress in his spiritual work. "Where the only desire is for the soul, and where there is no other desire, there is no grief." (Brihad-aranyaka Upanishad IV—III, 21). But the disciple must be cautious in applying this rule practically. The desire for the soul is as much a desire as the desire for a house or any other worldly thing; both make man regardful of events; and both must therefore urge him to adopt all sorts of measures to secure the desired object. If one desire is to be condemned, there is no reason why the other should be commended. The *Niralamba Upanishad* argues this subject with much force, and deprecates *all desires* indiscriminately; declaring that a desire to remain immersed in worldly affairs, as well as a desire to obtain liberation from worldly concerns,—being both desires,—ought to be equally avoided by the disciple, as an ardent wish to accomplish either of those desires, or any other desire, at any cost and under any circumstances, cannot but produce highly prejudicial effects, involving the disciple into complications from which he could not easily hope to disentangle himself. On this principle, the said authority, humorously, though very correctly, asserts that even "a desire not to desire" is blameable. So that the disciple must understand that, whenever he is told that he shall desire such and such thing for the sake of the Soul, it is intended that he should adopt that line of conduct, which would, of itself, and without any desire or other application on his part,—lead to his spiritual

advancement; and that therefore whatever good action is done, it must be done from a sense of duty, because it is appointed and necessary to be done; and not with any desire or expectation of reaping any advantage; (Bhagavat-gita. XVIII—9, and V—10, &c.); not even *Mokhsa* (final emancipation).

How, it may be asked, can one attain *Mokhsa*, if he does not desire it and does not ask for it? The *Rig Veda* contains a complete reply to this question in the VIIth Mandala (Sukta 49 and Mantra 12), where it assures us that a really deserving person obtains *Moksha*, or liberation from life and death, in the same manner as the *Urvāra* fruit liberates itself from its stalk. This fruit, it must be noted, is one of the species of cucumber; and it separates itself and falls of itself from the stalk, the moment it is fully ripe. So then, man can attain the final emancipation, without asking for it—"The Supreme spirit attracts to itself him who meditates upon it, and who is of the same nature; as the loadstone attracts the iron by virtue which is common to itself and to its products." (Vishnu Purana V—VII.)

With these explanations, let us try to understand the following Rules of the Text, as to what is *to be desired* by the disciple:—

9. *Desire only that which is within you.*
10. *Desire only that which is beyond you.*
11. *Desire only that which is unattainable.*

12—(a) *For within you is the light of the world—the only light that can be shed on the path. If you are unable to perceive it within you, it is useless to look for it elsewhere. (b). It is beyond you, because when you reach it, you have lost yourself. (c) It is unattainable, because it for ever recedes. You will enter the light, but you will never touch the flame.*

These rules form one group. Rule 9 is to be read with Rule 12 (a); Rule 10 with Rule 12 (b); and Rule 11 with Rule 12 (c).

With reference to what has been already stated, that nothing which is not eternal can aid the disciple, these Rules, 9 to 12, require that he shall desire the eternal; that is the eternal which is to be found within him, without him, and everywhere else, and which is unseizable. That which is to be desired and discovered in all these places is only One (Brihad-aranyaka Upanishad V—IX, 9), although in order to impress the fact of the universal pervasion of that One upon the mind of the disciple, it is described in these rules as that which is within and without and so on all, as will be seen from numerous sacred authorities.

So then, first of all, Rule 9, (with Rule 12a) asks the disciple to desire that which is within himself. It is the great Soul. It abides in our heart (Chandogya Upanishad VIII—1-1; Bhagavat-gita XVIII, 61 &c.). It is the Truth of Truth (Brihad-aranyaka Upanishad IV—III, 6; Chandogya Upanishad VII—III, 4). It is the great Light. (Ibid VII—XII, 3). It will shine in the heart of him who reflects on it with fixed resolution. (Swetnasvatara Upanishad IV—7.)—He who knows the true nature of things, who has subdued his senses, who is calm, free from desires, enduring and composed in his mind, beholds the soul in the soul alone; beholds the great Soul. (Brihad-aranyaka Upanishad IV—IV, 23;) and that is to be seen, heard, minded, and meditated upon. (Ibid, IV—IV, 5). This is what the Text asks the disciple to desire and find, as this is the only light that can be shed on the path; and he should try to find it within himself, for if he feels unable to find it there, he can never hope to find it elsewhere; whereas if he succeeds in finding it within himself, he will be able to find it everywhere else; for, "by seeing, hearing, minding, and meditating upon what we find in ourselves, all the universe can be comprehended." (Brihad-aranyaka Upanishad IV—IV, 5.)—This is because "the light which is in man is the same light that shines outside man, above this heaven, higher than all, than everything in the highest world, beyond which there are no other worlds." (Chandogya Upanishad III—XIII, 7; & III—XVII—7).

Hence the next Rule, the 10th, requires that the disciple shall desire that which is without him. If he looks for it within himself and not outside, his work would be useless. He should remember that which is to be desired is the Eternal, the Infinite. "The Infinite is below, above, behind, before, right, and left; and it is all this." (Chandogya Upanishad VII—XXVI, 2). "It is beyond"; "beyond



everything" (Brihad-aranyaka Upanishad V.—IX, 9). Indeed, if it is not beyond the heart of one individual, or beyond a certain point, then it *cannot* be called the Infinite. When the disciple desires and tries to perceive that which is within himself, outside and beyond, then he loses himself in what is infinite, and then he is said to realize the grand idea of the Infinite; and then only can he hope to achieve success in his great undertakings—for, "the Infinite is bliss. There is no bliss in anything finite. Infinity is only bliss. We must desire and understand this Infinity." (Chandogya Upanishad, VII.—XXIII, 1).

Now as to Rule 11 (with Rule 12—c), let us remember the last words in the preceding paragraph, namely, that we must desire to *understand* this Indefinite; *understand* it and not *handle* it. For it is "unseizable" (Swetaswara Upanishad I, 6 and Mundaka Upanishad Brih. A. Upanishad IV—IV, 22). Indeed, it cannot be otherwise. If you can seize it for any single moment, it becomes a finite object, limited by space and time; whereas that which you are to desire is not so limited, nor is it otherwise conditioned. But there is this fact to be noted, that although it is one which cannot be handled, yet, as it is Truth, Glory and Light, every deserving person can fairly expect to enter within its influence; within its light,—however unable he may be to touch the flame.

When the disciple begins to desire the One which is within him and without him, and which is unseizable, he naturally feels the want of means necessary for the achievement of the desired object. A desire without the materials for its realization is hardly worth being entertained. So, the Text tells him what more he is to desire and become possessed of in order to gain his ultimate end, in the following Rules.

13. *Desire power ardently.*

14. *Desire peace fervently.*

15. *Desire possessions above all.*

16. (a). *But those possessions must belong to the pure soul only; and be possessed therefore by all pure souls equally; and thus be the special property of the whole, only when united. Hunger for such possessions as can be held by the pure soul, that you may accumulate wealth for that united spirit and life which is your only true self. (b). The peace you shall desire is that sacred peace that nothing can disturb, and in which the soul grows as does the holy flower upon the still lagoons. (c) And the power which the disciple shall covet is that which shall make him appear as nothing in the eyes of men.*

Rule 13 should be read with Rule 16. (c); Rule 14 with rule 16 (b); and Rule 15 with Rule 16 (a).—

Rule 13 enjoins the disciple to desire power ardently. Indeed he *does* want power. "The deluded soul (*i. e.*, the individual soul), though dwelling on the same tree with the universal soul (*i. e.* both being in the same body) is immersed in the relation of the world, and is grieved for want of power." (Mundaka Upanishad, III—1, 2,—and Swetaswara Upanishad, IV, 7). But what is that power which the individual is in need of? Surely it cannot be that power which has reference to mundane matters, *i. e.*, a control over men and things, such as is possessed by the sovereigns we see scattered all over the world,—for the worthlessness of such power to a spiritual man is plainly apparent.

The following stanzas are said to have been chanted by Mother Earth in her mirth, as, wreathed with autumn flowers like bright smiles, she beheld so many great and powerful kings unable to effect the subjugation of themselves. "How great," the Earth is represented to have said, "is the folly of princes, who are endowed with the faculty of reason, to cherish the confidence of ambition, when they themselves are but foam upon the wave! Before they have subdued themselves, they seek to reduce their ministers, their servants, their subjects, under their authority; they then endeavour to overcome their foes. Thus, say they, 'Will we conquer the ocean-circled earth' and intent upon their project, behold not death, which is not far off. But what mighty matter is the subjugation of the sea-girt earth to one who can subdue himself? Emancipation from worldly existence is the fruit of self-control. It is through infatuation that kings desire to possess me, whom their predecessors have been forced to leave, whom their fathers have not retained. Beguiled by selfish love of power, fathers contend with sons, and brothers with brothers, for my possession. Foolishness has been the character of every king who has boasted 'All this earth is mine:'

'every thing is mine; it will be in my house for ever'; for he is dead. How is it possible that such vain desires should survive in the hearts of his descendants who have seen their progenitor, absorbed by the lust of dominion compelled to relinquish me, whom he called his own, and tread the path of dissolution? When I hear a king sending word to another by his ambassador "This earth is mine; immediately resign your pretensions to it—I am moved to violent laughter; but it soon subsides in pity for the infatuated fool." (Vishnu Purana IV—XXIV.)

If this is the lot of the so-called Sovereigns of the Earth, what can be said of the power and possessions of an ordinary person, however wealthy and however great. "In acquiring or losing, or preserving wealth, there are many griefs, and there are misfortunes in friends, in wife, children, servants, house, land and riches, and whatever else is considered to be acceptable to man. All these contribute more to his misery than to his happiness, even in this world; and still more so in the next. Where could man scorched by the fires of the sun of the world, look for unmixed felicity, but in the shade afforded by the tree of emancipation (Moksha). Attainment of the Divine is considered by the wise as the only remedy for the three-fold class of ills that beset the different stages of life,—conception, birth and decay,—as characterised by that only happiness which effaces all other kinds of felicity, however abundant; and as being absolute and final." (Vishnu Purana VI—V.)

So, it is this kind of power, that the disciple should desire; that is the power which can secure for him that which is eternal bliss; and not the power over worldly matters. This is what our Text means, when it says (Clause C. in Rule 16), that "the power which the disciple shall covet is that which shall make him appear as nothing in the eyes of men." For such power, as is desired by men of the world, can never remove the grief which the individual soul is suffering for want of power as stated in the extract from the Mundaka and Santaswara Upanishads given above. "Such grief can only cease when the individual soul sees the universal soul within itself." (III. I, 2 and IV, 7. of the said Upanishads respectively). Hence the power which the disciple has to desire, is such as is calculated to enable him to behold the Supreme in all its infinite glory.

The first step towards the acquisition of such power is to obtain peace, *i. e.*, a perfect control over all our organs; unalloyed love for all; and unmixed devotion to the Supreme. The Text, (Rule 14 and Clause B of Rule 16) defines the peace to be, "that sacred peace that nothing can disturb, and in which the soul grows as does the holy flower upon the still lagoons." Those who are immersed in worldly affairs, and who take a pride in effecting worldly triumphs, can never hope to remain in that peaceful condition of mind, which alone can pave the way for the attainment of the eternal bliss. "As a mansion of clay is plastered with clay and water, so the body which is of earth, is perpetuated by earth and water, (*i. e.*, eating and drinking). The body consisting of five elements, is nourished by substances equally composed of those elements. But since this is the case, what is there in this life that man should be proud of? Travelling the path of the world for many thousand of births, man attains only the weariness of bewilderment, and is smothered by the dust of imagination (Vāsana). When that dust is washed away by the water of real knowledge, then the weariness of bewilderment sustained by the wayfarer through repeated births, is removed. While that weariness is relieved, the internal man is at peace, and he obtains that supreme felicity which is undisturbed and unequalled." (Vishnu Purana VI, VII).

And so all the *Śrūtis* tell the disciple to desire Peace (Syantam,) (*e. g.*, Amritabandu Upanishad, &c., &c.). And practically, how to acquire Peace, is well explained in the Brihad-aranyaka Upanishad, where, at the request of the Devas and other students, the great Prajapati told them what their duty was, in these words,—"Restrain your desires," "Be liberal," "Be clement." And the same was repeated by the Divine voice, with the force of thunder,—namely, the syllables Da-Da-Da, meaning, "*Dāmyata* (Be restrained;) *Datta* (be liberal;) *Dayādhan* (be clement). Therefore every person shall learn this triad of duty,—restraint, liberality and clemency. (V—11, 3).

The reader will perceive that these three divine precepts when closely analysed, will be found to embrace all the moral rules; and the observance of them, coupled with an



unmixed devotion to the Supreme, will secure for the disciple that peace which he is required to obtain.

And lastly, Rule 15 advises the disciple to "desire possessions above all." This is the outcome of the two preceding rules. When he acquires power and peace in the sense in which they are explained, he will be in possession of most of what may be necessary for his spiritual advancement; for such possessions belong to the pure soul. Let us remember what the Text says in Clause A. of Rule 16, viz., that the "possessions which a disciple ought to desire, are such as are possessed by all pure souls equally, and are thus the special property of the whole, only when united." This idea is well illustrated in the following speech of Great Prahlada. He said:—

"Whatever power I possess, Father, is neither the result of magic rites, nor is separable from my nature. It is no more than what is possessed by all those in whose hearts the Eternal abides. He who meditates not of wrong to others, but considers them as himself, is free from the effects of sin; inasmuch as the cause does not exist. But he who inflicts pain upon others in act, thought or speech, sows the seed of future birth; and the fruit that awaits him after birth is pain. I wish no evil to any, and do and speak no offence; for I behold the Supreme in all beings, as in my own soul. Whence should corporeal or mental suffering, or pain inflicted by elements or gods, affect me, whose heart is thoroughly purified by the contemplation of the Supreme? Love then for all creatures will be assiduously cherished by all those who understand that the universal soul is in all things"—(Vishnu Purana I—XIX.)

Such, generally speaking, are the Power, Peace, and Possessions which a disciple is required to desire and acquire; but in a special sense, they mean the possessions, peace and power, which a disciple would obtain by the practice of Yoga, which is essential for the attainment of the final goal. Some superficial thinkers consider that Yoga is prohibited by the Sage Veda-Vyasa, in his *Brahma-sutra*. (II. I., 3); but from the antecedent and subsequent passages, it is clear that what is forbidden is that kind of so-called Yoga, which has mundane matters for its object. Indeed, it is impossible that Yoga in its really spiritual sense should have been denounced by that venerable Sage; for Yoga, from the Sanscrit root *yuj*—to join,—means the attainment of the Supreme by the individual soul; and if this is condemned, then the whole foundation upon which the fabric of every true religion stands is destroyed; and no Sage like Sri Veda Vyasa can, for a moment, be presumed to have advocated such a course. On the other hand, numerous works composed by the same Divine Author, authorize, and strongly inculcate the necessity of Yoga in its highly spiritual form—vide Sri Bhagavata XI, XV; Vishnu Purana VI—VII; Markandeya Purana, Ch. XXXIV., &c., &c., In the Bhagavat-gita (VI, 23), Yoga is defined to mean "the disunion from conjunction of pain from adherence to worldly things, and union with things spiritual"—and Sri Krishna ordains that Yoga shall be practised (*Ibid* II—48). Indeed authorities for the performance of Yoga are to be found in the Upanishads and the Vedas. In the course of time, different systems of Yoga have sprung up; and the disciple should consult the best of the teachers before he selects one for his guidance.

Generally, Yoga consists of eight parts or subservients:—1. *Yama* (forbearance of certain actions); 2. *Niyama* (observance of certain actions); 3. *Asana* (posture in which the Yoga-practitioner is to sit when engaged in meditation); 4. *Pranayama* (modifications of breathing during such meditation); 5. *Pratyahara* (restraint of organs from susceptibility to outward impressions, and directing them entirely to internal perceptions); 6. *Dharana* (abstraction; fixing the mind upon the Great One); 7. *Dhyana* (contemplation of this Supreme); and 8. *Samadhi* (unceasing and immovable concentration of thought on the supreme). This last stage is arrived at when the disciple obtains an accurate knowledge of the great soul.

I must leave the disciple to study the works abovenamed in order to understand the eight foregoing sub-divisions of this sublime Yoga-Vidya; but a summary of what is comprised in the first and second divisions (*Yama* and *Niyama*) is, I think, necessary for the purpose of these Annotations.

To be brief, *Yama* includes five acts of forbearance; and *Niyama* has five acts of observance. To the former class belong, 1st *Ahimsa* (Freedom from injury, and practice of active benevolence); 2ndly *Satya* (Freedom from all that is untrue; and practice of veracity); 3rdly *Asteya* (Freedom

from appropriation of what belongs to others, and practice of honesty); 4thly *Brahma Charya* (Freedom from sensual desires, and practice of continence); and 5thly *Aparigraha* (Freedom from interest, and practice of disinterestedness.) And to the latter part (*Niyama*) belong, 1st *Saucha* (purity of mind, speech and body); 2nd *Santosha* (cheerfulness and contentedness under all circumstances); 3rd *Svadhaya* (religious study); 4th *Tapas* (religious austerity), and 5th *Niyatama* (Firmness of mind). The disciple will find, on a careful analysis, that all these rules of forbearance and observance, are comprised within the Rules given in the present Treatise,—namely, Rules 1 to 16, and the preamble.

The disciple who applies himself to the practice of Yoga is called "Yoga-Yajuy." (The practitioner of Yoga, the neophyte); and when he attains the Divine wisdom, he is termed the "*Vinishpannasamadhi*," (one whose meditations are successfully accomplished, by his arriving at the last stage of Yoga, namely, the *Samadhi*,—i. e., the adept). (Vishnu Purana. VI. VII.)

Colonel H. S. Olcott has beautifully compared the Yoga with Mesmerism, in his Introduction to the Treatise on the Yoga Philosophy of Patanjali, in these words:—"Yoga is self-mesmerization. It differs from the practice of the ordinary mesmeric operator, in that the subject in this case is the mystic's own body, instead of another person. In both examples there is the development of a current of psychic aura, if the word is permissible, and its direction an operative WILL upon a selected receptive object. The mesmeriser throws out his current upon his passive subject, and in that organization provokes the result his mind had conceived and his will commanded. The Yogi develops the same potential aura, but turns it in upon himself. He firstly determines concentration, vanquishes the natural restlessness of the body and supremacy of the physical appetites; reducing the physical self to the condition of a passive subject. Then only, when his will has fully asserted its power, can he develop within himself those transcendental powers of intelligence which are fitted to observe the laws and phenomena of the spiritual world."

This process of self-mesmerization (Yoga) produces an extraordinary self-illumination, developing the higher faculties of man, hitherto lying latent and dormant; it fills his heart with a genuine feeling of compassion, sympathy and beneficence towards all beings, without any distinction whatsoever; and endows him with the knowledge of universal sciences; knowledge of the former state of his existences and knowledge of the past, present, and future events; besides powers to control the course of nature and change them; not to mention such comparatively small powers as clairvoyance, clairaudience and so forth;—all tending ultimately to enable him to behold the Great Soul within himself, without himself and everywhere. Such is the effect of the sublime science, *Yoga-Vidya*; and such are the powers and possessions which the disciple is required to desire and obtain.

Now, let us pause a while, and make a resumé of all that has been said from the beginning.

The preamble gives the preliminary rules calculated to ensure the purity of the disciple's heart, and the steadiness of his mind. Then the Rules 1 to 4 (referring to ambition, desire of life, and desire of comfort), show how a disciple should behave in respect of himself, in his individual capacity. The Rules 5 to 8 (relating to the sense of separateness, sensation and growth) describe the line of conduct which the disciple should follow in respect of others, in his social capacity. The Rules 9 to 12 (adverting to the desire of what is within us, without us, and unseizable), declare how the disciple should act in respect of the Great Soul, in his highly spiritual capacity. And lastly the Rules 13 to 16, (which refer to the acquisition of spiritual power, peace and possessions) are calculated to advise the disciple as to the best materials that he should furnish himself with for the purpose of accomplishing the journey to his final goal with safety.

When these Rules are properly understood and observed by the disciple, he will be in a position to proclaim in the words of a great personage referred to in the Chandogya Upanishad:—"I desire real glory, the glory of glories. I shall not, no, I shall never again,—enter the white toothless all-devouring slippery object (i. e., the womb). I shall proceed to the 'Sabha' (Hall) of Prajapati, the Immortal universal Soul." (VIII, XIV—1.). That is the Hall of

learning, to which our Text alludes in the subsequent parts of this Treatise; and that is the Hall (figuratively of course) to which the Text requires the disciple to seek the way in the following 17th and other Rules.

(To be Continued).

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Where then is the motive for occult study? one may be tempted to ask. The reply is, there ought not to be any motive for it. A love for it should be made to spring up like the love of an artist for his art. This kind of glowing affection for a higher spiritual life is the firmest basis on which a neophyte can take up his stand. Any other attitude, however disguised, will but lead to unsatisfactory results.

In confirmation of the remarks herein made, I appeal to the Bhagavat-gita and that priceless little book lately published, entitled "Light on the Path."

THE SOLAR SPHINX.

### LIGHT ON THE PATH.

WRITTEN down by M. C., Fellow of the Theosophical Society, London, 1885; and annotated by P. Sreeuevas Row, Fellow of the Theosophical Society, Madras, 1885.

(Continued from page 233.)

17. *Seek out the way.*
18. *Seek the way by retreating within.*
19. *Seek the way by advancing boldly without.*

By recalling to memory what has been stated with reference to Rules 9 and 10—(where the disciple is required to desire that which is within himself and without him), it will be perceived that the final goal to be reached by the disciple is *only One*. "That which shines glorious above yonder heaven, above this world, and above all others, large or small, is the same as that which shines within mankind." (Chandagya-Upanishat III.—XIV.—7.) But though the goal is but one, the paths leading to it are more than one. Broadly speaking it may be said that the paths are two,—those lying within and without mankind,—all other roads being merely the branches of these two. This is well explained, though symbolically, in the Maitri-Upanishat VI.—I. and other sacred works. The "golden being in yonder sun" and "that which lies in the lotus of the human heart," are not distinct. The lotus of the heart means nothing but Akasa (Ether) which pervades the universe, including of course human hearts. So that the Ether, whether existing in the human heart or in the universe, may equally be called the lotus; each having its own system of petals, which substantially mean the different points of the compass. The *One* then is to be sought for by *two* principal ways,—by retreating within and by advancing without. All your success in struggling against and giving up evil, and all your success in acquiring virtue, throughout ages, will work for you a beneficial effect, and form a nucleus for good actions to gather round in the future; and this secret treasure will be preserved for you by the soul within you. It holds this treasure for you to reach it; and it is hither that you should seek the way, as ordained in Rule 17. In this way, this rule corresponds with Rule 17 of the second section of this Treatise, which directs the disciple to "inquire of the inmost, the one, of its final secret, which it holds for you through the ages." And when this mystery is learnt, the disciple's further progress becomes exceedingly easy; and he may then be able to seek the way by advancing without himself, to study the other laws of being, of nature, &c., as set forth in Rule 19.

How these ways are to be sought is fully explained in Rule 20, which, for the sake of easy reference, I have divided into clauses as follows:—

20 (A). *Seek it, not by any one road. To each temperament there is one road, which seems the most desirable.*

For, however the primary constituents of the physical bodies and the nature of the individual souls are similar in many respects, yet the result of good or bad Karma accumulated for ages, works such great changes in the case of each individual, that no two persons agree in their moral or spiritual conditions in every respect, so much so that for

all practical purposes we may safely hold that the nature of each man is different, or rather, has become different from that of every other. Consequently the path to be followed by one can hardly suit the other. "Even the wise man," says Sri Krishna, "seeks for that which is homogeneous to his own nature. All things act according to their respective natures" (Bhagavat-gita, III—33). And then, recognising this as an inevitable necessity, Sri Krishna proceeds to declare that each should choose for himself a particular path best suited to his own peculiar condition, and the Dharma (i. e., the method adopted for reaching the final goal), thus chosen by each person, though contrary to, is better than that of another, though ever so well followed. To die in one's own Dharma thus selected, is really efficacious, while the adoption of that which another has chosen would lead to fearful consequences (Bhagavat-gita, III—35). And it must be remembered that although each individual has to select one road for himself, yet the means to be adopted for traversing it are multifarious. So the Treatise says:—

20 (B). *But the way is not found by devotion alone; by religious contemplation alone, by ardent progress, by self-sacrificing labour, by studious observation of life. None alone can take the disciple more than one step onwards. All steps are necessary to make up the ladder:—*

So the Mandaka Upanishat says:—"The soul cannot be obtained by a person without power (i. e., the kind of power already explained), nor by indifference, nor by devotion, nor by knowledge void of devotion; but if the wise strives with all these supports, then enters the soul the abode of Brahme" (III—II—4). And Mann, after declaring that man should be really triumphant over all his organs, adds that "when one organ fails, by that single failure his Divine knowledge passes away, as water flows away through one hole in a leathern vessel" (II—99). When the united efforts of the whole man are thus put forward in pursuit of the great end in view, then everything will add its quota and serve to facilitate the ascent of the ladder in a very successful manner.

20 (C). *The vices of men become steps in the ladder, one by one, as they are surmounted. The virtues of man are steps indeed, necessary—not by any means to be dispensed with.*

No doubt each act of virtue has its own reward, and will lead us onwards on the steps of the ladder; but the step gained by surmounting a vice is much more firm than the step gained by the practice of any act of virtue. For a person, who goes on practising virtue in his own way,—without being familiar with any particular kind of vice,—is at any moment liable to be beguiled by the alluring temptations of such vice, and to be immersed headlong in it, so deep and fast that he would find it exceedingly difficult to extricate himself from its trammels, if ever he thinks of doing so at all;—but the case is different with a person who has eaten enough of the fruits of vice, and who, by personal experience, gradually comes to look upon its pleasures as illusive, transient, and mischievous; feels ashamed of his ever having indulged in them; and grows really penitent and sincerely vigilant in his resolution to avoid their repetition. Such a person is incapable of retreating into similar vice again; he has surmounted it; he has thereby gained a step in the ladder; as firm as it should be. But here it should be particularly understood that it is not intended, nor is it in any way desirable as a precedent condition, that one should have necessarily indulged in vice before he can prepare himself to secure a firm footing on the ladder. Happy are those whose life knows no vice, and whose mind is strong proof against all vicious temptations,—and sure enough their progress on the spiritual ladder is as certain as it is firm. But all are not similarly blessed. Many do err; and what is intended in the foregoing observations is to show that not only there is hope even for such erring people, but that there is also a chance of their placing a more firm foot on the ladder than others, if they only mend their ways, with a strong resolution not to revert to their former vices for ever hereafter.

"Although," says Sri Krishna, "thou art the greatest of all offenders, yet thou shalt be able to cross the gulf of sin, if thou avalest thyself of the bark of wisdom. As the natural fire, O Arjuna, reduceth the wood to ashes, so may the fire of wisdom reduce the whole Karma to ashes."

(Bhagavat-gita, V—36 and 87). Here Arjuna suggests a doubt as to the fate of those sinners who endeavour to reform themselves, but who are cut off from this world before they can succeed in working out the effects of their evil Karma. "Doth not the fool," he asks, "who is found not standing in the path of Brahma, and who is thus as it were, falling between good and evil, like a broken cloud, come to nothing?" (*Ibid*, VII—38). But Sri Krishna assures him that, "such a one's destruction is found neither here nor in the world above. No man who is doing good attains an evil condition." (*Ibid*, VII—39).

