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## THE LIFE.

What to you is the meaning of Life, oh! seeker after immortality? What does it mean to you to live forever, and measure existence by Eternities, not years? Truly, you lift your head among the stars, and call yourself "sky-walker," for you sit in the assemblies of the gods, and hold creation in the hollow of your hand. Yet, though I would ask you of those lofty journeys, and of the converse that you held, and of the music of the spheres, and of what the Planetary Spirits taught you, you cannot tell me, for the "I" within you, meshed in the world of shadows, driven like a leaf before the storm in the dust of physical existence, (ashes of the burnt-out fires of the past) wits not of these great events. All memory of Life has been forgotten in the strain and stress of living, and all belonging to you of the Real and True, is but the echo of your dreams.

When, therefore, waking life becomes to you a dream,\* and dreams take on the vividness of conscious thought, know that your soul is budding in the garden of Eternal Life, that the Spirit in its golden Triangle, with outstretched wings, broods close above, and that the mystic moment dawns, when basking in the great effulgence of that golden Glory, the bud will open to the perfect flower, and immortality be won. Then the "sky-walker" does not walk but fly, bestriding Kala Hamsa, the Great Bird. Thus life is given up, and Life is gained. CAVÉ.

\* See *Voice of the Silence*, p. 2, et seq.

## INDIAN DAYS.

## A DIALOGUE OF LIFE AND DEATH.

By *H. P. Blavatsky*.\*

The heat was unbearable the day we spent in D——. It was so hot that one was inclined to suspect that Surya meant to bake the Jats, who are his faithful worshippers, alive, as well as ourselves, who so constantly cursed his too scorching caresses. The glaring rays of sun poured liquid gold on the marble walls and cupolas of the Kiosks, lay in blinding spots on the slumbering waters of the tanks, and darted dazzling arrows into everything, living or dead. Even the flocks of parrots and peacocks, which are as plentiful in the gardens of India as sparrows in our Russian cabbage beds, were forced to hide in the thickest part of the shrubbery.

Great was the silence around us. Everything slept, tingling with heat and languor. We took refuge in a marble summer house, lofty and well hidden under the thick trees, so that we enjoyed under this peaceful shelter a sort of comparative coolness. It stood in the middle of a small pond, protected and darkened by various creepers. While there, it was impossible to feel either weary or over heated. Here was a haven of shadow and coolness, but outside the limit of the miniature lake, a regular Hades of heat lay ablaze. The very ground seemed to crackle and open in numberless chinks, under the flaming kisses of the formidable spring sun. His rays, like fiery tongues, licked the foliage of the garden, still luxurious but already fading.

Roses pressed their petals together or shed them on the ground. Even the lotus and the water lily curled the edges of their thick, hardy leaves, as if gingerly avoiding the burning touch.

Orchids alone, "those blossoms of passion," lifted high their many-colored, insect-like chalices, drinking in this torrent of fire as other flowers drink in refreshing dew.

What an original and lovely garden! It was set on a dead rock measuring hardly an acre, but containing over two hundred large and small fountains. The keeper, a clean-shaven old man, all sugar in words and manner, assured us that only a part of the fountains were playing, many being out of order and stopped; but that on the day of a great reception in D——, that of the Prince of Wales, if I am not mistaken, there were six hundred of them.

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\* Translated from the Russian by Vera Jelikhovska Johnston.

However, we were perfectly satisfied with the two hundred. For a few rupees the gardeners enabled us to feel deliciously cool during the hottest hours of the day, and, when the night came, to walk along a path which was bordered with high sprays of fresh water instead of trees. I have never seen anything comparable to these two walls of water-dust, sparkling in the moonlight and passing through all the shades of the rainbow.

Almost abandoned by human beings, the lovely garden is running wild, given over as it is to the sole use of an army of magnificent peacocks, which are also getting as wild as the garden. The favorite birds of Juno, whom India calls Sarasvati, fill the garden, hundreds of them composedly pacing up and down the path, sweeping with their long tails the accumulation of dry leaves and rubbish which evidently had not been removed from the path for years. The birds are strung along the branches of the trees like so many beads, giving to the old garden the appearance of an enchanted wood in some fairy-land. In the glare of an Indian day, the shaggy old trees move as if expanding and contracting in gentle breathing, and thousands of inquisitive eyes peep at you from behind the thick foliage, sparkling like huge blue sapphires, with reflections of gold. These are the eyes on the tails of the restless peacocks, ever moving on the branches.

The first time I entered the garden, I stood aghast a long while utterly unable to account for this strange phantasmagoria. But as soon as my curiosity took the shape of action and I moved forward to examine the wonder more closely, I had to suffer the consequences of my rashness. One of the peacocks frightened by my approach, darted past me, and in his heavy flight, not only knocked the sun hat off my head, but myself as well off my feet. So my reflections on the theme of the wonders of India were interrupted. The exploration of the garden, however, soothed my feelings and the Babu avenged my fall by tearing a whole handful of bright feathers from the tail of another peacock. "A souvenir from D——," he said. He did not seem to be in the least moved by the consideration that his victim was perfectly innocent, having taken no part in the offense.

The garden is cut in all directions by a regular network of narrow paths. These were going to be cleaned, the gardener explained to us, but not before he heard about some new "distinguished visitor" having started for D——; which led us to conclude, with our usual insight, that we were not included in the category of those

lucky people. In all directions we saw waters peacefully slumbering in their nests of marble, snugly covered with thick blankets of green scum. The receptacles of the fountains, the ponds and miniature lakes had long turned into a sort of green gruel. Only the waterworks right in front of the palace are regularly attended to, and add immensely to the beauty of the lovely wood. In spite of its neglected appearance, the octagonal pond in the center, where we were taking refuge, is especially beautiful. Surrounded by smaller fountains with their high sprays flying into the air from the bowers of luxuriant tropical growth, we spent a blissful day, as if in some aquatic kingdom. Four avenues of waterworks lead cross-wise to the pond and you reach the Kiosk which sheltered us, by going over four little bridges with lace-like parapets of white marble.

We were tired of talking, and sat in silence; each of us was left to his own reflections and occupations. I was trying to read, but my thoughts turned more to the Thakur than to the contents of the book. With his head half hidden by the thick foliage of some creeper, and only his long white beard protruding, our respected chief, Colonel O., was snoring gently. Narayan and Mulji crouched on the floor and the Babu taking the place of some absent idol, sat with his legs crossed, on the high pedestal and to all appearances was also snoozing.

We sat on, half dozing, motionless and silent for a long while. At last towards half past five, the slumbering gardens began to wake up. The heat grew less; the peacocks crawled out of their hiding places and flocks of golden-green parrots called out to each other on the tops of the trees. A few moments more and the sun will disappear under the distant line of the salt lakes. Then exhausted nature will be granted a respite until next morning, and will grow cool for the new ordeal by fire.

I put my book by, and looked around with increased interest, everything beginning to breathe freely and to move. The garden, the very image of Daniel's fiery furnace a moment ago, was now turning into a grove in some classical idyl. But in vain would one look for troops of merry nymphs playfully throwing water at each other; in vain would one listen for the gay notes of Pan's piping. The limpid waters of the tank reflected only the deep blue sky, and the peacocks roosting on the lace-like bridges. Preparing for sleep, they played with their tails like so many Spanish ladies with their fans; they spread them and then shut them again, admiringly looking at their own images reflected in the water below. At last,

having sent us a few more golden rays, the sun departed and a faint cooling breeze began to reach us. It was so pleasant in our summer house, so cool and quiet, that we decidedly refused to go into the stuffy halls of the palace for dinner, and asked for our food to be served to us where we were, deputing the Babu to settle the matter.

The frisky Bengali would not go over the bridge. He said he recognized the peacock he had plundered, sitting right on the balustrade, and feared the bird's revenge. So it would fare better with him if he took a safer and a shorter way to the shore, which he did by plunging head foremost into the water directly from the pedestal on which he was enthroned throughout the afternoon. The noise of the splashing water startled the Colonel, who said he wanted to know whether the Babu meant to get drowned, plunging into unknown waters in this foolhardy way.

"Better to get drowned, than to risk the revenge of an infuriated *glamour!*" shouted the latter, noisily blowing the water from his mouth and nostrils.

"What glamour?" asked our president, pacified by the fact that the water hardly reached the Babu's chest.

"Why, the accursed peacock, of course. I have recognized him for a certainty for the same bird who visited us yesterday in Burtpore," went on the Bengali at the top of his voice, stepping with great difficulty on the muddy bed of the tank. "Do you think that I did not notice the pretended bird and Mulji exchanging meaning glances behind my back!"

"A very round-about way of making fun of me," said the "General" frowning. "This *Nastika* never believed in anything, laughing at everything on earth."

"Well, now is your opportunity to laugh at him. Just look at him!" I said, bursting into laughter.

Indeed the Babu was a sight! With an effort he extricated himself from the mud and climbing the high white marble banks, left behind him long streaks of greenish mud. Covered with mud and weeds all over, he had lost his likeness to humanity.

"You are like a drowned man, my poor Babu," I said laughingly. "It is the second bath you have taken today. The water has a wonderful attraction for you. Surely after death you will be turned into a water spirit; but I hope you will escape death by drowning."

"What I was, that I am and that I shall be," he answered, quoting one of the aphorisms of his all-denying sect. "Dust I was, dust

I shall be, and besides they say that drowning is a very pleasant death, Mem-Sahib."

"Who you *are*, everybody sees; what you *shall be*, I do not know, but undoubtedly in your last incarnation you were a Newfoundland puppy!" retorted Mulji.

But the remark was lost on the Babu. He evidently was a little ashamed of his looks and ran towards the house at full speed.

Were Narayan right and were I actually endowed with the gift of prophesy, as he pretended, I would rather have swallowed my own tongue than have given utterance to my last remark. Poor boy, little did he think that an untimely and painful death was in store for him in the yellow waters of the Ganges. It is five years since I saw him last, and two since his terrible accident, but I can never think about him and the pleasant days we spent together without feeling sad, sad at heart. I often dream,—only too often,—of his fragile, child-like little body emerging from the water all covered with the green-black mud of that tank at D——. It seems to me I can see his eyes fixed on mine inquiringly, those eyes of his so full of light and mischief then, glazed and dim a long time now. It seems to me I can hear my own remark; "I hope you will escape death by drowning," and his light-hearted laughing answer, "what I was, that I shall be; dust I was, dust I shall be," and I wake up shuddering with horror and pity.

The poor fellow was drowned in the most horrible, and at the same time ridiculous manner. Between Dehra Dan and Haridwar the Ganges is not the great river it becomes further on, but a mad torrent which is as swift as it is shallow. In one place especially, the river is to be crossed only with the aid of a small footbridge, while horses must be led, their legs only partly covered by the water. But in spite of all warning, the Babu would cross over on horseback. The horse was soon knocked off its legs, and the boy could not free himself for some reason or other, most probably his foot having got entangled in the stirrup. The mad torrent dragged both horse and rider over a mile, until they finally disappeared, having reached a place where the river forms an abrupt waterfall.

"But is it really possible? Has he actually become dust?" I often ask myself when my thoughts turn to the past, and invariably my mind turns to another conversation, a conversation which took place only a few days after our pleasant stay in D——, and which may throw some light on the insoluble enigma of death. As usual,

Narayan and the Babu came to disagree on some important point and asked Thakur to help them out of their difficulties.

I have written down this remarkable conversation in full as I remember it, in the hopes that serious readers may profit by it. Not that it definitely settled questions which to me personally are a constant torment; but it gives a complete idea of the point of view from which the best philosophy of the East considers life beyond the grave, its mysteries, and, in general, the soul of man.

(*To be continued.*)

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## ORIENTAL DEPARTMENT.

*Edited by Charles Johnston.*

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### THE WATER OF LIFE.

“Narada came to Sanatkumara, saying: Master, teach me to know the Soul; for I have heard from the sages that he who knows the Soul crosses over the sea of sorrow. But I, Master, am sorrowful; therefore guide me over to sorrow’s further shore.

“He answered him: All thou knowest already, is but words. But thou shouldst seek to find out truth. For when a man knows, he declares the truth; but without knowing, he cannot declare the truth; therefore thou shouldst seek after understanding.

“When he gains insight, he understands; without insight, he cannot understand, but through insight, he understands; therefore thou shouldst seek to gain insight.

“When a man aspires, then he gains insight; without aspiration there is no insight, but insight comes through aspiration. Therefore thou shouldst seek for aspiration.

“What a man grows forth from, towards that he aspires; if he grows not forth from it, he cannot aspire after it, but he aspires because he grows forth from it. Therefore thou shouldst seek thy source, from which thou growest forth.

“When a man acts, then he grows; if he does not act, he cannot grow, but he grows through action. Therefore thou shouldst follow after action.

“When he finds joy, then he acts; if he finds not joy, he will not act, but he acts when he finds joy. Therefore seek to find out joy.

“Where the Boundless is, there is joy; there is no joy in what is limited, but the Infinite is joy. Therefore seek to know the Limitless.

“When he neither sees nor hears nor perceives anything but the Soul, that is the Limitless; but where he sees, hears, and perceives what is other than the Soul, there is limitation. The Boundless is immortal, but the limited is subject to death; the Boundless is rooted in its own greatness, but not in what men call greatness. For men call these things greatness: cattle and horses, elephants and gold, slaves and women, lands and houses. But not this greatness do I speak of.

“It is beneath, it is above; it is to the west, it is to the east; it is to the south, it is to the north; it is the all. But I myself am this: I am beneath, I am above; I am to the west, I am to the east; I am to the south, I am to the north; I am the All. But I am the Soul: the Soul is beneath, the Soul is above; the Soul is to the west, the Soul is to the east; the Soul is to the south, the Soul is to the north; the Soul is the All.

“He who beholds this thus, understanding it thus, and knowing it thus, the Soul is his delight, the Soul is his pleasure, the Soul is his friend, the Soul is his joy; he is king over himself, and works his will through all the worlds. They who know not this, are subject to others; their world passes away, nor do they work their desire throughout the worlds.

“The Seer beholds not death nor sickness nor sorrow; the Seer beholds the All, and in all things finds the All.

“He who takes only pure food from the world, becomes pure in being; then he remembers truly, and from that true memory comes the loosening of all the knots of the heart.

“Thus when his error was worn away, the Master Sanatkumara showed him the shore that is beyond the darkness. Therefore they tell that he has crossed to the further shore.”—*Chhandogya Upanishad*.

We all come forth from the Soul, which is boundless Joy. The memory of that joy remains with us and haunts us, and the longing for it fills us with sorrow. All the works and ways of man, all his follies and his sins, are but his passionate strivings to find his way back there, to the Soul from whence he came.

The Soul that man is, is the fulness of abounding life, glowing with power, self-sustained, self-replenished, radiant and exultant. Fallen from grace, and driven into exile in his narrow shell of personal life, he seeks to give himself that sense of abounding life by outward sensations, for the veriest sensualist seeks nothing but keenness of life, strong feeling, a vivid sense of the activity of his



being. In reality, there is no impurity in this, for the sense of vividdest life is his birthright, and he is only seeking what is his own. There is no impurity, but there is futility, and a certain shadow of pain.

For any outward sensation whatever, be it good or bad, be it painful or pleasant, if it be kept up unbroken and unintermitted, will certainly bring numbness, and a total inability to perceive it any longer. There is no possibility of continued keenness for a single sensation.

The whole sensual world lies under this law; and therefore throughout the whole sensual world there is alternation: pain bursting in upon pleasure; death hurrying on the heels of life. Were there no cold, we could not feel heat; if there were no evil, we could not speak of good; and only the presence of the devils gives their holiness to the gods.

This two-sidedness runs through the whole natural world as we know it in sensation; and the natural world mirrored in sensation is the psychic world. Nothing psychic transcends the personal self with its isolation; nor is there any help or liberation for it throughout the whole psychic realm. All things psychic come under the law of alternation; all things psychic are subject to death.

Sensation is nothing but this: an attempt to feign the vividness of real life by an unreal expedient; by keenness of outward stimulus, instead of fulness of inward power. But even pleasure becomes numbness and insensibility; even unbroken life becomes miserable weariness, so that the personal self, in its desperation has created for itself pain, to cure the numbness of pleasure; has discovered death, to break the weariness of miserably prolonged life. Numbness and insensibility terrify the personal self far more than even pain and death; therefore it has sought out these grim expedients, to slake its thirst for the keen sense of being; a thirst that is a tragical memory of its old days in the shadow of the Soul.

All this is wrong and needless. In the true destiny of man, there is no place for pain or sorrow, no room for sickness and death. These things belong only to the hither shore; on the further shore, where we should inhabit, they cannot dwell. What we need, to cure us of sorrow, is the inflowing of the Soul.

We need to find our way back to the living waters; deep draughts of that boundless flood will give us the sense of abounding and exultant life within ourselves; the very prize we seek so vainly to gain by the way of sensation. And through desperate struggles,

and almost despairing aspiration, we are finding our way back; for we can only aspire thither, from whence we have come.

The first draught of the waters of life, every man may have for nothing; the second and all following draughts must be paid for, and paid for in full. The first draught of the immortal life will teach us that there is another source of vividness of being, besides sensation; a source the very opposite of sensation, set against it as the night is set against the day; and of which the way of sensation is but the poor distorted copy, seeking to give what it can never give; what is the gift only of the Soul. If we would drink a second time of the waters of life; if we would drink this time consciously and knowingly, we must pay for the draught by conquering the lust of sensation, for the two cannot go together. The body may be true to sensation, live its life, and die its death; or it may be true to the life of the Soul, and be gradually transformed to a vesture of the immortals. But it cannot be true to both; one or the other must be effaced; and there is nothing more awful than the desolation of falling back into death and the darkness, after once we have tasted of life and beheld the light. But to struggle and gain freedom from the lust of sensation, whose thrall we have been for so many ages, is a task that might try a hero's soul; yet the prize is worth it, for the prize is immortality.

The real fulness of immortal life, as against the imitation; gold as against dross: this is the first boon of the Soul. The next is one which we may well regard as a perpetual miracle: the one great miracle of life. It is the finding of our other selves. The water of life is a sea above us and beyond us; and therefore our first free draught has taken us out of ourselves, thus admonishing us that this 'ourself' is only a small part of the matter; a very insignificant inlet of the infinite sea. And here comes the price to be paid for the second draught. We can no more hold to the little inlet of our personalities; we must open our hearts to the infinite sea. To find the immortal waters a second time, we must lose ourselves. That is the price, and it must be paid. To sink back into the lonely personal self, after seeing its smallness, is to be guilty of a baseness that brings long, slow death; but to rise altogether above our selves, and let nothing remain in us to check the Soul, requires a fortitude that is divine. No human soul accomplishes this without bitter weeping and wailing, without almost heartbreaking and despair; as no soul frees itself from lust without passing through a black gloom of despondency, deadness, and the shadow of death.

But in losing ourselves, we find our other selves. We were under the impression, in old days, that we really saw and knew and understood the people round us; but we now recognize how vastly we were mistaken. Simple as may be the heart of man, it needs a god to understand it; and we must attain to godlike power and insight, by driving our selfhood aside, before we can even feel the presence of the simplest heart. But when the first great victory is won, when the divine quietness and strength descend on us like the soft wings of the nestling twilight, then the radiance begins to gleam and glow to us through the darkness from other hearts, as the stars come out through the mantling shadows of evening. And no sight on earth or in heaven can vie with the marvel and miracle of this, our first initiation into real human life.

Thus we gradually make our way back into the inheritance of the immortals. The rising tide of the water of life, at first a faint spring, often stifled and hidden and defiled, gradually washes us and makes us clean, restoring us to immortal strength, to the freshness of everlasting youth. All we do will have the new and unprecedented quality of a creative act; we shall perpetually embody in our works some new secret of the Soul; and there are still hidden secrets as fine as the decking of the forests in springtime, or the lighting of the stars.

But nothing in this world or any other will equal the recognition of the divine and creative quality in other souls; there is where we shall find our true inheritance; and we shall find it in increasing measure, with the rising onflow of the Soul. If man is not yet redeemed it is more the fault of the redeemers than of man. ?

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## THEOSOPHICAL NEWS AND WORK.

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### THE CONVENTION.

The Thirteenth Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society in America, was held in the Audience room of the Grand Hotel, at Cincinnati, April 30th, 1899, and was called to order by Dr. J. D. Buck, President; about 75 members being present. Dr. A. P. Buchman, of Fort Wayne, was elected Temporary Chairman. Dr. Buchman took the chair, and after a few remarks proceeded to organize the Convention.

Dr. Thomas M. Stewart was elected Secretary.

Committees were appointed on Credentials, Resolutions, and Nominations.

Major James Albert Clark, of Washington, was then elected permanent Chairman of the Convention, Dr. Stewart being confirmed as permanent Secretary.

Telegrams of greeting from England and San Francisco were received, and after being read at the Convention, were ordered to be placed on the minutes.

Major Clark then took the chair and addressed the Convention briefly, expressing his appreciation of the honor conferred upon him.

The Committee on Credentials reported that 24 Branches were represented by delegates or proxies present.

Report of the Treasurer was then called for, and was found to be as follows:

Receipts .....	\$1,587.73
Disbursements .....	995.54
	<hr/>
Balance .....	\$ 592.19

This report was received by the Convention with much approval, and many expressions of satisfaction, and Dr. Buck, in commenting thereupon, reminded the members of the advantage secured by the establishment of a sound financial basis, explaining that expenses had been kept down and the personal labors of all the officials and assistants had been contributed, in the hope that a surplus could be shown at this period, indicative of honest and conservative management of the Society's funds. He further advised the members and Branches of the desirability of continuing their payment of dues and donations as liberally as could be afforded, to the end that during the ensuing year there might be a sufficient accumulation to justify a re-establishment of our Magazine.