Now, taking together the case of people who are always pure, and of those who have been redeeming their purity by surmounting vices, the Text proceeds as follows:—

20 (D). *Yet though they create a fair atmosphere and a happy future, they are useless if they stand alone. The whole nature of man must be used wisely by the one who desires to enter the way. Each man is to himself absolutely the way, the truth, and the life. But he is only so when he grasps the whole individuality firmly, and by the force of his awakened spiritual will recognises this individuality as not himself, but that thing which he has with pain created for his own use; and by means of which he purposes, as his growth slowly develops his intelligence, to reach to the life beyond individuality.—When he knows that for this his wonderful complex separated life exists, then, indeed, and then only, he is upon the way.*

The disciple should enter the path, heart and soul, and he should remember what Sri Krishna says:—"Thou shouldst strive to raise thyself, by thyself, as self is the friend, of self." (Bhagavat-gita, VI—4). He should by the awakened will, i.e., the sacred will springing up by means of a virtuous conduct, recognise the fact that his sense of individuality is not a portion of his soul, but is one created by unbecoming conduct since its combination with the body. The disciple should try to reach to the life beyond such individuality. What is meant by this, is explained in the following rule and remarks.

20 (E). *Seek it by plunging into the mysterious and glorious depths of your own inmost being. Seek it by testing all experience, by utilizing the senses, in order to understand the growth and meaning of individuality and the beauty and obscurity of those other divine fragments, which are struggling side by side with you and form the race to which you belong.*

The disciple should first understand what secret treasure is preserved for him in the inmost recesses of his heart; and in doing so he should test all experiences by utilising the senses in a becoming manner. It is not meant that he should yield to the seductions of sense in order to know it. When he has chosen and entered the path, he cannot yield to these seductions without shame. Yet, he can experience them without horror: can weigh, observe, and test them, and wait with the patience of confidence for the hour when they shall affect him no longer. But at the same time he should remember what has been already observed, namely, that he should not condemn the man that yields to such seductions—but on the contrary stretch out his hand to him as a brother pilgrim. He should not for a moment fancy himself a thing apart from the mass. When he has found the beginning of the way, the star of his heart will show its light, and by that light he will perceive how great is the darkness in which it burns! Mind, heart, brain, and all are obscure and dark until the disciple wins the first great battle against his senses, and so forth. But let him not be appalled by that sight. He should keep his eyes fixed on that small light, and it will grow, much to his advantage. Even the darkness within him has its special advantage. It will help him to understand the helplessness of those who have seen no light, and whose souls are in profound gloom. Bearing this in mind, the disciple should not blame others,—should not shrink from them; but try to lift a little of the heavy Karma of the world, and give his aid to the few strong hands that hold back the powers of darkness from obtaining complete victory. By doing so the disciple enters into a partnership of joy, which brings indeed terrible toil and profound sadness, but also a great and ever-increasing delight.

Having thus made sufficient researches within himself; and by testing all experience by utilising his senses, the disciple must proceed a step farther, by advancing without.

20 (F). *Seek it by the study of the laws of being, the laws of nature, the laws of the supernatural.*

While the disciple searches for and examines the treasure deposited within himself as above indicated, he ought not to discard any thing that is outside. Immense gain is effected by a right contemplation of the displays which the visible works of the creation exhibit. "Behold this, the vast and extensive universe," says the Rig Veda, "and have confidence in His prowess." (I.—103—5). "The seven rivers display His glory; and heaven, earth and sky display His manifested form. O Indra, the sun and moon perform their revolutions that we may see and have faith in what we see." (Rig Veda, I.—102—2). Even the scriptures of those sectarians who hold up "Revelation" as the sole refuge of man, are full of sublime descriptions of the visible creation, and of interesting references to the various objects which adorn the scenery of nature. Without the cultivation of our reasoning powers, and an investigation of the law and economy of Nature, we can never hope to appreciate and understand the excellence of that which we are in search of. The universe is the macrocosm (Brahmānda), while an individual being is the microcosm (Pindānda), one is allied to the other, and the study of one is essential for the right understanding of the other. "Yonder sun is the external soul and Prana is the internal; from one the other is inferred," says the Maitri Upanishat. (VI—I). Hence it would be extremely prejudicial to the disciple's interests, if he were to narrow his search to within the circle of his own heart, and shut his eyes to all that lies beyond. Remember that "Para-brahma is one whose centre is everywhere, and whose circumference is nowhere."

And what next?

20 (G). *And seek it by making the profound obsequance of the soul to the dim star that burns within. Steadily as you watch and worship, its light will grow stronger. Then you may know you have found the beginning of the way. And when you have found the end, its light will suddenly become the infinite light.*

The disciple, after having made researches within and without, should ultimately turn back to his internal spirit, for it is there that he is to behold that which he seeks to behold. "Lastly," says the Chandagya Upanishat "Approaching his own spirit, and calmly reflecting on his object, let him enlogize." (I. III—12). And the result is that "having beheld the exquisite light in our own hearts, and beheld it also high above all darkness, we attain to that Lord of Lords and the noblest of lights, the Divine Sun." (*Ibid*, III. XVII.—7).

What a disciple has to do after finding the beginning of the way, is thus declared in the following rule.

21 (A). *Look for the flower, to bloom in the silence that follows the storm: not till then.*

The pause of the soul is the moment of wonder; and the next is the moment of satisfaction; that is the silence.

Now the disciple has found the way; but only its beginning. The first shoot of the plant has appeared, but the flower of the plant is still in the bud. We can hardly expect it to put forth its blossoms, until it is free from the excitement of its struggle against the contending and obstructive elements. And so it is with individuals. The disciple cannot hope that the flower of wisdom will bloom until his struggle against the allurements of his sensual desires and appetites has successfully terminated, and a perfect silence has begun to reign, as a calm after the storm. This idea is beautifully illustrated in the Maitri Upanishat:—The "syllable Om is sound; its end is silence, soundless, void of sorrow or fear; full of joy and satisfaction; firm, immovable, indestructible," and so on (VI—22). The Chandagya Upanishat (Ch. I) describes the syllable Om, as the quintessence of all essences, the noblest part of the Veda, the animating principle of the body, the supreme and the most adorable; the Para-brahm itself. It is ordained that this mysterious and sacred word should be adored, chanted, and chanted repeatedly. Broadly speaking, it is composed of three letters A. U. M. But it has also what may be called a half-letter (Ardha-mātra), which consists of the silence (Śānta), which ensues after the word is uttered, and more especially after uninterrupted successive repetition of the word with a perfectly peaceful mind. This sacred word removes every taint of sensual desires and appetites, and lands the disciple in a perfect blissful silence. This is the sort of silence which the

disciple should attain; and this is the silence in which the flower blossoms as the text says.

It is not however meant that the seed thrown does not germinate at all in the meantime. The text assures us that,—

21 (B). *It shall grow; it will shoot up; it will make branches and leaves, and form buds, while the battle lasts. But, not till the whole personality of the man is dissolved and melted—not until it is held by the divine fragment which has created it, as a mere subject for grave experiment and experience,—not until the whole nature has yielded and become subject unto its higher self, can the bloom open. Then will come a calm such as comes in a tropical country after the heavy rain, when nature works so swiftly that one may see her action. Such a calm will come to the harassed spirit.*

This plant will certainly grow during the storm and struggle; but it does not always happen that it is in blossom during such period. Very often we see a tree flourishing in the luxuriance of its foliage, with widespread branches and a huge trunk, and yet bearing neither flower nor fruit owing to the absence of certain conditions essential to a complete development of all the inherent properties of the seed thrown into the soil. So it is with man. He may find the beginning of the right path;—may even have a capacity for advancing further, and yet, if he does not earnestly strive in that direction, his further progress is hopelessly retarded. At this stage, when the disciple has risen to a level higher than his neighbours, it behoves him to put forth his unswerving energies, and work out the Karma with a cheerful mind. Then, sure enough, a calm will come to him, in which the bloom will open in all its beauty and fragrance, and when he attains this state of perfect mental calm, he is in a position to behold in his own soul the object of his researches." (Maitri Upanishat, IV—34).

What occurs next, is thus stated in the Text:—

21 (C). *And in the deep silence, the mysterious event will occur which will prove that the way has been found. Call it by what name you will, it is a voice that speaks where there is none to speak; it is a messenger that comes, a messenger without form or substance; or it is the flower of the soul that has opened. It cannot be described by any metaphor. But it can be felt after, looked for and desired, even amid the raging storm.*

This is an event exceedingly sacred and mysterious, and baffles all attempts at description. "The happiness which comes to the mind which has wasted away its defilement by intense abstraction, and which has merged itself in the soul, cannot be uttered by the voice; and can only be apprehended by its own perception." (Maitri Upanishat, VI—34). This opening of the bloom is the glorious moment, when perception awakes; with it comes confidence, knowledge, and certainty.

21 (D). *The silence may last for a moment of time, or it may last a thousand years. But it will end. Yet you will carry its strength with you. Again and again the battle must be fought and won. It is only for an interval that nature can be still.*

Nature stands still between man's physical death and rebirth; the interval may be short or long according to each individual's merit and other conditions. But however this may be, it is certain that what is gained once is never lost. Once having passed the storm and attained peace, it is then always possible to learn, even though the disciple waver, hesitate and turn aside. The voice of silence remains within him, and though he leaves the path utterly, yet one day it will resound, and rend him asunder, and separate his passions from his divine possibilities. Then with pain and desperate cries from the deserted lower self, he will return to the pure path. "No man that does good can ever attain an evil condition" says Sri Krishna (Bhagavat-gita, VII—39).

Here we have arrived at the end of Section I; and the Text has the following concluding remarks:

*These written above are the first of the Rules which are written on the walls of the Hall of Learning. Those that ask shall have. Those that desire to read shall read. Those who desire to learn shall learn.*

The Hall of Learning is what is described as the "Sabha" of Pragapati (Lord of men) in the Chandagya Upanishat, (VIII—14); and as the Sda of Brahma in the Maitri Upani-

shat, (VI—28). The rules "written on the walls of the Hall of Learning," mean the rules connected with Brahmagyana—(Divine wisdom). To go to the Hall is to enter the condition in which the learning of such rules becomes possible.

Those that ask shall have these Rules. But when an ordinary man (i.e., one who is not a disciple in the sense in which that word is explained above) asks, his voice is not heard, for he asks with his mind only, and the voice of the mind is only heard on that plane in which the mind acts. Therefore, except in the case of those who have mastered the foregoing twenty-one Rules, it cannot be said that those that ask shall have. To ask is to feel the hunger within—the yearning of spiritual aspirations. To be able to read means having obtained the power, in a small degree, of gratifying that hunger.

To read is to read with the eyes of spirit, and not the eyes of the flesh (More of this, hereafter).

Those who desire to learn shall learn. It must be so. When the disciple is capable of entering the hall of learning, he will always find his Master there; and when the disciple is ready to learn, he is accepted, acknowledged, and recognised. For he has lit the lamp, and it cannot be hidden. (See Bhagavat-gita, XVIII—70).

Section I is thus brought to a close with the following blessing to the disciple.

*Peace be with you.*

The word "peace" corresponds with the Sanscrit word Sānti, or Swasti, which is used at the end of a part or whole of certain Aryan sacred works, e. g. Taitereya Upanishat, II—1; its object being to bless the disciple who is struggling to remove all obstacles to knowledge; and thereby obtain peace of mind. This blessing of peace is given by the Master to his beloved disciples, whom he considers as himself; and such disciples, be it remembered, are not confined to any particular locality. They are to be found in the East as well in the West, and everywhere.

By One Supreme this universe is pervaded; even every world in the whole unlimited circle of nature. Man (wherever he may be), by abandoning all that which appertains to the perishable world, enjoys pure Happiness and Peace. (Isa Upanishat—I.)



(To be continued.)

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## LIGHT ON THE PATH.

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WRITTEN down by M. C., Fellow of the Theosophical Society, London, 1885 ; and annotated by P. Sreenivas Row, Fellow of the Theosophical Society, Madras, 1885.

(Continued from page 258.)

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### SECTION II.

In the first section of this Treatise, the disciple was instructed as to what was to be avoided and what was to be desired ; and he was told that, after a successful struggle against his passions and so forth, a calm would come to his harassed spirit ; and that in this deep silence a mysterious event would occur, which would prove that the beginning of the way was found.

Now, the object of the rules in this second section is to advise the disciple as to his future line of conduct with the view of making further progress. Indeed, this second section is intended to indicate to some extent the secret of the transition from the *Sushupti* to the *Turya Avastha*. It must be noticed that *Sushupti* does not here mean sound sleep as it is ordinarily understood ; but refers to the condition of *Pragnya* (a sort of consciousness), when its *Vyâpti* (extension or activity) in the *Sûkshma* and *Sthûla Upâdhis* (i. e., gross and subtle vestures), is completely restrained. The final secrets referred to in this Treatise relate to the mystery of the Logos known as *Atma*. It is not possible to explain the subject fully without referring to the secrets of Initiation, which cannot, of course, be divulged in a work intended for general publication. Moreover, the disciple has now arrived at that stage, which is as sacred as it is mysterious, and which is imperceptible to the sense and incomprehensible to the reason in the sense in which those words are popularly understood ; and any attempt at a written description of the events which would henceforth follow would therefore be utterly futile. The disciple should trust to his own intuition and experiences ; and try to solve the mystery gradually as it presents itself to him, by the help of the spiritual light which by this time has begun to illumine his inner self in an unmistakable manner. He has lit the lamp as it were, and must be able

to see all that can be seen at the stage at which he has arrived. All teachings henceforward ought to come to him from sources internal and not external; for, as stated in Rule 19 *supra*, he is on the threshold of Divinity; and for him no law can be framed, and no guide can exist. Moreover, all that hereafter occurs to the disciple is of such a nature as to be felt and recognised by himself alone, and not such as can be communicated to him by others. However, he will find that some amount of light is thrown on this profoundly mysterious subject by the explanations furnished in the following pages.

Under any circumstances, it would be impossible for the disciple to master the subject until the first battle is won; for the mind may recognise the truth, and yet the spirit may not be able to receive it. But, once having passed through the storm, and attained peace, by a careful study and observance of the rules given in the first section, the disciple would always find it easy to understand the spirit of the ensuing rules, and learn the truth for himself, even though he waver, hesitate, and turn aside. The voice of the silence remains within him; and though he leave the path utterly, yet one day it will resound and rend him asunder, and separate his passions from his divine possibilities. Then, with pain and desperate cries from the deserted lower-self, he will return. This is a very comforting assurance, but the disciple would do well not to put himself in a position which is calculated to impede his progress for howsoever short a time and plunge him into obscurity, at a time when he had but just lit the lamp and begun to find the way. It would be highly prejudicial to his spiritual progress if he should slacken his energies and thereby sacrifice the bright and immediate prospects, in anticipation of a distant possibility of regaining the same on some future occasion. Time flies; flies noiselessly it is true, but so rapidly that "no winds along the hills can flee as swiftly as he." We can get back almost everything that is lost, except Time, which is absolutely irrecoverable. So precious is Time; and the disciple should make the best use of the time which he may have at his command during life. The Text gives the following warning note to the disciple, as a prelude to the forthcoming Rules:

*Out of the silence that is peace, a resonant voice shall rise. And this voice will say, "It is not well; thou hast reaped, now thou must sow. And knowing this voice to be the silence itself, thou shalt obey."*

The disciple should not be elated with whatever success he has hitherto achieved. All that he has found is but the beginning of the way; and should he become careless or indifferent, not only his onward progress will be retarded as a matter of course, but even the little advance he has made on the path will be so far obscured as to require renewed and powerful efforts to regain the former light. No doubt he has reaped some good fruits of his past labours; but unless he sows again the seed of virtue, he cannot reap a fresh harvest calculated to afford to him that nourishment and strength which are essential to his future advancement, until at last he attains to that highest station, when there is no death or birth for him. Those that have passed through the silence and felt its peace and retained its strength, long that the disciple shall likewise pass through it; and it behoves the disciples therefore to be on the alert, and persevere in his course with a redoubled vigour;—more especially because he has succeeded in making several acquisitions which fairly enable him to push himself forward in the path with a bright prospect of ultimate success. What those acquisitions are, the Text proceeds to explain as follows:

*Thou, who art now a disciple able to stand, able to hear, able to see, able to speak, who hast conquered desire and attained to self knowledge, who hast seen thy soul in its bloom and recognised it, and heard the voice of the silence, go thou to the Hall of Learning and read what is written there for thee.*

Let the disciple understand that to be able to stand is to have confidence; to be able to hear is to have opened the doors of the soul; to be able to see is to have attained perception; to be able to speak is to have attained the power of helping others; to have conquered desire is to have learned how to use and control the self; to have attained to self knowledge is to have attained to the inner fortress whence the personal man can be viewed with impartiality; to have seen the soul in its bloom is to have obtained a

momentary glimpse in oneself of the transfiguration which shall eventually make the disciple more than man; to recognise is to achieve the great task of gazing upon the blazing light without dropping the eyes, and not falling back in terror, as though before some ghastly phantom. This happens to some; and the disciple should be very careful and firm in this respect. He should always be steady in his mind and full of courage; especially because he is forewarned of what is to happen, and because, moreover, the event would be to his glory and highest spiritual advantage. If he chances to be weak, and shrinks from beholding the Light which presents itself to him, it need hardly be said that he loses the victory when he had all but won it. To hear the voice of silence, is to understand that from within comes the only true guidance; and lastly, to go to the Hall of Learning is to enter the state in which learning becomes possible. Then will many words be written there for the disciple; and written in fiery letters for him easily to read. For, when the disciple is ready the Master is ready also. This position of the disciple is figuratively described in the Maitri Upanishat in these words:—  
"Having passed beyond the earthly concerns, the senses, and their objects; and having then seized the bow, whose string is pure life and whose wood is fortitude, with the arrow of unselfishness,—the disciple strikes down the first warder of the door of Brahma" (IV—28.)

It must be understood that the hearing and seeing, &c., spoken of above do not mean the hearing and seeing with the physical ears and eyes. Every human being, nay almost every animal—unless the faculties are abnormally impaired—is able to hear and see in the sense in which those terms are popularly understood; and this would consequently be no new acquisition in the case of the disciple. The faculties by which the disciple is now able to hear and see are the inner faculties and not the outer. That this is what our Text means is clear from Sections 14, 15, 16, &c. *supra*. This is not intended to mean that in the course of training to which the disciple subjects himself, the external faculties are useless. As well explained in the Vishnu Purana, the knowledge obtained through the outer senses shines like a lamp, while that obtained by Gnâna (divine wisdom) breaks upon the obscurity like the Sun (VI. V.) The wise see not with the eye of flesh (Vishnu Purana, VI. VI.) The soul sees and enjoys with the aid of the mental celestial eye. (Chandogya Upanishat, VIII. XII. 5) The Gnâna Chakshas (eye of wisdom) and Divya Chakshas (celestial, or luminous eye) are spoken of in the Mundaka Upanishat II. 1. 2; in the Bhagavat Gita XI. 8 and XIII. 35; in the Maha-Bharata, Anusasana Parva XIV. 10, and Aswamedha Parva XVIII. 30; the Chandogya Upanishat VIII. XII. 5 and other sacred works; and the method of developing such inner faculties is explained in the Sri Bhagavata-Skanda XI and Chapter XIV; in Patanjali's Aphorisms on Yoga, and in other works.

This sublime subject will be fully discussed in the next Section on Karma.

Now the Text proceeds to give some practical instructions to the disciple to assist his future progress:

1. *Stand aside in the coming battle, and though thou fightest, be not thou the warrior.*

2. *Look for the warrior, and let him fight in thee.*

3. *Take his orders for battle and obey them.*

4. *Obey him not as though he were a general, but as though he were thyself, and his spoken words were the utterance of thy secret desires; for he is thyself, yet infinitely wiser and stronger than thyself. Look for him, else in the fever and hurry of the fight thou mayest pass him; and he will not know thee unless thou knowest him. If thy cry reach his listening ear then will he fight in thee and fill the dull void within. And if this is so, then canst thou go through the fight cool and unwearied, standing aside and letting him battle for thee. Then it will be impossible for thee to strike one blow amiss. But if thou look not for him, if thou pass him by, then there is no safeguard for thee. Thy brain will reel, thy heart grow uncertain; and in the dust of the battle-field thy sight and senses will fail, and thou wilt not know thy friends from thy enemies.*

*He is thyself, yet thou art but finite and liable to error. He is eternal and is sure. He is eternal Truth. When once he has entered thee and become thy warrior, he will*



*never utterly desert thee, and at the day of the great peace he will become one with thee.*

These Rules 1 to 4 form one group. The Battle they speak of is the struggle against the passions, which ought to be duly restrained and placed under proper control. And the individual who is to fight the battle is Man, who, roughly speaking, is made up of Body and Soul, which are dependent on one another, inasmuch as the Body is worthless without the Soul; and the Soul,—so long as it remains enveloped in the Body—can only act through the Body. In fact the Body is the vehicle of the soul, and it is by their combination that man can move and live; but the rider is invisible to the world at large, and all ordinary people see the vehicle rolling along as if automatically; and suppose that it, the vehicle, *i. e.*, the physical body, is everything; and that it alone constitutes the Man. But as the disciple, in his present advanced stage, is able to understand things better than the generality of mankind, Rules 1 to 4 enjoin upon him the necessity of looking for the real warrior within him, namely, the inner man, the rider, the soul itself, and making him fight the battle, although to all outward appearances, it is the vehicle, namely, the outer man, that is engaged in the fight as the warrior.

And this is so for the simple reason that the outer man cannot fight the battle successfully. The body, which is represented as the outer man, is finite, and destructible; it is mortal, and is held by death. (Katha Upanishat II. 18. Chandogya Upanishat VIII. XII. 1). And further, it cannot safely be left to itself in the uncontrolled exercise of its senses. "He who attends to the inclinations of the senses, has in them a certain concern; from this concern arises passion; from passion, anger; from anger, delusion; from delusion, deprivation of memory; from loss of memory, the loss of reason; and from the loss of reason, the loss of all" (Bhagavat Gita II. 62).

Hence Rule 1 means that although outwardly it is the outer man that fights, yet he should not be the real warrior, as in that case he would be certain to fail and lose the victory.

And then Rule 2 says that the disciple should look for the warrior and allow him to fight in him. Who is this warrior? It is no other than the inner man, the individual Soul. As this is indestructible and wiser and stronger than the other, it is better fitted to fight the battle. It cannot certainly act without the body; and what is required is, of course, that they should both be combined together in battle; making the body subordinate and subservient to the soul. "The body is the car; the senses are the horses; and mind is the reins. And the rider is the soul itself." (Katha Upanishat III. 3 and 4.) The mischievous consequences that would follow were the horses left entirely without guidance, are too obvious to need description.

But at the same time the outer man should not consider himself a stranger to the inner man. In one respect they are distinct; but in other respects, *viz.*, so long as the soul remains embodied, they both together form one man. In this sense the inner man is the outer man for all practical purposes; and the inner man's orders are no other than the secret desires of the outer man himself. In order to achieve a complete victory, the outer man must invoke the aid of the inner man, and obey his command. This is the meaning of Rule 3 as fully explained in Rule 4.

After thus recognizing the Soul and allowing it to fight the battle, the disciple should listen to its advice and obey it implicitly.

5. *Listen to the song of life.*
6. *Store in your memory the melody you hear.*
7. *Learn from it the lesson of harmony.*

The teachings of a pure Soul are the songs of life. There is a natural melody, an obscure fount though it be, in every human heart. At first the disciple may not find it, or may find only discord. But he should look deeper; and if he is disappointed, he should pause a while and look deeper still; and then he will find it; for sure enough it is there. It may be covered over, and utterly concealed and silenced, but it is there. At the base of our nature, we shall find faith, hope and love; and he who chooses evil, does so simply because he refuses or neglects to look within himself; and shuts his ears to the melody of his heart, as he blinds his eyes to the light of his Soul. He finds it easier to live in desires, and does not care to look beyond what is necessary for their satisfaction. But underneath all life is the strong current

that cannot be checked; the great waters are there in reality. Seek diligently then, and you will perceive that none, not the most wretched of creatures but is a part of it, however he blind himself to the fact, and build up for himself a phantasmal outer form of horror. In that sense we may fairly say that all those among whom we struggle on are fragments of the Divine. And so deceptive is the illusion in which we live that it is hard to guess where we shall first detect the sweet voice in the hearts of others. But we must know that it is certainly within ourselves. We should only look for it; and once having heard it, we shall the more readily recognise it around us.

I may say that this song of life is what in common parlance is called the voice of pure conscience;—which is a natural, original faculty forming a part of the human constitution. From his make, constitution and nature, man may fairly be presumed to be a Law to himself. He has within him a Rule of Right which the Vedas all *Ritam*, as explained in the early part of this work. That some people go amiss is no proof against the existence of this Rule of Right; for we must remember, what a great philosopher has said, that Conscience is the Sovereign *de-jure*, and to her belongs the command. But, as she is not the Sovereign *de-facto* at the same time, her command is likely to be respected or disregarded by man according to his choice. When so disregarded, Conscience stands in the position of a Sovereign dethroned in the season of national anarchy and rebellion; but the Conscience, like the Sovereign, never dies. She may lie dormant for a time; but she exists all the same. All that is wanted is that man should listen to the voice of conscience, the song of life as it is, and he will go right.

There seems to be some difference of opinion among Western philosophers on this subject, to elucidate which I beg leave to quote the following passages from the work of Dr. Bain, which is extensively read in these days. The learned Doctor says: "It is contended, that the human mind possesses an intuition or instinct, whereby we feel or discern at once the right from wrong; a view termed the doctrine of the Moral sense, or Moral sentiment. Besides being supported by numerous theorizers in Ethics, this is a prevailing and popular doctrine; it underlies most of the language of moral suasion. The difficulties attending the stricter interpretation of it have led to various modes of qualifying and explaining it."..... "On the one side, Conscience (*i. e.*, Moral sense above alluded to) is held to be a *unique* and ultimate power of the mind, like the feeling of Resistance, the sense of Taste, or the consciousness of Agreement. On the other side, Conscience is viewed as a growth or derivation from other recognised properties of the mind."... "Practically it would seem of little importance in what way the moral faculty originated, except with a view to teach us how it may be best strengthened when it happens to be weak. Still a very great importance has been attached to the view that it is simple and innate; the supposition being that a higher authority thereby belongs to it. If it arises from mere education, it depends on the teacher for the time being. If it exists prior to all education, it seems to be the voice of universal nature or God."

This is not the time or place for discussing this puzzle in morals; nor do I in the least pretend to be able to solve the riddle to the satisfaction of all. I have already stated my conviction in favour of the simple and intuitive character of conscience; and would conclude this subject with the words of Dr. Bain:—"Ethical Theory embraces certain questions of pure Psychology, *viz.*: The psychological nature of Conscience, the Moral Sense, or by whatever name we designate the faculty of distinguishing right and wrong, together with the motive power to follow the one and eschew the other. That such a faculty exists is admitted."

It behoves the disciple to listen to and respect this song of life; store all its instructions in memory, and learn from them lessons for his guidance. The result of obeying this song is thus described in the Text.

8. *You can stand upright now, firm as a rock, amidst the turmoil, obeying the warrior, who is thyself and thy king. Unconcerned in the battle, save to do his bidding, having no longer any care as to the result of the battle, for one thing only is important, that the warrior shall win, and you know he is incapable of defeat,—standing thus, cool and awakened, use the hearing you have acquired by pain and by the destruction of pain. Only fragments of the great song come to your ears, while yet you are but man. But if*

you listen to it, remember it faithfully, so that none which has reached you is lost, and endeavour to learn from it the meaning of the mystery which surrounds you. In time you will need no teacher. For, as the individual has voice, so has that in which the individual exists. Life itself has speech and is never silent. And its utterance is not, as you that are deaf may suppose, a cry: it is a song. Learn from it that you are a part of the harmony; learn from it to obey the laws of harmony.

I can add nothing to this Rule 8. It is exceedingly clear, and the disciple who has read and mastered all that has been said above will have no difficulty in understanding this Rule.

While thus the disciple ought to seek out and look for the inner man and make him fight the battle, he ought not to be indifferent to all that is outside. The Text says:—

9. *Regard earnestly all the life that surrounds you.*

10. *Learn to look intelligently into the hearts of men.*

11. *Regard most earnestly your own heart.*

12. *For through your own heart comes the light which can illuminate life and make it clear to your eyes.*

Study the hearts of men that you may know what is that world in which you live and of which you will be a part. Regard the constantly changing and moving life which surrounds you, for it is formed by the hearts of men; and as you learn to understand their constitution and meaning, you will by degrees be able to read the larger word of life.

This task of the disciple looking into his own heart and the hearts of other men, and of regarding the life that surrounds him, should be accomplished, be it remembered, from an absolutely impersonal point of view; otherwise his sight would be coloured. Therefore impersonality must first be understood. O Disciple, understand that Intelligence is impartial; no man is your enemy; no man is your friend. All alike are your teachers. Your enemy becomes a mystery that must be solved, even though it takes ages: for man must be understood. Your friend becomes a part of yourself, an extension of yourself, a riddle hard to read. Only one thing is more difficult to know—your own heart. Not until the bonds of personality are loosed can that profound mystery of self begin to be seen. Not till you stand aside from it will it in any way reveal itself to your understanding. Then, and not till then, can you grasp and guide it. Then, and not till then, can you use all its powers, and devote them to a worthy service.

But in order to be of service to others, the disciple should possess the power of speech, that is such speech as has been elsewhere explained. The Text says:

13. *Speech comes only with knowledge. Attain to knowledge and you will attain to speech.*

It is impossible to help others till the disciple has obtained some certainty of his own. When he has learned the first twenty-one Rules and has entered the Hall of Learning with his own powers developed, and sense unchained, then he will find that there is a fount within him from which speech will arise—i. e., such speech as will enable him to help others.

Now the Treatise sums up all the acquisitions which the disciple has by this time made, and declares the extent of the progress he has achieved in his journey; in these words:

14. *Having obtained the use of the inner senses, having conquered the desires of the outer senses, having conquered the desires of the individual soul, and having obtained the knowledge, prepare now, O disciple, to enter upon the way in reality. The path is found; make yourself ready to tread it.*

What preparations the disciple ought to make, or in other words what measures he ought to adopt, in view to his treading the path and accomplishing his long journey successfully, are stated in the three following Rules of the Text:—

15. *Inquire of the earth, the air, and the water, of the secrets they hold for you. The development of your inner senses will enable you to do this.*

The disciple ought to behold the universe, and study it. But what he is required to behold is not the outward manifestation of the universe on which ordinary people are content to gaze, nor is it by means of the outer senses which ordinary people alone use that he is to behold it. The universe is a great historian and teacher. All that passes in the world's history, including man's inmost thoughts, are recorded faithfully on the earth, air, water and ether. As I have

stated in my pamphlet on Theosophy, it is clear that, from the established principles of mechanics, action and reaction are equal,—every impression which man makes by his movements, words or thoughts, upon the ether, air, water and earth, will produce a series of changes in each of these elements, which will never end. Thus, the word which is going out of one's mouth causes pulsations or waves in the air, and these expand in every direction until they have passed around the whole world. In the same manner the waters must retain traces of every disturbance, as, for instance, those caused by ships crossing the sea. And the earth too is tenacious of every impression that man makes upon it. The paths and traces of such pulsations and impressions are all definite, and are subject to the laws of mathematics. But it needs a very superior power of analysis to follow and discern such sounds, traces and impressions. Nevertheless, as all this is due to physical laws, it is not too much to suppose that this must be within the reach of human beings—and more especially, within the reach of the disciple, who, by a course of study such as is laid down in these rules, has by this time developed his inner senses to such a degree as to enable him to read and hear the secrets of nature. But with all this he is but a disciple yet, and must needs have help. So the Text says:—

16. *Inquire of the holy ones of the earth of the secrets they hold for you. The conquering of the desires of the outer senses will give you the right to do this.*

This is exactly what Sri Krishna recommends. "Seek then the spiritual wisdom, with prostrations, with questions, and with devotion, that those (*gnanis*) the learned holy ones, who see its principles, may instruct thee in its Rules, which having learnt, thou shalt not again fall into folly, and thou shalt behold all nature in spirit." (Bhagavat-gita V. 34 and 35). The virtue of unselfishness which the disciple has now acquired gives him the privilege of thus soliciting instruction from the holy sages.

And lastly, the Text says:—

17. *Inquire of the inmost, the One, of its final secret, which it holds for you through ages.*

This is the last step in the ladder of instruction. The disciple has now reached that stage when he can say with certainty,—“The soul is its own refuge.”—(Bhagavat-gita VI. 4).

But it must be particularly understood that all the different courses of instruction inculcated in these Rules, in rapid succession, are not capable of equally rapid acquisition.

17. (A). *The great and difficult victory, the conquering of the desires of the individual soul, is a work of ages; therefore expect not to obtain its reward until ages of experience have been accumulated.*

This warning is necessary to avoid disappointments, as there are some temperaments which know nothing of patience. The following passages from the Bhagavat-gita are to the point. “A few among ten thousand mortals strive for perfection; and only a few of those who strive, become perfect and know the Supreme (VII 3). But, no man who hath done good to any extent will attain an evil position. He whose devotions have been broken off by death,—having enjoyed through innumerable years the rewards of his virtue in the purer regions,—is at length born again in some holy and respectable family or perhaps in the family of some Yogi. Being thus born again, he is endued with the same degree of application and advancement of his understanding that he held in his former body, and here he begins again to labor for perfection (VI. 41 to 43). Thus labouring with all his might, he is purified of his sins, and is made perfect after many births; and then he proceeds to the Supreme above. (VI. 41). Bearing these things in mind the disciple should work on with patience, with the firm belief that where there is virtue there is victory.

17. (B). *When the time of learning this 17th Rule is reached, more is on the threshold of becoming more than man.*

This is a great gain, and the disciple should strive with diligence and perseverance to reach this happy state, taking care that the knowledge hitherto acquired is not misused or negligently applied. On this subject, the Text says:—

18. *The knowledge which is now yours is only yours, because your soul has become one with all pure souls and with the inmost. It is a trust vested in you by the most high.*

*Betray it, misuse your knowledge, or neglect it; and it is possible even now for you to fall from the high state you have attained. Great ones fall back, even from the threshold, unable to sustain the weight of their responsibility; unable to pass on—Therefore, look forward always with awe and trembling to this moment, and be prepared for the battle.*

After this wholesome warning, the Text gives the following Rules for the guidance of the disciple in this final struggle:

19. *It is written that for him who is on the threshold of divinity no law can be framed, no guide can exist. Yet to enlighten the disciple the final struggle may be thus expressed.*

19. (A) *Hold fast to that which has neither substance nor existence.*

20. *Listen only to the voice which is soundless.*

21. *Look only on that which is invisible alike to the inner and the outer sense.*

Having arrived at this stage of spiritual development, the disciple has henceforth no concern with those objects which have reference to his gross or even subtle body (Sthula and Sukshma or Linga Sarira). His soul is now encased in elements which are infinitely more subtle and more etherialised than those which constituted his gross or subtle body; and he is now in the fittest condition to contemplate the Supreme Soul in all its purity. So Rules 19 A, 20 and 21 advise the disciple to devote himself exclusively to the Supreme and to none other; for it is clear that what is described in these three different Rules as being immaterial and intangible; as soundless, and invisible, is one and the same; the immateriality and intangibility; the soundlessness; and the invisibility, being the attributes the Great One in its unmanifested condition. (Keu Upanishat I. 2; Katha Upanishat VI. 12; Mundaka Upanishat I. 6 and 8; and Māndukya Upanishat I. 7).

Here a word of explanation is necessary in respect of Rule 19 (A), where the Supreme One is described as that which has neither substance, nor existence. It certainly has no substance, because it is spirit, immaterial, uncreated and eternal. But has it no existence even? The Text says that it has not; and it is fully supported by the Aryan sacred works, which declare that "this was originally non-existent. (Asat) (Chandagya Upanishat III. XIX—I;) and that "from non-existence (Asat) proceeded existence (Sat)." (Rig Veda X. 72—2 and 3). But it must be understood that non-existence, as the word is used here, does not mean a state of void, or absolute nullity; but that it is only intended by means of this term to mean that prior to the evolution of the universe, no portion of what we now see was in existence; that is, no portion had been manifested. This is evident from the same Chandagya Upanishat, which says in another chapter (VI. II. I) that "this was originally existence (Sat)." And the Rig Veda speaks of the Supreme as being both non-existent (Asat) and existent (Sat) (X. V. 7). It is called existence (Sat); because it has always existed in essence, in a latent condition; and it is called Asat, because this essence remained unmanifested; so that in effect both the terms mean one and the same thing. It must be remarked here that the Rig Veda, in another hymn (X. 129. 1) declares that "there was neither Asat nor Sat;" but this is said with reference to the time when the evolution of the universe (commonly called the Creation) was about to be begun; so that it could not then be said either that the original essence had manifested itself or that it had not; for it was in the course of manifestation. So that this Vedic expression—that there was neither Asat nor Sat—is intelligible enough, and is not contrary to what has been above stated.

It is in this sense that our Text refers to the Supreme as that which has no existence, besides being soundless and invisible. This is the highest condition of Para Bramha. If this is so, how, it may be asked, can the disciple be called upon to hold fast to that which has no existence, in other words, that which is intangible and unseizable; listen to the voice of the soundless; and look on that which is invisible. In order to explain away this apparent incongruity, we ought first to form some idea of the highest, unmanifested condition of the Universal Soul which the disciple is required to contemplate, and secondly, we ought to understand the nature and extent of the powers which the disciple has now acquired in view to his accomplishing this great work.

Let us then understand that the Supreme condition of the All-pervading, who is one with wisdom, is the eternal Truth, which is simply existent (Sattāmatram;) self-dependent; unequalled, tranquil, fearless and pure; which is indefinable, incapable of being taught, or enjoined by works; which is internally diffused; which cannot form the theme of discussion, and the object of which is self-illumination (Vide Vishnu Purana I. XXII). The task of one who attaches himself to this unmanifested condition of the Supreme spirit, is indeed difficult (Bhagavat-Gita, XII—5;) and it certainly cannot be accomplished by one who tries to apprehend, hear and see it in the sense in which those words are generally understood. We ought not therefore to construe in this sense the Rules of our Text (Rules 19 (A), 20 and 21) and the corresponding passages in the Brihat Aranyaka Upanishat (IV. IV—23), the Mundaka Upanishat (I—6), the Katha Upanishat (II. IV—I), which require the disciple to apprehend the unseizable, listen to the soundless, and behold the invisible. The disciple has long since passed beyond that stage in which he apprehends, hears and sees in the way in which ordinary people do. He has attained an internal illumination, and is by means of this light quite competent to comprehend and feel the great light, the Supreme One. The term "Samadhi," a condition which the disciple reaches when he is fairly on the Path, may be defined to be the entire occupation of the thought by the sole idea of Para Bramha without any effort of the mind, or of the senses, and the entire abandonment of the faculties to this one all engrossing notion. This, in ordinary phraseology, is what is meant by holding fast to that which is unseizable; listening to the voice of the soundless, and seeing the invisible.

The disciple who has advanced to this most sacred state is in a position to exclaim in the words of a Rishi in the Brihat Aranyaka Upanishat:—

"I have touched and gained the narrow, long and ancient road; the road leading to the Divine, along which travels the man who is virtuous, who knows Brahma, and whose nature is like light." (IV. IV—8 and 10).

Here we come to the end of Section II; and the Text congratulates the disciple at his arrival at this blissful condition, by exclaiming,—

*Peace be with you.*



*(To be continued.)*

## LIGHT ON THE PATH.

WRITTEN down by M. C., Fellow of the Theosophical Society, London, 1885 ; and annotated by P. Sreenevas Row, Fellow of the Theosophical Society, Madras, 1885.

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### *Section III.*

#### KARMA.

**F**ROM the Rules laid down in the 1st and 2nd Sections of this Treatise \* for the information and guidance of the disciple during his pilgrimage on the Path, he will have perceived that his success in this great undertaking depends upon himself. As emphatically observed by Sri Krishna, "Self is the friend of Self ; and Self likewise is his own enemy." "(Bhagavat-gita VI. 5). But in order to arrive at a satisfactory solution of this great problem of life and to fully realize this grand idea the disciple must have some knowledge of the fundamental principles upon which this doctrine of KARMA rests ; that is, in other words, he must clearly understand how his actions, including the words he utters and even the thoughts that he evolves, are capable of swaying his destiny both in this life and in the future ; especially as the results so obtained are certain and unfailing ; and are calculated to render him happy or miserable, according to their peculiar tendencies, and this in his temporal as well as in his spiritual concerns.

The text therefore devotes a separate section to this subject ; and I trust I shall be pardoned for introducing at some length certain preliminary observations, in order to enable the reader to comprehend the teachings of the Text more easily and more accurately.

Further, the reader must understand that the doctrine of Karma, including the theory of the transmigrations of the soul, is not an innovation recently engrafted upon the ancient Aryan religious system. The law of Karma is one of the essential laws of nature—the law of retributive justice ; and as such is eternal. This is proclaimed in the Veda, and in all other ancient Aryan works ; and from the quotations made in the course of the following observations and annotations, the reader will perceive that the Rig

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\* See *Theosophist*, Vol. VI.

Veda,—so far from being silent on this subject, as some seem to suppose,—furnishes authoritative statements upon almost every proposition connected with Karma and metempsychosis.

Section III. (Introductory.)

The human being is called "Purusha;" and is of a two-fold nature; one *Martya*, mortal, and the other *Amartya*, immortal. (Rig Veda I. 164—38). The Mortal Purusha is also called *Kshara*, destructible, (Bhagavatgita XV. 16; Chandogya Upanishat VIII. XII—1.) and constitutes the body of the human being; that is, the resting place of the immortal *Purusha*, which is called *Akshara*, indestructible (Bhagavatgita XV. 16); and which is not born, and does not die; nor can it be slain although the body in which it dwells is slain. (Katha Upanishat. II. 18). This double Purusha is pervaded,—as every thing else is,—by the third and the highest Purusha, entitled *Purushottama*, (Bhagavatgita XV. 17.), who is the unborn and Eternal ONE. (Rig Veda VI. 9—5; IV. 27—2; X. 81—3; X. 164—3.) Hence the human body is dignified by the title of *Brahma-pura*, the habitation of Brahma (Chandogya Upanishat VIII. I. I).

Here a word of explanation is necessary respecting the mortal Purusha above spoken of. This mortal Purusha (*i. e.*, the human body) is composed of what is called *Prakriti* (matter). This *Prakriti* is the primordial substance forming the material cause for the evolution of the Universe; and by its union with *Purushottama*, everything, animate or inanimate, was produced, as well before as after the *Pralaya* or dissolution. (Swetasvatara Upanishat I. 8.) Vishnu Purana I. II. 21, &c. Bhagavatgita IX. 10.) Hence *Prakriti* is figuratively called the mother of the world, *i. e.*, the passive principle—(Vishnu Purana I. II. 21, &c.); while *Purushottama* is called the Father, *i. e.*, the active principle (Rig Veda X. 82—3). Indeed, *Prakriti* derives its name from its function as the material cause of the first evolution of the universe in each cycle; for this word is a compound of *Prathamam* (first), and *Kṛiti Kṛiye* (action); or it may be said to be a compound of two other roots,—*Pra*, to manifest and *Kṛiti*, to make; meaning that which caused the universe to manifest itself. (Devi Bhagavata IX. I. 8, &c.) The body thus formed by means of *Prakriti*, is called *Pura* (town or habitation); and the soul that animates and inhabits it (*séyata*), is called *Purusha* (*Puri-séyata iti purushah*).

So that *Prakriti* is co-eternal with *Purushottama*. The Rig Veda speaks of the original existence of *Tat* and *Tama*. (X. 129, 283); the former representing *Purushottama* (Bhagavatgita XVII. 23;) and the latter, *Prakriti*. (Manu I. 5; Devi Bhagavata XII. VIII. 69); and to show how these two have always been associated together, the Rig Veda declares that;—"The first germ was in the Waters. That One rested on the lap of this was Aja (unborn)" (X. 82—5); the first germ and the One being the *Purushottama*, the supreme, (Bṛihad-aranyaka Upanishat III. IX. 9. Bhagavatgita VII. 10 & IX. 18); and the waters, called Aja (the unborn) and elsewhere called *Salila* and *Apas*, being no other than *Prakriti* itself (Rig Veda X. 129—3 & VII. 34—2; Taitereya Aranyaka I. 23, 1. Vide also Bhagavatgita XIII. 20).

Hence this *Prakriti* (Matter) and *Purushottama* (Universal Soul), together with *Purusha* (Individual Soul) constitute the Triple-Aja (*i. e.*, the triad of unborn ones), mentioned in the Sritis (Swetasvatara Upanishat IV. 5. Nārāyana. Shashta prasna III. 12, &c.) Of these three unborn ones, the Universal Soul and the individual Soul are unchangeable, while Matter is changeable, and is capable of being moulded into different forms and shapes. It, matter, is therefore said to be two-fold; being first, *Avyakta*, its unmanifested and undifferentiated condition, technically called *Mūlaprakriti*, root-matter or principle; (Devbhāgavata IX. 68, 69) and its particles in the latent germ known as *Tanmatras* have had no beginning and will have no end; they are eternal as above explained; and secondly, it is *Vyakta*, the manifested and differentiated condition, which is not eternal, since its manifestation has had a beginning and will have an end. (Swetasvatara Upanishat I. 8. Devi Bhagavata IX. 1—6). It is in this second condition that *Prakriti* forms the material cause of the universe and man. "The water was the Mūla (root or cause); and the world the Tūla (shoot or effect)," says the Aiteraya Aranyaka (II. I. 8). When the universe is destroyed or when the man dies, the shapes formed by means of the particles of matter are destroyed, and the particles themselves return to their original source; the root principle above mentioned. (Bhagavatgita VIII. 18 and 19, XIII. 6, Manu I—18 and 19.) The shape or form, of which the destruction takes place in this manner is called the mortal portion of man (*Martya* or *Kshara*). So that birth and death are predicated of the body so formed and thus liable to destruction, and not of particles of matter, which constituted its component parts, nor of the Soul which dwelt in it,—both of which are eternal, unborn and indestructible—(Bhagavatgita II. 13.) Understanding in this sense what has been stated in the commencement of this Section as to the mortal and immortal portions of man, let us proceed to describe the mortal portion more fully, as man's success in reaching the final goal depends absolutely upon his shaking off this mortal coil.

The primary and eternal particles of *Prakriti*, the rudiments, called the *Tanmatras* above referred to, are the subtle elements, (Manu I. 27). From them proceed five gross elements, called the *Pancha-Maha-Bhutas* (Manu I. 19); namely, *Prithvi* (earth), *Appa* (water); *Tejas* (light or heat), *Vayu* (air) and *Akas* (ether,) which is wrongly supposed to mean a vacuity or nullity, but which in reality is a substance of the subtlest nature). The aggregation of these five elements forms the *Brahmanda* (the Macrocosm = universe); as well as *Pindanda* (the microcosm = man). The heat in man is *Tejas*; the apertures of the senses are *Akas*; blood mucus and seed are *Appa*; the body is *Prithvi*; and breath is *Vayu* (Aitersya Aranyaka II. iii 3).

Man so formed is five-fold; that is, he is enveloped in five vestures (Kosas). His first or most outward covering, is called the *Annamaya Kosa*, *i. e.*, the cover made of and supported by *Anna* (food), composed of the above mentioned gross elements. Within this is the second covering called the *Pranamaya Kosa*, composed of *prana* (Vital airs). Within this is the third covering called

the *Manamaya Kosa*, composed of *Manas* (mind or will), which gives the Soul its power of thought and judgment, and controls the vital airs. Within this is the fourth covering called the *Vigyana-maya Kosa* composed of *buddhi* (intellection) giving the conception of personality. And within this is the fifth covering, called *Anandamaya Kosa* composed of pure bliss (*ananda*) (*Taitereya Upanishat*, *Bhriḡu Valli*, 3rd *Anuvaka* and *Paingalopanishat* Ch. II). These five coverings, together with the Soul which is therein enveloped, and the Supreme Soul which pervades them and every thing else, constitute the seven great principles forming the whole man. It must be understood that all these seven principles are not always patent in man; the germs are there; but they require to be developed in a systematic manner.

The first of the said vestures, that is, the most outward covering, constitutes the corporeal body of man, technically called *Sthula Sarira* (the gross body), because it is composed of the gross elements. What is popularly known as Death occurs in respect of this *Sthula Sarira*. At death, the Soul leaves the *Sthula Sarira* and issues forth with its other vestures, which constitute its *Sukshma Sarira* (subtle body), and which are composed of the subtle particles of matter. But the component parts of this (*Sukshma Sarira*) are so minute in their dimensions and so subtle in their texture, that it (*Sukshma Sarira*) is imperceptible to ordinary people when it departs from the *Sthula Sarira*. On its departure, its former abode the *Sthula Sarira* which was hitherto warm owing to the warmth of the inherent properties of the *Sukshma Sarira*, becomes cold; a decomposition takes place, and the elementary particles which had composed it return to their respective sources;—while the soul,—enveloped in the *Sukshma Sarira*, which is also called the *Iṅga Sarira*, and which resembles the shape of the *Sthula Sarira* (*Taitereya Upanishat*, *Bramhanda Valli* II. *Anavaka*), passes through all its transmigrations in this world, and through all its sojournings in the higher and lower regions,—never becoming separated from those vestures till its final emancipation is effected. This final separation, be it remembered, does not take place at once. Each of these vestures has in turn to survive the preceding and more dense one, and then die; except the sixth principle (the individual soul), which joins the seventh principle (universal soul); and this is *Moksha*, the final emancipation (*Taitereya upa: Brh. Valli* V). This theory of the double body of man (the gross and the subtle), is recognised by the *Rig Veda* (I. 164—4), which symbolically refers to *Bhumi* (earth), *asu* (breath), *asrij* (blood); and *atma* (soul); the earth representing the gross body; the breath, the subtle body; the blood, the aggregate elements of which the body is formed; and the soul, the animating and conscious principle connected with the gross and subtle body. And there are innumerable instances of tangible illustration of this theory recorded in the Aryan ancient sacred works, amply corroborated by modern tradition and by the experiences of numerous sages who are still living. There are even instances of ordinary men (who of course must have sufficiently developed their higher nature during their prior existences), experiencing the constitution of such double body, (gross and subtle);

and in support of my statement, I will cite the testimony of a Western philosopher in preference to that of an Oriental, for reasons which need not be mentioned. Professor Edwin D. Babbitt of New York, in his famous and learned book on the principles of light and colour, after numerous statements and arguments, observes as follows:—

“Have we not seen that there is a grander universe within the universe; and has not St. Paul spoken of ‘a natural body’ and ‘a spiritual body?’ And have not many persons been conscious of a second self, which at times could look down upon their outward body? Varley, the eminent English electrician, once did this; and the doctrine of ‘the double,’ so well known in Germany under the name of ‘Doppelganger’ argues in this direction. In my own experience I have met with several who at times have been able to look upon their bodies which were lying near them, and occasionally have found difficulty in re-entering them. These would be connected by shining life-cords with their own bodies, and sometimes would see the indescribable radiance of the inner world. Dr. Cleaveland, of Providence, in the translation of Deleuze, (p. 367) speaks of a carpenter who fell from the staging of a building to the ground. ‘As I struck the ground,’ said he, ‘I suddenly bounded up, seeming to have a new body, and to be standing among the spectators, looking at my old one. I saw them trying to bring it to. I made several fruitless efforts to re-enter my body, and finally succeeded.’ Then, the learned Professor goes on to ask,—“Is not this a most cheering thought, giving tokens of the immortal life and of a more beautiful existence to those who have become innately beautiful? Our outward flesh easily becomes corrupt or worm-eaten and at death is disintegrated. But this inner body is finer than light itself or any known ethers, and having no elements of decay it must continue to live. The materialists say that thought and mentality are absolutely impossible without a physical brain to think with. Well, I am not denying their proposition. Here is not only a brain but a whole body which is material in its nature, although of a very refined materiality; but still back of this must be the animating spirit itself.” (pp. 509, 510. Edition 1878).

And the reason why the modern Scientists do not, as a rule, (subject fortunately to numerous exceptions) recognise this theory of “double man,” is simply because they do not extend their attention and researches in the direction of psychological matters, as is well explained by one of themselves, namely, the learned Professor Babbitt, in his above mentioned work, in these words:—

“Many of our scientists, with a singular perversity of mind, grasp, with all their souls after the grosser elements of nature, writing long treatises on a beetle, a worm, a mineral, or a skeleton; but when marvellous facts are revealed with regard to these more beautiful essences of being, these lightnings of power, without which the whole universe would be but a formless and lifeless mass of débris, they utterly fail to receive the glad tidings with philosophical candour; commence persecuting the discoverer as though he were an enemy; and return to the corpses and bones of the



dissecting room in preference to the radiant forms of the world of life. 'We build an exact science and deal with tangible realities,' is their watchword; and so they go right off in a carriage with one wheel into the path-ways which lead to all confusion and inexactness of knowledge" (p. 451, Edition of 1878).

But it is highly gratifying to find that of late the scientists have been gradually awakening to the real importance of the study and investigation of psychology in several of its departments. Numerous societies, composed of hundreds of members, have sprung up for this purpose; and one of the great philosophers of the present day, Professor Tyndall, has these hopeful words in his "Fragments of Science":—"To whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? Let us lower our heads and acknowledge our ignorance, priest, philosopher, one and all—perhaps the mystery may resolve itself into knowledge at some future day. The process of things upon this earth has been one of amelioration."

Wishing the philosophers every success in their honest endeavours to discover the truth, let us proceed with our work. I have incidentally referred above to transmigrations of the soul.

This means that the soul, after leaving the gross body at death, proceeds, clothed with the subtle body, to different regions higher or lower; and there enjoys or suffers, for a certain time, according to the merits or demerits, *i. e.*, Karma, contracted during its previous association with the gross body (Rig Veda I. 125-5 and 6; I. 164-38; IV. 5-5; and VII. 104-3, &c. Chandogya Upanishat V. X. 1 to 5; Brihad-Aranyaka Upanishat IV. III. 9; Manu XII. 3. &c.) And then it returns to this world, again enters a gross body formed in the womb of the mother; again dies, and is again born (Rig Veda I. 164-32; Chandogya Upanishat V. X. 7 to 9. Aitereya Upanishat II. IV. 2 to 6; Svetasvatara Upanishat V. 7; Bhagavatgita II. 13 and 22; Manu I. 28 and the whole of Chapter XII). This condition of the soul is summarily described in one verse in the Rig Veda, where the survivors of a deceased person are represented as addressing the soul of the latter in these words:—"Meet with the Pitris (progenitors who reside in the *Loka* or regions specially allotted for them); meet with Yama (God of death, *i. e.*, the God of retributive justice); and meet with the recompense of the sacrifices thou hast offered, (*i. e.*, the meritorious actions done), in the highest heaven. And then, throwing off all imperfections go again to thy home (the womb), and become united to a body, clothed in a shining form." (Rig Veda X. 14-8.)

This process of birth and death, and of sojournings in different regions, continues until such time as the soul becomes capable of divesting itself of its subtle body (*Sukshma Sarira*), just as it formerly threw away its gross form (*Sthula Sarira*); and then the soul acquires its natural purity, and attains the supreme. Rishi Vámadeva speaks of this final process, from his own personal experiences, in the Rig Veda in these words:—"Being still in the womb, I have known all the births of these divinities in their order. A hundred (*i. e.*, numerous) bodies, hard as iron, confined me, but as a hawk I came forth with speed" (Rig Veda IV. 27-1). This verse is quoted in the text of the Aitereya

Aranyaka (II. V. I) and Aitereya Upanishad (II. IV. 5), as an authority for the theory of repeated births and deaths in this world; and this has been explained to mean that the said Rishi was subjected to repeated births so long as he did not comprehend the difference between body and soul; but when, by the power of Yoga, he acquired divine knowledge, he burst through his bonds with the force and celerity of a hawk from its cage.