Committee on Resolutions then reported that no new matter had been presented for their consideration, and upon the recommendation of the Committee the Convention unanimously reaffirmed the "Proclamation" of 1895 as expressing the present attitude of our Society.

Invitations to hold the next regular Convention at Columbus, Indianapolis, Washington, Kansas City, were received from Delegates from said cities, all of which were ordered to be referred to the Executive Committee.

On motion the Convention adjourned, to meet at 2.30 P. M.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

The Convention resumed its sitting at 2.45 P. M., the first order of business being the reading of the President's Annual Address, as follows:

*Comrades and Delegates to the Convention:—*

We are here assembled as the Thirteenth Annual Convention of Theosophists in America, having dropped the title of the American Section of the T. S. since the Boston Convention of 1896, while retaining the title of T. S. in A. and the Constitution of 1896. That two other organizations assume the same title is not a matter of surprise, and need not be a matter of controversy. All these organizations profess the same principles, avow the same objects, and the members of each profess loyalty to the same genius who started the Theosophical Movement in 1875. All of which proves that theosophists, like other people, differ in opinion and even in their application of ethical principles to conduct and to life. ?

The T. S. in A. which we represent, by refusing to relinquish its organization and surrender our rights therein at the Chicago Convention of February, 1898, has continued the legitimate work of the Society under the Constitution as it had previously been conducted by Mr. Judge, as the accredited agent of H. P. Blavatsky, up to the time of her death.

The reorganization here in Cincinnati, in May, 1898, was simply a re-affirmation of the previously existing order and association. We now return to the former time of meeting, *viz.*, the last Sunday in April, and so continue the old order, traditions and work of the Society.

Having been present at every Convention since the corporate organization of the T. S. in A., having witnessed the growth, the dissensions, and even the disruptions that have occurred, it is with peculiar pleasure that I welcome you to Cincinnati for this our Thirteenth Annual Meeting. Here in the Theosophical ranks you will find peace; peace secured through the discussion of principles and the avoidance of personalities; peace consistent with the absolute liberty of the individual. With one of the largest organizations ever attained in America, with each member free to express his opinions and to act upon his own convictions, we have been in perfect harmony and acted in concord on all matters that have arisen in the conduct of the Society. It is in this spirit of Freedom and Brotherhood that we welcome you into our midst, and invite you to co-operate with us as a local society in extending these principles throughout the land. It is these principles that have given us solidarity and perpetuity, and kept out all disintegrating forces or influences. We have persistently held by the declared objects of the Society, and have found enough in the *Secret Doctrine* and our ?

splendid literature to interest the public and to inspire us as individuals during the rest of the present incarnation. In asking you as individuals to share with us, we crave the privilege of co-operating with you as delegates representing a large constituency, in order that the blessings of Peace and Brotherhood may become universal amongst men.

The year since our last convention here has not been especially eventful. The members of the T. S. in A. are, in a certain sense, separatists. We have refused to be diverted from our legitimate work by personal controversies or considerations of any sort, and as students of the Sacred Science, have learned to stand alone, and to endeavor to work out these problems in daily life. In other words, to apply Brotherhood no less than to proclaim it. We have no controversies with, nor animosities toward other organizations, nor do we deny to them the possession of the same qualities. We make work along these lines a special duty, and remember that the "duty of another is full of danger", and attended with difficulty. The past year has not been fruitful of growth in organization, but rather of disorganization. No effort has been made or solicitation used to induce old members to join us, even where they had broken all other affiliations, though they have been cordially welcomed to their rightful place when they returned. If there has been a seeming lack of enthusiasm, it has been more than made good by deep conviction and steadfastness to principles. We are thus building for the future, while resisting the disintegrating influences of today. When the cycle again changes, as change it will, and regeneration again sets in, let us see to it that we have created such conditions, and cherished such a spirit of consideration for others, that we may stand as a nucleus of a genuine Brotherhood of Man.

At the Convention a year ago, 34 Branches were reported in affiliation. We had no accurate list of members. As all records and lists of members were retained by the usurping power in N. Y., we had slowly to regather the lists of members and to build again our statistical data. Some organizations have disbanded for lack of members, or from discouragement at the continued dissensions in their midst. Several old charters have been replaced, in some cases renewed by a minority of members, and 9 new ones have been issued. During the year 69 new members have been admitted in the usual form, while former members have all along been returning. Our strength lies not in numbers, though we have a goodly organization, but in the individual character of our members. We

have had no public lectures outside of local Branches, and no general propaganda work during the year. Nor do I believe the time is ripe for such work. The luke-warm and indifferent may drop out. Unable to stand alone, they would be little use in the maintenance of the Society, and the Society is better without them. Those who are genuinely interested need help, and will not have far to seek in order to find it.

Several attempts are now being made by former members to form new organizations, the reasons assigned being as diverse as individual opinions on such matters usually are. We can only wish them, one and all, success, so far as they seek to promote the cause of Brotherhood amongst men. We who are here assembled find the old organization good enough, and see no reason for radically changing it. We are apt to charge others with the disorganization going on in the general movement. We have expected too much of individuals. There has been from the first, since 1875, a tendency in the minds of many to place some individual on a pedestal and to accord to such, if not divine powers, at least unusual prerogatives. We had to learn the lesson, that human evolution is always an individual problem, a growth from within, in the accomplishment of which we may indeed derive assistance from study and from association with others, but after all, we have to *become* the ideal that we seek. If in seeking this assistance, we forget or neglect our duties to others, if we preach and proclaim Brotherhood to the four quarters of the globe, and remain uncharitable and inconsiderate toward others, we shall not only fail in individual progress, no matter what our opportunities and who our teachers may be, but our unbrotherliness in fact will bring about precisely the disintegration which we are now witnessing. Toleration of the opinions of others which may differ from our own, is, at best, a negative virtue. Have we not failed even here?

The Brotherhood proclaimed by the founders of the Society, is no negative virtue, but a charity so broad as to include every man of woman born, and a sympathy so great that it forgets to condemn, and labors only to help and to save. While the cry of Brotherhood was in the air, it was the unbrotherliness in deed and in fact that separated us from the Chicago Convention. This lesson cannot be too often recalled or too seriously taken to heart. Not in the condemnation of individuals, but in guarding our own speech, and in building our own lives in conformity with what we profess. It may be but a single step from the slogan of brotherhood to the

slang of contempt and cynicism. There are thousands of organizations today that profess and proclaim the Brotherhood of man, and the survival of the fittest will not be determined by the question as to who shouts it the loudest or keeps the word continually in the air. A little self-restraint, a gentle consideration for others, a helpful hand or a kindly word wherever and whenever needed, is the only sermon on brotherhood that counts a feather-weight in the problem of human evolution, or in lifting the heavy Karma of the world.

The great social problems of the day are before us for solution. They are to be solved by work, not wind. They may be solved by ballots, or they will solve themselves by bullets, and the professed Theosophist can not hold himself aloof from economics. Meditation and renunciation may help the individual to the abode of peace within his own soul, but these should serve to clear his brain, warm his heart and strengthen his arm for the conflict against wrong and oppression. The real Theosophist is a Soldier of Truth, and a Warrior of Light. He may war against institutions that are public wrongs, and vested power and privilege that oppress the poor, and in thus doing battle for human rights remember his duty to every man, as a brother by every tie either human or divine. It is not weak-kneed dreamers that the world needs today, but strong men and women, with good common-sense, fearless declaration of principle and uncompromising integrity, who stand first, last and all the time, for the highest principles, and the broadest charity. If Theosophy is powerless to help along these lines, it may as well be swept into the dust-bins of the past.

As students of the Secret Doctrine, we have the grandest philosophy known to man. It enables us to solve the perplexing problems of life, and gives us the light of knowledge in place of conjecture, blind belief, or still more blind doubt and denial. But it does not and cannot remove us from individual responsibility. It intensifies the sense of duty, and when really understood, gives meaning to life and zest to all human endeavor. It places before the soul of man an ideal of human perfection, and the conditions of universal happiness and prosperity. If its teachings are understood and genuinely accepted, it kills out selfishness, and teaches co-operation, and puts the man at his best estate for the service of humanity by which, alone, he rises to full stature as a son and servant of the people, and an almoner of the Divine. Thus only in doing his duty to all can he evolve to perfection as an individual. The law of Growth is the law of Use. In this warfare of truth, names and



numbers count for little. One man may face the world, as did one woman in 1875, and yet prove a majority in the councils of the future. It is not the subtleties of metaphysics or the intricacies of ancient philosophy or religion that have given the T. S. a hearing in these last years of the 19th century. It has gained a hearing in spite of these, and through these ancient cults taught the broad lesson of charity. It has again and again been charged with adopting these, simply because it claimed for them a candid hearing and just consideration. This is like identifying the good Samaritan with the outcast, whom he tries to shield and rescue. It is the price paid for the privilege of serving the poor and despised. Just as the Man of Sorrows was condemned for eating with publicans and sinners.

It seems to me that our duty as Theosophists is plain, and our opportunity never better than today. Upon the individual discharge of this duty depends the success and perpetuity of the T. S. in A., and not upon our adulation or loyalty to Leaders and Official Heads, or even on our belief in Mahatmas. Let the Branches of our Society be schools for the education of men and women, who shall in deed and in truth help the world, and in our annual conventions let us discuss and advocate those principles, measures and methods that shall most certainly and largely contribute to this end.

Members of the T. S. in A. cannot have failed to observe that what I have outlined as the true mission and method of the T. S. is precisely that adopted in the *Forum*, since its revival a year ago. In it, principles not personalities, have been discussed, and the principle of charity and toleration exercised. Not one offensive personal reference can be found in the *Forum*. All of this is equally true of the *English Theosophist*, and the foreign magazines published by our affiliated Societies. The thanks of the Convention are especially due to our comrades in N. Y., who have had the *Forum* in charge, and who, month by month, have so faithfully and acceptably discharged this labor of love. Something still further should be said in regard to the "Oriental Department" of our little journal. Mr. Johnston's work, performed month after month, is not only a labor of love, but a literary work of unusual merit. It could not be replaced, and something more than thanks should express the appreciation of the T. S. in A.

It is by the cheerful co-operation of the loyal workers that have remained, that we are still in the possession of an organization, and that the T. S. in A. has not yielded to the disorganizing forces and the hostile attacks continually directed against it. In all this, I find reason for congratulation, courage and hope.

This address was fully discussed unanimously approved and ordered to be received and placed upon the minutes.

The report of the Committee on Nominations was then called for. Dr. Tenney, Chairman of the Committee, responded, saying the Committee had thought it unwise to offer any changes in the present official and executive board if the previous incumbents were willing to continue their duties for a further period.

The following officers were then put in nomination for reelection for the term of the ensuing year :

For President, J. D. Buck.

For Vice-President and Treasurer, A. H. Spencer.

For Members of the Executive Committee, A. P. Buchman, G. E. Harter, William Main, William Ludlow, M. H. Phelps, and George M. Coffin.

There were no other nominations, and by motion duly put and seconded, the above officials were declared elected.

Dr. Buck, in accepting the Presidency for another year, declared his firm adherence to the principles of Theosophy, and to the interests especially of the T. S. in A., as their exponent, and promised to continue, as in the past, to give to the executive office his best endeavors in thought, and all the time and labor properly to be spared from the duties of his profession and the necessities of his private life.

Major Clark, the Chairman of the Convention, was then presented by the Convention, with a gavel as a memento of the occasion and received the same with thanks appropriately expressed.

After the discharge of the various committees and some further remarks by the Chairman, the meeting adjourned to meet at College Hall, at 8 P. M.

#### EVENING SESSION.

The Convention assembled at College Hall, at 8.30 P. M., Dr. Buck in the Chair, and about 250 persons present; this meeting being, in accordance with the usual custom, especially devoted to the public, the Chairman introduced as the speaker of the evening, Major James Albert Clark, of Washington, who had chosen as his subject, "The Meaning of the Theosophical Movement."

Major Clark spoke for upwards of an hour and a half, presenting his subject in most learned and scholarly form, tracing the Theosophic Movement through its stages in history, comparing its aspects at different periods with the thought and habits of the times.

He brought to bear upon the subject a most elaborate and interesting compendium of scientific analogies, quoting from numerous writers and experimentors of high standing and authority, to show that the religio-scientific theories and doctrines accepted for years past by students of Theosophy were rapidly coming into approval and adoption by the intellectual community.

During the entire period of Major Clark's speech the audience manifested remarkable interest, following him to the very end with unflagging attention, notwithstanding the severe heat of the evening and the rather exceptional depth of the discourse. After Major Clark's speech and a few remarks by Mr. Spencer and Dr. Buck the Convention was adjourned *sine die*.

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King of a thousand worlds am I  
 And my reign with Time began.  
 The night and the day in their cyclic sway  
 Pass by as their deeds I scan;  
 Yet Time shall cease, ere I find release,  
 For I am the Soul of Man.

CHARLES H. ORR.

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#### REVIEWS

*The English Theosophist* for April reaches us in a new and well designed light green cover, a dignity to which the *Forum* hopes to attain in the not far distant future! There are some sensible editorial notes, the usual reprint from an old *Path*, and a thoughtful article by H. H. B., "The Quest of the Ideal." The new volume also starts a "Answers to Questions" department, while there are quite a list of activities. Being a new volume, it is an excellent time to subscribe.

The May number is received just as we go to press. We especially notice some sensible observations by "An Outsider," under the caption "W. Q. Judge on Occultism," and there is an extended notice of the half-yearly meeting of the North Eastern Theosophical Societies' Federation. (S.)

*Lotu sblüuten* (German) for April reproduces a section of Sir Edwin Arnold's beautiful rendition of the "Bhavagad Gita," in verse, which it is printing in installments. There are also many pages devoted to a "Life" of Paracelsus. (S.)

*Theosophischer Wegweiser* (German) for March has for its leading feature, an article by Dr. Hartmann, "The Basis of the Theosophical Society." It also contains a notice of the second annual meeting of the T. S. in Leipzig. (S.)

The *Tidskrift för Teosofi* (Swedish) for March contains the conclusion of the translation of "Some Modern Failings," and starts a question and answer department with two leading questions; one about the Masters and the other about racial Karma. (S.)

*The Purposes of Soul*, by Jasper Niemand, has just been reprinted by the H. P. B. Press at London. It is such an admirable little paper, and is read so much less widely than it deserves, that special mention is made of it here. It may be obtained from the W. Q. J. Pub. Co. (S.)



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THE SOUL SPEAKETH.

Out of the far past I come to you, bridging the distance you have placed between us, in the majesty of my power, in the effulgence of my glory, in the sternness of my displeasure.

I am He whom you have denied and turned against; you have crucified me between two thieves. Yet am I also mighty in my compassion, and therefore, turn I not away from you,—Oh! reflection of myself.

For though you have soiled the divine image in which you were made, preferring to herd with the animal in you rather than to walk the starry spaces of the sky; yet I, who am yourself, return again and yet again, and so forever will return, until at last you see and follow me.

For Eternity is mine and the days thereof, and I can afford to wait the fulfillment of my desires.

God, from whose Spirit I came forth, knows me for what I am, and I stand between you and the Radiance of His Sight, whose least beam would wither you to dust.

CAVÉ.

## INDIAN DAYS.

## A DIALOGUE OF LIFE AND DEATH.

By H. P. Blavatsky.\*

(Continued from May FORUM.)

"Master," Narayan had said to Thakur, in the midst of a very hot dispute with the poor Babu, "what is it he is saying, and can one listen to him without being disgusted? He says that nothing remains of the man after he is dead, but that the body of the man simply resolves itself into its component elements, and that what we call the soul, and he calls the temporary consciousness, separates itself, disappearing like the steam of hot water as it cools."

"Do you find this so very astonishing?" said the Master. "The Babu is a Chârvâka<sup>1</sup> and he tells you only that which every other Chârvâka would have told you."

"But the Chârvâkas are mistaken. There are many people who believe that the real man is not his physical covering, but dwells in the mind, in the seat of consciousness. Do you mean to say that in any case the consciousness may leave the soul after death?"

"In *his* case it may," answered Thakur quietly; "because he sincerely and firmly believes in what he says."

Narayan cast an astonished and even frightened look at Thakur, and the Babu—who always felt some restraint in the presence of the latter—looked at us with a victorious smile.

"But how is this?" went on Narayan. "The Vedânta teaches us that the spirit is immortal and that the human soul does not die in Parabrahman. Are there any exceptions?"

"In the fundamental laws of the spiritual world there can be no exceptions; but there are laws for the blind and laws for those who see."

"I understand that, but in this case, as I have told him already, his full and final disappearance of consciousness is nothing but the aberration of a blind man, who, not seeing the sun, denies its existence, but all the same he will see the sun with his spiritual sight after he is dead."

"He will not see anything," said the Master. "Denying the existence of the sun now, he could not see it on the other side of the grave."

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\* Translated from the Russian by Vera Jelikhovska Johnston.

1. A sect of Bengali Materialists.

Seeing that Narayan looked rather upset and that even we, the Colonel and myself, stared at him in the expectation of a more definite answer, Thakur went on reluctantly :

“You speak about the spirit of the Spirit, that is to say about the *Âtmâ*, confusing this spirit with the soul of the mortal, with *Manas*. No doubt the spirit is immortal, because being without beginning it is without end ; but it is not the spirit that is concerned in the present conversation. It is the human, self-conscious soul. You confuse it with the former, and the Babu denies the one and the other, soul and spirit, and so you do not understand each other.”

“I understand him,” said Narayan.

“But you do not understand me,” interrupted the Master. “I will try to speak more clearly. What you want to know is this. Whether the full loss of consciousness and feeling of oneself is possible after death, even in the case of a confirmed Materialist. Is that it?”

Narayan answered : “Yes ; because he completely denies everything that is an undoubted truth for us, and in which we firmly believe.”

“All right,” said the Master. “To this I will answer positively as follows, though this does not prevent me from believing as firmly as you do in our teaching, which designates the period between two lives as only temporary ; whether it is one year or a million that this *entra'acte* between the two acts of the illusion of life lasts, the post-humous state may be perfectly similar to the state of a man in a very deep, fainting-fit, without any breaking of the fundamental rules. Therefore, the Babu in his personal case is perfectly right.”

“But how is this,” said the Colonel, “since the rule of immortality does not admit of any exceptions, as you said.”

“Of course it does not admit of any exceptions, but only in the case of things that really exist. One who has studied the *Mândukya Upanishad* and *Vedânta-sara* ought not to ask such questions,” said the Master with a reproachful smile.

“But it is precisely the *Mândukya Upanishad*,” timidly observed Narayan, “which teaches us that between the *Buddhi* and the *Manas*, as between the *Îshvara* and *Prâjñâ*, there is no more difference in reality than between a forest and its trees, between a lake and its waters.”

“Perfectly right,” said the Master, “because one or even a hundred trees which have lost their vital sap, or are even uprooted, cannot prevent the forest from remaining a forest.”

"Yes," said Narayan, "but in this comparison, Buddhi is the forest, and Manas Taijasa the trees, and if the former be immortal, then how is it possible for the Manas Taijasa, which is the same as Buddhi, to lose its consciousness before a new incarnation? That is where my difficulty lies."

"You will have no difficulties," said the Master, "if you take the trouble not to confuse the abstract idea of the whole with its casual change of form. Remember that if in talking about Buddhi we may say that it is unconditionally immortal, we cannot say the same either about Manas, or about Taijasa. Neither the former nor the latter have any existence separated from the Divine Soul, because the one is an attribute of the terrestrial personality, and the second is identically the same as the first, only with the additional reflection in it of Buddhi. In its turn, Buddhi would be an impersonal spirit without this element, which it borrows from the human soul, and which conditions it and makes of it something which has the appearance of being separate from the Universal Soul, during all the cycle of the man's incarnations. If you say, therefore, that Buddhi-Manas cannot die, and cannot lose consciousness, either in eternity or during the temporary periods of suspension, you would be perfectly right; but to apply this axiom to the qualities of Buddhi-Manas is the same as if you were arguing that as the soul of the Colonel is immortal, the red on his cheeks is also immortal. And so it is evident you have mixed up the reality, Sat, with its manifestation. You have forgotten that united to the Manas only, the luminousness of Taijasa becomes a question of time, as the immortality and the posthumous consciousness of the terrestrial personality of the man become conditional qualities, depending on the conditions and beliefs created by itself during its lifetime. Karma, the law of perfect balance in the Universe and man, acts unceasingly, and *we reap in the next world the fruit of that which we ourselves have sown in this life.*"

"But, if my Ego may find itself after the destruction of my body in a state of complete unconsciousness, then where is the punishment for the sins committed by me in my lifetime?" asked the Colonel, pensively stroking his beard.

"Our Philosophy teaches us," answered Thakur, "that the punishment reaches the Ego only in its next incarnation, and that immediately after our death we meet only the rewards for the sufferings of the terrestrial life, sufferings that were not deserved by us. So, as you may see, the whole of the punishment *consists in the ab-*



*sence of reward, in the complete loss of the consciousness of happiness and rest.* Karma is the child of the terrestrial Ego, the fruit of the acts of his visible personality, even of the thoughts and intentions of the spiritual I. But at the same time it is a tender mother, who heals the wounds given in the preceding life before striking this Ego and giving him new ones. In the life of a mortal there is no mishap or sorrow which is not a fruit and direct consequence of a sin committed in a preceding incarnation; but not having preserved the slightest recollection of it in his present life, and not feeling himself guilty, and, therefore, suffering unjustly, the man deserves consolation and full rest on the other side of the grave. For our spiritual Ego, Death is always a redeemer and a friend. It is either the peaceful sleep of a baby, or a sleep full of blissful dreams and reveries."