It is broadly hinted that the Rishi Vámadeva, who is thus stated to have burst through his bonds, is a mere personification of the individual soul which has arrived at that final and blissful stage when it can say, in the words of the Rig Veda, "Place me in the undecaying, unchanging region, where perpetual light and glory abide," and so on (Rig Veda, IX. 113-7). It is at this time that the soul, which had become mortal as it were, becomes immortal; and thenceforth there is no birth nor death for it, as it has reached the final goal. (Svetasvatara Upanishad IV. 17 and V. 14.)

In the meantime, while the soul continues its journey in this or other worlds, a certain refined machinery of thought still adheres to it, for although the organs of gross sensation are destroyed at death, yet something of the subtle nature, which is less destructible, remains, namely, that which results from the influence of man's action,—by deed, word, or thought,—committed during his former existence. True, the action ceases at the moment of its completion; but its spiritual operation, its consequence, the merit or demerit arising from the inexorable retributive efficacy of prior acts, continues clinging to the soul; and this is felt, remembered, and even seen in a peculiar manner (to be hereafter explained) by certain people. No doubt this is not the case with many, indeed the vast majority, of people; but nevertheless the fact is that such result *does* remain efficacious, and connects the consequences of the past and remote causes with current events, and brings about the relative effects, either immediately or prospectively; for it must be remembered that the *Aura* (*Tejas*), which an individual exhales whenever he acts, speaks or thinks, is not *lifeless and effectless*; but that on the contrary it is a material emanation, whose particles, though forming the minutest effluvia, are yet flowing out like living sparks or electric wires in the Ether (*Akas*) with which the whole universe abounds; and this electric influence, this nervo-vital force, is so powerful as to affect the physical, chemical and vital powers of all that comes into contact with it; and then to affect the very individual from whom it has issued, under the well known law of action and reaction; as will be fully explained hereafter.

This influence, or force, or result, or whatever it may be called, of the antecedent actions of man, forms as it were a seed, from which germinates the plant, yielding good or bad fruit, to be eaten by him during his subsequent existence. (Vishnu Purana I. XIX. 5). This seed is technically called the *Káрана Sarira*, the causal body (*Paingala Upanishad II*), as it is the cause of man's enjoyment or suffering. This *Káрана Sarira* is composed of the fifth *Kôśa* (*Anandamaya*) of man and adheres to the soul so long as the soul remains enveloped in the gross or subtle body (*Sthula* or *Sukshma Sarira*); and vanishes entirely when the soul extricates itself



from the trammels of the said two bodies; for then, the soul attains its primeval purity, and burns up as it were every trace of its combination with the body, including this causal body (*Karana Sarira*). This happens when the soul is prepared for final emancipation, *Moksha*. Till then, of course, the *Karana Sarira*, the seed, the result of prior actions, remains effective, and asserts a strong controlling influence over man's actions.

This process is technically known by the name of KARMA. Literally *Karma* means an *action*, but practically it is understood as including both *action* and *fruition*, as will be evident from the foregoing observations. Karma, therefore, is nothing but the law of cause and effect, in virtue of which man's condition in the future is regulated by the result of the tendencies encouraged and contracted by him in the past and the present. Indeed Karma is justice, which deals out to man exactly what is due according to his own conduct, good or bad; and it must be noticed that *Yama*, who is popularly called the Lord of the dead, is called *Yama* because he regulates the actions of mankind (*Yamayata-iti-Yama*). He is also called *Samavarti*, the one who deals with all equally without bias; and lastly he is known as *Dharmaraja*, the Lord of justice.

Hence the Law of Karma explains away all questions in respect of the inequalities of fortune and diversities of character among mankind in the world; enjoyments or sufferings of all kinds being simply the consequences of acts done by each soul of his own free will during prior existences, and which exert upon him an irresistible power, most significantly called the *Adrishta*, the unseen; because it is not seen but felt. It is remarkable that the Hermetic term equivalent to *Karma* is almost the same, viz., *Adraste*, which meant a goddess to whom the administration of justice was committed, in the same way as *Yama* is said to be the Lord of justice in the Aryan books. Further, what is popularly understood by such words as destiny, fate and doom, is nothing else but Karma; the words corresponding to them in Sanscrit being, *Dish-tam* (that which is enjoined); *Bhāgadhayam* or *Bhāgyam* (that which gives fortune), *Niyati* (that which is pre-ordained), and *Vidhi* (that which is pre-appointed); vide *Amara Cosa*; for whenever a man performs an action, he, by virtue of the very same action, determines and destines that his future condition shall be so and so, i. e., good or bad, according to the nature of action thus performed. Indeed, whatever man does now forms the seed for his future action, which may consequently be properly said to have been *predestined* by that action. It must be remembered that in every action of man the influence of his prior action (*Karma*) constitutes an important element. For the accomplishment of every action, says Sri Krishna, we need five essentials; 1, the actor; 2, the determined will; 3, implements for committing the act, such as hands, tongue, etc.; 4, the exercise of those implements; and lastly 5, the influence of antecedent conduct. The work which a man does with his body, speech, or mind, whether it be just or unjust, has these five essentials or factors engaged in the performance. (*Bhagavatgita* XVIII. 13, 14 and 15). These five essentials of Karma are divided into two groups in the *Mahābhārata*,—namely, 1, man's

present action (including the first four of the said essentials) and 2, the result of his past action (which forms the fifth essential). (*Mahā-bhārata*, *Anusasana Parva*, Chapter VI). And the same idea is conveyed in the *Matsya Purana*, (Chapter 219, in the Madras Edition), with a very clear exposition of the Law of Karma. This law seems to have been recognised by most of the ancient nations. The greatest philosophers in Greece and Rome adopted it; and the Jews knew it well, as we find from the Bible, (*John IX. 2*) where a passage occurs in these words:—"Master! who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" This idea of a person suffering for the sins not only of himself but of his parents is perfectly consistent with the teachings of the Aryans. The *Rig Veda* (VII. 86—5), and *Manu* (IV. 173) are explicit authorities on this point.

Here it is to be particularly noticed that the law of Karma which I have thus tried to explain according to the best available authorities necessarily implies that man is free to act as he chooses; as otherwise he will not be accountable for his action, and no result of his action would affect him. To be sure, man is free to act, within the circle of physical, intellectual and moral laws. He does not act independently of motive and reason; but he possesses the power of choice; he can never be made to will what he does not himself desire to will; and he can originate action within the said limitations. It is well that he is invested with such power of freedom; for it makes him feel that his happiness or misery is within his own power, giving rise to new springs of action, and fresh inducements for the due exercise of his rational faculties. Indeed, if I judge human nature aright it seems to me that man has a conviction—not acquired, but from his own natural constitution, that he has in himself an active power enabling him to do or not to do a certain thing just as he chooses; and this notion of liberty makes him feel the force of his moral obligation to do what is right and refrain from what is wrong.

"Man," says the *Chandogya Upanishat*, "is a creature of will. According to what his will is in this life, so he will be in the next. Let him therefore keep this will and belief pure" (III. xiv—i). The *Vishnu Purana* likewise dwells on the freedom of man's will, and shows how man is capable of being led away, for good or evil, by the mind. "Mind of man" this *Purana* says, "is the cause both of his bondage and his liberation. Its attachment to the objects of sense is the reason of his bondage, and its separation from the objects of sense is the means of his freedom. He who is capable of discriminating knowledge should therefore restrain his mind from all objects of sense." (*Vishnu Purana*, VI. vii, 22 and 30).

So that man's struggle against his passions depends for its success upon the mind itself. "Give me that resolute mind in the conflict," says a *Rishi* in the *Rig Veda* (VIII. xix, 20).

If this is so, how, it may be asked, are we to account for the popular notion that every act of man, indeed his every movement, is commanded by God, and that man has no liberty of choice to do or not to do anything, however small and insignificant? It is very difficult to trace the origin of popular notions; but in this

instance, I may say that the three following causes,—among others, it may be,—seem to have fostered this idea.

The first and foremost appears to be the over zealousness of certain classes of men, who consider it a great merit to acknowledge their absolute dependence on God, and to deny to themselves the least liberty of will, even so much as to raise a little finger or draw a breath, without the command of God expressly given for that purpose and on that occasion. But these persons do not for a moment pause to consider how great is the mischief their theory is calculated to produce. It ascribes *arbitrary* will to God, and reduces Man, an intellectual, rational being, to something worse than a *machine*; cancelling every inducement to virtue, and even promoting unmitigated evil. To avoid this incongruous result, the followers of this theory say that the ordination by God of any particular act to be done or avoided by man, is not simply because God willed it; but that God's will has had reference to the merits or demerits of man acquired during his past life. But this explanation does not solve the difficulty, and leaves open the question:—"What was it that induced the meritorious or other act in the past life; in the life before that; in the one before that again, and so on indefinitely?"

The second ground of the theory of Divine intervention in every act of man is to be found in the fact that one of the words used to represent the result of past action (*i. e.*, Karma) in the Sanscrit books, and notably in the Bhagavatgita (XVIII. 13, &c.) and Mahabharata (Anusasana, Chapter VI), quoted above, is *DAIVAM*. This word taken literally does certainly mean *Divine* (that which relates to *DEVA*=God, is *Daivam*). But this is a technical word; and, like all other technical words, has a special significance attached to it. The Amara Kosa, the universally recognised Sanscrit Lexicon, classes *Daivam* synonymously with five other words representing the result of past action (Karma). The Matsya Purana, which devotes one entire chapter (the 219th in the Madras Edition and 195th in the Calcutta Edition) to the elucidation of this subject, defines in the clearest possible language the word *Daivam* to be "the result, impression, or effect of *one's own actions* committed during his prior existence;" and this definition receives a very strong support from a series of *slokas* in the 8th chapter of the Vāyu Purana. In numerous other Sanscrit works also, although no specific definition of the word is given, there is sufficient to establish the fact that what is meant by *Daivam* is *Karma*, and not a Divine command; *e. g.*, the Mahabharata, Anusasana Parva, Chapter VI. It must further be noticed that the Aryan books are full of passages like this:—"The man who abandons all desires of flesh obtains bliss;" Again, "the man who transcends the qualities of the body, becomes immortal," and so on (Bhagavatgita, II. 71 and XIV. 20). If the bonds in which the soul is entangled were laid by God on purpose, it is utterly impossible that man could extricate himself therefrom; whereas expressions like these are perfectly consistent with the hypothesis that it was man who entangled himself in the web, and therefore it is man that should extricate himself from it. In a word, each man is his own

preserver or destroyer according as he follows good or evil. The reason why *Daivam* happens to be one of the technical words chosen to represent Karma, seems to be to attach the greatest importance to Karma, showing that it is not merely a human artificial institution; but that it is one of the Divine Laws which are eternal, and that its influence in ruling the destinies of man is supreme.

And the third ground for the popular belief in the Divine intervention appears to be based on passages like this:—"All are dependent on God." (Bhagavatgita IX. 4). It is clear that such passages are intended to proclaim the Divine Supremacy, but certainly not to declare that man,—endowed with organs of sense and action together with a rational faculty, is nothing but a toy incapable of moving a finger or drawing a breath without the special command of God for that purpose. In order to maintain my position in holding this view, I quote the following verses from the Bhagavatgita: "Every one is urged to act by the qualities of Prakriti, which are inherent in him" (III. 5). "The Lord creates neither the power (Kartutva) nor the deeds (Kārya) of mankind, nor the application of the fruits of action. All this happens in due course of nature" (V. 14). "Mankind are led astray by their reason being obscured by ignorance, but when that ignorance is destroyed by the force of reason, their Divine wisdom shines forth with the glory of the Sun." (V. 15 and 16). So that "man should raise himself by himself" (VI. 5); and he should "ponder well and act as he chooses" (XVII. 63). Surely, if these passages (and there are volumes of others like these) do not prove the liberty of human will, I do not understand what else they mean.

And lastly, I would quote the following hymn of the Rig Veda, which is very widely known to Aryan Pandits:—"Two birds, associated together as friends, dwell on the same tree. One of them eats the sweet fig, while the other, abstaining from it, merely looks on—" (Rig Veda I. 164—20). Here, the tree represents the body; and the fig means the fruit or result of actions. The bird that consumes the fruit is the individual soul, and the bird that is merely looking on is a symbolical manifestation of the supreme soul—surely a *looker-on is not an actor*.

In making these observations, I must not for a moment be understood as ignoring the divine supremacy. Far from it. If I hold that man is subject to the law of Karma, I hold also (in the words of Akshyopanishat) that *both* man and Karnic law, as well as every thing else, are subject to the Divine law, which is emphatically called the *rita* in the Veda, as representing the law as well as the source of the law. (I. 123-8, 9; V. 45-7. Vide also Taitereya Upanishat, Sikshavalli XII—and Maha-Bharata, Anusasana Parva, Ch. 47. v. 36.) The enjoyer and the objects of enjoyment are all in the Supreme; and the Supreme is in them all. (Swetaswatar Upanishat I. 7. Bhagavatgita VI. 29.)

In conclusion, I would cite the following hymn from the Rig Veda, which sets forth the origin and growth of sin in a way which clearly confirms the above view that man's lot depends on his own conduct;—"The cause of sin (Anrita) is not ourselves, but our

condition (*Dhriti*). It is that which is intoxication, wrath, gambling, and ignorance. There is a senior in the proximity of the junior. Even a dream is provocative to sin." (Rig Veda VII. 86-6). Let us try to understand this hymn carefully. *Rita* means law, righteousness, justice. It is asked, what is the cause of the soul acting in a way contrary to this, *i. e.*, *Anrita*. The soul answers that this cause is not itself (*Nasaswo-daksho*); for soul of its own nature is pure;—*Nirvana-maya*—(Vishnu Purana VI. 4,) and that the cause is nothing else but the condition, *Dhriti*, of the soul: *i. e.* the condition of its being connected with the body; for *Dhriti* means holding, having, or bearing. The encasement of the soul in a body with various senses creates affections and dislikes, (Bhagavatgita III. 34); and these, in their turn, give rise to two natures, the higher (spiritual) and the lower (animal), which the foregoing hymn represents as the senior and junior living together in proximity, and each inclining man towards itself. "He who attends to the inclinations of his lower or animal nature has a concern; from concern proceeds a passion; from passion anger, and from anger is produced folly; from folly arises the loss of memory; from loss of memory, the loss of reason; and from loss of reason, the loss of all!" (Bhagavatgita II. 62, &c.) Hence the Vedic hymn just quoted cautions a man to be careful even in the smallest matters, as "even a dream is provocative to sin."

This is the Law of Karma. It is eternal in this that it, Karma, does not vanish except by its enjoyment by the individual concerned, now or hereafter, and it is inevitable inasmuch as no one, not even the greatest of men, can escape from its influences—(Maha-Bharata, Anusasana Parva, Ch. VI; Devi Bhagavat IX. 40, 73; Vishnu Purana I. XVIII. 3 Manu IX. 10).

Such is the force of Karma; and from this point our Text starts and proceeds to explain how Karma is eternal and infinite, when it is viewed in the abstract, with reference to the whole universe and the great body of mankind *generically*, and how it is finite, when viewed with reference to men, *individually*; how the threads constituting the Karma are so many living particles, as it were, affecting not only the party immediately concerned but others also; how the effects of Karma can be washed out by individuals, and so on. I shall divide this Section III into several clauses for the sake of convenience, and discuss the topic embraced by each clause separately.

(To be continued.)

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## *LIGHT ON THE PATH.*

WRITTEN down by M. C., Fellow of the Theosophical Society, London, 1885; and annotated by P. Sreenivas Row, Fellow of the Theosophical Society, Madras, 1885.

*(Continued from page 64.)*

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### *Section III. Clause I.*

**A**S explained in the Introductory clause, the human existence is made up of Karma. It is impossible to conceive of human existence without Karma. This is the result of Nature's eternal law of causes and effects, the causes themselves being the effects of antecedent causes in an indeterminate succession, forming a circle, a wheel of life as it were, rolling on from eternity to eternity. It

is on this account that the Aryans declare that Karma is Nitya (eternal); and our Text propounds the same theory in the following words:—

*Consider with me that the individual existence is a rope, which stretches from the infinite to the infinite, and has no end and no commencement; neither is it capable of being broken. This rope is formed of innumerable fine threads, which, lying closely together, form its thickness.*

Briefly said, the above Text means that Space and Time are infinite; and that the human existence,—speaking generically,—which is spread over such infinite space and infinite time, must be infinite likewise. Time and space, it must be understood, are not nihilities nor vacuities. They are the measurements of extension and duration in the abstract. Space is filled with Ether, and Time is full of an everlasting succession of events.

The Space is declared to be a form of the Universal soul (Taitereya Upanishad Siksha Valli, VI—I. &c., &c.); and it is therefore eternal. (Devi Bhagavata, IX—I. 5). It is thus boundless, and no calculation of its magnitude is possible. But in order to give the reader something better than this abstract idea, I shall quote the following verses from the *Siddhanta Siromoni*, one of the ancient Aryan works on Astronomy:

“The earth and its mountains, the Dêvas and Danavas, men and others, and also the orbits of the constellations and planets; and the Lokas (regions) which are arranged one above the other, are all included in what has been denominated the *Brahmanda* (Brahma's egg—the Universe). Some astronomers have asserted the circumference of the circle of Heaven to be 18,712,069,200,000,000 yojanas (one yojana is nearly 10 miles) in length. Some say that this is the length of the Zone which binds the two hemispheres of *Brahmanda*. Some *Pauranikas* hold that this is the length of the circumference of the Lokâlôka-parvata (mountain). Those, however, who have had a more perfect mastery of the clear doctrine of the sphere, have declared that this is the length of that circumference bounding the limits, to which the darkness-dispelling rays of the sun extend. But whether this be the length of the circumference of the *Brahmanda* or not, this much is clear to me—that each planet traverses a distance corresponding to this number of yojanas in the course of a Kalpa, i. e. a day of Brahmâ, and that it has been called the *Khakaksha* by the ancients.” (Chapter III, Sections 66 to 69). Upon this subject, one of the Western Philosophers, Dr. Dick, states that “the space which surrounds the utmost limits of our system, extending in every direction to the nearest fixed stars, is at least forty billions of miles in diameter; and it is highly probable that every star is surrounded by a space of equal, or even greater extent.”

While such is the amazing magnitude of our system, our *Brahmanda*, we are assured that there are *thousands and thousands of such Brahmanda in existence*. (Vishnu Purana II.—VII. 27.)

Further, I shall attempt to illustrate the infinitude of space from another stand point, taking my figures from Professor Dick's philosophy. Among the bodies impelled with the greatest velocity

which human art can produce, the ball propelled from a loaded cannon stands first; and it has found by experiments that the rate of its motion is from 480 to 800 miles in an hour, subject to the resistance it meets from the air and the attraction of the earth. It is said that the cannon ball, moving at such great speed would require 4,700,000 years ere it could reach the nearest star!

But the light that flows from the sun travels about 1,400,000 times more swiftly than the motion of the cannon ball. And supposing that any one is endowed with a power of motion as swift as that of light, and that he continues such a rapid course unceasingly for 1,000,000,000 years, he may then probably approach “the suburbs of creation;” and all that he has surveyed during this long and rapid flight, would bear no more proportion to the whole Divine empire than the *smallest grain of sand* does to all the particles of matter of the same size contained in ten thousand worlds!

Such is the infinity of space that it exceeds all bounds of human thought, and we are simply lost in wonder at its immeasurable extent.

And then the Time is equally infinite. This also is a form of the Supreme Soul (Vishnu Purana, I. II. 18. Bhagavatgita XI. 32, &c.) and this too is eternal (Rig Veda I. 164-2. Devi Bhagavata IX—I. 5). To give the reader some idea of the infinitude of time, I shall state certain facts taken from the book on Hindu Astronomy above alluded to, and the notes of the learned editor together with the Puranas extant on the subject.

The period which intervenes between the evolution of the Universe in some form or other, (Srishti), and its dissolution (Prakritapralaya), when all the discrete products of nature (Prakriti) are withdrawn into their indiscrete source (Mulaprakriti), constitutes the whole period of 100 years of Brahmâ's age, as it is allegorically called, and is known as the *Maha Kalpa*.

One day out of this long life of Brahmâ is called *Kalpa*; and a *Kalpa* is that portion of time which intervenes between one conjunction of all the planets on the horizon of Lanka, at the first point of Aries, and a subsequent similar conjunction. A *Kalpa* embraces the reign of fourteen Manus, and their sandhies (intervals); each Manu lying between two sandhies. Every Manu's rule contains seventy-one *Maha Yugas*,—each *Maha Yuga* consists of four Yugas, viz, Krita, Treta, Dwapara, and Kali; and the length of each of these four Yugas is respectively as the numbers 4, 3, 2 and 1.

The number of sidereal years embraced in the foregoing different periods are as follows:—

	Mortal years.
360 days of mortals make a year ... ..	1
Krita Yuga contains ... ..	1,728,000
Treta Yuga contains ... ..	1,296,000
Dwapara Yuga contains ... ..	864,000
Kali Yuga contains ... ..	432,000
The total of the said four Yugas constitute a	
Maha Yuga ... ..	4,320,000
Seventy-one of such Maha Yugas form the	
period of the reign of one Manu ... ..	306,720,000

The reign of 14 Manus embraces the duration of 994 Maha Yugas, which is equal to ...	4,294,080,000
Add <i>Sandhis</i> , i. e., intervals between the reign of each Manu; which amount to 6 Maha Yugas, equal to ...	25,920,000
The total of these reigns and interregnums of 14 Manus, is 1,000 Maha Yugas, which constitute a Kalpa, i. e., one day of Brahma,—equal to ...	4,320,000,000
As Brahma's night is of equal duration, one day and night of Brahma will contain...	8,640,000,000
360 of such days and nights make one year of Brahma, equal to ...	3,110,400,000,000
100 of such years constitute the whole period of Brahma's age i. e., Maha Kalpa ...	311,040,000,000,000

That these figures are not fanciful, but are founded upon astronomical facts, has been demonstrated by Mr. Davis, in an essay in the *Asiatic Researches*; and this receives further corroboration from the geological investigations and calculations made by Dr. Hunt, formerly President of the Anthropological Society, and also in some respects from the researches made by Professor Huxley.

Great as the period of the Maha Kalpa seems to be, we are assured that *thousands and thousands of millions of such Maha Kalpas* have passed, and as many more are yet to come. (Vide Brahma-Vaivarta and Bhavishyre Puranas; and Linga Purana, ch. 171, verse 107, &c.) and this in plain language means that the Time past is infinite and the Time to come is equally infinite. The Universe is formed, dissolved, and reproduced, in an indeterminate succession (Bhagavata-gita VIII. 19).

Some people consider all such speculations to be futile, because the Infinite cannot become the legitimate object of man's consciousness, since man's senses, which alone form the avenue to the whole domain of human consciousness, never come into contact with the Infinite. But this objection is utterly invalid; for, as is very forcibly shown by Professor Max Müller in his Hibbert Lectures, it is very clear that with every finite perception there is a concomitant perception of the Infinite; whenever we try to fix a point in space or time, we feel that we are utterly unable to fix it in such a manner as to exclude the possibility of a point beyond that. In fact, our very idea of limit implies an idea of a beyond, and thus forces the idea of the Infinite upon us. And, as far as mere distance or extension is concerned, it is difficult to deny that the eye, by the very act by which it apprehends the finite, apprehends also the Infinite. The more we advance, the wider grows our horizon; but there can be no horizon to our senses, unless as standing between this visible and finite on one side, and the invisible and infinite on the other.

Thus the infinite is implied in the manifestation of our own sensuous knowledge; and we arrive at the idea of the infinity of space and time. If this be so, the infinity of human existence is self evident, for mankind, composed of eternal soul and eternal particles of matter, and abiding on the surface of infinite space, and during infinite time, cannot but be infinite itself. True, the existence of an individual A or B cannot be said to be infinite, as the embodiment of his soul began at a certain period and will terminate at another

period. But A or B is not the only human being in the universe. There are millions of millions of beings like him; and each one of them is born; he dies, and is again born in thousands of successions,—contracting affinities which bind one to another in various ways during such innumerable existences; so that the lot of one embodied soul may fairly be said to be cast with all those similarly embodied; and the good or evil of the individual unit becomes the good or evil of the world as a whole. Hence the Karma of one is inextricably interwoven with the Karma of all. Man's enjoyment or suffering have reference not only to *his own* Karma (Rig Veda I. 162-22 and VI. 74-3); but also to the Karma of his *forefathers*, (Rig Veda VII. 86-5); and even to the Karma of *others* (Rig Veda VII. 52-2).

In this sense, taking mankind generically, the human institution is everlasting and infinite, and its Karma is equally so; for we cannot conceive of human existence without Karma, and it cannot break. It may be dissolved at certain Pralayas, but it is again revived at the next evolution, the seed being ever present. "The creatures," says the Vayu Purana, "who at the close of the preceding kalpa had been driven by the mundane conflagration to the *Janoloka*, now form the seed for the new creation"—(VIII. 23, &c.); and this is true not only of the souls, but also of the result of their past Karma. "The seeds of Karma generate other seeds, and others again succeeding, and they bear fruits good or evil according as the seeds are good or evil," (Mahā Bharata Anusasane Parvam. Ch. VI).

But at the same time it must be remarked that the result of human existence is not the work of a day or even a cycle. It is the aggregate sum of actions committed during innumerable previous existences. Each action may in itself be as slight as can be conceived, like the minutest filaments of cotton,—such that hundreds of them may be blown away by one single breath; and yet, as similar filaments when closely packed and twisted together form a rope, so heavy and strong that it can be used to pull elephants and even huge ships with, so the articles of man's Karma, however trivial each one of them may be in itself, would yet by the natural process of accretion, combine themselves closely, and form a formidable *Pasa*, (rope) to pull the man with, i. e., to influence his conduct for good or evil.

This illustration of Karma-pasa, (rope of karma)—by means of the cotton rope occurs beautifully in the Vishnu Purana (VI: V. 53) and in the Hitopadesa. Hence it is a common saying among the Aryans that man is *karma-baddha* (bound by karma).

Now the Treatise proceeds to explain the nature and character of the threads of Karma.

#### Clause II.

*These threads are colourless, are perfect in their qualities of straightness, strength and levelness. This rope, passing as it does through all places, suffers strange accidents. Very often a thread is caught and becomes attached, or perhaps is only violently pulled away from its even way. Then for a great time it is disordered,*

and it disorders the whole. Sometimes one is stained with dirt or with colour; and not only does the stain run on further than the spot of contact, but it discolours other of the threads.

This illustration of the threads of a rope being pure at first, but becoming stained with colour and dirt when it is used for different purposes, needs no explanation, as it is within the experience of every person in daily life. Now the application of this illustration to human existence shows that the soul is itself pure, but that it becomes impure and stained with colour when it is encased in a body, indulging in appetites and desires incidental to such embodiment, during the innumerable migrations which the soul undergoes.

The Soul is in its nature, *nirvānamaya*, pure. (Vishnu Purana VI. 4; and VI. 7); and the particles of Prakriti (matter), the aggregation of which in a gross form constitutes the body, the habitation of the soul, are also pure. (Mahabharata Vana Parva, Sl. 12619); for the primary particles of matter called the Tanmatras have no qualities such as those which would affect the soul. (Vishnu Purana I. 37.) But Prakriti (matter), in its manifested and differentiated condition, that is, when it is moulded into shapes and forms, becomes by some mysterious natural process, invested with three principal (*gunas*) qualities, viz:—the *Satwa guna*, *Rajo-guna*, and *Tama-guna*. (Devi Bhagavata. III. VIII. 4, &c.) “The *Satwa guna*, because of its purity, is clear and free from defect, and entwined the Purusha (soul) with sweet and pleasant consequences (*Bhagavatgita* XIV. 6) “The *Rajo guna* is of a passionate nature, arising from the effects of worldly thirst, and invests the Purusha with the consequences proceeding from action. (Ibid, 7.) And the *Tama guna* is the offspring of darkness, and is the confounder of all the faculties of the mind, and it imprisoneth the Purusha with intoxication, sloth and idleness”—(Ibid, 8). These qualities are capable of binding Purusha, and of bending him towards one another (Ibid, 6, 7, 8.) So that, the Purusha, who resides in the Prakriti, (*i. e.*, the soul enveloped in a body), partakes of the qualities thus proceeding from Prakriti; and the consequences arising from those qualities are the causes which operate in the birth of Purusha and determine whether it is to be in a good body or evil” (Ibid, XIII. 22). How pure souls are thus capable of becoming impure is fully described in the Vayu Purana and in the Mahabharata, Vana Parva, Sl. 12619; and also in the Vishnu Purana, which latter being more clear than other, I quote it in full:

“The individual soul is of its own nature pure and composed of *nirvanamaya*, and wisdom. The properties of pain, ignorance, and impurity are those of Prakriti and not of the soul. There is no affinity between fire and water; but when the latter is placed over the former in a caldron, it bubbles and boils, and exhibits properties of fire. In like manner, when the soul is associated with Nature, it is vitiated by egotism (*Ahamkara*) and the rest; and assumes the qualities of grosser Nature, although essentially distinct from them and incorruptible. \* \* \*

The ill-judging embodied being, bewildered by the darkness of

fascination, situated in a body composed of five elements, loudly asserts ‘This is I.’ But who would ascribe spiritual individuality to a body in which the soul is distinct from the ether, air, fire, water, and earth of which that body is composed? What man of understanding assigns to disembodied spirit corporal fruition, or houses, land, and the like, that it should say, “These are mine?” What wise man entertains the idea of property in sons or grand-sons—begotten of the body,—after the spirit has abandoned it? Man here performs acts for the purpose of bodily fruition, and the consequence of such acts is another body; so that their result is nothing but confinement to bodily existence.” (Vishnu Purana VI. 7.)

The same idea is conveyed in the Maitri Upanishat from another stand point, in these words:—“The five rudiments (Tanmatras) are called by the name ‘element;’ next, the five gross elements (*Mahā-bhutas*) are also called by the name “elements;” and the aggregation of these is called the Body, *Sarira*;—(*i. e.* the *Sūkshma Sarira* composed of Tanmatras, and the *Sthūla Sarira* made of gross elements.) That which verily rules in this body is called the elemental soul (*Bhūtātma*). Thus the soul’s immortal nature, which in itself is as a drop of water on a lotus leaf, becomes assailed by the qualities of the said elements of nature (*Prakriti*); and from being thus assailed, it suffers bewilderment; and from its bewilderment it sees not the Lord *Bhagavanta*, who is within one’s self. Borne along by and sailing on the stream of qualities, uncertain and unstable, bereft of true knowledge, full of desires, and forlorn, it becomes subject to selfishness (*Abhimāna*). Thinking such thoughts as ‘I,’ ‘he,’ ‘this is mine,’ and so on, it binds itself by itself, as a bird with a snare. Entangled in the fruits of its own actions, it obtains honourable, or mean births; its course becomes upward or downward; and it wanders about assailed by various *pairs*” (such as pleasure and pain; cold and heat, &c.) (*Maitri Upanishat* III. 2.)

Thus it is that the Soul, pure at first, becomes subject to desirable and repulsive objects after its embodiment in the mortal coils (*Chandogya Upanishat* VIII. XII. I); but as this misery is brought about by the line of conduct adopted by himself, it is quite possible for him to obtain bliss by choosing and following the best path during his pilgrimage. For the soul is the lord of life; has the choice of actions; and can control and restrain the passions incidental to his physical embodiment, if he only wishes to do so earnestly. “He is the chooser between *three* roads (Virtue, Vice and True Knowledge); and his success or failure depends upon what road he chooses.” (*Swetaswata Upanishat* V. 7). And “when the soul has surpassed the three qualities which are existent in the body, then it is delivered from birth and death, and old age and pain; and drinks the water of immortality.”—(*Bhagavatgita* XIV. 20).

From the foregoing observations, the reader will perceive that the threads of human existence were originally pure; they became impure by subsequent contaminations; and it is possible for them to regain their original purity. But how, he may ask, is all this consistent with the teachings of the preceding clause,



which are to the effect that the Karma of mankind is infinite, without beginning or end, and can never break. That both these propositions are in perfect harmony with each other will be evident if the reader will be pleased to go over the observations made in the preceding clause once more. There he will find that human existence and Karma are spoken of as infinite only when they are viewed with reference to *mankind, generically, as a whole* and not in respect of *an individual unit viewed singly by himself*. So that it is quite proper to say that the Karma of each person began with his encasement in the body, and would terminate with his disseverance from it and from all its concerns. If this were not so, it would be idle to speak of one's attaining purity and emancipation (Moksha), the ultimate end and purpose of every individual soul.

But the reader may fairly demand an explanation as to how *Karma*, that is, one's own action, inactive and ineffective as it seems to be,—is capable of producing such results as would affect him favourably or prejudicially during this life and in the future. The solution of this difficulty forms the subject of the following clause.

(To be continued.)

stain would be accompanied with pain and concomitant evil—so it is with Karma. The threads which form the rope of Karma (Karman-pasa), being as effective as a living electric wire, their effect, when communicated to the individuals, must certainly be to affect them either for good or evil, according to the nature of the cause which produced that effect.

But in order to be able to realize this great idea, the reader should clearly understand how human action is originated, and what follows after the action is performed. Let him remember that desires are the springs of action; one of the essential conditions of an action is a Will; and the exertion of the Will stirs up the nervo-vital force which is within us. This force thereupon acts upon the nerves; nerves contract the muscles; and the muscles produce the necessary movements, resulting in the performance of the action intended. But the influence of this vital force, when once roused by the Will, does not cease upon the completion of the action. Being an offspring, as it were, of the human Will, and consequently, semi-intelligent and electric in its effects, this vital force flows out of the body as a material emanation, in the form of what we may call Aura, endowed with sound, colour and odour; and spreads itself in the ethereal space, making impressions and radiating the character of the will upon all surrounding objects, animate and inanimate; and then reflects back upon the very individual from whom it first emanated, under the well known mechanical law of action and reaction; either for good or evil, according as the will which rouses the Aura was in itself good or evil. This in brief is the philosophy of Karma; and a great Oriental Adept has described this in lucid and forcible language thus:—

“Every thought of man, upon being evolved, passes into the inner world and becomes an active entity by associating itself—coalescing we might term it—with an elemental—that is to say, with one of the semi-intelligent forces of the Kingdoms. It survives as an active intelligence—a creation of the mind's begetting—for a longer or shorter period proportionate to the original intensity of the cerebral action which generated it. Thus, a good thought is perpetuated as an active, beneficent power; an evil one, as a maleficent demon. And so man is continually peopling his current in space with a world of his own, crowded with the offspring of his fancies, desires, impulses and passions; a current which reacts upon any sensitive or nervous organization that comes into contact with it, in proportion to its dynamic intensity. The Buddhist calls this his ‘Skandha,’ the Hindu gives it the name of ‘Karma.’ The Adept evolves these shapes consciously; other men throw them off unconsciously.”

In the following pages I shall endeavour to explain and prove *seriatim* each of the propositions above put forward; and I beg the reader will be pleased to follow me step by step patiently.

To begin with the origin of human action. The motive powers of man's conscious nature which give impulse and energy to human activity and set him in motion internally and externally, are what are called *Desires*; which include blind impulses, such as various kinds of appetites, as well as impulses accompanied

### LIGHT ON THE PATH.

WRITTEN down by M. C., Fellow of the Theosophical Society, London, 1885; and annotated by P. Sreenivas Row, Fellow of the Theosophical Society, Madras, 1885.

(Continued from page 64.)

#### Section III. Clause III.

*And remember that the threads are living—are like electric wires, more, are like quivering nerves. How far, then, must the stain, the drag awry, be communicated!*

AS shown in the preceding clause, the threads of human existence, though colourless and pure in their origin, are yet liable to become coloured and impure, when a man is led away by his passions and desires. The colour of a thread is of itself capable of communicating its stain to the individuals who caused it and to others who come into contact with it; but if it happens that the coloured threads are not inactive, ineffectual particles of matter, but are like living and effective electric wires, then the result of their communication to us and others must necessarily be more serious. A piece of charcoal stains our fingers, but if it be a live coal, the

by knowledge and intention; in fact every impulse which urges man to action. Desires are thus the springs of action, and action is the exertion or exercise of the faculties of man, internal or external, and includes not only an overt act or uttered speech, but also the inmost thought.

One of the essential conditions for the performance of an action is Will. It is the Will that determines the action, and it therefore is the cause of Karma. In the absence of Will, as in the case of infants or idiots, no Karma is generated, as the cause does not exist. So that man's accountability for his actions commences with the Will, irrespective of the commission of the action or otherwise. If the Will be followed by a *corresponding* overt act or speech, then his action would be doubly meritorious or vicious according to the nature and quality of the Will itself; and if the Will be not so followed by deed or word, then he shall have his deserts for the Will alone, for in *foro conscientie*, a mere will to do an act or speak a word is itself commendable or blameable as the case may be. Here it is that the Moralist differs from the Jurist. A vicious will without a vicious act is no offence in the eye of the Public Law, whereas morality takes cognizance of both, separately and jointly. True, the law takes notice of what it calls an "attempt" to commit an offence; but an attempt implies more than mere will; it is a stage beyond that. "Acts," says a lawyer, "immediately and necessarily connected with the commission of the offence and which constitute the commission of the offence, not being completed only because the offender is hindered by circumstances independent of his will, as by seizure by the police, &c., are attempts." So that it is clear that an attempt is one of a series of small actions necessary to the fulfilment of a great one. It may be asked whether the Law does not look to Will as the criterion for ascertaining whether an offence committed was intentional or otherwise. I know the Law does this; indeed the maxim of the Jurist is, *Actus non facit rem, nisi mens sit rea*. (The action itself does not constitute guilt unless it is done with a guilty intention.) But then, it must be remarked that the means which the Jurist employs to discover the Will, the internal motive, are confessedly *external*; for he says, *Acta exteriora indicant interiora secreta* (external acts indicate internal secrets); and regards only such intentions as are demonstrated by outward actions; and assumes jurisdiction against an *overt act* or against an intention manifested by an *overt act*, in utter disregard of the antecedent, latent will which influenced the overt act. Surely this mode of procedure is not calculated to elicit the truth; and it may and does very often tend to eliminate it, for man is quite capable of covering his foulest deeds and thoughts by parading his innocent ones with simulated candour, and pre-arranging matters in the manner best suited to prevent the possibility of arousing suspicion in the shrewdest people. The more enlightened a man is the greater is the chance of his proving a consummate cheat, unless his enlightenment has extended to the regions of spiritual purity. But the Jurist is powerless in dealing with such cases. Wherever the Public Law is severed from spiritual matters, there necessarily arises an insurmountable barrier

which confines the Jurist within narrow limits in point of time and scope of inquiry. Nay, it is not, in such a state of things, possible for a Public Tribunal to devote the unlimited time and energy necessary for the divulgence of every immoral act committed within the realm. So that his motto has been, *ne lites immortales essent dum litigantes mortales sunt*; (Let not the strife be immortal while those who strive are mortal); but the reign of psychology begins at this very point; it deals with the *immortal portion* of man principally; and its functions are neither restricted by time nor by any other consideration. It takes cognizance of every action, whether trivial or grave, whether still in the bud, in the mere conception of the individual, or an accomplished fact, and deals out retributive justice, whether the process takes days, centuries or even cycles.

Hence it is an essential condition of the law of Karma that we should dive deep into the human heart, and examine the character of the will in every action, outward or inward. The influence of the will is the cerebral influence, that is, the influence of nerves, or rather the pairs of nerves, emerging from the brain, such as optic nerves, auditory nerves, olfactory nerves. This influence of the will, when exerted, stimulates the vital force which pervades the brain and the nerves; travels to every part of the human system with the speed of lightning, and causes a vibration of the nerves. Then the nerves, acting through the interposition of the spinal cord, the main trunk of the nerves distributed to all parts of the body except the brain, contract the muscles. And lastly, the muscles produce the movement of such part of the body as may be necessary for the performance of the action contemplated by the will. In other words, the vital force, agitated by the Will, flows out, and results in an action, external or internal; for it must be remembered that "besides the mechanical effects produced by our outward actions, there is also an electric influence exerted and propagated by almost every muscular effort, every chemical change, within us, and every variation in the state of health or vigour, and especially by every mental effort; for no thought can arise in the mind, which does not alter the psychological, chemical, and electric condition of the brain, and consequently of the whole system. The stronger the emotion, the greater the change; so that great mental efforts and great exertions of the will bring about important moral effects. If the action is an overt one, as when we raise the hand or utter a word, the action of the vital force is mechanical, but if it is an internal action, as when we do not proceed beyond evolving a thought, then the effect is electrical; and consequently the result in the first case is more palpable than in the second; but in either case it is the vital force that has produced the result; and the question arises whether there exists such a thing in the human constitution as the vital force of which we are speaking.

This subject belongs to the department of Occult science, which from time immemorial has been the peculiar possession of the sacerdotal section of the Aryans; and "into the knowledge of which Moses was initiated at Heliopolis (in Egypt) where he was educated, and Jesus among the Esseniaen priests of Egypt or

"Judea; and by which these great reformers, particularly the latter, "wrought many of the miracles mentioned in the Scripture," as stated by Dr. Williams, a Professor of Psychological science in England, upon the authority of Rebold. These ancient occultists designated the vital force under the name of regenerating Fire, which the Sanscritists call *Têjas*.

*Têjas* is another name for Agni, who is the source of all that gives light and heat. So that there are different species of Agni, (fire); but "whatever other fires there may be, they are but the ramifications of Agni, the immortal" (Rig Veda I. 59. 1.) The primary division of Agni is threefold. "Agni," says the Vishnu Purana, "has three sons, *Suchi*, *Pavamâna*, and *Paraka*," (I. x.). *Suchi* means the *Savira*, or Solar fire; *Pavamana* means *Nirmathana*, fire produced by friction, as the friction of two pieces of wood; and *Paraka* means the *vaidyuta* or fire of the firmament, i. e. the fire of the lightning, or electric fire.

The sources of these three fires, I may observe in passing, constitute the three principal deities spoken of in the Veda namely, *Surya*, the sun, representing the solar fire; *Indra* (and sometimes, *Vayu*) the rain-producing deity, representing the fire of the firmament; and Agni, representing the terrestrial fire, the fire produced by friction (Nirukta VII. 4); and all these three, be it remembered, are merely the ramifications of one Agni; which in its turn is an emanation from the Supreme One, as the reader will find from the allegorical description given of Agni as being the mouth-born son of Brahma, in the Vishnu purana.

Now, each of the triple forms of Agni has numerous subdivisions. The solar fire is distinguished by several divisions according to the nature of the rays emitted by the great luminary.

The terrestrial fire, i. e., friction fire, is called by various names, according to the purposes to which it is applied, e. g., the *Ahvanika*, the fire into which the sacrificial oblations are poured; the *Garhapatya*, the household fire, and so on. And the fire of the firmament has various names with reference to its functions outside the man, and inside; as, for instance, the function of digesting food, &c.—(See Prasna Upanishat III. 5; Mundaka Upanishat I. II. 4—Also Sri Bhagavat IV. 1—61 and Vayu Purana); and the name given to that form of the fire of the firmament, which is in the body of human beings, is *Vaiswânara*. (Rig Veda I. 59—2): from the roots *Viswa* (all) and *nara* (man); i. e., the element residing in all men. (See also Bhagavat Gita XV. 14.) It is this Vaiswanara fire which concerns us the most in connection with the subject of these annotations. Being the electric fire located in the human body, its functions are very important; indeed it is said to be "the navel of men, supporting them like a deeply planted pillar." (Rig Veda I. 59—1.); i. e., it supports man as a pillar supports a house. The mystical circle about the navel in the human body, which is the prop and support of the whole human body, is called *Mulâdhâra*; and the sphere of *Vaiswana* fire which is just about the navel is called *Agni mandala*, "fanned by the air of the breath" and so on, as beautifully described in the Maitri Upanishat (VII. 11), and other esoteric works.

It is to be remarked here that the same *Vaidyuta* (or firmamental) fire, which, in the form of Vaiswanara, sustains human life as above described, also supports the whole Universe, for the Veda declares it to be equally the prop and navel of the universe (Rig-Veda I. 59—2). That which is abroad in the universe is analogous to electricity, magnetism, light, heat, &c., as those terms are understood by physical science; and that which is in living beings is what may be called the animal magnetism; it belongs to the vital and spiritual portions of man, the microcosm, and is not only endowed with all the qualities of electricity, &c. which the macrocosm possesses, but is also replete with intelligence such as may be communicated to it by the will of the individual who evolves it from time to time.

This fire, called the *Vaidyuta* (electric), or Vaiswanara (residing in all men) "is for obvious reasons called *Sarira-agni*, fire of the body, and is the vital force above spoken of as being influenced by the will, and so producing muscular action, &c. "The Will," says the Maitri Upanishat, "stirs up the *Sarira-agni* (fire of the body); then the fire agitates the Maruta (wind) in the body, and the wind passing through the heart, produces sound, &c." VIII.—11). This fire, this vital force, I propose to call by the name of *Têjas*, which, besides meaning Agni (fire) as above stated, means also light, heat, power, ardour, spirit, energy, bodily vigour, and so on, exactly representing the functions of the electric fire dwelling in the human body. And the English name which some eminent scientists of the West have given to the emanations of this *Têjas* is *Aura*, which Webster defines to be "any subtle invisible fluid, supposed to flow from a body; an effluvium, emanation, or exhalation," &c. Its powers in sustaining men, bodily and spiritually, are very great, and are extensively exercised by the Aryan occultists in reading the thoughts of others and transmitting their own to them, at however great a distance; also in healing the sick, and showering blessings, and various other purposes. Indeed this *Têjas* is a great power in the hands of the Aryan sages. "Brahma-*Têjas* is the power of the powers" was the motto of the great Rishi Viswamitra. Referring to the fact that this emanation or *Aura* is endowed with colours and sounds, a great Oriental Adept says to one of his correspondents,—“How could you make yourself understood by, command in fact, those semi-intelligent forces, whose means of communicating with us are not through spoken words, but through sounds and colours in correlation between the vibrations of the two? For sound, light and colour are the main factors in forming those grades of intelligences, those beings of whose very existence you have no conception,” &c.

Now let me assure my readers that the theory of *Têjas*, or bodily fire, or animal magnetism, and of its emanation in the form of *Aura*, is neither fanciful nor novel. It is a stern reality, founded on ages of experience. "Search where we may," says Professor Williams, "this force (magnetism) has been universally acknowledged and used by all tribes and nations; and so far from this being but a science of yesterday, it enjoys the double reputation of being very old and having stood the test of ages; indeed, we maintain that it is the oldest

science extant, and that nothing was practised as a *science* prior to it." Magnetism as such, then, was the keystone of medicine, or the secret of the physician, and it was the pillar of religion, or the power of the priest. It may be interesting to some of us to know that medicine and her sister the church can pre-eminently claim the greatest antiquity as "professions" (*i. e.*, the former concerning the body and the latter concerning the spirit). And even in the present age, despite the sceptical notions here and there prevailing,—we see the great strides which this sublime science has made; and its reality and importance are being recognised by numerous modern scientists of eminence. I beg to refer my readers especially to the works of Professor Williams above mentioned; to the book of Baron Reichenbach, translated into English by Mr. William Gregory, late professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh; to the Treatise on Light and Colour by Mr. Edwin D. Rabbitt of New York, and lastly to the numerous quotations in the book on the science and art of Organic Magnetism, by Miss Chaudos Leigh Hunt of London. All these writers, be it remembered, have founded their works upon their own personal researches, observations and experiments, and upon the testimony of hundreds of other persons, some of whose names and addresses have been given in full.

These Western authors call the Têjas by various names, such as Odyle, Odyle force, Od, Odic force, animal magnetism, animal electricity, Mesmerism, Aura, Magnetic Aura, and so on. One of them, Professor Williams, describes it in these words:—The aura which pervades the brain and nervous system, though electrical in its nature, is something more than mere electricity; hence, for want of a better name, it is frequently called animal magnetism or animal electricity, in distinction to terrestrial magnetism or electricity. The former appears to be charged with an *intelligence*, so to speak; a spiritual essence characteristic of itself and clearly distinguished from the latter. Water may be charged with electricity; and but one result can be obtained from it. However, if animal electricity be used the water partakes of whatever therapeutic virtue the operator desired at the time he charged it."

Another writer, Miss Hunt, thus speaks of the powers and properties of Magnetic Aura:—

"I will now refer to it as it is expressed in name.....A thought makes this emanation active. It flows from the eyes, fingers, toes, and the ends of the hair. It can, by art, be rendered entirely subservient to the human *Will*, and can be compelled to travel in any direction; how far, is unknown. We might correctly term it elastic in its nature. It carries with it any desired influence, affecting sensitives at a distance as powerfully as though they were in the same room and under the immediate influence of the one who is directing it. It is called animal magnetism.....and it can be directed for curing mental, moral and physical diseases, producing refreshing sleep; rendering the body insensible to pain; *developing spiritual gifts*; artificially causing the phenomena of somnambulism; cultivating plants and fruits; taming animals, &c."

It must be remarked that although we have been speaking of the Magnetic Aura as it emanates from human beings, for the purpose of illustrating the law of Karma, yet it must not be supposed that its flow is confined to human beings. It exists in every animate and inanimate body, and in fact in all known substances and elements.

Having thus seen that such a thing as Têjas does exist, it must next be understood that it does not remain dormant. Designed as it is by the laws of nature to perform the most important functions, this Têjas is ever vigilant; and its influence is constantly spreading itself both within and without the body in which it abides; and, except in cases where a human will commands and transmits it in any particular direction, it flows in all directions widely and indiscriminately, although not generally visible owing to the very subtle nature of the particles composing it. Some idea may be formed of the extreme minuteness of the atoms from the following account, for which I am indebted to Professor Thomas Dick:—

"There are found in various liquids animalcules so small that they appear only like points when viewed through microscopes magnifying several hundreds of thousands of times. The smallness of some of these animalcules is such that a million of them do not exceed the bulk of a grain of sand, and yet each of these creatures is composed of members as curiously organized as those of larger animals. They have life and spontaneous motion; are endued with sense and instinct; are observed to move with astonishing speed and activity; and their motions appear evidently to be governed by choice, and directed to some end. They use food and drink; and are consequently furnished with organs of digestion. They appear to have considerable muscular power, and are furnished with limbs and muscles of strength and flexibility. We must therefore conceive that these living beings have a heart, arteries, veins, muscles, and circulating fluids, with all other parts and organs requisite to constitute an animal being. And if this is so, how inconceivably fine and minute such organs must be! Dr. Reid has calculated that the bulk of one of these animalcules—by no means the smallest—is equal to only  $\frac{27}{1,000,000,000,000,000}$  or less than

the forty billionth part of a cubic inch; that is, it would require more than forty billions of such minute beings to be equal in size to a cubic inch!"

If the *bodies* of these animals be so small, how infinitely smaller still must be the globules that swim in their blood! And how inconceivably smaller again must be the atoms that compose a solid, inanimate body! Professor Gaudin calculates the number of atoms for a large pin's head at about 8,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000, which, if measured off at the rate of a million per second, would take over 250 millions of years to complete! But even this must be far below the infinitude of the smallness of the particles of matter, for the subtlest ethers must have atoms quite transcending in minuteness all the measurements and calculations of the human mind!

It is owing to the extreme minuteness of the particles of matter that we are not generally able to see them as they issue from bodies; but it is certain that they do exist, and continue to flow, as the natural result of the constitution of organic bodies, animate or inanimate. As the constituents of those bodies are particles of matter held together by the operation of certain laws of nature, so there are other laws of nature under which particles tend to separate, and complex bodies are resolved into their prime constituents. Besides the great dissolution called the *Naimittika-pralaya* (occasional dissolution) which occurs at the end of each day of Brahma (Kalpa), when the organic bodies are destroyed, but their substance remains intact; and the still greater dissolution, the *maha-pralaya* or *Prākṛita-pralaya* (great elemental dissolution), which occurs at the end of a hundred years of Brahma (*Maha-Kalpa*), when not only the organic bodies, but even their substance,—in fact the whole universe—is resolved into the original source, *Mūla-prakṛiti*; there is a third dissolution, called the *nitya-pralaya* (constant dissolution), which is taking place incessantly and without the slightest intermission, in respect of all organic bodies, in the course of their various stages of growth and decay. Sri Bhāgavata Purana speaks of this constant dissolution in these words:—"The various conditions of beings, subject to change, are occasioned by that constant dissolution of life which is being rapidly produced by the restless stream of time, perpetually taking everything away." (XII, V.) Indeed, nothing in the universe remains the same, without undergoing some change or other, during even the shortest twinkling of an eye. Our inability to perceive this fact, while partly due to the very subtle nature of the change, is principally the consequence of our ignorance and disregard of the laws of nature.

Further, we must remember that were it not for the constant flow of material particles from all bodies, perception of external objects would be impossible, and our faculties of vision, hearing and the like would be but so many useless appendages. It is a scientific fact, recognised by Eastern and Western philosophers alike, that the functions of the eye, nose, ears and so forth are due to stimuli excited by the emanations that issue from all known substances. The particles of matter proceeding from surrounding objects fall upon the eye, and, entering it through the pupil, they are refracted by the different humours deposited in the eye by nature, and thus converge into a focus upon what is called the retina at the back of the inner membrane of the eye. On the retina images of those objects are painted, with all their varieties of form and colour; and these images are thence conveyed to the brain by means of the optic nerve. Similar particles of matter produce the sensation of smell by entering the nasal organ, where a net-work of olfactory nerves is spread over the mucous membrane lining the upper part of the nasal cavity. These nerves are connected with the minute hairlets of the nasal membrane through certain cells. When the vibrations of a material particle, i. e., the effluvia emanating from odoriferous bodies, come into contact with this net-work of nerves, they provoke the sensation of smell. And, in like manner, the particles

proceeding from bodies in a state of agitation produce a vibratory motion; which, acting upon a sort of nerve net-work called the drum, in the cavity of the ear, produces the sensation of sound. There is thus a perfect correspondence between all the vibrations of nature; and such expressions as:—"The fire crackles with the light;" "The sun rises like the cry of a new-born child;" "The sound is heard when the sun is scattering his rays," and so on, are to be found in the Rig-Veda (VI. 3—6 and 7 and IX. 74—1); thus proving that there is an intimate relation between the set of vibrations which communicates to us the impressions of sound, and the other set which gives us the impressions of form and colour. It cannot be otherwise. The human voice (sound) is the means of expressing thoughts, feelings and passions; an adequate expression in words of deep thought and strong, passionate feeling is a poem; if the same sentiments are to be expressed in sounds alone, we must employ music, and if we make a similar appeal to the mind, dumbly addressing the eye as our sole channel of communication, we do so by means of painting. Thus poetry may be called the music of language, and music the poetry of sound, while a picture is an unspoken poem, a silent melody. All three arts are means of expressing our passions and feelings, and they operate upon the mind by sympathy. The mind is likewise affected by odour, an inseparable accompaniment of all bodily emanations, since it is a quality of every substance in which the earthly element is present.