"As far as I remember, the periodical incarnations of the Sûtrâtma<sup>1</sup> are compared in the Upanishads to the terrestrial life which is spent, term by term, in sleeping and waking. Is that so?" I asked, wishing to renew the first question of Narayan.

"Yes, it is so; that is a very good comparison."

"I do not doubt it is good," I said, "but I hardly understand it. After the awakening, the man merely begins a new day, but his soul, as well as his body, are the same as they were yesterday; whereas, in every new incarnation not only his exterior, sex, and even personality, but, as it seems to me, all his moral qualities, are changed completely. And then, again, how can this comparison be called true, when people, after their awakening, remember very well not only what they were doing yesterday, but many days, months, and even years ago, whereas, in their present incarnations, they do not preserve the slightest recollection about any past life, whatever it was. Of course a man, after he is awake, may forget what he has seen in his dreams, but still he knows that he was sleeping and that during his sleep he lived. But about our previous life we cannot say even that we lived. What do you say to this?"

"There are some people who do remember some things," enigmatically answered Thakur, without giving a direct answer to my question.

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<sup>1</sup> In the Vedanta, Buddhi, in its combinations with the moral qualities, consciousness, and the notions of the personalities in which it was incarnated, is called Sutratma, which literally means the "thread soul," because a whole row of human lives is strung on this thread like the pearls of a necklace. Manas must become Taijasa in order to reach and to see itself in eternity, when united to Sutratma. But often, owing to sin and associations with the purely terrestrial region, this very luminousness disappears completely.

"I have some suspicions on this point, but it cannot be said about ordinary mortals. Then how are we, we who have not reached as yet the Samma Sambuddha,<sup>1</sup> to understand this comparison?"

"You can understand it when you better understand the characteristics of the three kinds of what we call sleep."

"This is not an easy task you propose to us," said the Colonel, laughingly. "The greatest of our physiologists have got so entangled in this question that it has become more confused than ever."

"It is because they have undertaken what they had no business to undertake,—the answering of this question being the duty of the psychologist, of whom there are hardly any among your European scientists. A Western psychologist is only another name for a physiologist, with the difference that they work on principles still more material. I have recently read a book by Maudsley which showed me clearly that they try to cure the soul's diseases without believing in the existence of the soul."

*(To be concluded.)*

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#### WHAT IS PRACTICAL THEOSOPHY?

There are two ways, which lead to true religion, or, to express it in other words; to the realization of absolute truth; namely, knowledge and possession. Neither of these two is perfect without the other; for we cannot really know a thing unless we are in possession of it, and the possession of a thing will not be realized unless we know it. No one can come into possession of divine wisdom, by merely learning a definition of it, and the possession of truth is of little benefit to us, unless we become conscious of it; because wisdom is the realization of absolute truth. If it once becomes manifested within ourselves, we recognize it and require no other proof of its presence, than that recognition; for truth, if once recognized, is self-evident and proves itself; otherwise inference would be higher than truth itself. Every logical conclusion, every mathematical or philosophical deduction rests ultimately upon the recognition of a self-evident truth, which cannot be proved; without the admission of such an universally recognized and self-evident principle, no discussion would be possible.

There is an old maxim, recognized by every occultist, which says: "He who has the *One* has everything; he who has not that

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<sup>1</sup> The knowledge of one's past incarnations. Only Yogis and Adepts of the Occult Sciences possess this knowledge, by the aid of the most ascetic life.

*One*, has nothing ; because within the One everything is contained and everything comes of that One.”

It is asked : What is the One and how can we come into possession of it ?

Spirit is the essence of all things. It is life, light, consciousness. All the faculties of human nature are rays of the spirit. The life, light and consciousness, which we find manifested in nature cannot be the highest ; they cannot create immortal love, supreme intelligence, divine wisdom. The manifestations of powers in eternal nature are not their own causes ; they are evidently caused by the action of underlying spiritual principles, whose presence cannot be scientifically demonstrated, but which may be perceived by the spiritual recognition of the soul of man.

What are the highest powers and faculties, of which we are capable of thinking ?

*All-love, all-knowledge, omnipotence.* We can think of such states ; but we cannot comprehend their nature ; because in our own state as limited beings we cannot grasp that which is universal and infinite. We cannot accommodate God to our intellectual understanding ; we can only perceive and study the manifestations of his love, wisdom and power. Love, intelligence, strength are the highest thinkable qualities of human nature and they are manifested to a certain extent in all beings. They are eternal and immortal principles, which never die, even if the forms in which they become manifest, come and go. Man’s intelligence is a product of a ray of divine all-knowledge ; man’s loves, even if they are perverted, are products of the action of divine all-love ; power within that which is limited, is the same as omnipotence in the eternal. All-knowledge beholds the all of eternity within the past, present and future ; all-love embraces all the worlds and everything therein without any distinction or preferences ; omnipotence carries out what all-knowledge decides and all-love demands. In man’s constitution, love, intelligence and strength are united and may become developed to the highest extent.

Man’s wisdom, being a manifestation of divine wisdom in him, cannot be acquired in any other way, except by establishing the conditions in which such a manifestation may take place in his soul. It cannot be acquired from reading of books. A tree cannot gather the blossoms of another tree and produce fruits thereof. Each tree has to spread its own branches towards the sunshine and let itself be pervaded by the light, that causes nutriment to be absorbed by the

roots and to rise to the top. Only those who live in the light of wisdom will become wise; mere talk about wisdom is idle and fruitless.

All-love is the experiencing of one's own life in all other beings. All-love asks nothing for any separate "self"; it creates and builds up throughout eternity; because to give itself and to nourish all, is the quality of real love. Thus should man love too. He should desire nothing of that love for himself; but whatever he receives of it, he should send out again to others. In this way he will become one with eternal love and attain immortal life in it. He who is able to truly love has gained the true life; his nature, becoming pervaded by divine love becomes one with it. He will no longer need to contemplate and decide what kind of loving actions he should perform, but perform them instinctively; for divine, universal love, being his own nature, speaks in his heart and uses him as an instrument for performing deeds of love and kindness towards all beings.

Man has no power whatever which is really his own. He cannot make himself live, walk, see, hear, feel or think. He can only use or misuse the powers which are lent to him by God and nature for the term of his life. He cannot himself create any power whatever. His powers are like rays and reflections of the sunlight, producing rainbow colours in a cut crystal. They disappear at the disappearance of the sun. But while he lives, these powers may become manifested and developed in him. The ordinary powers with which his external nature is endowed are known to a certain extent; but the divine powers slumbering in the interior of his nature are known only to few. If men and women were to be told what divine and magical powers are latent within them, they would not believe it. Nevertheless it is self-evident that God in them is identical with God in the universe and that his power in both is the same. Fortunately, these divine powers cannot be developed in man unless his nature becomes divine. Were it otherwise, men would misuse these powers and the world become a still greater hell than it already is.

Thus "practical theosophy" consists neither in scientific acquisitions, nor in such works as originate from the illusory conception of self; it is higher than all human speculation can go and begins where the "self" of man ends. It consists in the development of pure intelligence, unselfish love and spiritual power as manifestations of the principles of all-knowledge, all-love and omnipotence in the individuality called "man."

FRANZ HARTMANN.

## LIFE'S SECRET.

Look not for the sunshine in the sky; look not for its smiles upon the sea. It is thine eyes that make the sun-shine happy, and thine eyes are but the mirrors of the soul of thee. *There* is the sun; and there it shines for ever, the source of all true joy.

In the midst of storm, in the midst of calm; with friends beside thee, with friends apart—it shines. Listen to the song of its shining!

“O man, lend me thine heart! O man, hear my soft singing! I am thy friend, and in the midst of all changes I change not. Out from the depths of things into the depths, doth my light carry. Look for it, live in it, love it with tenderest love, and it will make clear to thee life's last secret—death's destroyer.

“The name of that secret is known to the winds of heaven; the waters murmur it, and the trees whisper it together. They know its sound, but I alone know its meaning; for I, the eternal singer, I am the name and the soul of the name and its home, and I am—*thyself.*”

MALBROUK.

## ORIENTAL DEPARTMENT.

*Edited by Charles Johnston.*

## THE TREE OF LIFE.

“Rooted above, with branches downwards, stands the immortal Tree of Life. This, verily, is called the Shining, the Eternal, the Immortal. In it are all worlds set, nor does any go beyond it.”—*Katha Upanishad.*

“Learn now from me, concerning Hunger and Thirst. For when a man hungers, as they say, the Waters, verily, guide what is eaten by him; like as there are guides of cattle, guides of horses, guides of men, in the same way are the Waters guides of what is eaten. This stands forth as an outgrowth; know, therefore, that it is not without a root. And where would its root be, but in the Waters? Therefore, through Food as the outgrowth, seek its root, the Waters; and through the Waters as outgrowth, seek their root, the Radiance; and through the Radiance as outgrowth, seek its root in Being; for all creatures are rooted in Being, Being is their home, in Being are they set firm.

“And likewise when a man thirsts, as they say, the Radiance guides what he drinks; like as there are leaders of cattle, leaders of

horses, leaders of men, so is the Radiance the leader of the Waters. This stands forth as an outgrowth; know, therefore, that it is not without a root. And where would the root be, but in the Radiance; therefore, through the Waters as outgrowth, seek their root, the Radiance; and through the Radiance as outgrowth, seek its root in Being; for all creatures are rooted in Being, Being is their home, in Being are they set firm.

“And how these three powers, on entering into man, become each threefold, has been taught by me before. When man goes forth in death, Voice in him enters into Mind, Mind enters into Life, Life into Radiance, and Radiance into the higher Divinity. This Soul, verily, is the Self of all beings; it is the Real; it is the Self; that thou art, O Shvetaketu.”—*Chhandogya Upanishad*.

Man is the Tree of Life, rooted in the Eternal, and branching downwards through the three worlds. Measuring downwards from the Eternal, which is infinite Life itself, the highest of the three worlds is the causal world, the world of will and power, creative, above space and time, and therefore beginningless, endless. In the causal world is the first outgrowth of the Tree of Man: the causal self, with its celestial vesture, drawing its life directly from the One Life, and vividly touching and answering to all other selves.

The second outgrowth of the Tree of Life is in the second world, the world of the Waters: the psychic realm of emotional and passionate life. Here, the psychic self falls under the dominion of time, though not yet of space: therefore all pure psychic energies are free from the bonds of space, though subject to time. The free psychic self can exercise all its powers across the wide deserts of space, as if space were not; space has no being for the psychic self.

The third outgrowth of the immemorial tree is in the lowest world, the world of sensation, of the natural body, of the physical man. And as sensations are contacts of surface, and surface means space, therefore this lower world is subject to space as well as time.

As the leaves of the tree gather sustenance from the air; drawing in material from the outer world, transforming it, and adding it to the substance of the tree; so the outermost growth of the tree of man, the physical body in the natural world, gathers material through sensations from the world around it, transforms it through emotional life, and adds it at last to man's lasting possessions in the causal world. Sensations are the food in the fable: all that is drawn

from the natural world, the whole body of sensations, is spoken of as food; while all that comes to us from psychic and emotional life is spoken of as drink, as our sustenance drawn from the waters. And as emotion takes up sensation, and weaves it into the psychic body of man, so the waters become the leaders and guides of food. As will guides emotion, the Radiance behind is the guide of the waters. Therefore, the symbolic food of regenerate man is imaged as sacramental bread and wine, transformed and instinct with life.

This is the symbol of the Tree of Life: ancient as man's first paradise, and to be found again when he returns to his home, when the Tree shall bear twelve manner of fruit. While man is true to the symbol, it is well with him. If he fails, he is driven forth, and comes under the dominion of mighty fear. For the true man must perpetually draw his sustenance through the Radiance: derive the substance of his life, his sense of power and endurance, from his root in the Eternal; and only so long as life is flowing to him through his root, can his bodily and psychic outgrowths draw in and assimilate the substance of the outward world.

Man's instant inspiration, in every act, in every bond, must come from his root in the Radiance, or he violates his law of life. When we seek the root of stability and power in the outer world, in a bulwark and barrier of material things, the sap is failing from our branches, and we are already under sentence of death. For the utmost material gains are bounded irrevocably by man's mortality; the longer they have lasted, the nearer is the end. Therefore, the votaries of wealth are haunted by the inexorable spectre, drawing nearer and nearer, and the end is swift darkness and oblivion.

And it is part of the curse on falseness to life's first law, that they who seek stability and power where they are not, never secure what they seek for a single faultless instant. There is always nature's grinding mutation fighting against them, grimly certain to win. Nine parts in ten of man's ambition are not material or sensual at all, but purely psychic, a matter of feeling, not sensation; therefore ambition brings us under the psychic law, insatiate and grasping personality, egotism thirsting and crying to be slaked, yet never satisfied, or possible to satisfy. For egotism prompts endless comparison with others, and no man ever excelled all men in all things. Even if we surpassed all the living, there are still the serene and mighty dead, challenging comparison, whom no man can excel. And as we rise in life, the dead rise with us, and we must measure ourselves against the best of all time. Therefore the hour

this instinct of comparison enters life, that same hour peace leaves it.

Sensual life is under the sway of grinding mutation, perpetual building through dissolution. Psychic life is under egotism, ever comparing itself with others: whence come envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharity. Both are subject to death, and the shadow of death is on them. Over both hangs the black mantle of fear. As men grow away from pleasant and wholesome animal life, and its instinctive direct dealing with nature, they come under the realm of psychical law, under the sway of fear. And when many are fearful together, fear soon breaks into panic: one running makes the others run, all racing for an invisible goal, trampling each other down in the race. This is the Struggle for Life, which surges and rages around us,—no law of nature at all, but a wave sent forth into nature, from the fearful heart of man.

And all the misery of the struggle, where nine fail through weakness, for one who wins through strength, comes from this panic of fear; yet the victors are to be little envied, for they are doomed to struggle again among themselves, with the black garland of mortality waiting as the one certain prize for the victor among victors.

There is a cure for fear, and one cure only: once more to break through from the psychic world of emotion to the causal world of power; to rest in the Radiance, not in sensuality; to be strong in will, not in possessions doomed to waste away. It is only as every act flows from the world of will, rising clear and lucent in the Radiance, that man is man at all, a conscious worker in immortality. The first certain sign that a man's life is flowing from this source, is the passing away of the evil genius of envy, of comparison with its miserable fruits. For he who lives creatively, from his genius, finds all things in him new, impossible of comparison with anything that has been before, or shall be after. Take the simplest instance: for thousands of years, the world's singers have been adding line after line of true music and beauty to the great epic of man; yet the same line has never been written twice; all are individual and perfect. Nor did any true singer in his hour of inspiration ever feel, or dream of, comparison with others: singing in glad forgetfulness, in the fullness of his heart, intent only on his song.

Thus it should be, not with song only, but with every act and instinct of the will; always something new and unprecedented; for the living will of man is better than any of its works. Therefore, the way of escape from fear is this: at all hazards, and with high, indomitable valor, to break through the mind-woven barriers into the



living world of will and power. Thereafter, the initiative of life will flow forth naturally from the highest, from the eternal and boundless sea of Life. Though still fighting, and battling valiantly with pure joy in the fight, the visible man stands aside in the battle; the Warrior is other than he; his unborn, deathless Self.

The Radiance glows in every heart of man. Nothing but pure faith in the Radiance, sterling fidelity, is needed to lead man back to his home. But faith and valor are treasures which grow, like the blue champaka flower, hardly elsewhere than in the gardens of heaven. So that the ancients fabled that only sons of Jove himself, high king of gods and men, could ever hope to win to the immortal world. For the seeming-valiant are often valiant from fear, running bravely to escape the pursuer behind them.

Every man is heir to conscious immortality, not in some future world shimmering along the rim of heaven, but here and now; for here, he is in the midst of the Eternal; even now he is in the heart of the everlasting. And finding our immortality, we find that sense of present and instant power, the want of which has made us miserable, driving us in our misery to make others wretched with us. It is for the man of valor to claim his heritage; the usurper is only his craven self; so by the Self, let him overcome the self, and win his crown.

When the well-springs of light and power are opened, all the long forgotten potencies of the will, the riches of heart and soul and understanding, begin to stir and open in the sunlight. There is no longer the question, what work we shall do; we ask now whether all time will be long enough for us to complete it, with the power we now have at command, and the fine perfection which has become our standard.

The work before us includes the transforming of the whole natural world, till it is instantly subject to our wills, ready to embody the secrets of the highest. We are destined to utmost conquest over all material powers. This splendid instinct of mastery drives men into right action even now, while they believe wrongly; for will is far wiser than thought. But our methods of material conquest are all short-sighted; our ponderous materialisms essay the conquest of space and time, but in a wrong and halting way. For the smallest liberation of psychic life from its material husk and vesture is a final conquest over space; the least infiltration of the Radiance is a final victory over time, for it makes man immortal, freeing him from time.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

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### QUESTION 129.

*What is the difference between a student and a chela? Chela and lay-chela? What degree of spiritual growth is necessary before one can be a chela? What is the "something" more than "mere goodness" that is required? What is the difference between conscious and unconscious chelaship? Is there an external form of initiation in connection with chelaship?*

*J. D. Buck.*—Add to the earnest student ambitious to learn, devotion to the highest good, and he becomes a *Chela*. In this case his *Guru* is his own Higher Self. Devotion illumines the clarified mind so that the spiritual perceptions begin to work. Let such a student obtain a teacher competent and willing to instruct, without definite obligations of self-surrender and obedience, trusting only to the implied reciprocal courtesies and one's voluntary recognition of these and he may be called a *lay-chela*. A *Chela* proper, or "accepted *Chela*," as it is usually called, implies all the foregoing, and a more definite recognition on the part of the student of what is due the one who is thus able and willing to guide his study and spiritual development. This implies devotion and obedience. It is based on desire for progress, confidence in the teacher and readiness to follow instructions which would be otherwise worthless, if not harmful.

The third question is by implication answered in the first and second. The "something more than goodness," is devotion, intelligence and discrimination; or spiritual perception; zest for the higher life and progressive illumination. Conscious Chelaship may be when one recognizes the existence and office of the Higher Self, the *Illuminator*, or the presence and office of the Teacher or *Guru*. The office and activity of either may exist to some degree without conscious recognition as such on the part of the student. Lastly, there is the external recognition of the relation of *Chela* and *Guru*, not by form and ceremony, but on inner planes. If it be genuine, valuable, and enduring, it is the culmination of the previous stages outlined above. A growth and a fruition, concerning which no one who experiences it will feel the least doubt or uncertainty. The only way to secure it is to work up to it and deserve it. "When the *Chela* is ready, the Master appears."

*Charles Johnston.*—Chela is Hindi for child. A true Chela is the child of his Genius; and every man's Genius is already with the Immortals.

But to become a child of his Genius, one must do three things: first, he must convince himself that he has a Genius, and this can only be done in some moment of life when he must set his Genius against the world, taking the side of what he hopes, rather than knows. The instant strengthening of his will is the proof that he has chosen the real.

Then he must convince himself that his Genius is kind. And this can only be done in a moment of life when he is compelled to choose between himself and another; and, choosing the welfare of the other, finds that that way his Genius lies. A wonderful opening of the heart admits him into new worlds.

And, lastly, he must convince himself that his Genius is strong, mighty, unconquerable. He must kill fear, not through himself, but through his Genius. He must set his Genius against circumstances, and watch it easily win. He has now an ally in every man's heart; a traitor to the man's own selfishness, within the camp.

And every man's Genius is a new revelation. It is the lonely and pure, even when he enters most into the hearts of others. This courage to follow his Genius at all hazards is the one thing needful beside mere good-nature, or kindness. Better a thousand mistakes and disasters, than cowardice. But a man's Genius makes no mistakes. The three steps, therefore, are knowledge, kindness, and valor.

A student is, I suppose, someone whose courage is still being screwed up, but has not yet reached the sticking point. And a lay-Chela is a child of the head, not of the heart. An unconscious Chela is a child of the heart only; a conscious Chela, is of both heart and head. As for the rite, let us leave that to the man's Genius and the Immortals.

*A. P. B.*—The literal meaning of the word Chela is child. The pupil of a Sage or Guru, is called a Chela. A student may be, and is any one who studies the Theosophic Philosophy. To be a student of Theosophy does not presume the necessity of having a relation with a Guru or Sage. A lay-chela, I take it, is one who has become pledged to a Guru or Adept and is not confirmed in the work, *i.e.*, is not yet in a position to devote the whole of his life to the work of study and is active in other ways as well as in the work of the master. Before one could become the pupil of a master in music, or

mathematics, or painting, or sculpture, or chemistry, it stands to reason that a preliminary knowledge of the fundamental principles of the science would be a pre-requisite. It would be a sad waste of precious time for Ernst Haeckle, to teach a class in Biology that had not been taught all that could be given in primary schools as a preliminary fitting. It follows then that the work a Guru or Adept would give to a pupil, would necessitate a certain amount of preparatory training. What the degree of such training must be can only be conjectured, and as the question now comes into my mind, I am inclined to think that all study and thought and practice done along Theosophic lines, is the preparatory work a Guru would ask of a disciple before it would be at all possible to make an intelligent beginning. Now, at this point, is where I think lay-chelaship starts.