If all this is true—as it must be true according to the teachings of science—in respect of the gross emanations of the body, it cannot be otherwise in the case of the subtle emanations (Aura) which flow from our inmost structure. We are then perfectly justified in holding that this Aura spreads itself in the Ether around us, clothed in appropriate forms and colours, and producing smell and sound, like all other emanations of the body; and that whenever set in motion by the exertion of the human will, it assumes such forms and colours as to render it capable of indicating the real character of every human action, however secret: disclosing the lowest whisper, the inmost thought, and the minutest play of the muscles. In this manner it enables us to communicate our own thoughts to others at any distance however great. This is not all. The *Tejas*, the source of human aura, as already explained, being the immediate result of the conjunction of the soul with the body, will continue to adhere to the soul, even after it vacates the gross body (*Sthula sarīra*) and merges into the subtle body (*Sukshma Sarīra*) throughout all its various transmigrations. Thus Aura and its modes of manifestation form an important element in the operation of the law of *Karma* to which men are subject during the successive series of their numerous existences.

Hence, the reader will perceive the utility of the following additional particulars on the subject of Aura, with special reference to its colour,

(To be continued.)

## LIGHT ON THE PATH.

WRITTEN down by M. C., Fellow of the Theosophical Society, London, and annotated by P. Sreenivas Row, Fellow of the Theosophical Society, Madras.

(Continued from page 113.)

## Section III. Clause 3. (Continued.)

I SHALL now attempt to show how Aura endowed with colours emanates from human bodies, and how colours represent the character of human actions.

Form is an essential property of matter. All bodies—even the elementary particles of which the commoner substances are composed—are extended in space of three dimensions, that is, they have length, breadth, and thickness. "Quantity," says Kânâda, the great author of the *Nyâya* Philosophy, "is the universal quality common to all substances. It is fourfold; great and small, long and short. Extreme smallness and shortness are eternal; and extreme greatness and length—termed infinite—are likewise eternal. Within these extremes is the inferior magnitude or finite quantity, which is non-eternal; and this is of various degrees from the mote or tertiary atom, upwards to any magnitude short of the Infinite. The finite magnitude of products or effects results from number, size or mass. Infinity transcends the senses; i. e., an object may be too great or too small to be distinguishable."

Now, almost every body that has form, has also colour. Colour, it must be remarked, is not a distinct principle, existing separately from the body whence it is thrown off; but it is the inherent property of reflecting particular rays of light, which property is possessed by the constitutional elements of the body. "Colour," says the *Nyâya* of Kânâda, "is a peculiar quality, to be apprehended by sight; and it abides especially in earth, water and light; and it is a characteristic quality of the last. It is perpetual in the primary atoms; but not so in their products."

So we find that colour is present throughout Nature, animate as well as inanimate. The earth is clothed with a mantle of delightful green, interspersed with the brilliant hues of flowers and fruits. In like manner fire and water have colours of their own. Indeed colour is an essential requisite in every world inhabited by sentient beings. Were the objects of nature destitute of colour, or were one single unvaried hue alone spread all over the face of the universe, we should be at a loss to distinguish one object from another. Hence, by a peculiar adaptation of nature, all bodies are so constituted as to reflect one or more classes of rays of light and colour; and the eye is so exquisitely formed as to be differently affected by the different kinds of reflected rays, and is thus the faithful organ of the mind in discriminating between them and thereby giving rise to all the delights and benefits of vision. But all bodies do not reflect all colours, nor do all those reflecting the same colours do so in equal proportions. One body, for instance, absorbs all the rays of colour except the green one, which it reflects; and this body is consequently green; another body reflects the red

rays, absorbing all others, and is therefore red; and so on. And sometimes the colours apparently possessed by a body are not natural to it, but are borrowed from other bodies. "The blue colour of a clear sky is derived," according to Patanjali, "from the southern peak of the great mountain Mêru, which is composed of sapphire. On the other sides of the Mêru, the colour of the sky is said to be different, being borrowed from the hue of the peak which overlooks that quarter. Others suppose that the black colour of the pupil of the eye is imparted to the sky, (blue and black being reckoned tinges of the same colour) just as to a jaundiced eye every object is yellow." Some of the Western scientists attribute the blueness of the sky to the fact that particles of air and the minute globules of moisture constantly floating among them, reflect blue rays. And it is also suggested that of all the rays reflected from the earth into the atmosphere, the blue ones being the most refracted, have the least momentum, and are consequently more liable to be reflected back to the eye. In the same way the colour of the ocean is said to vary considerably from local circumstances. Its generic colour is generally believed to be dark blue; but in different places the sea is known to be green, and even red and yellow; this discoloration being due to the nature of the bottom, the weeds and insects on the surface, and so on.

The colour thus perceptible in bodies is a source of beauty and utility, and has therefore two significations. First, it expresses that feeling of the mind which accompanies the sensation produced by the action of coloured objects on our organs of sight; and secondly it denotes the peculiar quality of the coloured object, in virtue of which a certain feeling is excited in the mind. In either sense the subject of colour demands our careful attention. The sparkling lustre of the universal sunshine, the lurid glare of the thundercloud, the crimson streaks of the morning, and the rich and ever-varying glories of the sunset, successively call forth our admiration and contribute to our delight, while the quality of objects and the character of actions as indicated by colour are so many precious gifts of nature, which every human being ought to appreciate and utilise as he moulds and directs his conduct with a view to the attainment of the final goal. It is in this last mentioned sense that I propose to discuss the subject of colour in the following pages.

This subject is one of utmost difficulty, and can only be treated successfully by one who has made some fair progress in the study of occult science. Nevertheless, as it is the duty of every one to investigate and try to understand all that he can for himself, I have endeavoured to collect various passages bearing on the subject from such books as are within my reach, and these are here given in a condensed form, leaving the reader to make further investigations for himself with the help of the Upanishads and other works of esoteric science, together with treatises on anatomy, Eastern as well as Western.

"From THAT (*Tat*), which is the cause of all (*Kâranam*); which is not the subject of senses (*Aryakam*); which is eternal without beginning or end (*Nityam*); and which is existing,



as well as non-existing, i. e., in other words, which is manifested and unmanifested, (*Sat* and *Asat*), was produced *Purusha*." (*Mānava Dharma Sastra*. I. 11). This is the *Purusha* spoken of in the famous *Purusha Sūkta*, which really forms a part of the Rig Veda, and is not merely a recent interpolation, as some Orientalists seem to consider. Their views have been satisfactorily combated by one of themselves, namely, Dr Haug, the great Sanscritist, in his work on the origin of Brahminism.

From the union of *Purusha* with *Prakriti* (both of which are eternal; see *Bhagavat-Gita* XIII. 20), that is, from the direction and influence exerted by *Purusha* upon *Prakriti*; and from the inherent character of *Prakriti* itself, the material particles of the latter combined with one another, and assumed the form of one entire unity, composing the mundane Egg. (*Vishnu Purana* I. II. 1 to 56; *Manu* I. 27). In this egg, the Great Power, *Purusha*, sat inactive during a whole divine year; at the close of which, by virtue of his sole will, he caused the egg to divide itself (*Manu* I. 12; *Chandogya Upanishad* III. XIX. I.); and then divided himself,—becoming half male and half female. (*Manu* I. 32; *Brihat-Aranyaka Upanishad* III. IV. 3; *Satapatha Brahmana* XIV.—4-2, &c.). He is the same that is called *HIRANYAGARBDHA* in the Rig Veda, (X. 121—1 to 10), where he is described as being the first divine incarnation; the one that remained as an embryo in the water; and the one by whom the universe has subsequently been evolved. From this "first-born Lord" (*Prathamaja*), as declared in the *Taittiriya Upanishad*—(*Bhṛigu Valli*, X. 6), proceeded *Viraj*, otherwise called *Virat* (*Manu* I. 32). This is the *Virat* spoken of in the hymn of the *Purusha Sūkta*; and from this *Virat* proceeded mankind, and the rest. (*Manu* I. 33, &c.).

Now let us understand that the Supreme Lord,—the God,—the first manifestation of *Para-Brahma*, above spoken of, is described as being full of Glory, Light, Light of lights, Light without smoke, and so on (*Jyoti*, &c., see Rig Veda VI-9—5; *Chandogya Upanishad* III. 13—7 & III. 17—7; *Katha Upanishad* IV. 13; *Swetasvatara Upanishad* III. 8); and He is also said to be of golden (yellow) hue. (*Hēmānga*, *Hiranmaya*, *Rukmavarna*, *Swarnamaya*, &c., see Rig Veda X. 121—1; *Brihat-Aranyaka Upanishad* VII-XV. 1; *Adharva Veda* X. VII-28; *Mundaka Upanishad* III. I. 3; *Maitrayanya Upanishad* V. I; *Manu* I. 9; *Vishnu Sahasravama Sloka* 92; *Yekakshara Upanishad* ch. I. *Vāyu Purana* VI. 3). The identity and unity of the Deity thus described as Light and as Golden, are proved by the *Taittiriya Upanishad*, which calls Him by the compound name of *Svarna-Jyoti*, Golden-light. (*Bhṛigu Valli* X. 6); and by the Rig Veda, (IV. 58—2), which ascribes to the Deity the colour of *Gaura*, which in one sense means that which is white, pure and brilliant, and in another sense yellow, saffron and golden; thus combining the two into one, which we may call the *bright yellow*. The sacred import of this bright yellow, or yellow light, or yellow fire, or whatever it may be called, is only known to occultists; and we may hold that this bright yellow was the original colour.

Next, the male and female halves of the Divine incarnation already spoken of, and whom we may take to be the representatives of

*Purusha* and *Prakriti*, in the sense in which those words are understood as meaning the active and passive principles, are said to be of the blue (*Sāma*) and red (*rakta*) colours respectively. (*Avyakta Upanishad*, Ch. VI.) The blue and red may therefore be styled the second original colours.

The ascription of these three colours, yellow, blue and red, is not arbitrary. They are significant representatives of the real character of the objects of which they are the attributes. For the yellow which is the seat of luminosity, represents the *jyoti-mayam* (glory and light) of *Purusha*; while the blue, which is soothing and electrical, correctly denotes His sublime benevolence and power; and lastly the red, which is the seat of heat and passion, expresses the qualities of *Prakriti*, as manifested by embodied souls.

We may therefore fairly hold that yellow, blue and red, are the primary colours, and the sources of all other colours, hues and tints.

I know that white and black are generally mentioned with reference to the respective qualities of purity and impurity, merit and demerit, and so on; but this is no reason for presuming white and black to be among the original colours. In fact they are not colours at all in themselves; they are the compounds of several colours combined in different proportions. But as white is the most positive of all the colours, and excels all others in luminosity, it very properly represents what is pure and meritorious; whereas black, which is diametrically opposite to white, indicates opposite qualities, such as impurity and demerit;—while red stands midway, and denotes a mixture of good and bad qualities. Hence it is declared that white, black and red colours (*Sita*, *Asita* and *Rakta*) are the representatives of the three general divisions into which human actions may be divided according to their character. (*Mantrika Upanishad*, Ch. I.)

The three general divisions of the quality of actions, are *Rajoguna*, *Satwaguna*, and *Tamoguna* (the mixed, pure and dark quality—see *Dhyāna-bindu Upanishad*, Ch. I. *Bhagavad-gita*, XIV. 6); and because these qualities arise from the union of *Prakriti* with *Purusha*, the qualities of *Prakriti* are accordingly designated under the same names, namely, *Rajoguna*, *Tatwaguna* and *Tamoguna*, bearing the colours of *Lohita*, *Sukla*, and *Krishna* (red, white and black) respectively. (*Swetasvatara Upanishad*, IV. 5; *Sandilya Upanishad*, Ch. II. *Pingala Upanishad*, I, &c.) Similarly the three energies of *Purusha*, namely, *Brahma*, *Vishnu* and *Rudra*,—otherwise called *Anirudha*, *Pradyumna*, and *Sankarshana*, (as described in *Vishnu Purana*, V—XVIII; *Karma Purana*, Ch. 49. verse 39; and *Markandeya Purana* Ch. IV, and 41), which have influenced the aforesaid qualities or forms of *Prakriti*, are likewise said to be red, white and black, respectively (*Dhyāna-bindu Upanishad*, Ch. I.)

Here it may be questioned, in passing, how *Purusha*, which is Purity itself, came to be combined with the qualities of *Prakriti*, such as darkness. But we must understand that the union of *Purusha* with *Prakriti* is not mechanical. It is the influence exerted upon *Prakriti* in the same manner as fragrance affects an

individual's mind. (Vishnu Purana, I. II. 1). In this sense it must be understood that *Purusha*, affecting the *Rajoguna* of *Prakriti*, became himself *Brahma* the creator; affecting the *Salvaguna* of *Prakriti*, he himself became *Vishnu* the preserver; and affecting the *Tamaguna* of *Prakriti*, he himself became *Rudra* the destroyer. (Vishnu Purana, I. II. 1, &c.) This organization of the Trinity in Unity is beautifully illustrated with pregnant brevity by the single syllable *Om*, which, when pronounced as one word, forms the sacred emblem of *Purusha*; and, when considered as a trilateral word, consisting of A, U, and M., indicates the triple energy of *Purusha*, mentioned above as *Brahma*, *Vishnu* and *Rudra*; and the *Ardha-mâtra*, that is the nasal sound which follows the utterance of this word, and which in fact is the real *Om*, represents the source of these three energies, viz: *Purusha* Himself. Furthermore, these letters A, U, M, and the *Ardha-matra*, constitute the four conditions of *Purusha*, namely, the *Viswa*, *Taijasa*, *Prâgna*, and *Atma*,—otherwise called the *Jagrata*, *Swapna*, *Sushupti* and *Turya Avasthas*, i. e., the waking, dreaming, sleeping and blissful conditions. For a further explanation of this subject, I beg to refer my readers to the following works:—Chandogya Upanishad, I. I. Mândûkya Upanishad; I, I to 12, and II, 13; Adharva Sikha Upanishad. Chap. I; Dhyânabindu Upanishad, Chapter I; Râmatapanya Upanishad, Chapter I; Maitri Upanishad VI—22, &c., &c.

Now, confining myself to the subject on hand, I find that *Brahma*, *Vishnu* and *Rudra*, represented by A, U, and M, like the corresponding forms of *Prakriti* which have been influenced by them,—are described as red, white and black or blue respectively—(Dhâya-bindu Upanishad Chapter I.)

But how, it may be asked, is all this consistent with the popular notion, supported by such works as Adharva Sikha Upanishad (Chapter I), which attributes the *blue* colour to *Vishnu* and *white* to *Rudra*. This attribution is, I think, true only in respect of certain incarnations, and not generally. These two deities are of *all* colours, and are often described as such. Further, the condition of *Taijasa* (or *Swapna*), which is ascribed to *Vishnu* is white at one stage and blue at another; and similarly the *Pragna* or *Sushupti* condition of *Rudra* is blue at one stage and white at another: So that *Vishnu* is sometimes said to be white (moon's colour, *Sasi Varna*), and sometimes blue (*Sama*); and also sometimes has a blue body and white or yellow clothing; similarly *Rudra* is sometimes said to be white and golden, sometimes black, and often reddish black (*Nilalohita* and *Krishna Pingala*); and also having a white body and blue vestures—(See Rig Veda, I, 435 and II. 33—8; Adharva Veda XI—2—18; Vishnu Purana V. XVII and V. XVIII, &c., &c.) It is true that the Deity mentioned in the Vishnu Purana as having a white body and blue vesture, is *Bala Rama*. But *Bala Rama* is an epiphany of *Rudra*; for it is declared that *Bala Rama* is an immediate incarnation of *Sesha*; *Sesha* is no other than *Sankarshana*, and *Sankarshana* is *Kâla* or *Kâlanatha*, who is *Rudra* himself—(Krishna Upanishad Chapter I; Vishnu Purana II. V. V. I; and V—36; Kârma Purana

Chapter 48; Mârkaṇdeya Purana IV—122; Mahâbharata, Santi Parvam, Chapter 285, Section 23).

Thus we see that yellow, blue and red are the primary colours; and white, black and red, have come to be recognized as the principal colours indicative of the character of objects.

This is true as well of the macrocosm as of the microcosm. Colour is a peculiar quality to be apprehended only with the aid of light; and the source of light is the sun. (Rig Veda, I. 50-4). As the visible sun we see in yonder sky illumines the moon and other planets, and the whole universe, and removes the darkness of the night, so the Divine (or Spiritual) sun that abides in the lotus of the human heart, diffuses light in man, and removes the darkness of sin (Rig Veda, I. 50—10). That which dwells within the lotus of the heart is the same that dwells in the sun in the sky. Its lotus is the same as the ether; and hence ether may equally be called the lotus, whether it exists in the heart of man, or in the universe; and its petals are the four cardinal quarters and the four intermediate points of the compass. (Maitri Upanishad, VI—2.) This is not all.

As the particular ray of yonder sun called the *Sushumna* is the most efficacious, and especially contributes to give light to the moon, (Nirukta, II. 6), so the particular ray in man (i. e., the artery) which bears the same name, *Sushumna*, is equally powerful, and illumines the soul and leads it on to the path of eternity, if it is properly attended to. (Yoga Sikha Upanishad, Chapter I, and Darsana Upanishad, Chapter I). Further this artery, *Sushumna*, is emphatically called the *Visvadhara* (the sustainer of all); it extends from *Mûlâdhara*, the navel circle, and passing through *Vinâdanda*, the spinal cord, reaches *brahma randhra*, the crown of the head; whence it diffuses a blissful *blue* light, which every sage beholds (Mandala Bramhana Upanishad, Ch. I, Sandilya Upanishad, Ch. IV.) ;—in the same way as the sun standing in the sky above us, gives out a *blue light* for the good of the world; for I may venture to affirm that the real colour of the sun is *blue*. And lastly, as the rays of the sun diffuse themselves in seven prismatic colours throughout the universe, so likewise the rays proceeding from the arteries in our body diffuse themselves in the ether that surrounds us. Indeed, both these classes of rays go by the same name *rasmi*. (Maitri Upanishad, VI. 30). Whatever colour and quality belongs to the external sun, belongs also to the internal one. The great Austrian author who was almost the first to discover the human aura in the Western world, viz., Baron Reichenbach, traces, by the experiences of himself and numerous sensitives, a great resemblance as to their direction between the colours of the aura around the human head and those of that which flows from a bar magnet, when turned vertically, thus showing the harmony between man and the outward universe. This harmony is thus expressed in the Chandogya Upanishad:—"The arteries of the heart exist, steeped in brown ethereal fluid; yea, in a white, a blue, a yellow, and a red ethereal fluid. Verily, the sun exists also as brown, as white, as blue, as yellow and as red. As the main road, with a village at each end, meets both this and that, so do the rays of the sun meet this region and that; from

that sun they spread; they then enter the arteries, and thence they spread out again" (Chandogya Upanishad, VIII. VI. 1 and 2).

This shows how intimate is the relation between the visible sun, and the sun within man; and let the reader note the fact that the prominent colours in both are yellow, blue and red, besides of course the white which is intended to represent the all-pervading light.

Let us now attend more particularly to colours observable in the human body under different conditions, and trace the nature of the qualities these colours indicate.

The five elements of which the human body is composed have colour. That the earth and water possess colour is obvious enough. The seven flickering tongues of fire, which represent the different stages or conditions of its blaze, are clearly mentioned in the books. (Mandakya Up., I. II. 4; Prasna Up., III. 5). Then *Vāyu* (air) which is in man, is fivefold, each division having a colour. Thus, the *Prana*, which is the air in the heart and which is ascending, is red (*rakta*); the *Apana*, which is the air located about the anus and which is descending, is whitish red (*indragupta*); the *Vyana*, which is the air in all parts of the body, and which may consequently be called the circulating air, is bright yellow (*archi*); the *Udana*, which is the air in the throat and which keeps down the food and drink which man partakes of, is white (*apandra*); and the *Samāna*, which is the air in the navel and whose function it is to carry the grosser portion of the food and drink to the lower bowel, and convey the finer portions to every part, and which we may call the equalizing air, is milk-white. (*Gokshīra-dhavalā*)—(See Maitri Up., II. 6; Amretanada Up., Ch. I; Prasna Up., III. 5.) And, lastly, the *Akasa* (Ether) is likewise fivefold (*vyōma-panchaka*), namely, *Akāsa*, *Para-akasa*, *Maha-akasa*, *Surya-akasa*; and *Parama-akasa*; each having a different colour, ranging up to "the indescribable blaze of pure light."—(Mandala Brahmana, Ch. I).

This is how the human body has come to be possessed of colours, —not merely the external but the most internal part of it also. The internal parts which now concern us most are the arteries and the heart. There are one hundred and one principal arteries in the body (Katha Up., VI. 16); and each of these is a hundred times divided; there are 72,000 branches of every branch of an artery; and within them moves the circulating air (Prasna Up., III. 6; Brihat Aranyaka Upanishad, IV. II. 20); and they are all steeped in colours. (Chandogya Up., VIII. VI. 1.) The arteries of the heart called *Hita*, extend from the heart outwards to the surrounding body. Small as a hair divided a thousand times, they are full of their fluid and coloured white, black (or blue), yellow, and red. (Kānshitaki Upanishad, IV. 20). The Brihat-Aranyaka Upanishad adds green to the said colours. (IV. III. 20); and the Commentator of that work remarks;—"food when digested becomes blue, if there be an abundance of the airy humour; yellow by an abundance of bile; white by an abundance of phlegm; green by a deficiency of bile; and red by an equal mixture of all the humours; and in this manner, even the vessels, through which these humours pass, assume the same colours. In

those five vessels abides the subtle body; and dependent upon this subtle body are all the impressions produced by the belief in the worldly attributes of a higher and lower state."—(See Maitri Up., VI. 30.)

Then, as to the heart itself, it (the *Hridaya*) is *ashtadala-padma*, or an eight-petalled lotus. These eight petals or anglos represent the eight points of the compass: 1. The petal on the east is *sveta* (white); 2. The petal on the south-east is *rakta* (red); 3. The petal on the south is *krishna* (black); 4. The petal on the south-west is *nīla* (blue); 5. The petal on the west is *sphatīka* (crystal-like); 6. The petal on the north-west is *Manikya* (ruby-like); 7. The petal on the north is *Pīta* (yellow); and 8. The petal on the north-east is *Vaidurya* (like Lapis lazuli). There are minor petals between these eight principal ones; and each of them has a colour. (*Dhyāna-bindu Upanish.*, Ch. I.)

Thus colour is connected with the physical, mental, and moral conditions of mankind; man's action is influenced by colour; and it manifests itself by means of colours. (*Mahā-bharata*; *Moksha Dharma*, 181 Chapter). The soul which abides in the lotus of the heart being dynamic, the character of human action varies and is good, bad, or mixed, according to the quality of the particular petal in which the soul may be resting for the time being; as for instance, if the soul's resting place be the first petal in the foregoing list, man's action will have a tendency towards virtue; if in the second, to slothfulness; if in the third, to anger; if in the fourth, to vice; if in the fifth, to pleasure; if in the sixth, to confusion; if in the seventh to contentment; if in the eighth, to mercy; and so on. (*Dhyāna-bindu Upanishad*, Ch. I). But it must be remarked that this is only a rough outline, and that the emanations of colour and the consequent display of character are not always the same as above indicated. The shades of human thought are various and innumerable, and the shades of colour-emanations resulting from the evolution of thought are therefore necessarily various and innumerable. These variations depend not only upon the quality of thoughts evolved, and the locality of the soul for the time being, but also upon a number of other circumstances, physical, mental, moral and spiritual, which are inevitably connected with human existence as a whole. So that no hard and fast rule can be laid down for the guidance of those who endeavour to read human character from the emanations of coloured Aura. Each person should trust mainly to his own study and experience of human nature; bearing in mind the broad general rules laid down in the *Bhagavadgita*, namely:—The *Satwaguna* is pure, clear, and free from defect; and entwined the soul with sweet and happy consequences. Its colour-emanation is white. The *Rajoguna* is of a passionate nature, arising from the effects of worldly desires; and imprisoneth the soul with corresponding consequences. Its colour-emanation is red. And the *Tamoguna* is the offspring of ignorance, and confounds and vitiates the faculties of the mind, and imprisoneth the soul with sloth and intoxication. Its colour-emanation is black (Chapter XIV, verses 5, &c.) See also Chapter XVII of *Bhagavadgita*, where something like an inventory

is given of the particular actions that may be said to appertain to particular colours in a general way.

Such colour radiations are being gradually recognised by the Western scientists. Baron Reichenbach, of Austria, proves, by means of personal experience and the testimony of numerous sensitives and others, that "a fine force (Aura) issues from all known elements and substances, and appears in beautiful lights and colours which can be both seen and felt." This view is fully endorsed by Edwin D. Babbitt of New York in his work on Principles of Light and Colour; and he quotes the evidence of numerous persons in support of this view. The following description of the psychic colour-emanations, as furnished to the last named writer by one Mrs. Minnie Merton will be found interesting: "In the base of the brain (the animal loves), the colours are a dark red, and in persons of a very low nature, almost black, while in the upper brain the colours assume a yellowish tint, and are far more brilliant. In a high nature, the colours over the moral and spiritual powers are almost dazzling with the yellow tint nearly merged into white, and far more exquisite than sunlight. In the higher front brains, in the region of the reasoning intellect, blue is the predominant colour, becoming lighter as it approaches the top brain, and darker as it comes down to the perceptive (over the brow), with a little touch of the violet in its outer edges. Benevolence emits a soft green light of indescribable beauty. Over firmness the colour is scarlet, and over self-esteem, purple. As you move down the sides of the head, from the moral powers towards the lower loves, it becomes orange, then red, then dark (at the bottom). Very low natures sometimes emit such a dark cloud from the base of the brain, that it seems as though I could scarcely see them. When a person laughs or sends forth happy thoughts it causes a dancing play of bright colours; but when in violent passion, a snapping and sparkling red is emitted." Here Professor Babbitt remarks that the above description nearly coincides with his own perception of the same phenomena; and that an eminent savant informs him that this is in harmony with the colours as he has seen them.

From all that has been said above, the reader will perceive that the coloured emanations of human aura are not merely imaginary, but real, and are thus proper subjects of observation and ocular demonstration, and are destined to yield permanent results affecting the life of man now and ever hereafter. True, those emanations vary according to the condition of different stages of life, and according to the quality of different thoughts evolved at every moment of individual existence; thus displaying the character of each isolated action as distinct in itself. But the effect of such isolated and momentary occurrences, good, bad or mixed, constitutes the sum total of individual existence, and makes up the character of the man as a whole; it survives the death of the gross physical body; inures to the soul, and adheres to it, during all its transmigrations, including re-birth in this world.

The general character of each man may be said to assume a peculiar colour, formed as it is by the composition and decomposition of different colours acquired and abandoned during the whole

period of his existence; and this constitutes the predominant colour in man, pervading all other colours of the Aura he is constantly throwing out during the subsequent stages of his existence. It is by this colour that the Karma of the individual is measured; and by it the extent of progress he may have made on the good or evil path is ascertained. The Mahâ-bhârata declares that the colour which indicates the general character of an individual is seven-fold, namely, black (*krishna*), 2 dusky (*dhuma*), 3 blue (*nila*), 4 red (*rakta*), 5 yellow (*haridra*), 6 white (*sukla*), and 7 pure white (*para-sukla*); and states that so long as man continues to be of an evil mind, the general colour of his Aura will be black; and he will be in the lowest stage; but when he strives for moral advancement, he passes through various stages of purity, and the predominant colour will grow gradually purer and purer; so that when he arrives at the first stage of meritorious progress his aura will be reduced from black to a dusky hue; and it becomes blue when he makes some appreciable progress in purity. Then, there arises a struggle between his higher and lower principles; and his aura becomes red. If he succeeds in the battle, and comes out victorious, the aura will be yellow; a further progress will render it white; and when the highest stage on the path of purity is reached, the aura will be perfectly pure and brilliant. (Mahâ-bharata, Sauteaparva Mokshadharma, Ch. 181). The same idea is conveyed in the Mandala Brahmana Upanishad (Chapter I), which assures us that a neophyte, as he advances in the path of righteousness, perceives in himself streams of light of the colour of *nila* and *samua* (blue of different kinds); then of *rakta* (red); and then of *pita* (yellow of different hues) successively, until he attains to the brightest. And the whole subject is summarized by Patanjali in one single aphorism (No. 7 in the Chapter on Emancipation) in his work on the Philosophy of Yoga. He states that black is the aura of a bad man and white is that of a good man, while a mixture of black and white is the colour of a man who stands midway between them; and that the colour of an adept is neither black, nor white, nor mixed; for he generates no karma which can be understood in the ordinary sense as good or bad; he attains to that position in which unalloyed purity and brilliancy become his properties.