The "something more than mere goodness" that is required, is a spiritual understanding, a spiritual awakening, the union, consciously, of the distinctly mental and distinctly spiritual elements of one's make-up. Is there such a thing as unconscious chelaship? I think there is. If I were to give my opinion as to how such a condition could exist it would be as follows: Our higher nature, our Father in Heaven, is ever our Teacher, our Master, our Guru, and is, unconsciously to our sense nature, teaching us the lessons of life. In other words it is the guiding hand in the evolutionary push that makes for the perfectability of the human race as a whole. On the other hand conscious chelaship means the conscious taking up of the work, doing consciously, all that is in one's path that will awaken the inner spiritual principle, substituting selflessness for selfishness, simplicity for pride, humility for vanity, etc.

The whole of chelaship relates to the inner man, to the divine nature, and has nothing to do with externals; hence, an external form of initiation would be mockery. All there is of the question relates to the soul, and whatever is performed is done on the soul plane. An external initiation would, in my opinion, be no better than the idol worship of a Hottentot.

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QUESTION 130.

*"What should be the attitude of a Theosophist towards the theories of Edward Bellamy and Henry George?"*

J. H. C.—It should be that of every other intelligent, liberal-minded man—hearty approval and earnest advocacy. The Theories of reform advanced by Bellamy and George are inspired by consideration for the betterment of humanity and consequently are upon

a Theosophic basis. The most their opponents have to say against them is that they are impractical of realization by the human race as it exists to-day. Perhaps that is true. But Theosophists do not believe that improvement of the race is hopeless, or that Ancient Wrong is so buttressed by precedent and respectability that it can never be overthrown. Individual ownership of land, and Trust conspiracies for the enrichment of the few to the injury of the many, are not older than Robbery and Murder, nor have they any better claim to perpetuity as essentials of human existence. Theosophy aims at the education of the race to such just and rational standards of action, in this life, as will be the outcome of universal right thought and right endeavor. Its energies are not devoted to enlistments for an imaginary good society in a mythical cloud-built New Jerusalem, but to making life easier, its burdens lighter and its happiness greater upon the plane we know something positively about, that where we are now. Both Bellamy and George proclaimed the equality of man, affirmed mutual responsibility for all the burdens of existence, showed how the "privileged classes" can be restrained from their selfish trampling upon that law and gave to the "disinherited" reason to look forward to a brighter and better day. Certainly Theosophists of all men, should find themselves in sympathy with such ideas and labor for their universal acceptance. That goal is no doubt very far ahead of us, but—There's lots of this Manvantara left yet.

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### THEOSOPHICAL NEWS AND WORK.

We are approaching the vacation season. A few of the Branches are so situated as to continue work during the hot weather, others find it necessary to suspend operations till the cooler weather begins.

It is a time of great political unrest, and people everywhere are watching and wondering what will come next and what the final issue will be. In the great issues now involved the work of the T. S. is very much in evidence. The basic principle with and for which we have faced the world for nearly a quarter of a century, is now like a mighty giant rising to its feet, and justice, equity and brotherhood are in the air. The Conference to be held at Buffalo the latter part of June till July 4th, is to me the most important since that which resulted in our Declaration of Independence. Such a list of representative names as are appended to the call for that Confer-

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## THE GODLIKE IAMBLICHUS.\*

In the cities of Asia Minor, Nicomedia, Pergamos, Smyrna, whither nineteen-year-old Julian had wandered in search of Grecian wisdom, he had heard of the famous theurgist and sophist, Iamblichus of Chalcidica, the pupil of the Neoplatonist Porphyry,—the godlike Iamblichus, as all men called him.

Julian went to him in Ephesus.

Iamblichus was an old man, small, lean, wrinkled.

He loved to complain of his illnesses, his gout, his rheumatism, his headaches. He abused the doctors, but carefully followed their treatment. He took great delight in talking about poultices, infusions, medicines and plasters. He went about in a soft lined tunic, even in summer, and could never keep warm. He was as fond of the sun as a lizard.

From his early youth, Iamblichus had abstained from eating flesh, and spoke of it with sincere disgust. He could not understand how people could eat anything that had had life. His maid-servant prepared him a special kind of barley porridge, a little warm wine, and honey. Even bread the old man could not masticate with his toothless gums.

Around him were gathered a great crowd of pupils, full of respect and adoration for him, from Rome, Antioch, Carthage, Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Persia. All believed that Iamblichus worked miracles. He treated them like a father, who was weary of having so many little, helpless children. When they began to dispute or quarrel, the teacher waved his hand with a grimace of physical pain.

He spoke in a gentle, pleasant voice, and the higher rose the voices of the disputants, the more gently spoke Iamblichus. He could not endure noise, and hated loud voices and creaking sandals.

Julian, greatly disappointed, looked with perplexity at the capricious, shivering, sick, old man, unable to see what power could attract people to him.

He remembered that it was said that his pupils had seen him once, at night, at the hour of prayer, raised by a miraculous force ten cubits above the ground, and surrounded with an aureole of golden radiance. And there was another story of how the teacher, in the Syrian town of Gadara, had evoked from the two springs of Eros and Anteros, a joyful genius of love, with fair curls, and a dark, sorrowful spirit. Both nestled up to Iamblichus, like children, and vanished again at a wave of his hand.

Julian listened to the words of the teacher, but could find no power in them. The metaphysics of the school of Porphyry seemed him dry, dead, and terribly complicated. Iamblichus seemed to be playing at overcoming dialectic difficulties on contested points. In his teaching of God, of the world, of Ideas, of the Triad of Plotinus, there was deep book-knowledge,—and not a spark of life. Julian had expected something different.

Nevertheless, he waited, and did not go away.

Iamblichus had strange, green eyes, which showed even more distinctly against his dusky, wrinkled skin. Sometimes the evening sky has this greenish color, when seen between dark clouds, before a storm. It seemed to Julian that in those eyes, which were not human, and still less divine, there gleamed that occult, higher, serpentlike wisdom, of which Iamblichus uttered not a word to his disciples. But suddenly, in a tired, low voice, the godlike teacher asked why his barley porridge or poultices were not ready, or complained of his gout, and Julian's reverence vanished.

Once he was walking with Julian outside the city, on the seashore. It was a soft, sad evening. Far off, over the harbor of Panormos, gleamed the white terraces of the famous temple of Diana of the Ephesians, crowned with statues. On the sandy shore of Cayster,—it was here, according to tradition, that Latona gave birth to Apollo and Diara,—the thin, dark reeds were motionless. The smoke of innumerable altars from the sacred grove of Ortygia rose in straight columns to the sky. To the south, the mountains of Sarnos shone white. The beating of the breakers was soft as the breath of a sleeping child. Transparent waves broke

over the smooth, black sand. There was a smell of the salt water warmed by the sun, and of seaweed. The setting sun was hidden behind the clouds, gilding their piled-up masses.

Iamblichus sat down on a stone, and Julian reclined at his feet. The teacher stroked Julian's stiff, black hair:

"You are sad?"

"Yes!"

"I know. I know. You are seeking, but not finding. You have not the strength to say: 'He is;' and you have not the courage to say 'He is not.'"

"How did you guess, teacher?"

"Poor boy! I have been suffering from the same malady for fifty years. And I shall suffer, to the day of my death. Do you think I know Him more than you do? These are perpetual birth-pains. In comparison with them, all other pains are as nothing. People think that they suffer from hunger or thirst or pain or poverty. In reality they suffer only from the thought that perhaps He is not. This is the only suffering in the world. Who dares to say 'He is not'? and who knows what superhuman power is needed to say 'He is'?"

"And you, even you have never drawn near to Him?"

"Thrice in my life I experienced the ecstasy, the full absorption into Him. Plotinus experienced it four times. Porphyry, five. There were three moments in my life for the sake of which it was worth while to live."

"I asked your pupils about this. They knew nothing."

"Do they dare to know? The husks of wisdom are enough for them. For almost all men, the kernel is deadly."

"Let me die, teacher! But give it to me!"

"You dare?"

"I dare! Tell me! tell me!"

"What can I tell you? I know not how. And is it right to speak of it? Listen to the stillness of the evening. It will tell you the secret better than any words."

And he stroked Julian's head as before, as though he had been a child. The pupil thought: "This is it! this is what I was waiting for!" He clasped Iamblichus' knees, looked up entreatingly into his eyes, and said:

"Teacher, have pity! Reveal all. Do not desert me."

Iamblichus spoke low, as if to himself, as if he neither heard nor saw his pupil. His strangely unmoving, green eyes were fixed

on the clouds, inwardly gilded by the sun.

“Yes, yes, we have all forgotten the Father’s voice. Like children separated from the Father from our cradles, we hear it, and do not recognize it. There must be perfect silence in the soul, a ceasing of all earthly and heavenly voices. Then may we hear His voice. While the reason shines, and like a noonday sun illumines the soul, we remain in ourseves, and behold not God. But when the reason draws near to its setting, an ecstasy comes over the soul, like the dew of evening. The wicked cannot feel that ecstasy. Only the wise man becomes a lyre, which trembles and resounds under the hand of God. Whence comes the light that illumines the soul? I know not. It comes stealthily, when you do not expect it. It cannot be sought out. God is not far from us. We must prepare ourselves. We must be full of quietness, and wait, as the eyes wait, for the rising of the sun that uplifts his light, in the words of the poet, from the dark ocean. God neither comes nor goes. He only manifests himself. And then He is the opposite of the world, the opposite of all that is. He is nothing. He is All.”

Iamblichus rose from the stone, and slowly spread his lean, weak hands.

“Be still, be still,—I say unto you,—be still! Hearken unto Him. He is here. Let the earth and the sea be silent, and the air, and even the heavens! Hearken! It is He who fills the universe, piercing the atoms with His breath, and illumining matter,—Chaos, ‘that makes the gods to fear.’—as the evening sun gilds that dark cloud.”

Julian listened, and it seemed to him that the teacher’s voice, weak and low, filled the world, reaching even to the very heavens, to the utmost limits of the deep. But Julian’s sadness was so great that it escaped from his breast in an involuntary sigh:

“My father, forgive me, but if it be so, to what end is life? why this eternal alternation of life and death? why are there sufferings? why is there evil? why is there a body? why are there doubts? why is there a longing after the impossible?”

Iamblichus shuddered slightly, laid his hand on Julian’s hair once more, and answered:

“That is where the mystery lies, my son. There is neither evil, nor the body, nor the world, if He is. Either He, or the world. It seems to us that there is evil, that there is the body, that there is the world. This is but an illusion,—a cheat of life. Remember—all have one soul, all men, and even inarticulate things. There was a

time when we all rested together in the bosom of the Father, in the everlasting night. But once we looked from above, into the darkness, the material world, and each saw in it his own image, as in a mirror. And the soul said to itself: 'I can and will be free! I am as He is. Can I not dare to separate myself from him, and become the All?' The soul, like Narcissus in the stream, was taken captive by the beauty of its own image, mirrored in the body. And then it fell; it wished to fall to the end, to separate itself from God forever—and could not. The feet of a mortal touch the earth; his brow is higher than the summit of heaven. And so by the everlasting ladder of birth and death, souls, all beings, rise to Him, and descend from Him. They try to depart from the Father, and cannot. Every soul wishes to be a god, but in vain: it longs for the bosom of the Father, and finds no rest on earth, thirsting to return to the One. We must return to Him, then all will be God, and God will be all. Are you the only one who longs for Him? See what a heavenly sadness there is in the stillness of nature. Listen! Can you not feel that all things are longing for Him?"

The sun set. The golden, incandescent clouds grew cold. The sea became pale and ethereal as the sky. The sky, as blue and clear as the sea. Along the road a wagon rumbled. In it sat a youth and a woman,—two lovers, perhaps. The woman's voice sang a sad, familiar love-song. Afterwards all once more became silent, and still sadder. The swift, southern night descended from the heavens. Julian murmured:

"How often I have wondered why nature is so sad. The more beautiful, the sadder it is."

Iamblichus replied with a smile:

"Yes, yes! nature would fain say what she is grieving for, but cannot. She is dumb. She sleeps, and tries to remember God in her slumber, through the veil of her dream, but cannot, because of the burden of matter. She conceives God dimly and dreamily. All worlds, all stars, and the sea, and the earth, and living things, and trees, and people,—all are nature's dreams of God. What she conceives, is born and dies. She creates by conceiving only, as happens in dreams; creates easily, knowing neither effort nor obstacle. That is why the waves of her creation are so beautiful, so purposeless, so divine. Nature plays at seeing visions,—it is like the sport of the clouds. Without beginning, it is without end. Beyond conceiving, there is nothing in the universe. The deeper it is, the quieter. Will, struggle, action, are only weak, incomplete, or

clouded dreams of God. Nature, in her mighty inactivity, creates forms, like Geometry. What she sees, exists. She pours forth form after form, from her maternal bosom. But her dim and silent conception is only the image of another, and a brighter one. Nature seeks the word, and finds it not. Nature is the sleeping mother Cybele, with eyes perpetually closed. Man alone has discovered the word which nature sought, and found not. The soul of man is nature, opening her sleeping lids, awakening, and ready to behold God—no longer in a dream, but openly—face to face.”

The first stars shone out on the darkening and deepening sky. Now and again they faded, only to flash up again once more. They seemed to rotate, like great diamonds strung to the firmament. New stars kept lighting up, and ever new ones. Iamblichus pointed to them:

“To what shall I liken the world—all these suns and stars? I shall liken them to a net, cast by the fishermen into the sea. The net moves, but cannot stop the water, and the universe tries to lay hold on God, but cannot. The net moves, but God is still, as the limitless ocean, in which the net is cast. If the universe did not move, God would have created nothing, would not have moved from his repose; for why and what should He strive after? There, in the kingdom of the eternal Mothers, in the bosom of the Universal Spirit, lie the seeds, the Idea-forms, of all that has been, and shall be,—the Logos lies hidden, the germ of the cricket, of a blade of grass, and side by side with them, the germ of the Olympian God.”

Then Julian cried aloud, and his voice sounded on the evening stillness like a cry of mortal pain:

“But who is He? Who is He? Why does He not answer when we cry to Him? What is His name? I would know Him, see and hear Him. Why does He evade my thoughts? Where is He?”

“Poor child,—what means thought before Him? He has no name. He is of such nature that we can only say what He cannot be, and never what He is. But you cannot suffer without praising Him; you cannot love without praising Him; you cannot curse without praising Him. Creating all, He himself is nought of what He has created. When you say ‘He is not,’ you offer Him not less praise than when you say ‘He is.’ Nought can be affirmed of Him; neither existence, nor being, nor life; because He is above all existence, higher than all being, beyond all life. That is why I said He is the negation of the world, the negation of your thought. Turn away from the existent, from all that is; and there, in the abyss of

the abyss, the depths of unspeakable darkness, like to the light, thou shalt find Him. Give up for Him friends and kin and land, heaven and earth, and thyself and thy reason. Then thou shalt no longer see the light, for thou shalt be the light. Thou wilt no longer say: 'He and I;' thou wilt feel that He and thou are one; and thy soul will mock at thine own body, as at a mirage. Then—the silence, and no more words at all. And if the world, at that very moment, should fall into ruins, thou wilt rejoice, for what is the world to thee who are one with Him? Thy soul will desire no more, for He is above life; it will not think, because He is higher than thought. Thought is a searching for the light, but He seeks not the light, because He is the Light. He penetrates thy soul utterly, and re-creates it into Himself. And then above passion and alone, it rests above reason; higher than the righteous, higher than the realm of Ideas, higher than beauty, in the abyss, in the bosom of the Father of Lights. The soul becomes God, or to speak more truly, it understands at last that throughout the eternities, it was, and is, and shall be God. . . . Such, my son, is the life of the Olympians, such is the life of godlike men and sages. A renunciation of all that is in the world, a contempt for the passions of earth, the flight of the soul to Him whom it beholds face to face."

He was silent, and Julian fell at his feet, not daring to touch him, and only kissed the earth which the feet of the holy man had touched. Then the pupil raised his face, and gazed into those strange green eyes, in which shone the unveiled secret of the Serpent's wisdom. They seemed quiet, and deeper than the sky; within them seemed to flow a magical power. Julian whispered:

"Teacher, you can do all things. I believe! Command the mountains, and the mountains will move! Be like Him! Work a miracle! Accomplish the impossible; pity me; I believe!"

"My poor child, what do you ask of me? Is not the miracle which may be accomplished in your soul greater than any miracle that I can work. My child, is not that miracle more terrible and divine, that power in whose name you dare to say: 'He is,' and if He is not, all the same 'He shall be.' And you say: 'So shall He be; I will it so!'"

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\*From D. S. Mereshkovski's novel, "Julian the Apostate," translated by Charles Johnston, Altamus, Philadelphia.

## THE RELATION BETWEEN THE MASTERS AND CHELAS.

*By H. P. Blavatsky.*

REPRINTED.

\* \* \* \* You have no right as a body (Theosophical Society) to thrust occultism upon ignorant masses who, knowing nothing of its laws and philosophy, would be but more deeply thrown into superstition. Let your line be a broad one of universal brotherhood. Work for the good and regeneration of the world before that of your country and for that of your country before you work for self, and if you work unselfishly and help the founders of the Theosophical Society to place the Society on a firm footing and increase its sphere of progress and usefulness, then when the hour comes we shall call you to our secret places for initiation into the mysteries. But you must deserve this by work and deeds, not words. You will be judged not merely by your desires, but by the amount of practical good you may do to the world and to your country, and the assistance you may render to the founders.

\* \* \* \* Once that a Theosophist would become a candidate for either chelaship or favours, he must be aware of the mutual pledge, tacitly, if not formally offered and accepted between the two parties, and that such a pledge is sacred. It is a bond of seven years of probation. If during that time, notwithstanding the many human shortcomings and mistakes of the candidate (save two which it is needless to specify in print) he remains throughout every temptation true to the chosen Master, (or Masters, in the case of lay candidates), and as faithful to the Society founded at their wish and under their orders, then the Theosophist will be initiated into \* \* \* \* \* and thence forward allowed to communicate with his guru unreservedly; his failings may be overlooked; they belong to his future karma, but are left for the present to the discretion and judgment of the Master. He alone has the power of judging whether even during those long seven years the chela will be favoured regardless of his mistakes and sins, with occasional communications with, and from the guru.

The latter, thoroughly posted as to the causes and motives that led the candidate into sins of omission and commission, is the only one to judge of the advisability or inadvisability of bestowing encouragement, as he alone is entitled to it, seeing that he is himself under the inexorable law of karma, which no one from the Zulu savage up to the highest archangel can avoid—and that he has to



assume the great responsibility of the causes created by himself.

Thus the chief and the only indispensable condition required in the candidate or chela on probation, is simply unswerving fidelity to the chosen Master and his purposes. This is a condition *sine quâ non*; not as I have said, on account of any jealous feeling, but simply because the magnetic rapport between the two once broken, it becomes at each time doubly difficult to re-establish it again, and that it is neither just nor fair that the Masters should strain their powers for those whose future course and final desertion they very often can plainly foresee. Yet how many of those who, expecting as I would call it "favours by anticipation," and being disappointed, instead of humbly repeating *mea culpa*, tax the Masters with selfishness and injustice. They will deliberately break the thread of connection ten times in one year, and yet expect each time to be taken back on the old lines! I know of one Theosophist—let him be nameless, though it is hoped he will recognize himself—a quiet intelligent young gentleman, a mystic by nature, who, in his ill-advised enthusiasm and impatience, changed Masters and his ideas about half a dozen times in less than three years. First he offered himself, was accepted on probation, and took the vow of chelaship; about a year later, he suddenly had the idea of getting married, though he had several proofs of the corporeal presence of his Master, and had several favours bestowed upon him. Projects of marriage failing, he sought "Masters" under other climes and became an enthusiastic Rosicrucian; then he returned to Theosophy as a Christian mystic; then again sought to enliven his austerities with a wife; then gave up the idea and turned spiritualist. And now having applied once more "to be taken back as a chela" (I have his letter) and his Master remaining silent—he renounced him altogether to seek in the words of the above manifesto—his old "Essenian Master and to test the spirits in His name." \* \* \* \*

Yet to those Theosophists, who are displeased with the Society in general—no one has ever made you any rash promises; least of all, have either the society or its founders ever offered their "Masters" as a chromo-premium to the best behaved. For years every new member has been told that he was promised nothing, but had everything to expect only from his own personal merit. The Theosophist is left free and untrammelled in his actions. Whenever displeased—*alia tentanda via est*—no harm in trying elsewhere; unless, indeed, one has offered himself and is decided to win the Masters' favour. To such especially I now address myself and ask,—Have you ful-

filled your obligation and pledges? Have you who would fain lay all the blame on the Society and the Masters—the latter the embodiment of charity, tolerance, justice and universal love—have you led the life; and fulfilled the conditions required from one who becomes a candidate? Let him who feels in his heart and conscience that he has never once failed seriously, never doubted his Master's wisdom, never sought other Master, or Masters in his impatience to become an occultist with powers; and that he has never betrayed his Theosophical duty in thought or deed—let him I say, rise and protest. He can do so fearlessly; there is no penalty attached to it, and he will not even receive a reproach, let alone be excluded from the Society—the broadest and most liberal in its views, the most catholic of all the societies known or unknown. I am afraid my invitation will remain unanswered. During the eleven years of the existence of the Theosophical Society, I have known, out of the seventy-two chelas regularly accepted on probation and the hundreds of lay candidates—only three who have not hitherto failed, and one only who had a full success. No one forces any one into chelaship; no promises are uttered, none except the mutual pledge between Master and would-be chela. Verily, verily many are called but few are chosen—or rather few have the patience of going to the bitter end, if bitter we can call simple perseverance and singleness of purpose. And what about the Society in general, outside of India? Who among the many thousands of members does lead the life? Shall any one say because he is a strict vegetarian—elephants and cows are that—or happens to lead a celibate life, after a stormy youth in the opposite direction; or because he studies the Bhagavat Gita or the “Yoga philosophy” upside down, that he is a Theosophist according to the Masters' hearts? As it is not the cowl that makes the monk, so no long hair with a poetical vacancy on the brow are sufficient to make of one a faithful follower of divine wisdom. Look around you, and behold our Universal Brotherhood so called! The Society founded to remedy the glaring evils of Christianity, to shun bigotry and intolerance, cant and superstition, and to cultivate real universal love extending even to the dumb brute, what has it become in Europe and America in these eleven years of trial? In one thing only we have deserved to be considered higher than our Christian brothers, who according to Lawrence Oliphant's graphic expression “kill one another for brotherhood's sake and fight as devils for the love of God”—and this is that we have made away with every dogma and are now as justly and wisely trying to make away with the last vestige of even nominal authority. But in every

other respect we are as bad as they are: backbiting, slander, uncharitableness, criticism, incessant war-cry and din of mutual rebukes that Christian Hell itself might be proud of. And all this, I suppose, is the Masters' fault. They will not help those who help others on the way of salvation and liberation from selfishness with kicks and scandals. Truly, we are an example to the world, and fit companions for the holy ascetics of the Snowy Range!

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### OUTFLOW AND INFLOW.

The members of the T. S. have for their future study and enlightenment, as has already been said by one of their members, one of the grandest philosophies ever given to man. To many of them, perhaps to the majority, this philosophy seems also the highest and most complete expression of Truth yet given. Once convinced of this, the theosophist finds himself confronted by two necessities: the necessity of at least a partial intellectual grasp of its system, and the necessity of applying and practically demonstrating its truth to a greater or less extent in his individual life and character.

From this theory of life he must deduce a working basis by means of which his final perfection shall be attained. Those who have done, and those who may yet do this are alone entitled to the term "Theosophist."

All effort heretofore given in study; in attempts to grasp the fundamental principles and truths of a philosophy so all-embracing as ours; in aspiration and endeavor, both inward and outward, to apply and relate some portions of this great knowledge to ourselves as individuals, to the T. S. as a body, and to humanity in general, will be unfruitful of the desired results should we, individually and collectively, fail to deduce from it all a solid basis upon which to build the future, with clear perception of the true methods by which its proportions, beauty and strength are to be attained.

The maximum of achievement with the minimum of dissipation and diffusion of force or power should be striven for in our present work, and in all activities arising in the future.

Possibly, the mental query may here be made by some: "What is our present work? I see but little activity going on in the T. S." We all acknowledge its subsidence in much of the outer work; and I think it can be added that we should greatly congratulate ourselves thereon, as it gives us time for deeper reflexion, and a better chance to recognize our actual position. From this there might suddenly come to some—as an inspiration—the fact that things with-

in the T. S. are going ahead with such strides—notwithstanding the apparent sluggishness—that unless they quicken their own footsteps very considerably, they will ere long be so far in the rear that they will be forced to give up the march altogether in this incarnation. That might be a little humiliating to some of those who fancy so little is being done!

If there are still some who are a little discouraged, who do not see the way quite clearly, who have not even yet fully recovered from a somewhat dazed condition, the result of past shocks, they should pick up hope, find courage to look more deeply within themselves, perhaps being rewarded thereby with clearer recognition of their own strength.

That they have been severely tried, and are yet standing within the ranks, gives fair promise for their further progression, with a growing assurance that “all is well”. Those who know that not only are they now able to “stand alone” but that they are learning to walk, and with no uncertain step, are waiting with patience and in sympathy for those who hesitate at every fresh step. Knowing how great has been the gain to themselves with every forward venture, they would bid the faint-hearted take courage, looking forward to the future of the T. S. with quiet confidence; a confidence born, not of the other people’s opinions, but from knowledge of the Law of all Life, the Law of Cycles, both great and small.

We have reached that point where theory must become practice; a point where intellectual knowledge must become vivified by intuitional knowledge; a point where each one must find for himself his own inner guide and Master if he would henceforth travel the Path. In other words, he must find and recognize his own centre. Those who yet being under the necessity of following in the footsteps of another, of being led and controlled by that other’s individual light, are not yet ready to “stand alone,” having so far failed to acknowledge the Master within themselves.

They rest upon another’s power; basking in the light and warmth of a borrowed radiance which will in time as surely lull to sleep their own higher psychic powers as that the body quickly slumbers under the sensuous influence of external warmth and repose. And it will be well for all of us if, instead of doing likewise or giving way to discontent and complaint, we bend all our energies upon *keeping awake*, that we may arrive at full knowledge of the course we are steering.

After all effort and achievement there comes a lull, a period of

outward inactivity. But, where not indicative of final withdrawal, this temporary absence or cessation of force is only apparent, an ingathering of energy, a deeper inspiration of the Great Breath, a concentration upon higher, more interior planes, the silence that comes after the closing and completion of a cycle, be it great or small.

With the closing years of this century, the completion of a great cycle has taken place. The vast amount of energy expended, and the powerful forces at work not only on the physical and intellectual, but also on the spiritual planes in its latter end, are facts so patent as to impress themselves upon even the most mediocre intelligence. That this tidal-wave of Force has reached the extreme limit of materiality is demonstrated in the great mechanical progress of the age; in its machinery and inventions, some of which are of so fine and delicate a character as not only to faithfully register the tones of the human voice, reproduce muscular action, but even cast some objective shadow of thoughts and emotions. Mechanical ingenuity cannot go much farther than this. And already we see in the successful experiments with wireless telegraphy, and in the most recent discoveries of Science, a receding of the great tide from the grossly material and mechanical into the higher planes and the finer forces of nature, which are as the outer shores of its occult regions, the intermediary plane between the known and the unknown.

With the end of this year closes also the cycle for the expenditure of that specially directed force and energy which has been finding its way for years in powerful currents through the T. S. This force-wave has—analogously with the above—also touched its extreme point in outward expression, and in the past year or two its receding, indrawing current has been making itself felt in a condition of greatly accelerated outward activity among those elements of its body seeking expression on a plane of action the most immediately productive of results, (all expressions of energy become most active immediately before its indrawing to interior planes; who is not familiar with the illustration: the dying flame of a candle flickers up brightest at the last!) whilst those elements more readily influenced and controlled by this indrawing force have receded and will continue to recede with it until reaching the plane of its original projection.

Cannot we see in this the *raison d'être* for the disruption of the T. S. and the severing of its body into various unaffiliated organizations, finding its cause in the necessity of a law which uses per-

sons and events as but instruments for the accomplishment of its immutable purposes? At any rate from this point of view would come a clearer comprehension as to our own and others' stand; deeper insight into the past, present and future would be gained, with a great advance towards equilibrium, self-poise and calmness, from which would inevitably flow a purer stream of love, a brighter patience, a wider toleration, and an inspiration to deeper resolve and more determined effort to work ever with—never against—the Law.

This contraction then, in the T. S., as an organization, would be but in accord with such law. Having completed its cycle of outward evolution the spiral turns backward upon itself in its cycle of involution. From the period of outflow we have reached the period of inflow. The seeds borne upon the bosom of this mighty tide have had time in which to perfect their growth and give forth their fruits. Those which have not done so will have lost their present chance, and must await the return of the cycle when there will again be an outflow of the Force. The seed-time of the present harvest is over; the conditions for a fresh or continued sowing no longer exist. The spring-time of our work, the golden summer with its warmth and glow, have come and gone; the autumn-time with its ripened grain, its swiftly-changing hues, is now upon us; and we feel the gentle touch of the approaching silence in this ingathering of the forces; the stillness, the calmness, the satisfaction that comes with the season of rest, after the cycle of outward effort and achievement.

When Nature ceases in her efforts to put forth, covering herself in her mantle of silence, we know that hers is not the stillness of death; that in her periods of dreamless sleep she still works on in the causal world of creative forces.

Let us then follow Nature, seek to enter with her the silent realm and create a future that shall far exceed and outshine the past.

We should remember that "It is only for an interval that Nature can be still," and the silence will end, and then from it shall arise a voice, 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 wilt obey."

E. D. PELTON.

## ORIENTAL DEPARTMENT.

*Edited by Charles Johnston.*

## THE TURNING TIDE.

"There are those who draw near to Thee through will, holding Thee ever in their hearts: there are those who draw near in thought to the unchanging Eternal: which of these follow the more excellent way?"

"They who draw near to me, holding me ever in their hearts, and with hearts drawn into me, full of perfect aspiration, these I esteem followers of the highest way.

"Yet they who draw near in thought to the unchanging nameless Eternal, the unthinkable all-present, the unmoving foundation which stands for ever firm;

Checking every impulse toward sensual life; with souls for ever balanced, these also come to me, rejoicing in the well-being of all creatures.

"Yet the path is hard, for those who fasten their thought on the unmanifest; the unmanifest way is difficult for those who dwell in bodies.

"But they who rest all the works of their wills on me, who aspire in heart towards me, who draw near single-minded, seeking the vision of me,

"For them I become a deliverer, raising them up from the ocean of death and embodied life; I quickly lift up those who lodge their wills in me.

"Therefore lead thy heart forward into me; let thy soul enter me; and thenceforth thou shalt surely abide with me forever."

*Songs of the Master.*

Century after century the tide has flowed in from the great sea of Life, to refresh the hearts and lives of men; and after leaving with them a certain measure of power and inspiration, has flowed back again lonely to the great lonely ocean.

But this time it is to be otherwise. The tide is to carry us with it to the immortal sea. Already the flood is full. The quiet time between flow and ebb is upon us, and the moment draws nearer when we must launch our boats upon the waves. Perhaps we should like it to be for ever high water, in a tideless sea; so that we might linger endlessly in the shallow margin; on the deep, yet within comfortable sight of the shore. Yet this may not be. The eternal tides of life

must come and go, with the great heart-beats of the eternal Being ; and the tide which flowed must ebb, carrying us out with it into the unknown, or leaving us stranded on the beach.

If it were a comfortable inland lake, there would be no tide, no ebb, and no hazardous setting forth for the unknown ; but this is the boundless ocean, and we must soon make up our minds whether to go or stay ; to remain sheltered among the sandhills, or trim our sails and set forth with the evening breeze into the gathering twilight, the purple gloom that covers the unknown.

There will be some among us who elect to turn back at the last, thinking that their courage and desire for adventure in the unknown will have grown, and that they will be of better heart, next time the tide comes in. Yet many of us will make the voyage, and begin to learn the secrets of the immortal sea. The twilight of evening, while we still linger under the shadow of the shore, will soon become the first dawning on the deep, and we shall feel the strong life of the everlasting begin to tingle in our veins. Little by little, we shall learn to forget that we were once shore-dwellers, sheltering ourselves among time's sandhills, and grow more and more into the life of our ever-flowing, yet ever restful home.

Every simile may be strained too far ; and this one, perhaps, has been carried far enough. Yet we must speak in symbols, for only in the inviolate life of nature can we find images of the living powers of the soul. Our human life is too corrupt, too sophisticated, too full of wire-drawn subtleties, of artificial thought and wholly false values, to yield us even the material of true symbols. We are hardened, frozen as it were into strange forms and pressures of life ; the sap has flowed from us, and we are left withered and dry, along the shores of death. Therefore, this symbol of the sea of life has its first application here. All that is hard and crystallized in us, all rigid forms and dry husks of by-gone times, all the unchanging molds of mind which cramp our imaginations and limit the outflow of our hearts by fancied boundaries : all this hard, dry life must pass away, to give place to the everflowing waters of the ocean. We must be ready to live henceforward without any fixed barrier or defence ; open on all sides to the flowing tides of life ; responsive to the instant inspiration of the soul, an inspiration which each time surpasses itself, and makes old and outworn even our previous intuition. Therefore the truth of the symbol : we must learn to live on the ever-flowing deep, and no longer on firm and unchanging earth.

There is something very disconcerting in this, perhaps : we would greatly prefer some definite rule, some set task to be done ;



we would heartily thank the sage who prescribed for us some decalogue, saying that through fulfilling the law we might enter into life. Yet this is just what no sage will do, or would dare to do. Each of us must find his own light, discover his own genius, gain his own footing in the immortal world. We have to deal in the last analysis not with a school of sages, but with the Eternal; with immemorial Life, through which alone the sages come into their power. And no initiation, even the last and highest of all, will ever lift the veil from that mystery: we shall never know whence is the eternal, infinite Life. It must suffice us to know that the Life is, and that we are the Life.

Then comes the world-old question, often asked and often answered: how are we best to enter into the Life? Are we to follow faith or works, meditation or action, thought or will? One answer to this question is translated here. Let us apply the answer to our present needs.

The path of thought and meditation is this, and it will really lead us at last to the goal: we live between two worlds, the hissing sea of the senses on one side, and the quiet deep of the Eternal on the other. If we can make every movement of our imagination cease to respond to the seething waves of the sensual sea, and more and more mirror the quiet deep above, we shall in the fulness of time win a perfect oneness with that peace, and enter living into the living world.

Yet this is a hard way, and the heart of mortal man cannot often compass it. There is another path, the way of will. At every moment of the way, we have some best inspiration, some highest thought; and the path of will directs that we should instantly turn this thought into an act, without even inquiring whether we might reach some thought newer and higher, and in whose light our present act would show full of imperfections and shortcomings. Instant act, for every best thought; no delay, no question or hesitation; no splitting of hairs, nor endless refining of motives, but instant action; instant realization through the will.

The will itself is colorless, equally ready for every act, whether it be to mold earthen jars or carve marble statues. All acts are alike to the will. But if we draw its power into us, and gain the habit of instant act, even for simple and everyday inspirations, we shall be able to count on our will when the great day of illumination comes. Always let the will in us be creative, never let it fall from its divinity to imitate. The difference is this: we imitate, when we act from a thought in some mind other than our own, and thereby

we make our will the servant of another's thought; we are creative when we let the will in us answer only to the thought which rises within ourselves, and thereby we become free. Every imitation makes it harder for the will in us to regain its freedom, and carries us further and further from the fountain of our life. Every creative act, where the will in us responds to a flash from within, makes us stronger, and brings us closer to our home. Therefore we shall soonest become obedient to the immortal tide, if we gain the habit of instant act, and if we act only from within. This is the easier way, smoother for mortal feet to tread; more accessible for common humanity than the difficult path of pure thought.

The habit of will, of instant action, will serve us well at the present hour, and in the hours immediately to come. For as we begin the life of the immortal, the fountains of the deep will be unsealed within us, and innumerable inspirations, long since forgotten and faded out of human life, will begin to make their way back into the morning twilight of our hearts. If we linger too long, too minutely pondering and questioning, the swift inspiration will flit away to some other more responsive soul; we should embody each inspiration at once, without an instant's hesitation. At the least, we shall have learned something, while hesitation has few lessons, and those few ignoble. At the most, we shall have given a new embodied life to the word of the Supreme.

This endless visible world has powers without end stored up in it, which men for ages have utterly forgotten; it has endless powers which no mortal ever knew. For the visible world is the outermost garment of the Life, and in no way less full of treasure than its source. Any inspiration of the will, after we have once boldly embarked, may be the key to some forgotten secret, or to some secret never known. If we act, we may discover the secret; if we hesitate, we shall learn nothing.

Then there is the really magical world which surrounds us, and of which our ignorance is as great as the peace of God: the magical world of our other selves. We cannot learn its first secret until we embark; we shall never learn it at all, unless we act. For to those who have set out, there come endless flashes of intuition as to our other selves; gleams of that great secret, that our other selves are touching us immediately all the time, in direct defiance of the frivolous veils of space. And a life, keen, vivid, infinitely full of promise begins for us with the first intuition of human life; when for the first time our other selves begin to touch us from within.

That is a work which will still be new after ages ; for us, it has hardly yet begun. So that we need have no fear that the time will hang heavy on our hands. Every human soul has endless needs and endless powers which are simply never touched in our present life as we have come to live it. That is something of what we mean by the crystallizing and hardening of life, which must all be melted away by the immortal waters. And we may begin at any moment to supply these needs and learn ~~these~~ unknown powers : at any moment after we have embarked with the turning tide. There is all the Oversoul yet to be worked into the tissue of human relations, and now is as good a time as any to begin. Each of us will have his own gleams, his own inspirations, unlike all others, for the great Soul is alive and original at every part ; therefore we ought from the outset to eschew the bad habit of copying, and act each one of us bravely for ourselves. So only do children learn to walk. Yet one rule may be laid down as of universal application : let us always think of people as our other selves.

Last task of all, and one embracing all the others : we are to find and keep wide open the doorway between our private souls and the great heart of Life. If we fail in this, all else is futile. Acts of charity have no more virtue for us than crimes ; crimes have even the greater virtue of sincerity. If we are faithful in this, ever invoking the immemorial light, and drawing the Power into our lives, then all will be altogether well, though we have to work our way up from the very mire and madness of passion. We shall learn many things on the way, that the white angels do not dream of. Therefore, this last counsel of all : the light, and always the light, though the world be wrapped in darkness, though the heavens fall.

## THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AMERICA.

FOUNDED BY H. P. BLAVATSKY AT NEW YORK IN 1875.

Its objects are :

- 1st. The formation of a nucleus of universal brotherhood without distinctions of race, creed, sex, caste or color.
- 2d. The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences.
- 3d. The investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychic powers latent in man.

The Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the finer forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

The organization is wholly unsectarian, with no creed, dogma or personal authority to enforce or impose; neither is it to be held responsible for the opinions of its members, who are expected to accord to the beliefs of others that tolerance which they demand for their own.

The following proclamation was adopted at the Convention of the Society held at Boston, April, 1895:

"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling towards all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a *scientific basis for ethics*.

"And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *Path* they tread in this."

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## ALSO I AM LORD OF THE SILENCE.

Know thou not that in the hour 'ere I claim thee as mine own, silence will fall upon thy lips? Why, therefore, complain of this? Thy heart is opening, and into it flows the heavy tide of the world's pain and sorrow.

This shalt thou sweeten with the wine of life—found in the secret chalice deep within—and send it forth again, sparkling with love and joy, to mingle its living current with the dead sea of the world's life. Yet, of these living waters, no drop shalt thou drink until thine initiation is accomplished.

The world's joy as also its sorrow are henceforth thine.

But the gladness and laughter of the world's Heart will not rejoice nor lighten thine own, and though thy heart contain the full measure of its sorrow and pain, yet must it not faint under the heavy load, but stronger and stronger grow.

Deeds, not words, shall I require of thee.

And in these days of waiting, silent and in darkness I remain.

Yet the time cometh when I thy Soul shall speak, the seal upon thy lips be broken and my words of Wisdom issue forth.

The world may marvel, but forget not 'tis I, not thou, who speaketh.

E. D. P.

## THE ABUSES AND DOWNWARD WAYS OF SCIENCE.

Goethe says in his "Faust": "Reason and science are the greatest gifts possessed by mortal man." The light of truth absolute, shining in his soul by the power of intuition belongs to a higher and immortal state and not to that which is mortal in man. The reflection of that celestial light is called "reason"; it endows man with his reasoning powers and from their application grows his science, and as everything, when it once becomes the possession of a person, may be used by him or her either for a good or evil purpose, so this power of reasoning may be a means to aid him on his way to perfection, or to degrade him below the level of brutes. As long as he clings to the divine light of wisdom, which is the source of all knowledge, because it is the direct recognition of absolute truth from which all relative knowledge is generated, this holy light will be his guiding star to show him the way out of the darkness of ignorance; but if he turns away from that source of all good and uses his reasoning powers without that superior guidance, his reason, joined by self-conceit, will become a will o' the whisp, leading him into the swamps of delusion and by kindling the fires of passion, into the flames of hell.

The foundation stone of all personal knowledge is *curiosity*. Without the desire to know there would be no attempt at observation and reasoning. It is a legitimate faculty. If the mythical Eve had not been curious to taste the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, primordial man would never have left his paradisiacal state and never stepped upon the ladder to individual development and progress. From curiosity springs the *desire for its gratification*. This is also perfectly natural, and while its motive power is noble and spiritual, it will be the source of his efforts to penetrate into the mysteries of nature and to study the wonders of the universe. A legitimate pursuit of scientific knowledge cannot be otherwise than elevating; it fills the soul with higher aspiration and with admiration for that divine power which called the universe into objective existence.

But if the spiritual aspect of nature is forgotten and "matter" placed upon the throne to be worshipped as the supreme being; if the divine law of wisdom is disregarded and blind chance considered to rule, then enters the devil of self-conceit and greed for knowledge that seeks *gratification at any cost*. From this state arises that class of would-be-seekers for truth, who having become lost to God, fancy themselves to be gods; having lost all sense of spirituality, holiness and sanctity or "religious feeling", are no more capable of recog-

nizing anything spiritual or holy in nature or in any creature, and their greed for the gratification of their scientific curiosity and personal ambition leads them to the *deseccration of nature*, and by doing this they are degrading themselves.