Here I must ask my readers to recall to memory what has been already stated, viz., that there is an intimate relation between light (colour) and sound. The seven prismatic colours correspond to the seven variations of *Nâda* (sound). *Na* means *Prâna*, the vital air; and *da* represents *Agni* or *Tejas* (fire or heat), which proceeds from the body when agitated by the vital air; so that *Nâda* has the same source as the *Aura*, (Rig Veda, I. 50. 8 and 9; Chandogya Upanishad, II. XXII; and Sangita Sastra). Again, the material emanations thus flowing out of our body are all odoriferous. So that the character of human action is disclosed by means of colour, sound and smell; and how this is done is stated in the Brihadaranya Upanishad (III. III. 3); Maitri Upanishad (II. 7); Markandeya Purana (VI. 33) and so forth.

When the devoted disciple hears the sacred sound, *Anâhata-sabda* which proceeds from the innermost recesses of his person ; listens to this blissful sound with an undivided attention ; and perceives a *Jyoti*, light, amidst this sound ; and when his mind becomes *enrapport* with this Divine Light, then he beholds HAMSA (the microcosmic sun) the all-pervading VISHNU, the highest manifested form of PARABRAHMA, in all His glory ; and this is the end of the disciple's journey. (Yogasikha Upanishad, Chapter VI).

(*To be continued.*)

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## LIGHT ON THE PATH.

WRITTEN down by M. C., Fellow of the Theosophical Society, London; and annotated by P. Sreenavas Row, Fellow of the Theosophical Society, Madras.

*(Continued from page 270.)*

*Section III, Clause 3, (Continued.)*

WE have seen how Aura emanates with colours from all bodies whether animate or inanimate; and how human Aura, in particular, is capable of indicating not only the character of human action on every isolated and momentary occasion, but also the sum total of all actions performed during the period of individual existence, taken as a whole. For the production of this great result, several conditions are necessary. First of all, the aura should be capable of spreading itself through the boundless space (*Akas* = Ether); affecting every body that comes into contact with it; and then reacting upon the very same body from which it had first emanated,—either for good or evil, according to the character of the aura for the time being. And secondly, the Ether should be capable of retaining indelibly the impressions which the aura makes upon it, and of producing permanent results calculated

to form and govern the destinies of man, etc. I shall now endeavour to show that all these conditions exist, and that their existence is quite within the range of ocular demonstration.

I have already shown that that aura is dynamic and electrical, and as such is perfectly capable of extending itself through space. Space, be it remembered, is not a void, but is filled by the ethereal element (*Akas*), highly luminous, and exceedingly subtle; conveying "the imponderable and intangible life-principle, the astral and celestial light combined," and forming what is called the *anima mundi*. Indeed, *Akas* is none other than a form of *Para Brahma*, the all-pervading.

The existence of Ether and its properties—known to the Aryans from time immemorial—are now being gradually recognised by the Western scientists. Not only do they admit generally that Ether exists, but also hold that it exerts a direct mechanical influence on the motion of bodies in the universe, on which it operates as a "retarding medium," by opposing a resistance to the motion of the planets. Indeed it has been proved that the effect of this retarding medium is already being sensibly felt upon the motion of Encke's comet. Professor Tyndall recognises ether as the medium filling space, and mechanically adapted for the transmission of the vibrations of light and heat, as the air is for the transmission of sound; and he says further that:—

"Ether explains facts far more various and complicated than those on which Newton based his law. If a single phenomenon could be pointed out which ether is proved incompetent to explain, we should have to give it up; but, no such phenomenon has ever been pointed out."

Dr. J. D. Buck says that:—

"This fluid ether, or whatever it may be called, acts everywhere as matter, but also possesses properties diametrically at variance with materiality; for instance, it can penetrate the most compact bodies, and cause a thousand various alternate operations of the remotest bodies upon each other."

And Professor Zollner in his work on Transcendental Psychics enunciates the theory of a fourth dimension of matter, or rather a fourth property of matter enabling it to pass through matter. He describes numerous experiments made by him to establish this theory, among them being instances of the abstraction of articles from a hermetically sealed box and so on.

"The ether," says Dr. Whewell, "must possess a number of complex and refined contrivances and adjustments, which we cannot analyse, bearing upon plants and chemical compounds, and the imponderable agents; as well as those laws which we conceive that we have analysed, by which it is the vehicle of illumination and light." He adds that "ether must not be merely like fluid poured into the vacant spaces and interstices of the material world and exercising no action on objects. It must affect the physical, chemical, and vital powers of what it touches;—it must be a great and active agent in the work of the universe as well as an active reporter of what is done by other agents."

The statement made by Dr. Whewell that ether is the reporter of what is done by other agents is not allegorical, but a fact recognized in Aryan works from time immemorial. The Aryans give the name of *Chitragupta* to the energy by means of which the impressions of human actions are as it were recorded in the pages

of nature's book; so that the moral rectitude or delinquency of each individual may be seen and measured with a view of constructing a basis for the dispensation of retributive justice in respect of his present and future life. Accordingly, the *Skanda Purana* defines *Chitragupta* to be *Viswa-charitra lehaka*, the recorder of the history of the Universe; and the function of this personified energy is declared in the *Agni Purana* (ch. 368 and 370) to be to record all the good or evil actions of individuals; and to communicate the same to *Yama*, the lord of justice, at the time of *Atyantika-laya*, i. e., the time when the soul receives its final judgment after the elemental dissolution of the universe, of which we have already said enough in this work. For further information, I beg to refer my readers to the *Srishti-kanda* of the *Padma Purana*, and *Bhavishya Purana*.

This grand process of the impression of the records of human actions on the volumes of nature not only bears the stamp of religious authority as above stated, but has furthermore the sanction of science. That universal ether is the recorder of human actions is a scientific fact founded upon the law of action and reaction, which is an established principle in mechanics. It is now generally conceded that there exists a mutual and reciprocal action of different things upon one another. Thus, if a body falls to the earth, the earth reacts upon it, and stops it or throws it back. If sulphuric acid be poured upon limestone, the acid acts upon the stone, and the stone reacts upon the acid, and a new compound is produced. Again, if light fall upon a solid body, the body reacts upon the light, which it sends back to the eye together with an image of itself. And from this established principle in mechanics it follows that every impression which man makes upon the ether, air, water or earth, by means of his aura, whenever he acts or thinks, must produce a series of changes in each of these elements; and thus the word which is leaving the mouth causes pulsations or waves in the air, and these expand in every direction. In the same manner, the waters retain traces of every disturbance, as, for instance, where ships cross the sea. And the earth too is tenacious of every impression man makes upon it.

"Not a leaf waves," says Professor Denton, the geologist "not an insect crawls, not a ripple moves, but each motion is recorded by a thousand faithful scribes in infallible and indelible scripture. This is just as true of all past time. From the dawn of light upon this infant globe, when round its cradle the steamy curtains hung, to this moment, nature has been busy in photographing everything. What a picture gallery is hers!"

To this I may add the testimony of Professor E. Hitchcock, who remarks that:—

"It seems that this photographic influence pervades all nature; nor can we say where it stops. We do not know but it may print upon the world around us our features, as they are modified by various passions; and thus fill the nature with daguerrotype impressions of all our actions. It may be too that there are tests by which nature, more skilful than any photographers, can bring out and fix these portraits, so that acuter senses than ours shall see them as upon a great canvas."

This view is supported by Professor Babbage, who holds that:—

"The air is one vast library, on whose pages are for ever written all that man has ever said or woman whispered."



And Professor Jevons agrees with Professor Babbage, and expresses a firm belief :—

"That every thought displacing particles of the brain and setting them in motion scatters them throughout the universe; and thus each particle of the existing matter must be a register of all that has happened."

The emanations of aura which are thus pictured on nature are no doubt exceedingly subtle; but they are not therefore the less definite or less perceptible as objects of vision than the grosser particles of matter, although it cannot be denied that, owing to the great subtlety of the aura, it needs a very superior power of analysis to follow and discern its colours, and read the character of the actions producing the variously coloured emanations. Nevertheless, as all these phenomena are due to physical laws, their analysis must be within the reach of human beings, under certain conditions.

So far from all this being simply a theory, or a mere matter of speculation, the subject has assumed a decidedly practical form. See for an instance the startling discoveries made by Psychometry. This is a term adopted by Dr. J. R. Buchanan some fifty years ago to represent the process of "Soul measuring," i. e., reading the thoughts and actions of each individual soul. This science of Psychometry recognises the fact that all things radiate their character upon all the surrounding objects, so that any sensitive person can see and describe them minutely. When such person—technically called a psychometer—sees any object, or any substance is placed before him, he comes into contact with the current of the astral light connected with that object or specimen, which retains pictures of scenes and events associated with its history. But these pass before him with the swiftness of a flash; scene after scene, each crowding upon the other so rapidly that it is only by a great exercise of will that he is able to hold any one scene in the field of vision long enough to describe it.

This is nothing but the result of the operation of natural laws, however miraculous it may seem to an ordinary mind. But we know that nature does not work without instruments, nor does it violate in one department those general laws which it follows in others. So that a human being must have special organs for special operations of the mind, as truly as for walking or speaking; and no vision therefore can possibly take place without an eye and without a grade of light adapted to that eye. The question is whether man possesses an eye, and whether there is light adapted to it, for the purpose of discerning the minute emanations of aura and reading the character of actions represented by such emanations. We say yes. Man has another finer and quite different eye besides the two outer ones; and nature furnishes the light necessary for the exercise of this finer faculty. Man sees gross objects through his gross eye coming into relation with the gross rays of the sun; and he sees subtle objects by his subtle eye coming into relation with the subtle rays of the sun—the vehicle of light from the sun to man being in either case the universal ether, which is most subtle and most luminous.

This fact ought not, I submit, to be ignored simply because ordinarily people do not know that they are possessed of such a faculty as that of which we are speaking. As regards man's outer faculty of vision let us here call to mind the well-known fact that it is not equally developed in all alike; and that it is moreover liable to be affected by various causes such as distance and nearness; grossness and minuteness; confusion and concealments; inattention and predominance of other matter; and lastly the defect of the organ by age or disease. So that all men do not see alike; and every day we meet people who are short-sighted, long-sighted, dim-sighted, and blind; and also partially blind, as in the case of color-blindness, which scientists say is caused "by the imperfect working of a portion of the rods and cones of the retina, or from the fact that the humours of the eye may be absorptive of certain colours, and thus prevent them from passing on to the retina and the brain, so that some can only see some colours and not others." And moreover, even without any one of these defects, man's vision is by nature limited to a certain range; and there are certain animals whose range of vision is naturally circumscribed within the narrow limit of a few inches, while there are others whose visual range is much wider than that of man. In these respects ophthalmoscopy and optical science have done much by composing medicines, and inventing instruments such as spectacles, telescopes and microscopes, to improve the outward faculty of vision by removing constitutional or natural defects and limits.

While such is the state of things in the outer temple of nature, it should be no matter of surprise that when we enter the vestibule of the inner temple, we there find a most subtle faculty of vision—a *third eye in fact*—which is free from all the defects that belong to the outward eyes, and which unfolds to us the mysterious nature of aura, its lights and colours.

The seat of this visual faculty is the aperture, of the size of a thumb, in the internal structure of man's forehead at the base of the nose between the two eye-brows. This cavity is the reservoir of *Tejas*, the *Vaiswanara* fire, which spreads itself in the body on its being fanned by the vital airs :—

"As the spreading light of a precious gem placed in a closed room collects itself in the key-hole, so the luminosity of the *sattva* (essence of the said *Tejas*) in the *hridaya* (heart,) collects itself in the said aperture on the forehead; and illumines the *Yogi* in respect of all things, irrespective of nearness or distance, alike of space and time."

This internal faculty has been called by different names with reference to its position and its properties. It is called the "light of the head" (*Murdhna Joti*); "seat of immortality" (*Amrita Sthana*); "the circle between the eye-brows" (*Bhru-chakram*); "eye on the forehead" (*Lalata-netram*), and (*Fala-netram*); "eye of wisdom" (*Gnana-chakshus*); "celestial eye" (*Divya Chakshus* or *Divya Drishti*); and so on.

True, this faculty has not that elaborate organism which the eye of the body possesses, but this is not necessary. The cause of the perception of form is not the same in all. In the case of men generally, the cause is the contact of the external eye with the form

by the medium of the external light ; whereas in the case of animals that roam at night and can see in the dark, the cause of perception is simply the contact of the eye with the form, no light being necessary at all. And the occultist needs neither the external eye nor the external light. His perception arises from the conjunction of the mind with the soul, assisted by the spiritual light, which results from such conjunction, and shows itself in the cavity of the forehead above referred to.

"The Yogi," says Patanjali, "disregarding all other instrumental causes, sees every thing solely from *Pratibha*, i. e., the light or right knowledge instantly produced from the conjunction of the mind and soul, antecedent to the exercise of the reasoning faculty." (*Viveka-khyati*.)

This knowledge is technically called *Taraka* ; which (as indeed the whole subject) may be fully studied by the disciple in the Upanishads entitled the *Saubhagya-Lakshmi*, *Dhyāna-bindu*, *Amirta-bindu*, and *Tripura-tapanya* ; and in *Vaisesheka-nyana* *Sidhanta*, and Patanjali's *Yoga-sastra*, Book III, Aphorism 34, etc.

The existence of this internal faculty and its powers are also mentioned incidentally in the *Rig Veda* V—42 ; *Chandogya Upanishad* VIII—14 ; *Matsya Purana* IV—1 ; *Nirukta* I—20 ; *Taittiriya Samchita* ; *Bhagavat Gita* XIII—35 ; and in numerous places in the *Maha-Bharata* and *Sri Bhagavata*. It is remarkable that *Sri-man Sankaracharya* in his work called *Prabboda Chandrodaya* identifies this internal visual faculty of a Yogi with the third eye which the deity *Rudra* is declared in various sacred works to be possessed of ;—Vide *Maha-Bharata*, *Anusasana Parva* ch. 140 ; *Brahma Vaivarta Purana*, *Krishna Janma Khanda*, ch. 39, &c.

The uses of this celestial faculty are numerous, as, for instance, the discerning of things invisible to the bodily eye, and so on ; but the principal object in developing it is said to be the acquisition of the "Intuition of the soul ; i. e., a knowledge in which the soul is the perceptible object of intuition.

"Although," says the author of the *Vaisesika* philosophy, "ordinary persons may have a knowledge of the soul, yet from this knowledge being affected by ignorance, it has been said to be like what is unreal. A right knowledge is only obtained from a particular concentration of the soul and the mind, effected by means of the virtue derived from Yoga." "When absorbed in concentration," says the *Svetasvatara Upanishad*, "the Yogi sees, by the true nature of his own self, which manifests like light, the true nature of *Brahma*, who is not born, who is eternal, and free from all effects of *Prakriti* ; and then he is released from all bonds." (II. 15.)

This is the ultimate end of man ; and the discovery and development of the inner sense above spoken of means the discovery of the Path which we should tread on our way to that highest goal (Vide Rule 14 of section I ante). Unfortunately, human scepticism is now-a-days a strong-hold capable of denying the existence of the soul or indeed anything beyond the grave ; but this is due to the absence, or imperfect nature, of any inquiry into these sublime matters with an unprejudiced mind. "A little philosophy," says Bacon, "inclineth a man's mind to

atheism, but depth in philosophy bringeth man's mind about to religion." And the respected author of "*Isis Unveiled*" says that :—

"Despite the indifference of Huxley, the jocularity of Tyndall, and the 'unconscious cerebrations,' of Carpenter, many a scientist as noted as either of them has investigated this unwelcome subject, and, overwhelmed with evidence, become converted."

And another scientist, and a great author,—although not a spiritualist, bears this honorable testimony ;—

"That the spirits of the dead occasionally revisit the living, or haunt their former abodes, has been in all ages, in all European countries, a fixed belief, not confined to rustics, but participated in by the intelligent.....If human testimony on such subjects can be of any value, there is a body of evidence reaching from the remotest age to the present time, as extensive and unimpeachable as is to be found in support of anything whatever." (Draper on Conflict between Science and Religion, page 121.)

However, leaving each individual to study for himself and form his own judgment on this most sacred subject, let us proceed with our work. The whole object of the Yogi in developing the celestial faculty we are speaking of is to bring his interior power into activity ; and to make himself ruler over his physical self and over everything else besides, with the view of discerning the Infinite Soul. At the same time, as the traveller intent upon reaching a great city passes also through certain minor places during his journey, so the Yogi, in his endeavours to attain the highest Divine Wisdom, acquires also certain minor powers, and is thus able to influence and sometimes control the operations of nature, and of vegetable and animal life in particular. Hence Yoga is said to be the key to the mystery of man's interior nature.

The science of mesmerism approaches Yoga in some respects ; especially the two important stages which a novice in mesmerism reaches after some preparations, viz., the degrees called "intro-vision," and "extra-vision." In the former condition, he obtains a luminous knowledge of the interior state of his own mind and body, i. e., he is able to see *within* himself ; while in the latter condition, he sees *without* ; sees objects and individuals, near or remote in both space and time. This extra-vision is technically called "clairvoyance."

Besides Yoga, which is the most consummate science of this sacred subject extant, and besides also the science of mesmerism which is fast making great progress on the lines of the Yoga, there are various methods which some imaginative philosophers have devised for developing this same faculty.

"One of the most practical methods of developing these forces," says Professor Babbitt, "is to sit somewhat reclining in an easy position with the back to the north, or a little north-east ; have merely a dim light, rather than otherwise, close the eyes ; turn the eye-balls a little upward, if they can be so held without pain ; and then steadily and gently make an effort as if to see. This can be practised from half an hour to an hour, or so, each time ; and while doing so, the thought should not be allowed to wander ; but the aim should be to see if lights, colours, forms and motions make their appearance." (Babbitt on Light, &c., p. 463.)

Besides all these instances in which the faculty of this inner sight is acquired and developed by practice, there are cases in which persons are known to have been endowed with such a faculty by nature during their present lives owing to the result of study and practice in former births. "This power," says the author of the *Vaisheshika Sidhanta*, "is also manifested by ordinary persons, as when a girl says, 'my heart tells me that my brother will go to-morrow.' This perception of things without study or practice is called *Laukika* (powers of an ordinary person) as distinguished from *Yogika* or *Arsha* (powers of a Yogi or Rishi.)"

"Thousands of persons," says Professor Babbitt, "are able to see finer grades of colour easily and clearly. Some can see them with the eyes wide open in broad day-light, and that, while in the midst of company or surrounded by the turmoil of daily cares. A Mrs. Minnie Merton of New York informs me that she has always been seeing them from her childhood, emanating from all human beings, and is in the habit of reading the character of the people, especially from the emanations of the head."

Professor Denton in his work on "The Soul of Things," gives a multitude of examples of the psychometrical power which Mrs. Denton possesses in a marked degree. A fragment of Cicero's house, at Tusculum, enabled her to describe, without the slightest intimation as to the nature of the object placed on her forehead, not only the great orator's surroundings, but also the previous owner of the building, Cornelius Sulla Felix or as he is usually called Sulla the Dictator. Further, a fragment of marble from the ancient Christian Church of Smyrna brought before her its congregation and officiating priests. Again specimens from Nineveh, China, Jerusalem, Greece, Ararat, and other places all over the world, brought up scenes in the life of various personages, whose ashes had been scattered thousands of years ago." In many cases Professor Denton verified the statements by reference to historical records.

Professor Buchanan proves that if a manuscript, no matter how old, be put into the hands of a psychometer he can describe "the character of the writer, and perhaps even his personal appearance;" and to this the revered author of "Isis" adds:—

"Hand a clairvoyant a lock of hair, or some article that has been in contact with the body of the person it is desired to know something about; and he will come into sympathy with him so intimately that he may trace through his whole life."

It seems that a mercantile gentleman of Mr. Babbitt's acquaintance in New York, can become so *en rapport* with the finer grades of light as to be able to see "through the human body as though it were made of glass. Here is the philosophy of clear-seeing or clairvoyance." (Babbitt on Light and Colours, p. 427.)

Thus we find that the aura, flowing from animate and inanimate bodies, spreads itself through the boundless space, and makes an impression on the volumes of nature; and that there is a faculty in man by which he can discern and analyse the emanations of aura, and read the character represented by such emanations.

Now, it remains to be seen how aura emanating from one affects others and then reacts upon himself, either for good or evil, according to the nature of the action which gave rise to the aura; *i. e.*, in other words, how the threads of *karma* can be said to be "living like electric wires," as declared in our Text. This will form the subject of our next article.

(To be continued.)

## LIGHT ON THE PATH.

WRITTEN down by M. C., Fellow of the Theosophical Society, London, and annotated by P. Sreenevas Row, Fellow of the Theosophical Society, Madras, 1885.

(Continued from page 329 and concluded.)

## Section III, Clause 3.—(Continued.)

HAVING shown in the preceding articles how Aura emanates from all animate and inanimate bodies and makes an impression upon the surrounding objects generally, I shall now attempt to describe the influence of Aura upon human beings in particular.

Mankind are affected, either for good or evil, according to circumstances, by the Aura constantly thrown off both by men and women, and by beings belonging to the other species of the animal kingdom; as well as by the races of the elemental kingdom; and even by the inanimate objects of the vegetable and mineral kingdoms. The Aryans from time immemorial believed in the influences of Aura proceeding from plants and stones, in averting contagious diseases by purifying the atmosphere; in curing diseases by imparting a healthy tone to the system; in counteracting the malign influences of evil elementals by opposing an Aura more electrical and powerful than that of the elementals themselves; and in developing various psychic powers latent in man by means of the great occult properties which they possess. The following are among the plants and trees so held in great esteem, namely,—Aswatha (*Ficus religiosa*), Palâsa or Pâtadru (*Butea frondosa*), Tulsi (holy basil=*Ocimum sanctum*); Bilwa (*Ægle marmelos*), Nimba (Neem=*melia azadiracta*), Munja (fibrous grass=*Saccharum munja*), and Soma (moon-plant or nectar producing plant=*Sacrostema viminalis*); and among the stones and gems I may mention Indra nila (Sapphire), Saligrams (sacred pebbles found in the river Gandak) and Sphatika (crystal). Such occult plants and stones are kept in or out of the houses, or upon the person of the individuals concerned, according to circumstances, in order to enjoy the benefits they are capable of producing. "Throughout the long and hoary antiquity of very early ages," says Mr. P. Davidson,—“has a faith in the effects of magical charms, amulets, and talismans existed, even amongst nations the most widely apart and unknown to one another, whilst in our own modern times the same belief in their efficacy and power is still entertained, not only amongst many of the natives of Asia and Africa, but also in Turkey, Italy, Spain and Britain;” and the learned gentleman gives numerous instances of the highly efficacious properties of Sâligrams, corals, flints, magnets and other magical and oracular stones. (Vide *Theosophist*, V. 285.)

It must be remarked that some of the occult plants and stones possess the extraordinary properties spoken of, inherently in

themselves; and some acquire such properties by a peculiar process of combinations. Among the artificial productions of the latter kind, I may mention the preparation called *Anjana*; a species of collyrium applied to the eye-lashes or, as is generally the case, painted on the palm of the hand, as the means of perceiving things which are invisible to external eyes. This mode of divining mysterious things is effected by means of *Anjana*, prepared in different ways for different purposes; as for instance; *Bhûtânjana* is a collyrium intended to discover apparitions, to lay spirits, and to render all sorts of goblins &c., visible; *Vasyânjana*, is a collyrium by which a person may bring every thing under his control; *Adrusyânjana*, which enables one to see all without himself being invisible to any; and *Garudânjana* a collyrium of emerald and ghee by which the eye becomes as keen as that of a Garuda or an eagle; and also *Rasanjana*, made of the calx of brass, *Naganjana*, made of the fat of serpents, and *Kusumanjana*, made of flowers, all these three last mentioned being used for curing diseases, such as eye-sore, &c., &c. And here the readers will note the fact that the Magic mirror of the Western nation is prepared on the same principles as the *Anjana* of the Eastern people.

And next, among the articles which possess extraordinary powers by themselves, without any preparation, I may mention the *Sphatika*, the crystal, whose property is described by a gentleman, who tested it personally in these words,—“If a person naturally endowed with a certain amount of clairvoyant power, gazes for a while into the crystal, he will see a succession of visions coming into its heart,—landscapes, scenes by sea and land, and sometimes messages written on scrolls which unwind of themselves, or printed in books that appear and then fade away. The experiment was tried with dozens of people, and in many cases succeeded. One Hindu gentleman saw, besides various scenes, the face of his deceased father, and was deeply agitated by the vision.” (*Theosophist*, III. 287.)

While men are thus affected by the magnetic Aura of plants and stones, they are much more strongly influenced by the Aura or rays of the planets. The Sun is the most magnetic of all bodies. The Sun's emanations tend to bind all things to itself; and the Sun imparts binding power to everything falling under its direct rays. And so of the Moon, whose rays have an immense influence on man, as well as upon the vegetable kingdom. This is the case with also the other planets, although their effects are not as palpably felt as those of the Sun and Moon. The science of Astrology is founded upon this theory; and although it cannot be denied that the divinations of numerous half-educated, careless and mercenary astrologers have proved to be false, yet the scientific basis of this sublime science remains unshaken up to this day. Many are the votaries of this science in the East and the West; and one of the great philosophers of the present age, Mr. Proctor, bears testimony to the fact that “the heavenly bodies do rule the fates of men and nations in the most unmistakable manner, seeing that without the controlling and beneficent influences of

the chief among those orbs—the Sun,—every living creature on the earth must perish. ("Our place among the Infinities," page 313). This learned author admits also the influence of the Moon; and further, sees nothing strange in the ancients' reasoning, by analogy, that if two among these heavenly bodies were thus potent in terrestrial influences, it was natural that the other moving bodies should be thought to possess also their own special powers.—(*Ibid*, p. 314.)

Such being the effect of the Aura of herbs, stones and planets upon men, it is no matter of surprise that men are influenced by the Aura of one another among themselves. A healthy visitor is liable to be seized by an attack of disease on entering the sick chamber, for he imbibes the Aura, i. e., the magnetic fluid thrown off by the sick person, which partakes of the morbid, unhealthy condition of the body. And similarly, a patient finds himself better, and gains strength after some friend with a healthy constitution has been sitting for some time by his side. In the same way, the Aura thrown off by one and inhaled by another, excites love or hatred, sympathy or antipathy between them; and this is what we mean when we say that so and so is prejudiced or biased in respect of some other. This happens not only when one sees another, but also when one hears the sound or inhales the odour proceeding from another; for the effects of material emanations in the shape of sound or smell are not less forcible than those arising from sight. The sympathy excited by music, and even pathetic or eloquent speech, and the feelings engendered by smelling particular odours, are too well known to need illustration here. The philosophy of this theory is thus explained by a renowned author, who holds that "when two men approach each other, their magnetism is either active or passive; that is, positive or negative. If the emanations which they send out are broken or thrown back, there arises antipathy. But when the emanations pass through each other from both sides, then there is positive magnetism, for the rays proceed from the centre to the circumference; in which case they not only affect health but also moral sentiments. This magnetism or sympathy is found not only among men, but also in plants and in animals." I must add that upon this theory is founded the popular belief in the effects of good or evil eye, good or evil touch and so on.