Even in physical matters science would make a far greater progress, if men would consent to recognize the spiritual aspect of all the forces of nature and understand that behind each mechanically acting power is an intelligence from which the physical force takes its origin; but when we come to beings in which sensation and self-conscious life are manifest, this ignorance is the cause of infinite harm. Therefore the greatest degradation of science is to be found among certain anatomists, physiologists, biologists and all those who deal with the phenomena of life after they have lost all regard for its sacredness. The medical student directing his whole attention exclusively to the physical body and its functions and being ignorant of the fact that this body is only the vehicle of the spirit, the dwelling place of the soul and temple of the divine inner man, acquires the habit of dealing with it without respect or reverence and loses all sense of modesty and shame. Having been taught that there is no "soul," he regards the corpse as a man in whom the functions of life have ceased and after he has once become accustomed to treat such a "dead person" in his dissecting room in the most brutal manner, which differs in no way from unlawful deseccration of corpses, he soon finds pleasure in treating living beings in a similar manner. Thus from the deseccration of nature to the *pleasure of vivisection* there is only one step, and only one more from the vivisection of animals to the vivisection of human beings; for the love of cruelty having once grown and the sense of pity and charity paralyzed, there is nothing to stop a degraded person from committing any crime for the purpose of gratifying his desire for knowledge and fame, unless it is the fear of the law of the country.

There is no crime, however horrible it may be, for which not some excuse may be invented, and thus it happens that the abomination of vivisection of animals, in spite of its evident uselessness, is not only tolerated but even publicly patronized under the pretext that something might perhaps be discovered thereby which could be beneficial to the corporeal well-being of mankind, and it would be useless to attempt to convince those, who know nothing about the sacredness of life, that even if the claims of the vivisectors were true, man had no right to sacrifice the higher principle of life to the lower principle of matter.

The vivisection of human beings is at present not openly permitted by law, but it begins to be universally practised. Occupants of poorhouses and hospitals, orphan children and prisoners are submitted to "scientific experiments" by injecting syphilitic and cancer poisons into their bodies and exposed to different kinds of tortures and death, for the gratification of scientific curiosity. One "doctor of medicine", whose stupidity we admire, even honestly confesses in one of the medical journals, that in his hospital children of poor people are used for such experiments, "because calves are too expensive."

From the love of vivisection to the mania for torturing and murder for the sake of the pleasure derived therefrom there is only another step. Perhaps "Jack the Ripper" was only the outgrowth of scientific curiosity, and Giles de Rey, Marechal of France, who, within a couple of years tortured to death in the most horrible manner several hundred women and children, was also in the beginning nothing else but a "scientist," wishing to come into the possession of forbidden knowledge at any price.

Such are the natural consequences if the thirst for knowledge exceeds the limits drawn by true religion, and there is no other remedy to prevent them, except that science becomes enlightened by the light of religious knowledge and recognizes that higher aspect of man, which is shown by the teachings of Theosophy.

FRANZ HARTMANN, M. D.

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## ORIENTAL DEPARTMENT.

*Edited by Charles Johnston.*

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### THE GUARDIAN OF THE GATE.

"Seeking the gifts of the gods, Vajashravasa of old offered up all his possessions. He had a son, by name Nachiketas. While the cattle were being led up for the sacrifice, aspiration entered the boy. He pondered thus:

"They have drunk water, they have eaten grass, they have given their milk, they have lost their strength. Joyless worlds verily he gains, who offers only these."

"He spoke to his father, saying: 'To whom wilt thou give me?' A second and a third time he asked him.

"His father answered: 'To Death I give thee!'

"Nachiketas pondered: 'I go before many that shall follow



after. I go in the midst, since many have gone before. What then is this work of Death, which he will work on me to-day?

“Look forward: as it was with those who went before—look backward—so shall it be with those who follow after. As corn, a mortal ripens; as corn he is born again.’

“Nachiketas, coming to the House of Death, stood at the door, thus meditating: ‘When a pure guest enters, the Fire-god enters the house; therefore they give him the greeting of peace. Bring water, therefore, for thy guest, O Death, son of the sun!’

“‘Hopes and expectations, friends and kindly speech, sacrifice and purification, sons and cattle,—it destroys all this for the man of little wisdom, in whose house a pure guest is not welcomed with food.’

“After three days Death returning addresses him: ‘For the three nights thou hast dwelt in this house of mine without welcome of food, thou a pure guest, and worthy of all honor—honor to thee, guest, may it be well with me—therefore against this, choose thou three wishes!’

*Katha Upanishad.*

From the House of Death in the great times of old, to a magic-lantern show in these lesser days, is a long cry; yet there is the same moral, and a sound one, underlying both: a moral we have need of, at this present time. Let us take the modern instance first.

When a good lantern has been found, with a perfect light, a picture full of color and detail, and a white screen to throw it on; when, finally, one who understands these things is there to handle the lantern, and an audience is gathered, eager to see the show, there is yet one chief condition to fulfill, without which all the rest is futile, and can only lead to portentous failure. The darkness must first be complete.

Even when the light is at its brightest, perfectly focussed and centered upon the screen, so that the rays are already painting their picture there, and carrying it thence into the very eyes of the waiting audience, unless all other lights be quite cut off, they may receive those rays for ever on their very nerves of vision, and yet see nothing, nor know that there is anything there to see. And even after they have had clear vision of the picture, if other lights be suddenly turned on, it instantly vanishes; and even though the very same rays are still pouring into their eyes, they will see nothing at all, until darkness once more brings back the revelation.

I have used this image already, to point one moral of the occult world; to suggest the word of an enigma which has caused many

to stumble. The riddle is, our forgetfulness of former births. The answer is, that the memory of them, and of them all, is with us even now, in pictures as vivid as any magic-lantern show, endowed with movement and with living voices, with a sense of by-gone years which yet dwell with us forever. Yet we see nothing, for our eyes are blinded by the day-light, and by our own lamps and candles which shut out that finer light.

Perfectly true for the memory of past births, this image is of far wider application, extending indeed to our whole life in the occult world, to all that follows after our regeneration. It is true for our whole inheritance in the Real, for all the wisdom and immortal will that wait for us, in the day of our initiation. We can only inherit when the lights that blinded us cease to enter our eyes, for we can only then see where lies our inheritance. The truth is as inexorable as it is simple. We cannot feel the immortal world of will, until we have come forth from the dominance of sensation.

The purpose of the Life is to make us present immortals: strong, exultant, creative. But we must first put from us two things: our lust of sensation, and the assumption that something is due from the world to our personal selves. Either one of these will shut us out altogether from the kingdom. The lust of sensation bars the way, because it is a condition of utter weakness, of dependency and fear; the dread that our beloved sensation may cease, puts us at the mercy of every chance of fate, and we are constantly pre-occupied with the fear that we shall be robbed. This is not the mood of the creative gods.

The other barrier, our demand on the world for consideration and tribute, based on what grounds one knows not, is even more absolute. Perpetually waiting for what is to come to us from without, whether wealth or fame or whatever it be, we keep away from us the real truth, that all things must come to us from within; we are to be enriched, not by the tributes of the world, but by our own creative power. The one source may grow weaker, and cease. The other grows stronger for ever. The receiver of tribute is ever dependent on his tributaries, but the creator is king.

The vital truth then, the heart and soul of our new life, is this: we are to live directly from the will in us, bringing it to bear on the outer world of natural powers, on our other selves, and on our own inner world. We are to find our sense of strength in that, and not in our sensations or emotions. We are to have the sense of strength through the immediate presence of the will, and not

through our outward possessions, nor because other people tell us we are strong. For that is why we seek wealth: to see ourselves mirrored large in the world's admiring eyes, that thereby we may come to believe in our own wealth. But the great sea of will lies behind us, ready to serve and strengthen us endlessly; ready to pour living divinity into our works and days, until all becomes changed to the likeness of the immortals. Our whole being is to pass through the furnace of regeneration, so that we shall awake, and arise to a new universe, founded and based upon the immortal will, wherein the material world hangs suspended like a colored cloud.

We are to find ourselves inwardly on our immortal part, and to build our whole lives on that, in fearless faith, in perfect power. From being merely receptive of the waves of material life, we are to become receptive of the sea of immortal will, drawing it into us from above, gathering immediate strength direct from the great Life, and fearing not to claim our divine inheritance in the Power. All the tides of the immortal ocean are with us now, in our attempt and aspiration, but not for long. It is ordained that the immortal waters shall soon flow out again to the everlasting silence and peace.

These good things we have told ourselves, and our better part knows that they are true. But there is another part in us, the old realm and domain of original sin, including more of us than we would have the archangels know, which refuses to believe at all in the radiance and the realm, lamenting that the goods we had are taken away, while the new things promised us are phantoms, shadows in the mist; and so between these two voices we fall into much sadness and sorrow.

This sadness which comes to us, on the heels of departing sensuality, and when we have had the grace to grow ashamed of our vain self-esteem, has long been known as the Guardian of the Gate. It is a mood we must meet and pass through, if we are to stay beside the mystic portal until the lingering lord within returns. It is the darkness our eyes must grow used to, before they can gain the vision of the better light. And as the aspirant of old waited three days and three dark nights at the door of Death, so must we wait, till the noise and turmoil of the senses ceases somewhat from our ears; till a truer estimate of our little personalities opens the way for a right estimation of our coming divinity. And as the aspirant of old received the gift of immortal wisdom, immortal power, and immortal joy; so too shall we receive, if we but endure

the darkness,—that darkness which comes to us in mercy, to prepare our eyes for the blinding sunrise of the Life.

The sadness of waiting is as inevitable, as little to be escaped, as little to be lamented, as the weariness which comes over the tired nerves of the voluptuary, when he repents him, and turns from his wicked ways. And it sometimes befalls that the penitent repents of his repentance, and returns once more to cull the sweets. Many who have painfully reached the door of imperious Death, the Lord of Initiation, have fled again before the third day, when he should return, unable to endure the darkness, frightened by the silence, and so sinking down again in the sensual sea. And much has been written in a very tragical tone of the sadness of waiting, so prone are we mortals to self-pity; yet there is no true tragedy here, unless convalescence be tragic. The true tragedy is, not to have the courage to wait. The waiting is indeed our only hope. For except across this valley of the shadow, we cannot come to the hills of light. Only by virtue of the darkness can we catch the rays of the rising sun.

We are well through the shadow now, and the day of our dawning is at hand. Hidden hands have led us far through the mysterious valley, without our knowing it; we are close to our journey's end. But we shall not therefore escape the shadow-land of sorrow, the dim days of lamentation, the misery of waiting at the door. Therefore we do well to fortify our hearts with courage and endurance, to clear our thoughts and strengthen them by the understanding that these things must be so, and the reason why they must so be, for only those who endure to the end will see salvation; the crown of life is for none who are not faithful to death.

Our souls have been led back from the world of daylight, from the surging sea of sensuality, to the very threshold of the everlasting doors, and we stand waiting without. We are still not perfectly inured to the darkness which alone can fit us for the light, and we would not be veritable children of men if we did not mark our time of waiting with dirges for the days that are dead, and elegies of regret for the sensual world we must leave behind us.

People sometimes say they have given up sensuality, and yet come into no true revelation. Yet this is a mere confusion of words. All our outward life is sensual; all life that depends on receiving from without, instead of creating from within; and there is little to choose between the slave of fine emotions and the slave of coarsest stimulants of sense. In truth, the latter is more likely

to turn back from the error of his ways, as he is less subtly and deeply corrupted. Vanity is a far more deadly evil than sensuality; and vanity, in its essence, is a claim for consideration and tribute to be paid to our personal selves, something due to the fine and worthy persons we esteem ourselves to be. The sense of grievance that goes with this claim would be comical, were it not such a deadly sign of weakness, such a barrier to the birth of the will. All the middle life in us which advances these claims must be broken down, before the will can flow clear through. We must outlive the sense that our daily lives and our personal selves are so portentously real, before we can open the door of the soul, and enter into life eternal.

Therefore before we complain against the gods, and magnify the sorrows of our waiting, we would do well to see whether we are perfect in these two things: whether the desires that dwell in the heart have been let go, and all personal vanity forgotten. And then let us be of good courage, waiting on the coming of the gods.

#### "HE DESCENDED INTO HELL."

The passage translated at the beginning of the Oriental Department, from the *Katha Upanishad*, tells the very same story which was embodied hundreds or thousands of years later, in the Apostles' Creed. The Father sends the Son forth as the sacrificial victim. The Son is delivered up to Death, and descends into the House of the Dead, rising again the third day.

But the story is older still. It is the outline of every rite of Initiation, whether in India, in Chaldea, or in Egypt. It is even older than all these: older than the Mysteries, which are as old as man; for it is the story of the Descent of the Soul.

The Soul is the son of the Eternal, which has descended into Hell, into the House of Death, where we all live, and which we all inhabit even now. We are the spirits in prison, to whom the Messenger was sent. The three days of our dwelling there, are past, present, future; the three mirages into which we break the everlasting Now.

But it is not only written that the Son descended; it is written that he rose again from among the Dead, the dead in sensuality and futility. It is written that the Son ascended again, learning the lesson of the great Initiator, Death, who is the veiled Genius of Life.

And in every land, whether it be Chaldea or Egypt or India, or wherever the Mysteries have dwelt in outward sanctuaries and shrines, the rite closes with the words: "Awake! Arise!" or be forever fallen.

C. J.

## RELIGION AND RELIGIONS.

BY COUNT LEO TOLSTOJ .

(Reprinted.)

## I.

You have asked me what I understand by the word religion; and whether I consider morality, independent of religion as I understand it, possible. I shall try to the best of my ability to answer these supremely important and admirably formulated questions as well as possible.

Among the great majority of the cultured class to-day, it is considered as proved that the basis of every religion is a personification and deification of the mysterious forces of nature, arising out of a superstitious terror of these forces of nature, and abowing down before them.

This opinion is accepted without criticism, on faith, by the cultured classes of our time, and not only meets with no opposition from men of science, but even, for the most part, finds amongst them its strongest supporters. If at rare intervals voices, like Max Muller's and others, are raised in opposition, voices attributing to religion another origin and purpose, these voices are neither heard nor heeded in the general and unanimous recognition of religion as an outgrowth of superstition. Not long ago, in the beginning of the present century, the foremost men of the time, even if they denied Catholicism and Protestantism, as the Encyclopedists did, at the end of the last century, still none of them denied that religion in general was and is an indispensable condition of life for everyone. Not to mention the Deists, like Bernardin de St. Pierre, Diderot and Rousseau, Voltaire built a monument to God, and Robespierre appointed a festival to the highest Being. But in our times, thanks to the light-minded and superficial teaching of Auguste Comte, who, like most Frenchmen, sincerely believed that Christianity is nothing but Catholicism, and hence saw in Catholicism a full realization of Christianity, it has been decided and accepted by the cultured class, always ready and willing to accept the very lowest propositions, it has been decided and recognized that religion is only a well-known and long-exhausted phase of human development. It is recognized that humanity has already lived through two periods—the religious and the metaphysical, and has now entered the third and highest, the scientific, and that all manifestations of religion among men are only a survival of a once necessary spiritual organ of humanity, which has long ago lost its purpose and meaning, like the nail on the horse's fifth toe. It is recognized that the

reality in religion consists in the terror called forth by the mysterious forces of nature, the recognition of imagined beings, and a bowing down before them, as Democritus thought in antiquity, and as the newest philosophers and historians of religion affirm.

But, not to mention that a recognition of supernatural beings, or being, did not and does not always arise from terror of the mysterious forces of nature, as is proven by hundreds of the very foremost and most highly educated men of the past, the Socrates, the Descartes, the Newtons, and like men of our own time, who recognized the highest supernatural Being in no wise from terror of the mysterious forces of nature, the affirmation that religion grew out of men's superstitious terror of the mysterious forces of nature in reality gives no answer to the main question, whence arose the representation of invisible, supernatural beings in men's minds?

If men had feared thunder and lightning, then they would have feared thunder and lightning; but why should they have invented an invisible supernatural being, a Jupiter, who dwells somewhere and sometimes hurls thunderbolts amongst the people?

If men had been awe-struck at the sight of death, then they would have feared death; but why did they "invent" the souls of the dead, with whom they began to enter into imagined relations? People might have hidden, from fear of thunder, they might have fled from death, through horror of death, but they invented an eternal and powerful being whom they feel dependent on, and living souls of the dead, not from fear only, but from some other reasons. And in these reasons, clearly, consists the reality of what is called religion. And, besides this, everyone who, if only in childhood, has experienced religious feeling, knows from his own experience that this feeling was always called up in him, not by terrible outward material appearances, but by an inward recognition of his own insignificance, loneliness, sinfulness, which had nothing in common with dread of mysterious forces of nature. Hence anyone may discover, both by external observations and by personal experience, that religion is not a bowing down before gods called forth by a superstitious dread of the mysterious forces of nature, rightly belonging to men only at a certain period of their development, but something entirely independent of dread, and of the stage of men's culture, something that cannot be done away with by any development of enlightenment, since man's recognition of his limitation in the midst of a limitless universe, and of his sinfulness—his not having fulfilled all that he might have and ought to have done, but has

not done—, always existed and always will exist while man remains man.

In truth every man, as soon as he grows out of the animal condition of infancy and early childhood, during which he lives guided only by the demands made on him by his animal nature, every man wakening to reasoning consciousness cannot but remark that all around him lives, renewing, undying, and incessantly obeying one clear eternal law; and that he alone, recognizing himself as separate from the whole living world, is destined to death, to vanish in limitless space and endless time, and to a torturing consciousness of responsibility for his faults—to a consciousness that, acting ill, he might have acted better. And, understanding this, every reasonable being cannot but fall athinking, and asking himself:—to what end is his momentary, indefinite, and wavering existence in the midst of this eternal, strongly defined, and endless world? On entering real human life, a man cannot pass this question by.

This question stands perpetually before every man, and every man must give it one or another answer. And it is exactly the answer to this question that makes the reality of every religion. The reality of every religion consists solely in the answer to the question,—to what end do I live, and what is my relation to the endless world surrounding me?—For all the metaphysics of religion, all teaching about deities, about the origin of the world, are only signs accompanying religion, and differing according to geographical, ethnographical, and historical conditions. There is no religion, from the loftiest to the coarsest, that had not as its foundation this fixing of the relation of man to the world that surrounds him, or to its first cause. There is no religious rite, however coarse, and no cult, however refined, which has not this same foundation. Every religious teaching is the expression, by the founder of the religion, of the relation in which he recognizes himself, as a man, and, in consequence of this, all other men, as standing towards the universe, or towards its source and first cause.

Expressions of these relations are manifold, according to the ethnographical and historical conditions in which the founder of the religion and the people that accepts it find themselves; and moreover these expressions are interpreted differently and disfigured by the followers of the teacher, generally hundreds and sometimes thousands of years, in advance of the understanding of the masses; hence of expressions of man's relation to the world—of religions—there are seemingly very many; but, in reality, of fundamental relations of man to the universe, or to its source, there are only three:



the primitive personal ; the pagan social ; and the Christian, or divine.

Speaking strictly, of fundamental relations of man to the universe, there are only two: the personal, consisting in a recognition of the purpose of life in the well-being of the personality, taken separately, or in union with other personalities ; and the Christian, that recognizes the purpose of life as a service of the Power that sent man into the world. For the second relation of man to the universe—the social—is in reality only an extension of the first.

The first of these relations, the oldest of all, now met with among people standing on the very lowest step of development, consists in this, that man recognizes himself as a self-sufficing being, living in the world to obtain the greatest possible amount of personal well-being in it, independently of how much the well-being of other beings may suffer thereby.

This first relation to the universe, in which every child finds itself on entering life ; in which humanity lived in the first, the pagan, stage of development, and in which many separate individuals of coarse moral fibre, and savage peoples, still live,—is the source from which all ancient pagan religions spring, as well as the lower forms of later religions in their corrupted form ; as Buddhism, Tao-ism, Mahomedanism, and others. Buddhism, although demanding from its followers a renunciation of the good things of the world, and even of life itself, is founded on this same basis of the self-sufficing personality destined to well-being, and its relation to the world around it, only with the difference that pure paganism recognizes the right of man to enjoyment, while Buddhism recognizes his right to the absence of suffering. Paganism holds that the world must afford enjoyment to the personality ; Buddhism holds that the world must disappear, since it causes the suffering of the personality. Buddhism is thus only negative paganism. From the same relation to the universe, the newest spiritism, which has as its basis the preservation and continued well-being of the personality, also takes its rise. All pagan cults are deifications of beings who follow personal enjoyment exactly as men do ; all offerings and prayers for the gifts of earthly well-being spring from this same relation to the universe.

The second pagan statement of man's relation to the universe, the social, which raises them to the next stage of culture, the relation which is the peculiar property of those who have reached manhood, consists in this, that the meaning of life is recognized, not in the well-being of a single, separate personality, but in the well-being of a certain group of personalities, a family, a tribe, a nation,

even the whole of humanity, as in the attempted religion of the Positivists.

The purpose of life, in this relation of man to the universe is transferred from the personality to the family tribe, or nation, to a certain group of personalities, whose well-being is thus recognized as the aim of existence. From this relation spring all the patriarchal and social religions of the same character, the religions of China and Japan, the religion of the Chosen People—the Hebrews—the imperial religion of the Romans, and the proposed religion of Humanity, of the Positivists. All forms of ancestor worship, in China and Japan, the worship of the Emperor in Rome, are built on this relation of man to the universe.

The third relation of man to the universe, the Christian, that in which every old man involuntarily feels himself, and which, in my opinion, humanity is now entering, consists in this, that the meaning of life is recognized by man, no longer in the satisfaction of his personality or the satisfaction of a certain group of people, but only in service of the will which produced him and the whole world, not for their own purposes, but for the purposes of this Will. From this relation to the universe arose the highest religious teaching we are acquainted with, the beginnings of which already existed among the Pythagoreans, the Therapeuts, the Essenes, the Egyptians, the Persians, the Brahmans, the Buddhists, and the Tavists, in their higher representatives, but which has received its fullest and highest expression only in Christianity, in its true, uncorrupted meaning.

All possible religions whatsoever inevitably fall under one of these three relations of man to the universe. Every man who has risen above mere animalism, inevitably recognized one of these three relations, and in this recognition consists the true religion of every man, quite regardless of the confession to which he professes a nominal adherence.

Every man must infallibly represent the relation of the universe to himself in some way or other, because a reasoning being cannot live in the universe that surrounds him, without having some relation or other to it. And since of such relations to the universe, worked out by humanity, and known to us, there are three only every man inevitably accepts one of the three existing relations, and whether he will or no, belongs to one of the three fundamental religions among which the whole of humanity is divided.

And therefore the widely extended conviction of people of the cultured class in Christendom, that they have raised themselves to such a height of development that they no longer need any religion

at all, and have no religion, in reality arises from the fact that these people, not recognizing the Christian religion, the only religion which is proper to our time, really retain a lower religion, either the social, or the primitive pagan religion, without knowing it themselves. A man without a religion, that is, a man without a relation to the universe, is as impossible as a man without a heart. He may not know that he has a religion, just as he may not know that he has a heart, but, just as he cannot live without a heart, so he cannot live without a religion. Religion is the relation in which a man recognizes himself towards the limitless universe that surrounds him, or towards its source and first cause; and a reasonable being cannot but find himself in some relation to the universe.

But you will say, perhaps, that the ascertaining of man's relation to the universe is the business not of religion, but of philosophy, or of science in general, if philosophy be regarded as a part of science. I do not think so. I think, on the contrary, that the proposition that science in general, including philosophy as a part of science, can ascertain the relation of man to the universe, is completely false, and serves as the chief reason of the confused understanding of religion, science and morality which exists in the cultivated classes of our society.

Science, including philosophy, cannot ascertain man's relation to the limitless universe, or to its source, for one sufficient reason, that, before any philosophy or science could arise at all, there must have existed already one or other relation of man to the universe, since, without this, no activity of thought is possible.

Just as a man cannot find the direction in which he ought to move—and every movement inevitably takes place in some direction—by means of any movement whatsoever; in exactly the same way it is impossible, by means of the intellectual work of philosophy or science, to find the direction in which this work ought to be done: every activity of the intellect inevitably takes place in some already given direction. And the direction for every intellectual activity is always pointed out by religion. All philosophies known to us, from Plato to Schopenhauer, inevitably followed the direction given to them by religion. The philosophy of Plato and his successors was a philosophy of paganism, investigating the means of obtaining the greatest possible well-being for the single personality, as well as for groups of personalities, in kingdoms. The philosophy of the Middle Ages, which springs up from the same pagan understanding of life, investigated the means of salvation for the personality, that is, the obtaining of the greatest possible well-being for

the personality in a future life, and only in its theocratic essays treated of the construction of society.

Recent philosophy, whether Hegel's or Comte's, has as its basis the Social-religious understanding of life. The pessimistic philosophies of Schopenhauer and Von Hartmann, wishing to free themselves from the Hebrew religious world-concept, involuntarily took the religious foundation of Buddhism. Philosophy always was and always will be simply an investigation of what follows from the relation of man to the universe, ascertained by religion, since, until this relation is established, the material for philosophic investigation does not exist.

In exactly the same way, positive science, in the strict sense of the word, always was and will be nothing more than the investigation and study of all subjects and manifestations subject to examination, in accordance with a given relation of man to the universe established by religion.

Science always was and will be, not the study of "everything," as men of science now naively believe, for this is impossible, since the number of subjects presented for investigation is endless, but only the study of what religion designates, in due order, and according to importance, from the whole endless number of subjects, manifestations, and conditions that are open to investigation. Hence there is not one Science, but as many sciences as there are degrees of the development of religion. Every religion selects a certain circle of the subjects offered for study, and hence the science of each separate period and people infallibly wears the character of the religion from the point of view of which it regards these subjects.

Thus pagan science, established during the period of the Renaissance, and flourishing in our society at the present day, always was and continues to be solely the investigation of all those conditions through which man gains the highest possible degree of well-being, and all those manifestations of the world which can provide it for him. The philosophical science of the Brahmans and Buddhists was always the investigation of the conditions in which man is freed from the sufferings that oppress him. Hebrew Science—the Talmud—was always solely the study and elucidation of the conditions which must be observed by a man in order to fulfil his covenant with God, and to preserve the chosen people at the height of its election. The truly Christian science, which is only beginning to be born, is the investigation of the conditions under which man may recognize the demands of the higher Will which sent him, and apply them to life.

(To be continued.)

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

### QUESTION 133. (*Continued.*)

*Is marriage compatible with the highest spiritual attainments?*

*N. W. J. Haydon.*—I think this question should be regarded as one of degree rather than as synthetic, in as much as it would be regarded and answered from a personal standpoint, and such answer would vary with each incarnation.

Now, although H. P. B. may state that initiates never marry, yet there is at least one exception—Paul, the Apostle, and the supposition that his life was one of celibacy, is controverted by the contemporary Hebrew customs. History shows that prior to Paul's conversion he was one of the Sanhedrim, and one essential to membership therein was the having been married, though the being a father was then no longer a necessity. It is therefore probable that Paul was single in the sense of his being a widower.

There are also other notable men who have publicly ascribed their progress in matters of the higher life to the assistance of their wives, for it seems to be the case that women while physically weaker are spiritually stronger than men, and the close companionship that marriage brings should therefore be very beneficial.

Moreover, these benefits are not for men only, they are mutual. The experiences of marriage must enlarge the intelligence of both sexes in a way that celibacy fails to effect, and though "a scientific basis for ethics" will clearly show why the latter state is right and natural for an accepted chela, yet for the rank and file of aspirants to that degree the same basis will also prove that "it is not good that man should be alone." Witness hereto the words written in 1 Cor. VII, 1-9, which read like those of experience. And again, from "The Light of Asia",

"Dear is the love, I know, of Wife and Child;  
Pleasant the friends and pastimes of your years;  
Fruitful of good Life's gentle charities;  
False, though firm-set, its fears.

"Live—ye who must—such lives as live on these;  
Make golden stairways of your weakness; rise  
By daily sojourn with those phantasies  
To lovelier verities.

"So shall ye pass to clearer heights and find  
Easier ascents and lighter loads of sins,  
And larger will to burst the bonds of sense,  
Entering the Path. \* \* \* "

## QUESTION 134.

*Is it ever right to do evil that good may come of it, or to do injustice to a minority for the sake of a majority?*

*W. W.*—The two parts of the question have no necessary connection, but both may be answered boldly in the affirmative, if due regard be had to the interpretation. No one has yet succeeded in drawing a hard and fast distinction between good and evil, and there is sound reason to believe that the terms are relative and not absolute, and like those in an algebraic formula, are capable under suitable conditions, of transposition and conversion.

As time advances standards change: "autre temps, autre mœurs," what is right at one time is wrong at another: what is one man's meat is another man's poison. What seems evil or good to-day is seen to-morrow to have been in fact the contrary. The distinction seems to be rather one of degree than of essence; of circumstance than of quality. An act is evil or good largely by reason of its motive, and not by reason of its effects—as a good act may do harm, and an evil one, good. The safe rule for each man is, that what his reason and conscience in their then state of development, convince him is wrong, it will surely be evil for him to do; and no causistry will protect him from the penalty of sinning against his Inner Light, be it a farthing dip or a refulgent lamp, and be the consequences what they may.

As to minorities, they are generally right and generally wronged. Politically and ethically, the greatest good of the greatest number, is a valid maxim and rule of action, and theosophically, the good of humanity takes precedence of the good of the individual. Since the best and wisest men are necessarily a minority, submission to the will and interests of the majority is an injustice rightfully imposed upon them; as at the other end of the line, the minority of dangerous criminals are properly deprived of their liberty for the good of the community, though their families suffer thereby. The minority of the moral, the intelligent and the educated must often sacrifice themselves and thereby suffer an injustice for the benefit of the greater number of their less enlightened brethren, as a wrong headed and perverse minority must be constrained for its own good, and for conserving the solidarity of humanity as a whole, and keeping all the elements in touch with each other.

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FOUNDED BY H. P. BLAVATSKY AT NEW YORK IN 1875.

Its objects are :

- 1st. The formation of a nucleus of universal brotherhood without distinctions of race, creed, sex, caste or color.
- 2d. The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences.
- 3d. The investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychic powers latent in man.

The Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the finer forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

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The following proclamation was adopted at the Convention of the Society held at Boston, April, 1895:

"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling towards all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm *a scientific basis for ethics*.

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## THE WINE OF LIFE.

When the great power of Eternal Love touches the human heart, it quivers its response, and from that day the man is a different being, however it may seem. Old ideals will pass and new ones take their place. Gradual the change, perhaps, but sure; for however the soul may wander,—however rebellious and defiant, at 'some future day the Light will burst forth and claim its own.

Strive you, therefore, to reach the hearts and souls of all by this divine power, which in some distant time will effect its purpose; distilling from the bitter sorrow in your heart that Elixir of Love, which, building first the vesture of your soul, acts as the Wine of Life to other souls, feeding the hungry and assuaging thirst.

And in the centuries to come mankind will light their fires from the torch you hold to-day.

CAVÉ.

ANOTHER VIEW OF—"AN INTERESTING EXHIBITION  
OF HOPEFULNESS", NOT QUITE SO PESSIMISTIC.

The few are altruistic and hopeful and these are wrong! "The race at large seems to possess a hidden understanding which warns them". And so the race at large settles back in its slothfulness and ignorance and selfishness, justified by this "hidden understanding". "And still it is good to know that a forlorn hope will find its leaders and warriors". Imagine H. P. B. reading these sentences and prophetic utterances twenty-five years ago!

There is indeed a "hidden understanding", and never since history began has it found such universal expression as at the present time, not with the overwise and pessimistic, but with the common people. They may indeed dream of a golden age, but they have put on their armor and with no "hidden understanding", but with a desperate purpose, have inscribed on their banners that this cruel, selfish, mammon-ridden age of Iron shall be broken! We may in our pride and self-complacency ignore or deny it, but this is not only the sign of the times, but heralded in hundreds, nay thousands of books, papers, and pamphlets, read by the masses of the common people. The "hidden understanding" of a race may be quite as readily and correctly discerned from accomplished facts as from a cold and pessimistic philosophy. As to the "Golden Age", the cycles are manifold. Every Yuga contains within itself all of the others, and it is specially these intra-yugic cycles that are under the control of man. Otherwise man is involved in an iron destiny, and all human endeavor is in vain, and only "beats against the pitiless motion of the Universe". These efforts of the few, the martyrs, even H. P. B. and the Masters, are all in vain. "It would be glorious if it did not happen to be in counter motion of the world." Having *ex-cathedra*, settled to our entire satisfaction this "counter motion of the world", we have nothing to do but to settle down in our self-complacency and let the world wag, while the people mourn. No one has ever proposed or even dreamed of uniting "under one roof a political party and an esoteric school of occultism". It has, however, been clearly shown that where the ethics of Theosophy prevail, "political parties" with all their diabolism will be unknown, and that true Occultism can find not better office than to do its utmost to hasten that day. As to the "world's showering itself meteor-like on other planets", according to the S. D., other worlds have met that fate, and when selfishness reigns supreme, and spirit-

uality is dead, man being the sole vehicle of spirituality on the earth, the earth is dead also.

If such degeneracy could sink Atlantis, it might go further and wreck a world. This is not such a funny business after all, though to "Modern Science" such a reason for the sinking of Atlantis is ridiculous and absurd. As to a Master in the Presidential chair, a Lincoln would fill the bill, and do his part to break the shackles of Mammon that now enslave black and white alike, as Lincoln broke the shackles of the slave. As to an "alien executive who knows not the people's ways", if he were half a Master he might "know something of their ways", unless he were a "pretty maid", in which case he would hardly be a Master!

Ridicule is neither argument nor philosophy, and good-natured misapprehension and misrepresentation fall far below the crisis that is now upon us, precipitated largely by that very philosophy which is made to do duty to annul or disregard it.

Some seem to imagine that H. P. B. came out for the sole purpose of founding the T. S. She came rather to preach a crusade against creed and dogma, against vested rights that were public abuses; against mammon worship, and selfishness in every form, and last but not least, against the heartless materialism of modern science, and the complacent conceit and indifference to the woes of the masses, of the so-called cultured and refined. She said more than once that she would *smash* the T. S. when it no longer served such a purpose.

"There is a passion for individual perfection, an effort to escape the sin and guilt of the world, that is at bottom a profound spiritual selfishness, an inverted egotism". There are hundreds of movements in the world to-day, working squarely on brotherhood lines, where in 1875 there was scarcely one. If the professed Theosophist can ignore or belittle these, or refuse to clasp hands with them at any or every opportunity, he but reverses, so far as he can, the very currents set in motion by H. P. B. and the Great White Brotherhood.

How much or how little may be accomplished by any or all of these movements, no man, not even a Master, can tell. It depends on how far the great mass of the people shall seize and utilize the priceless opportunity. The opportunity is cyclic, and may be Messianic if we make it so. Not for millenniums has it gone so far as now. It is not a war against the peaceful tides of evolution, but as we have been told again and again, working *with* the tide ac-

ording to cyclic law. The tumultuous tide, threatening to inundate the social fabric, and dashing its mad waves into resounding billows, may be "taken at its rise", and guided into peaceful channels, a veritable "golden age", even in Kali Yuga, when compared with that mad cyclone when Mammon and the unemployed meet like crested billows, and strew the sea with wreck and universal disaster.

A few hundred genuine Theosophists, embryo "occultists", if you please, scattered amongst the Brotherhood Leagues, with clear light as to justice and Brotherhood, can be of incalculable help in the coming crisis. For this have they been trained and educated; else have they studied in vain. In place of this, we have discouragement, apathy and a mystical self-complacency, ignoring and at last losing the grandest opportunity in a thousand incarnations: Choose ye this day whom ye will serve, Humanity or Self.

J. D. BUCK.

#### THEOSOPHICAL ACTIVITIES.

With the passing of the hot weather, during which few people could be gathered in a close hall to discuss anything, there should be a resumption of activities all along the line. The T. S. A. is not dead, nor is a single issue it has raised a dead issue. "Brotherhood" has been travestied and exploited and its banners trailed in the mud, yet is Brotherhood a live issue no less than a "fact in nature."

The S. D. and the whole work and mission of H. P. B. is being justified daily, and is bound in the coming century to be appreciated. There is not one ideal, or aim, or activity, in vogue in the regular T. S. work at the time of the death of H. P. B., or of W. Q. J., that is not still wise, timely, judicious and beneficent. Those who fold their hands in idleness and sink into apathy, or retire into caves of meditation with self-complacency, had better open their eyes, take a long breath of fresh air and *go to work*. If these things were true five or ten years ago, they are equally true now. The need is the same, but the opportunity tenfold greater. Shall we meet it with apathy or with zest? with idleness or with energy? The real doctrines of the T. S. are better understood and better appreciated to-day than ever before. "Flapdoodle," and even fighting, have failed to kill them. Let us have everywhere a winter's campaign, strong, dignified, manly and straightforward, just as though we were loaded to run clear through the next century.

J. D. BUCK.

President T. S. A.

## RELIGION AND RELIGIONS.

BY COUNT LEO TOLSTOI.

(Reprinted.)

I.—*Continued.*

Neither philosophy nor science can establish man's relation to the universe, because this relation must be already established before any philosophy or science can begin to exist. They cannot do this for yet another reason, that science, including philosophy, investigates manifestations by the intellect, and independently of the position of the investigator and the feelings which he experiences. But man's relation to the universe is defined, not by intellect only, but by feeling, by the entire collectivity of man's spiritual forces. However much it is suggested and explained to a man that all that really exists is idea only, that everything is made up of atoms, or that the reality in life is substance or will, or that heat, light, motion, and electricity are different manifestations of one and the same energy, all this will not make his place in the world clear to man—the feeling, suffering, rejoicing, fearing and hoping being. His place in the world, and therefore his relation to it, only religion shows him, saying to him: the world exists for you, therefore take from life all you can take from it; or, you are a member of God's beloved people, and will receive, along with your nation, the greatest amount of well-being attainable by you; or, you are an instrument of the highest Will, that sent you into the world to fulfil a work already appointed for you; recognize this Will and fulfil it, and you will do the best you can for yourself.

To understand given philosophers and sciences preparation and study are necessary, but for religious understanding they are not necessary: it is given to every one, even to the narrowest and most ignorant.

In order to understand his relation to the universe that surrounds him, or to its source, a man needs neither philosophical nor scientific knowledge,—extensive knowledge encumbering consciousness, often even hinders it; the only things necessary are renunciation, even, if temporary, of the vanity of the world, a sense of his own material nothingness, and a truthfulness, met with oftener, as is said in the Gospel, in children and the simplest unlearned people. For this reason we see that very often the simplest unlearned and uneducated people accept with perfect lucidity, consciously, and easily, the highest Christian understanding of life, while the most learned and cultured people continue to linger in the coarsest pagan-

ism. Thus, for example, we find the most refined and highly educated people believing that personal enjoyment is the purpose of life, or at any rate the freeing oneself from suffering, as the very wise and very learned Schopenhauer believed, while a half-educated Russian peasant-sectary, without the slightest effort of thought, recognizes the purpose of life as what the greatest sages of the world, men like Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, Seneca, believed it to be, the recognition of oneself as an instrument of the divine Will, a son of God.

But you will ask me: wherein consists the nature of this neither scientific nor philosophical capacity of knowledge? If this knowledge is neither philosophic nor scientific, then what is it? How is it characterized? To these questions I can only answer that, since religious knowledge is that on which all other knowledge is founded, and which precedes all other knowledge, we cannot define it, having no organ of definition for it. In theological language, this knowledge is called revelation. And this name, so long as a false meaning is not given to the word revelation, is perfectly right, because this knowledge is obtained neither by study, nor by the efforts of an individual man or men, but only by the reception by an individual man or men of a manifestation of the Eternal Mind, which gradually reveals itself to mankind.

Why could people ten thousand years ago not understand that the purpose of their life was not exhausted by the well-being of their personalities, and why did a time come when higher understandings of life—family, social, national, imperial,—were revealed to them? Why, within our historic period, was the Christian understanding of life revealed? And why was it revealed precisely to such a man, or to such men, and precisely at such a time, in one and not another place, in one and not another form? To try to answer these questions, seeking a reason in the historic conditions of the time, the life and character of those people who first accepted this understanding of life and gave it expression, in the special characteristics of those people, is just the same as to try to answer the question why the rising sun illumined first those and not other objects. The sun of truth, rising higher over the world, lightens it more and more, and sheds its light on those objects which first fall under the sun's illuminating rays, and are most capable of reflecting them. The conditions that make some people more capable than others of receiving the rising truth, are not any specially active qualities of mind, but passive qualities of the heart, that rarely co-

' exist with great and curious intellect—a renunciation of the vanities of the world, a consciousness of their own material insignificance, and truthfulness, as we see in all the founders of religions, who were never distinguished by philosophical and scientific knowledge.

In my opinion, the chief error that, more than all else, hinders the true progress of our Christian humanity, consists precisely in this, that the men of science of our time, who have seated themselves in the seat of Moses, guided by the pagan understanding of the world that was restored at the time of the Renaissance, have decided that Christianity is a condition that men have already lived through, and that, on the contrary, the pagan, social, ancient, and, in reality, outlived understanding of life is the one which humanity should inflexibly hold to. Therefore not only do they not understand true Christianity, which has given us the higher understanding of life towards which all humanity is moving, but they do not even try to understand it. The chief source of this error lies in the fact that men of science, breaking with Christianity and seeing that it does not correspond with their science, have laid the blame, not on their science, but on Christianity; that is, they have imagined, not the real fact, that their science is eighteen hundred years behind Christianity, which has already taken hold of a great part of contemporary society,—but, on the contrary, that Christianity has failed. From this exchange of rôles arises the startling fact that there is no one with a more confused understanding of the real meaning of religion, of morality, of life, than the man of science; and the still more startling fact that the science of our times, while achieving really great successes in its province of investigating the conditions of the material world, shows itself good for nothing, and sometimes even pregnant with harmful consequences, in human life.

And, therefore, I think that by no means science or philosophy, but only religion, can establish man's relation to the universe.

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## II.

And so, to your first question, what do I understand by the word Religion? I answer: Religion is the establishing by man of a certain relation between himself and the eternal and endless universe, or its source and first cause.

From this answer to the first question, the answer to the second question follows of itself. If religion is the establishing of man's relation to the universe, defining the purpose of his life, then morality is the indication and elucidation of that activity of man which, of

itself, follows from one or another relation of man to the universe. And since, of fundamental relations of man to the universe or to its source, only two are known to us, if we regard the pagan social relation as an extension of the personal, or three, if we consider the pagan social relation as distinct, then of forms of moral teaching there can similarly be only three—the primitive, savage, personal moral teaching, the pagan or social moral teaching, and the Christian moral teaching, that is, the service of Deity or the divine.

From the first relation of man to the universe spring the teachings of morality common to all pagan religions, having as their basis the personality's striving toward well-being, and in consequence defining all conditions that give the greatest amount of well-being, and indicating the means of securing this well-being. From this relation to the universe spring moral teachings like the Epicurean in its lowest form, the Mahomedan moral teaching, promising coarse well-being to the personality in this and the other worlds, and the teaching of worldly, utilitarian morality, which has as its aim the well-being of the personality in this world alone.