If such are the wonderful effects of the *unconscious* evolution of Aura, the result will be infinitely more marvellous when the Aura is thrown off *consciously*. Here let the reader recall to memory what I have already stated, namely,—that desires are the springs of action; that one of the essential conditions of action is will; that the exertion of the will stirs up the fire or the vital force (Tejas) which is within man; that thereupon the vital force flows out of the body, endowed with sound, colour and odour; that, being the offspring of the will, this vital force is semi-intelligent and electric in its effects; and that, when properly propelled, it travels in whatever direction and to whatever distance

the operator desires at the time of sending it forth, and affects the intended object, animate or inanimate.

The first condition then for the successful conscious direction of Aura towards any desired object, is strength of will. By nature, will is the strongest of all the powers possessed by a human being; for it belongs to his spiritual and therefore indissoluble part; and it displays itself the more forcibly the more it is freed from the material part of human constitution. Not only should a person have strong energy of will, but should also have the power of concentrating and sustaining the attention, and of abstracting himself from everything foreign to the object in view. And further, one should have faith in the strength and efficacy of his will-power, and ought not to allow it to be checked by the opposing influence of unbelief of whatever kind. Hence it is that, although the faculty of commanding the direction and effect of Aura exists by nature in every person, yet all do not possess it in the same degree; owing to difference in physical and moral qualities, as well as in the grade of development.

Then the second condition for success in this matter is the nobility and purity of the will. A man endowed with a strong will, but devoid of pure heart, may wield his power for selfish and immoral purposes, and thus apply the purest of fountains to the foulest end. He who desires to exercise this power, should be perfectly free from all worldly incentives and sensuality; he should sincerely regard other men and women as his brothers and sisters; and should not for a moment allow himself to be swayed by any other motive than that of doing good to all, unmindful of all other considerations, and unmindful of any sacrifices which such beneficent task may impose upon him. He should likewise shun every kind of pride or conceit, and avoid any show or exhibition of his power for the gratification of the idle and the curious. (Yoga Tatwa Upanishad). Hence it is said that the Aura of the little, innocent children is pure and healthy; that a higher degree of purity and healing property attaches itself to the Aura of an adult person who leads a moral life conscientiously; and that the highest degree of purity belongs to the Aura of the Adept, who has completely divorced himself from every worldly concern, and whose sole end and aim are the good of humanity in the highest spiritual sense of the word.

And the third condition for the successful operation of the will, is the entire absence of intervening obstacles. If a person wills a thought to reach another person, it will reach its object, only in case it encounters no psychological obstacles more potent than itself. We must also remember that all are not alike sensible to the action of another's will; and that the same persons are more or less so, according to the temporary dispositions in which they are found. And further, where the operator and the patient happen to be not of the same sex, but one is male and the other female, extra precaution is necessary. The Aura of a woman being by nature more electrical, more chemical; and therefore more positive and powerful than that of a man, the will of a woman will prevail against that of a man, unless the latter

develops his will-power to a degree sufficient to enable him to combat that of the former.

With these conditions, one may be able to evolve Aura consciously for any desired end. The parts of the body whence most Aura flows are the head, the eyes and fingers. I have already mentioned the faculty—the third eye—which man is capable of developing on his forehead. The employment of the fingers in the performance of what is called *Mudra*, i. e., the gesticulations and entwinings and wavings of the fingers, which accompany prayers and other invocations among Aryans, has reference to the Aura emanating from the fingers, and is specially referred to in the Rig Veda, I, 62—10. The process of placing others under the influence of Aura projected through the eyes is mentioned in the Rig Veda, I, 23—3, where a Rishi says, "Looking at each other they cast them asleep." Instances of Rishis controlling elements and conferring efficacious blessings are to be found in the following passages of the Rig Veda:—

"Brahma (Vedic hymn) is my protecting armour," (Rig Veda, VI. 75—19). This Brahma (Vedic hymn) of Viswamitra protects the tribe of Bharata" (Rig Veda, III. 53—12—13). "The Ribhus, uttering unfailing prayers, endowed with rectitude, and succeeding in all pious acts, made their parents young." (Rig Veda, I. XX. 4).

"Rishi Dêwapi, son of Rishtashena, performing the function of a *hotri*, knowing how to gain the good graces of the gods, has discharged from the upper to the lower ocean those waters of the sky which fall in rain." (Rig Veda, X, 98—5).

Who are these Ribhus? Who is Rishi Viswamitra? And who, in particular, is Rishi Dêwapi? I beg my reader's pardon for reserving answers to these queries for another occasion.

Now, to resume our account of Aura. It is a widely known fact that the Aryans attach a great sanctity to bathing in water; and this has a very intimate connection with the subject of the magnetic Aura we are speaking of. By nature water has the power of washing off and removing all material emanations, including Aura, so that Aryans bathe at stated hours to remove the emanations of bad Aura with which they may have come into contact during the preceding hours. They also bathe whenever they happen to touch people, animals, or other substances whose Aura they consider to be vicious; and whenever they are affected by unpleasant tidings of the death of those in whom they are interested; and even when the tidings are pleasant, if the event be one which is coupled with circumstances which must contribute to the flow of an unusual quantity of Aura, a portion of which must in the nature of things be not quite salubrious—as for instance in the case of child-birth. Acting upon the same principles, the Aryans refrain from bathing themselves after having seen, or touched, things or men whom they consider to be pious and capable of throwing off good aura.

These notions,—about evil eye, evil touch, good and bad effects of Aura and so on may no doubt seem superstitions to those who have not studied this subject. But, as observed by Bacon, "there is "superstition in avoiding superstition when men think to do best "if they go farthest from the superstition formerly received. There-

"fore care should be had that, (as it fareth in ill purgings) the "good be not taken away with the bad." Most of the symbolical myths supposed by some to be meaningless fictions may, by investigation, be found to contain the most profound expressions of well defined scientific truth.

Now to return to the subject of Aura. From what has been above stated, the reader will perceive that man is capable of affecting others by his Aura even where it is unconsciously thrown off; and hence the injunction laid down by the sages that one should always evolve good thoughts, and be ever pure in mind, speech or action (Manu VI. 64, &c.) on one hand; and that they should not associate with vicious people on the other, lest they should imbibe impure Aura.

While thus the Aura affects the surrounding objects and individuals, it does not fail to affect the very same person that first propelled it, according to the chemical laws of action and reaction already explained in the course of these annotations. So that whenever we evolve a thought, utter a word, or commit a deed in respect of others, this affects them if they happen to be weaker than ourselves, and then reacts upon ourselves either for good or evil, according to the nature of our thoughts, words or deeds. Hence the additional necessity of adhering to the rule of purity in all our actions, words and thoughts, even in respect of our own selves. Adherence to this rule produces good Karma and violation thereof an evil one. Nobody ever enjoys or suffers except from the effects of his own conduct. Every one reaps the consequences of his own doings. (Manu XII. 3, &c. &c. &c.). This is justice, the eternal justice by which the destinies of man are measured and governed. The apparent enjoyment of pleasure by an immoral man, and the apparent suffering of misery by a moral person, can afford no argument against the retributive justice of the rule of Karma, as laid down by the Aryans. We hold that human existence on this planet is not confined to one present life; but that it extends to an innumerable succession of lives, so that the consequences of man's actions in one life are in most cases felt in the next. This is what a great sage has said:—

"Who in this world is able to distinguish  
"The virtuous from the wicked; both alike  
"The fruitful earth supports; on both alike  
"The sun pours down his beams; on both alike  
"Refreshing breezes blow, and both alike  
"The waters purify? Not so hereafter;  
"Then shall the good be severed from the bad."  
(Mahabharata XII.—2798.)

And Manu says that, "iniquity committed in this world, produces not fruit immediately; but, like the earth, in due season; and advancing by little and little, it eradicates the man who committed it. He grows rich for a while through unrighteousness, then he beholds pleasant things; and he vanquishes foes; but he perishes at length from his whole root upwards. Yes; iniquity, once committed, fails not of producing fruit to one who wrought it" (Manu IV. 173—174).

But does not man enjoy happiness where he does nothing to



merit it, as, for instance, where he is born in a rich or pious family, or when he discovers a treasure unsought for? And similarly, does he not suffer misery when he does nothing to deserve it, as for instance, when he is born in a poor or miserable family, or when all his earnings are destroyed by inundations? And, is it not even said that man enjoys and suffers for the good and bad acts of his parents, although he himself may not be instrumental in the commission of these acts? When people are thus capable of enjoying or suffering in consequence of occurrences which are *entirely accidental*, how can it be said that the Law of Karma represents justice, and that nobody enjoys or suffers except from the consequences of his own conduct?

These queries and doubts are due to the notion that human existence does not extend beyond the grave. But this notion is delusive. Human existence, as has been so often stated in these pages, is made up of series of successive lives; and all those occurrences, which are characterized as accidents in the foregoing queries, are none other than the consequence of the individual's own action committed during his preceding existences. Neither the birth in any particular family, nor the gain or loss of wealth, nor any other event which falls to the lot of a man, can be classed as an accident. They are all the results of his own Karma; it is this which determines the family in which a man shall again be born; and regulates his conduct in every other respect, subject to the operation of the fresh Karma which he generates during the present existence.

Let us illustrate this proposition more fully—Broadly speaking, human afflictions are threefold: viz. I.: *Adhyâtika*; II *Adhibhautika*; and III. *Adhidaivika*—(*Vishnu Purana*.)

I. *Adhyâtika*, is an affliction which is natural to the envelopment of the soul in the physical body; and is of two kinds,—namely, bodily suffering such as fever and dysentery, and mental suffering, such as grief and hatred. Afflictions of this class are multiplied in many shapes in the progress of conception, growth, decay and death; and are such as cannot be avoided; for they are inseparable from man, so long as he continues to be born again and again.

II. *Adhibhautika* is likewise natural affliction but incidental. It embraces all those evils which are inflicted from without, on man by other men, birds, beasts, reptiles, fiends, goblins, and so on. These ills are likewise incidental to the soul's embodiment in a physical body. The children in the womb, as well as after their birth, imbibe so much of the Aura of their parents that they inherit from them not only their moral or immoral propensities, but also diseases of almost every kind. In the same way, though in a much less degree, the husband and wife are liable to be affected by each other's Aura, owing to their marriage relations. And even friends and relations, and neighbours, are affected by the Aura of an individual. Man, an individual unit, cannot be said to be separate from mankind as a whole. The lot of one embodied soul is cast in with the lot of all those who are similarly embodied; and the good or evil of one is the good or evil of all.

And, III, *Adhidaivika* is a superhuman affliction inflicted on man by means of heat, cold, wind, rain, storms and lightnings, and so on. This too is the result of soul's embodiment; and so long as man abides in a place which is subject to such atmospheric phenomena, he cannot expect to be free from their natural effects.

Thus it will be seen that misery is the result of the embodiment of the soul, and that the embodiment is the result of past Karma. Hence it is Karma that forms and rules the destinies of man, the threads of Karma will remain stained, and the threefold class of evils will continue to beset man during the different stages of life. Is man then doomed to this everlasting misery? No. The following clauses of the text show how man can hope to attain the Divine, and thus be free from the trammels of birth and rebirth and the consequent misery of any kind whatsoever.

#### Section III—Clause 4.

*But eventually the long strands, the living threads, which in their unbroken continuity form the individual, pass out of the shadow into the shine. Then the threads are no longer colourless but golden; once more they lie together, level. Once more harmony is established; and from that harmony within, the greater harmony is perceived.*

As we have seen above, it is the conjunction of the soul with the body that gives rise to good or evil Karma, and to consequent multiplicity of deaths and rebirths into the physical body. To the soul thus embodied there is no peace. But there is this most encouraging fact that this double feature in man is not constant; it began with the union of the soul with the body, and it must end with its disunion. All earthly relations are foreign to the soul, and cannot adhere to it for ever. When the process of regeneration is sufficiently advanced to enable the spiritual entity to dispense with further association with the body, the soul becomes exempted from the necessity of a relapse into materiality. It should therefore be the assiduous endeavour of man to transcend all the qualities which are co-existent with the body, break the bonds of the heart, and then shake off the mortal coil altogether. Then the soul feels as lightsome as "the horse which shakes off the dust from its hairy skin," and shines like "the eclipsed moon, which escapes from the mouth (shadow) of Râhu," (*Chandogya Upanishad*. VIII. 13). And thenceforth, the individual is no longer subject to death or birth; and the hitherto embodied individual—the mortal—becomes immortal. (*Brihad Acanyaka Upanishad* IV. IV. 7; *Katha Upanishad*. VI. 14; *Bhagavat-gita*. IV. 9 and *Vishnu Purana*.)

At this stage the threads of Karma lose their stain and binding force, and will assume the golden colour—for then the soul is fit to attain *Bramha*. But it must be remembered that this change of colour, and the attainment of the final, predominant colour of gold, is not effected in one birth. The colour improves gradually with the growth of merit during each birth; and assumes the purest and brightest hue when the soul reaches the highest state of spiritual excellence;—and this process will take ages for its completion. "Even the wise man," says Sri Krishna,



proceedeth not unto me until after many births. The Yogi, who labouring with all his might, is purified of his sins; and, after many births, made perfect, goeth at length to the Supreme abode." (Bhagavat Gita, VI. 45 and VII. 19.) But it is certain that every one, who deserves Divine bliss will attain to it, however long the process may take. "I am the same to all mankind," says Sri Krishna. "They who serve me with faith are in me and I am in them. However evil one's ways might have been hitherto, if he only serves me, he becomes as good as a just man; he soon cometh of a virtuous spirit, and he eventually obtaineth eternal bliss." (Bhagavat Gita, IX. 29—31.) The philosophy of this theory is explained by the Great Author of the *Fragments of Occult Truth*, in the Appendix, in these words:—

"The individuality or the spiritual monad is a thread upon which are strung various personalities. Each personality leaves its own—the higher spiritual impressions upon the divine *Ego*, the consciousness of which returns at a certain stage of its progress, even that of the highly depraved soul that had to perish in the end. The reason for it becomes self-evident, if one reflects that however criminal and lost to every glimmer of a higher feeling, no human soul is yet born utterly depraved, and that there was a time during the youth of the sinful human personality when it had worked out some or other *Karma*; and that it is this that survives and forms the basis of *Karma* to come. To make it clearer, let us suppose that A lives to that age when a person becomes an adult and begins to bloom fully into life. No man, however vicious his natural tendency, becomes so at once. He has had therefore time to evolve *Karma*, however faint and insignificant. Let us further imagine that at the age of eighteen or twenty, A begins to give way to vice, and thus gradually loses the remotest connection with his higher principle. At thirty or say forty, he dies. Now, the personality of A between fifteen and twenty is as little the personality of A from twenty to thirty, as though it were quite another man. Even the physiologists divide the physical personality into stages of seven, and show man changing atoms to the last, every seven years. The same with the inner man. The fifth principle of the sensual, highly depraved man, may and will perish, while the *Karma* of his youth, though not strong and complete enough to secure for him a bliss in *Devachan* (Heaven) and union with his higher principle—is yet sufficiently outlived to allow the monad a grasp on it for the next re-birth. On the other hand, we are taught that it so happens sometimes that the *Karma* of a personality is not fully worked out in the birth that follows: Life is made up of accidents, and the personality that becomes may be hindered by circumstances from receiving the full due its *Karma* is entitled to, whether for good or for bad. But the Law of Retribution will never allow itself to be cheated by blind chance. There is then provision to be made, and the accounts that could not be settled in one birth will be squared in the succeeding one. The portion of the sum-total, which could not be summed up in one column is carried forward to the following. For verily the many lives of an individual monad were well compared in the *Fragments* to the pages of an account book,—the Book of Life,—or Lives."

The book referred to, may, I beg leave to add, be the book of record kept by the great Universal Historiographer, the Chitrangupta, already spoken of.

Here the philosophy of *Karma* is brought to a close in our Text; and the following summary of *Karma* and its consequences; given in Chapter VII of Anugita, a well known episode in the Mahabharata,—may be studied to advantage:—

"There is no destruction here of actions good or not good. Coming to one body after another, they become ripened in their respective ways. As a fruitful tree producing fruit may yield much fruit, so does merit performed

with a pure mind become expanded. Sin, too, performed with a sinful mind, is similarly expanded. For the self engages in action, putting forward this mind. And now, further, hear how a man, overwhelmed with action, and enveloped in desire and anger, enters a womb. Within the womb of a woman, he obtains, as the result of action, a body good or bad, made up of virile semen and blood. That soul, after entering all the limbs of the foetus, part by part, and dwelling in the seat of the life-wind, supports them with the mind. Then the foetus, becoming possessed of consciousness, moves about its limbs. As liquefied iron being poured out assumes the form of the image, such you must know is the entrance of the soul into the foetus. As fire entering a ball of iron, heats it, such too you must understand, is the manifestation of the soul in the foetus. And as a blazing lamp shines in a house, even so does consciousness light up the bodies. And whatever action he performs, whether good or bad, everything done in a former body must necessarily be enjoyed or suffered. Then, that is exhausted, and again other is accumulated, so long as the piety which dwells in the practice of concentration of mind for final emancipation has not been learnt."

But when once this is learnt, one can make sure of attaining the Supreme; for in the words of Sri Krishna, "No true devotee shall ever perish." (Bhagavat Gita, IX. 31.)

Now the Text proceeds to give certain explanation and advice incidental to the foregoing rules and observations.

#### Section III, Clause 5.

*This illustration presents but a small portion—a single side of the truth: it is less than a fragment. Yet, dwell on it; by its aid you may be led to perceive more. What it is necessary first to understand is, not that the future is arbitrarily formed by any separate acts of the present, but that the whole of the future is in unbroken continuity with the present as the present is with the past. On one plane, from one point of view, the illustration of the rope is correct.*

It is said that the illustration of *Karma* by means of the ordinary rope, represents only a single side of truth, because, although the rope is made up of innumerable filaments twisted together and rendered sufficiently strong to drag even the heaviest body, yet its filaments are inactive and lifeless; whereas those which compose *Karma* are living, electrical filaments, capable of forming and ruling the destinies of men and nations. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that the formation and operation of *Karma* can hardly be illustrated by anything else than a rope. The Sanscrit word for an ordinary rope and for the quality of *Prakriti* (nature) is one and the same, namely, *Guna*, because the qualities of *Prakriti* operate as ropes to bind a man to the world; and as *Karma* arises by the operation of these qualities, and binds such men from birth to birth,—it is figuratively called *Karma-pasa* (rope of *Karma*.)

#### Section III, Clause 6.

*It is said that a little attention to occultism produces great *Karmic* results. That is because it is impossible to give any attention to occultism without making a definite choice between what are familiarly called good and evil. The first step in occultism brings the student to the tree of knowledge. He must pluck and eat; he must choose. No longer is he capable of the indecision of ignorance. He goes on either on the good or on the evil path. And to step*

definitely and knowingly even but one step on either path produces great Karmic results. The mass of men walk waveringly, uncertain as to the goal they aim at; their standard of life is indefinite; consequently their Karma operates in a confused manner. But, when once the threshold of knowledge is reached, the confusion begins to lessen, and consequently the Karmic results increase enormously, because all are acting in the same direction on all the different planes: for the occultist cannot be half-hearted, nor can he return when he has passed the threshold. These things are as impossible as that the man should become the child again. The individuality has approached the state of responsibility by reason of growth; it cannot recede from it.

Where a child fears not the consequences of his meddling with a sharp knife in a rash and careless manner, an adult is extremely cautious about it, and uses the best possible care in handling it. Where an ordinary person sees nothing but a pleasant white powder in arsenic and is ready to use it for any purpose whatsoever, the medical man sees in it the deadly poison, and takes the utmost care in dealing with it. In the same way, where an ordinary man looks upon a particular thing or event as being the most trifling and indifferent, the occultist views it with the utmost gravity, and watches its progress with the profoundest interest. For he sees, hears and understands things which are beyond the perception of an ordinary man; and therefore becomes impressed with a graver sense of responsibility than all other persons. Hence it is said that even a little attention to occultism produces a great Karmic result. Indeed it behoves an occultist to behave more prudently than ordinary people, in the same way as the latter are under obligation to behave themselves more cautiously than children, or lunatics.

#### Section III, Clause 7.

He who would escape from the bondage of Karma must raise his individuality out of the shadow into the shine; must so elevate his existence that these threads do not become so attached as to be pulled awry. He simply lifts himself out of the region in which Karma operates. He does not leave the existence which he is experiencing because of that. The ground may be rough and dirty, or full of rich flowers whose pollen stains and of sweet substances that cling and become attachments—but overhead there is always the free sky. He who desires to be Karmaless must look to the air for a home; and after that to the ether. He who desires to form good Karma will meet with many confusions, and in the effort to sow rich seed for his own harvesting may plant a thousand weeds, and among them the giant. Desire to sow no seed for your own harvesting; desire only to sow that seed the fruit of which shall feed the world. You are a part of the world; in giving it food you feed yourself. Yet in even this thought there lurks a great danger which starts forward and faces the disciple, who has for long thought himself working for good, while in his inmost soul he has perceived only evil; that is, he has thought himself to be intending great benefit to the world, while all the time he has unconsciously embraced the thought of Karma, and the great

benefit he works for is for himself. A man may refuse to allow himself to think of reward. But in that very refusal is seen the fact that reward is desired. And it is useless for the disciple to strive to learn by means of checking himself. The soul must be unjetttered, the desires free. But until they are fixed only on that state wherein there is neither reward nor punishment, good nor evil, it is in vain that he endeavours. He may seem to make great progress, but some day he will come face to face with his own soul, and will recognise that when he came to the tree of knowledge he chose the bitter fruit and not the sweet; and then the veil will fall utterly, and he will give up his freedom and become a slave of desire.

Therefore be warned, you who are but turning towards the life of occultism. Learn now that there is no cure for desire, no cure for the love of reward, no cure for the misery of longing, save in the fixing of the sight and hearing upon that which is invisible and soundless. Begin even now to practise it, and so a thousand serpents will be kept from your path. Live in the eternal.

These observations are calculated to warn the pilgrim of the dangers which are likely to beset him on his path, and to instruct him how to behave himself in every respect. They are plain enough in themselves, and the reader who has mastered the preceding rules will find it easy enough to understand them.

#### Section III, Clause 8.

The operations of the actual laws of Karma are not to be studied until the disciple has reached the point at which they longer affect himself. The initiate has a right to demand the secrets of nature and to know the rules which govern human life. He obtains this right by having escaped from the limits of nature and by having freed himself from the rules which govern human life. He has become a recognised portion of the divine element, and is no longer affected by that which is temporary. He then obtains the knowledge of the laws which govern temporary conditions. Therefore you who desire to understand the laws of Karma, attempt first to free yourself from these laws; and this can only be done by fixing your attention on that which is unaffected by those laws.

The laws of Karma have reference solely to actions partaking of the qualities of nature (Prakriti), whose secrets none but an Initiate has the right to demand and learn; for he alone can be said to have freed himself from the bonds of nature, and therefore to be able to unravel its mysteries. The text consequently advises those who desire to understand the laws of Karma to prepare themselves for the task by first getting rid of worldly concerns, and fixing their undivided attention upon that which is unaffected by the laws and bonds of Karma, namely, the Eternal Sat. For, "as here on earth, whatever has been acquired by exertion perishes, so perishes all that is acquired for the next world by sacrifices and other good actions performed on earth; for there is no freedom in any world for those that depart from hence without having discovered the self." (Chandogya Upanishad, VIII. 1—6.)

But it is not meant by this that those who desire to attain the Supreme should necessarily desert their homestead and all its

belongings, and lead a forest life. What is required is that one should perform his allotted function, quite unmindful of its consequences; practice virtue and piety for their own sake, without a grain of selfish motive and without the least expectation of reward; and direct his inmost thoughts to the contemplation and attainment of the Supreme. This is all and nothing more is needed, for, in the words of the author of the *Mahabharata*, "What need has a self-controlled man of the forest; and of what use is the forest to an uncontrolled man? Wherever a self-controlled dwells that is a forest; that is a hermitage" (*Santi parva*). And "No evil stain clings to him, who knows Sat, the Eternal Truth, although he may be living in the world, even as the water does not cling to a lotus-leaf, although it is constantly in the water" (*Chandogya Upanishad*, IV. 14—3).

## EPILOGUE.

My Readers! I have now arrived at the end of the Treatise, "The Light on the Path;" but certainly not at the end of the subject, of which it treats,—a task which for me is simply impracticable, and which I never presumed to accomplish. The subject is as profoundly mysterious as it is sublimely sacred. It is a science transcending every other science; the only science which serves man beyond this flitting Present; yea, the science of the soul, the eternal, absolute soul.

While, in conclusion, giving expression to my humble sense of gratitude to the talented authoress of this little gem of a book, for cordially according to me the privilege of annotating the same in my own way, I venture to invite the attention of my readers to another book from the pen of the same writer, which is most appropriately called "The Idyll of the White Lotus," and which, in my humble opinion, has such a very intimate connection with the present Treatise, that the study of the one cannot be complete without that of the other.

For,

Firstly.—That book (the Idyll) which was written in 1884, embodies what in the preface is emphatically called "The Tragedy of the Soul;" while this book, penned in 1885, contains rules necessary for enacting that Tragedy.

Secondly.—That book (Idyll, in—Book II. Ch. VIII) defines the three Truths, which are absolute and which cannot be lost, while this book (in Sections 1, 2 and 3 respectively) prescribes the infallible method by which those three eternal Truths can be realized—as the reader will clearly see from the following explanations. The first truth declared in the Idyll, is that, "the soul of man is immortal; and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendour has no limit;"—and the first section in the present Treatise has likewise reference to individual soul; it teaches that the soul is a reality and immortal, while the body perishes and is mortal; and it gives the rules as to what is to be desired and what is to be avoided by one who is desirous of finding and recognizing his soul. Then the second Truth inculcated in the "Idyll" is that, "the principle which gives life

"dwells in us, and without us, is undying and eternally beneficent, "is not heard or seen or smelt, but is perceived by the man who "desires perception;"—while the 2nd section of the present Treatise lays down the means of perceiving this Supreme soul, as the highest and ultimate end of man. And then the third Truth enunciated in the "Idyll" is that, "each man is his own absolute lawgiver, "the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself; the decrease of his "life, his reward, his punishment;" while the third section of the present Treatise, entitled the "Karma," conveys exactly the very same idea; and explains how Karma is generated and how it is annihilated;—as the best means of establishing a link between the object of the 1st Truth and that of the 2nd Truth, which, in other words, means the attainment of *Moksha*; the final beatitude.

And, thirdly, that book (Idyll) is the book of the Path; and this book is the book of *Light on the Path*. The path is the path of Devas (Gods); the path that leads to Brahma; the path whence no devoted pilgrim returns to the condition of the misery of death and birth. (*Chandogya Upanishad*, IV. 15—6). And the Light is that which discloses what was hitherto hidden from our view owing to our ignorance; the highest light; the light of lights, which shines above the heaven; higher than everything in the highest worlds, beyond which there is nothing else.—(*Ibid*, III. 13—5.)

Travelling on the Path, thus illumined, the devoted pilgrim beholds the Individual soul, and through it, the Supreme; and then the bonds of his heart are broken; all his doubts vanish; and the whole effect of his Karma is annihilated. (*Mundaka Upanishad*, II. VIII).

May both the Teacher and the disciple be glorious (*Tejaswi*); may our study be glorious; and may we not encounter any obstacles. Om! (*Taittiriya Upanishad*).

Peace! Peace! Peace.