From this teaching also, which considers the aim of life to be the well-being of the separate personality, and hence the freeing of the personality from suffering, spring the moral teachings of Buddhism in its coarse forms, and the worldly teaching of Pessimism.

From the second, pagan relation of man to the universe, which considers the aim of life as the well-being of a certain group of personalities, spring the moral teachings which demand from the individual the service of that group whose well-being is recognized as the aim of life. According to this teaching, the enjoyment of personal well-being is permitted only to the measure in which it is attained by the whole community which forms the religious basis of life. From this relation spring the forms of moral teaching known to us in the old Roman and Greek world, where the personality always sacrificed itself for the society, and also the morality of China; from the same relation springs the morality of the Hebrews, the subordination of the individual's well-being to the well-being of the chosen people, and the morality of our own time, which demands the sacrifice of the personality in the interest of the well-being of the majority. From this same relation to the universe springs the morality of the majority of women, sacrificing their personalities entirely for the well-being of the family, and, more than all, of the children.



All ancient history, and mediæval and modern history in part, are full of the miracles of this family and social morality. And at the present time, the great majority of people, only fancying that, in confessing Christianity, they follow Christian morality, in reality follow only pagan morality, and set up this morality as the ideal for the education of the young generation.

From the third, the Christian relation of man to the universe, which consists in man's recognition of himself as an instrument of the Supreme Will, for the fulfilling of its aims, flow the moral teachings corresponding to this understanding of life, elucidating the dependence of man on the Supreme Will, and defining the requirements of that Will. From this relation of man to the universe spring all the highest moral teachings known to humanity, the Pythagorean, the Stoic, the Buddhist, the Brahman, the Tavist, in their highest manifestations, and the Christian, in its real sense, demanding the renunciation of personal will, and of the well-being, not only of the personality, but of the family and society also, in the name of the fulfilling of the will, revealed to us in our consciousness, of the Power that sent us into the world. From the first, second, or third relation to the limitless universe or its source, springs the real, unassumed morality of every individual, without regard at all to what he confesses or professes nominally as morality, or what he wishes to appear.

Hence anyone who recognizes as the reality of his relation to the universe, the gaining for himself of the greatest possible well-being, however much he may say that he considers it moral to live for his family, society or nation, or for humanity, or for the fulfilling of the divine will, may artfully pretend before men, deceiving them; but the real motive of his activity will always be only the well-being of his personality, so that, when a choice becomes inevitable, he will sacrifice, not his personality to the family, the nation, the fulfilling of the divine will, but everything to himself, because, seeing the purpose of his life only in the well-being of his personality, he cannot act otherwise until he changes his relation to the universe.

In just the same way, whatever may be said by any one whose relation to the world consists in service of the family—as is for the most part the case with women—, or race, or nation—as is the case with members of an oppressed people, or political actors in times of struggle, however much he may say he is a Christian, his morality will always be social and national, and not Christian; and when a choice becomes inevitable between the well-being of the family or

society, and the well-being of his personality, or the well-being of the society, and the fulfilling of the will of God, he will inevitably choose the service of the well-being of that group of people for which, according to his view of the universe, he exists, because in this service alone he sees the purpose of his life. And exactly in the same way, however much it may be suggested to one who recognizes his relation to the world in the fulfilling of the will of the Power that sent him, that in accordance with the demands of personality, family, race, or humanity, he must perform actions contrary to the supreme will recognized by him in the qualities of reason and love dwelling in him, he will always sacrifice all his human relations in order to fulfil the will of the Power that sent him into the world, because he sees the purpose of his life only in the fulfilment of this will.

Morality cannot be independent of religion, because it is not only a consequence of religion—that is, of the relation which a man recognizes between himself and the universe—, but is already included, implied, in religion. Every religion is an answer to the question: what is the purpose of my life? And the religious answer already includes in itself a certain moral demand, which may sometimes arise after an elucidation of the purpose of life, sometimes before it. To the question of the purpose of life, this answer may be given: the purpose of life is the well-being of the personality, wherefore lay hold of all the well-being you can; or, the purpose of life is the well-being of a group of people, wherefore serve this group of people with all your force; or, the purpose of life is the fulfilling of the will of the Power that sent you, wherefore with all your forces strive to recognize this will and fulfil it. Or this question may be answered thus: the purpose of your life is your personal enjoyment, since this is the meaning of mankind; or, the purpose of your life is the service of the group of which you consider yourself a member, since this is the meaning of your being; or, the purpose of your life is the service of God, since this is the meaning of your being.

Morality is included in the explanation of life given by religion, and therefore can in no wise be independent of religion. This truth is especially evident from the attempts of non-Christian philosophers to derive the teaching of the highest morality from their philosophy. These philosophers see that Christian morality is indispensable, that life is impossible without it; more than this, they see what this morality is, and desire in some way to connect

it with their non-Christian philosophy, and to put the matter in such a light that Christian morality shall seem to flow from their pagan or social philosophy. And this they attempt to do, but exactly these attempts, more evidently than anything else, show not only the independence, but even the complete contradiction between Christian morality and pagan philosophy.

Christian ethics—which we recognize as the consequence of our religious view of the world—demand not only the sacrifice of the personality to the collectivity of personalities, but demand the renunciation of one's own personality and of the collectivity of personalities in the service of God; pagan philosophy investigates only the means of obtaining the greatest well-being of the personality or collectivity of them, and hence the contradiction is inevitable. To hide this contradiction, there is only one way—to heap up abstract conditional ideas one upon the other. Thus the philosophers since the Renaissance, for the most part, proceeded, and to this circumstance—the impossibility of reconciling the Christian morality which they had already accepted, with a philosophy derived from a pagan basis—must be ascribed the frightful abstractness, obscurity, unintelligibility, and estrangement from life of the new philosophy. With the exception of Spinoza who sets out in his philosophy from a religious, and—although he did not count himself a Christian—a truly Christian, basis, and the great genius of Kant, who simply made his ethics independent of his metaphysics, all the other philosophers, even the brilliant Schopenhauer, evidently invent an artificial relation between their ethics and their metaphysics.

It is felt that Christian ethics are something given beforehand, standing absolutely firm and independent of philosophy, and not needing the fictitious supports placed under them, and that philosophy simply invents propositions in which the given ethics would not contradict it, but would be connected with it, and, as it were, flow from it. But all these propositions seem to confirm Christian ethics only so long as they remain entirely abstract. As soon as they are transferred to questions of practical life, not only the non-agreement, but even the evident contradiction, of the basis of philosophy with what we recognize as morality, becomes fully evident.

*(To be Concluded.)*

## ORIENTAL DEPARTMENT.

*Edited by Charles Johnston.*

“THE CROWN OF LIFE.”

“Laying all thy works in thought on me, and full of me, let thy imagination be ever bent on me, holding firmly to the illumined soul.

“With thought full of me thou shalt cross over all hard places by my sovreign grace. But if through vanity thou obey not, thou shalt perish.

“If clinging to vanity, thou thinkest: ‘I will not fight the fight,’ thy decision is delusive, for nature will constrain thee.

“Bound down by the power of thine own work that was born with thee, what thou wilt not do in thy delusion, thou shalt do against thy will.

“The Master stands in the heart of all beings, leading all beings onwards through the world-glamor, as though carried forward by some outward power.

“Take thy refuge in him with all thy heart and soul. By his sovreign grace thou shalt come to the eternal dwelling-place and everlasting peace.

“Thus do I teach thee wisdom, more secret than all secrets. Perfectly pondering it, as thou desirest, so do.

“Hear once again my last word, the final secret. My beloved, thou art firm of heart, therefore I shall declare to thee thy desire.

“Let thy soul rest in me, let thy love be toward me, offering all to me, full of reverence for me. Thou shalt verily come to me, —this is truth I promise thee, for thou art dear to me.

“Giving up all other laws and bonds, take refuge in me alone; I will free thee from all the hosts of darkness. Sorrow no more.”

*Songs of the Master.*

After the servitude of sensual life is broken, and the weakness of vanity is overcome, there are long gray days of quietness, and at last, for those who endure, there is the sunrise of the everlasting Life.

The victory is gained. Eternity is begun. The mortal rises up immortal from the fire of death, in a vesture colored like the sun. And thenceforward each day and every work accomplished add to the certainty of victory, the firm knowledge that liberation has been won. And the fruits of victory are these:

There is first an abundant sense of life; a full and throbbing

vigor, that makes glad the heart, changing the old-time burden of our natural life into a pleasure; a pastime whose charm grows, not dulls, with use. Nature's law is cheerful energy, effective, abundant, adequate. And coming under the power of the law, we inherit the secret of nature's immortal youth, and find life not a struggle but a delight. We catch the great chords of the eternal song, and know in our hearts that the heart of things is altogether well.

Yet this flowing vigor, splendid as it is, is but the outer vesture of a far higher gift, the sense of inward rightness and power. We have opened the everlasting fountains, and henceforth our well-springs can never go dry. In the days of our vanity, a little calamity was enough to overwhelm us, for vanity is the weakest thing in the world. But now we are unconquerable. We are of the stuff that the gods are made of, and calamity can knock no longer at our doors.

In our human life, there was one thing more notable than all others, a shadow of utter blackness. We felt ourselves of more worth than the stones, yet the stones remained, while we passed away. We had a higher life than the streams, yet the streams failed not, though our knell was rung. In a nature that moved and lived eternally, man, the best work of nature, was doomed to die.

But that cloud has lifted. We have conquered death. And though we cannot tell of a certainty what awaits us in the great Beyond, yet we do know this: that with us it will be altogether well; for there is that in us which laughs at death, or greets it as a friend and ally, bending death with all things else to the furtherance of our everlasting ends.

And there is that in us which laughs at separation. We are already in some sense, and we feel that we shall be ever with less reservation, lords and masters over space. Wherever living souls are, we are; our interests are there, our work is being done there, our spirit is conscious there. For there is but the one world-old Soul of Man, the Divine, and that Soul we know ourselves to be. And this knowledge is not of the lips, but of the heart and will. We can feel the everlasting Soul throbbing in us, and without us, in every soul of our other selves. We exiled ourselves for ages from our dominion in our other selves by our vanity and lust. But the days of our exile are ended, and we have come again into power. Henceforth, whatever the soul of man attempts, whatever the Soul attempts in man, we have a share in it; whatever good thing is

undertaken, that makes for the honor of our life, we can help it, and bring support to every struggling heart of man.

Nor need we rely on our own sense of oneness only; our secret will instantly be guessed by our other selves. They will open their hearts to us, making us the allies of their wills, for nothing wins and charms like the living presence of the Soul. All men recognize their lord, and give him welcome, with relief and gladness opening their doors. That is a dominion which grows forever; not in abstract theory, but in living possession. We have kindred in every heart of man; we have fellowship in all his infinite work.

Yet greatest boon of all, greater even than the splendid victories over time and space, over death and separation, is the present power that initiates us into the secret of the creative gods. We are become children of the Will. There is no misery like the sense of wasting powers and slipping opportunities, when the days of life are falling through our fingers, and we cannot lay hold on them, nor gain the mastery over them. That sense of impotence, of foiled will, of weakness, is the greatest curse of life; and there is no boon like the getting rid of it.

Out of the futility into power; into conscious firmness and mastery: that is the essence of our victory, of our initiation into the Soul. For this is the heart of our secret, that the Soul is, that it is here and now; and that our doors open into the Soul.

Henceforth, our separate lives are closed. There is no more of them, nor of our separate interests and fears. We are the Soul, doing the work of the Soul, and sharing its everlasting power and youth. We need not defend the outposts of our little lives against the fancied hosts of enemies who threatened us all around; we can fall back on the reserve of the army, the host of universal Life. If our hearts are weary, if the battle has worn us out, we can withdraw into the shadow of the Soul, and there in silence and in peace, draw in great refreshment, coming forth again into the morning of the gods. Great horizons begin to glint and gleam to us, and we are already guessing at the mighty secrets of hidden life.

The greatness and the beneficence of all life are beginning to be revealed to us; the awful majesty and might that runs through us all, as the warp and woof of our being. We are initiated into the tremendous purposes that underlie it all, till our hearts thrill with dread and echo with deep delight. It is the Life, splendid, majestic, full of darkness and awe, thrilling with beneficence and power; we feel ourselves in presence of the Life.

As the mists scatter and lift before the sunrise, so do the shadows that surrounded us pass away. And so rapidly does the complexion of our life change with the lifting mists, that we are left breathless, hardly able as yet to steady ourselves in thought amid the dawning of this new-opening world. It was for this we were so long kept waiting; it was for this we endured the interminable watches of the night. Time seemed to go so slow with us that we feared old Time was dead. Now we are caught up and carried forward so rapidly that we have scarce time to feel our great alleviation, the splendid liberty that has at last descended into our days.

Henceforth, it matters little what we do, in our separate and isolated selves. For the great Life works, though we sleep. The Soul builds, even though we pass idle days. Whatever is good, the Life is carrying forward incessantly; and the Life cannot but win. Whatever is evil is rushing into conflict with the Soul, and the Soul cannot but prevail. Yet it shall be our pleasure to take our share in the building; in honor, we shall be abashed to be found shirking, while great nature throbs with creative life.

Of old time, we worked falsely, not knowing where our true power lay. We labored for our sensual satisfaction, never suspecting that sensuality can never bring us satisfaction, but only weakness and numbness and death. We worked for vanity, longing and thirsting to see admiration of ourselves and our wealth in others' eyes; never seeing that the preoccupation of vanity made us detestable to all men of good-will, and a laughing-stock to everyone in whom was rather malice than good-will.

Therefore our work of other days was doomed before it was begun. At the best, it brought us the opiate of delusion, and we lived the fools of hope. Most men still live thus, and will for ages. They dream that their reward is the sensual fruit of their labors, not seeing that their reward was their work itself. Therefore they live, working wisely, but believing very foolishly; and at last, finding no lasting delight in the sensual goal they set themselves, they droop, and incontinently die.

But not so shall we work. The Life is not pre-occupied with our sensual delights, nor striving to gratify our vanities; the Life is not working for any ends like these. The Soul works to create, in us, and with our hands. And for every creative work, the Soul has set its own reward: the power of a further and better creation, with every circumstance, every advantage of position or possessions,

which that new creative act demands. If I have worked wisely and joyfully, and, coming to the end of my work, require large material resources to embody my new vision, the title-deeds to new possessions will presently come to light; if I need a nation to work out my revelation of the Soul, I shall find myself leader of a nation; or, if I need nothing but the simplest natural life, with large, plain outlines quite unadorned, the Soul will give me that. Thus is our payment and our promotion, and the manner and measure of it is best left in the hands of the Soul.

This we come to see, throughout all life. Life is not a bill of pains and penalties, but an endless vista of opportunities for us and all men; a vista in no wise barred by sorrow and separation, nor in any way broken by death. The splendid march of life, and of all life, goes forward incessantly, from instant to instant, from hour to hour. That is where we have our inheritance. We are of the stuff that moves the world, that builds high heaven, that glows through death, and knows itself immortal.

If you are oppressed with sorrow, lonely and alone, deeming yourself forgotten of the gods, and outcast in the desert of a world where is no good, nor any love or tenderness, be sure that you are deluding yourself with the misery of things that are not, and shutting yourself out from the splendor and joy and solace of the things that are. Though the darkness is round you, and there is no sound but the cry that is so miserable, it fears to utter itself aloud, yet know with certainty that unseen beneficence is near; your sorrow is known, you are not forgotten. Not a pain will go without its solace, not a sorrow will fall on you, but it is the shadow of a coming joy. You are very well provided for, though you know it not; every least desire and effort is counted, nothing goes for naught; the perfectest justice will be measured out, where justice is all mercy, for you are not alone, but though you know it not, held firm in the arms of infinite Life.

The darkness will change to the gray quietness of dawn; after dawn will come full sunshine, and you will recognize with gladness and rejoicing that there are no more sad to-morrows, for you have been born into the light of everlasting day.



## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

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### QUESTION 134.—(Continued.)

*Is it ever right to do evil that good may come of it, or to do injustice to a minority for the sake of a majority?*

*A. H. S.*—The first part of this question is a misuse of terms. How can an act which produces good be an evil act? Good and evil are never arbitrary—they alter and modify according to time, place and circumstance, and in fact are not principles at all, only *aspects* of eternal, immutable, colorless TRUTH. Besides, who can tell whether good or bad is ultimately to “come of” what he does? I think we should simply try to do the square, honest thing on every occasion as far as we are able and leave time and event to disclose the results.

Now as to the second part of the question—Injustice is injustice, and whether to a majority or to a minority, makes no difference as to the intrinsic wrongfulness of it. On the part of a minority towards a majority it must naturally be accomplished by superior cunning, and hence is, of course, detestable in the eyes of decently-disposed men. Exercised by a majority towards a minority, it implies a bullying of the weak by the strong, which is not only despicable but unnecessary. However, “injustice” is a term like “evil”, no one who is not omniscient can surely discern it. What the question really demands is whether or not it is ever right to impose *hardship* on a minority, etc. Well! probably in some cases it is—if the minority will stand it. The majority should go at it carefully though, since by reason of the laws of Karma, there is a *balance* which has to be settled somewhere and somehow, by somebody. Then again, mistakes are liable to happen and the apparent minority of to-day may turn out a majority to-morrow, if not in numbers (which count for very little except in the way of proxies) in brains, energy, influence, honesty of purpose or other resource, and then it becomes awkward for the original majority who were willing to lend themselves to wrongful doings. So we see that even from the point of view of political exigency, no less than that of ethical restraint injustice is to be avoided.

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## HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY.

“ I understand, Socrates. It is because you say  
“ that you always have a divine sign. So he is  
“ prosecuting you for introducing new things into  
“ religion. And he is going into court knowing  
“ that such matters are easily misrepresented to  
“ the multitude, and consequently meaning to  
“ slander you there.” *Plato.*

I first met dear old 'H. P. B.', as she made all her friends call her, in the spring of 1887. Some of her disciples had taken a pretty house in Norwood, where the huge glass nave and twin towers of the Crystal Palace glint above a labyrinth of streets and terraces. London was at its grimy best. The squares and gardens were scented with grape-clusters of lilac, and yellow rain of laburnums under soft green leaves. The eternal smoke pall was thinned to a gray veil shining in the afternoon sun, with the great Westminster Towers and a thousand spires and chimneys piercing through. Every house had its smoke-wreath, trailing away to the east.

H. P. B. was just finishing her day's work, so I passed a half-hour upstairs with her volunteer secretary, a disciple who served her with boundless devotion, giving up everything for her cause, and fighting her battles bravely, to be bullied in return unremittingly for seven years. I had known him two years before, in the days of Mohini Chatterji, the velvet-robed Brahman with glossy tresses and dusky face and big luminous eyes. So we talked of old times, and of H. P. B.'s great book, the *Secret Doctrine*, and he read me resonant

stanzas about Universal Cosmic Night, when Time was not; about the Luminous Sons of Manvantaric Dawn; and the Armies of the Voice; about the Water Men Terrible and Bad, and the Black Magicians of Lost Atlantis; about the Sons of Will and Yoga and the Ring Pass-not; about the Great Day Be-with-us, when all shall be perfected into one, re-uniting 'thyself and others, myself and thee.'

So the half-hour passed, and I went downstairs to see the Old Lady. She was in her writing-room, just rising from her desk, and clad in one of those dark blue dressing-gowns she loved. My first impressions was her rippled hair as she turned, then her marvelously potent eyes, as she welcomed me: "My dear fellow! I am so glad to see you! Come in and talk! You are just in time to have some tea!" And a hearty handshake.

Then a piercing call for "Louise;" and her Swiss maid appeared, to receive a voluble torrent of directions in French, and H. P. B. settled herself snugly into an armchair, comfortably near her tobacco-box, and began to make me a cigarette. The cuffs of a Jaeger suit showed round her wrists, only setting off the perfect shape and delicacy of her hands, as her deft fingers, deeply stained with nicotine, twisted the white rice-paper of Turkish tobacco. When we were comfortably alight, she told me a charming tale of Louise's devotion. She had got away from her base of supplies somewhere, in Belgium I think, and things were rather tight for awhile. A wealthy gentleman called to see the famous Russian witch, and tipped her maid munificently. As soon as he was gone, Louise appeared, blushing and apologising: "Perhaps madam will not be offended," she stammered; "but I do not need money; *enfin—madame consentira—*" and she tried to transfer the *douceur* to her mistress.

Louise's entry cut short the story, and H. P. B. turned with a quizzically humorous smile to another theme: "Of course you have read the S. P. R. Report?—The Spookical Research Society,—and know that I am a Russian spy, and the champion imposter of the age?"

"Yes, I read the Report. But I knew its contents already. I was at the meeting when it was first read, two years ago."

"Well," said H. P. B., again smiling with infinite humor; "and what impression did the frisky lambkin from Australia make upon your susceptible heart?"

"A very deep one. I decided that he must be a very good young man, who always came home to tea; and that the Lord had given him a very good conceit of himself. If he got an opinion into

his head, he would plow away blandly, and contrary facts would be quite invisible. But your case was not the first on the list. They had a paper on modern witchcraft, at which another of your accusers proved that pinches and burns could be sent by thought-transference to a person miles away. It was quite grewsome, and suggested ducking-stools. Then you came on. But as far as I could see, the young Colonial had never really investigated any occult phenomena at all; he simply investigated dim and confused memories about them in the minds of indifferent witnesses. And all that Mr. Sinnett says in the *Occult World* seems to me absolutely unshaken by the whole Report. The Poet, the third of your accusers, came down among us after the meeting, and smilingly asked me what I thought of it. I answered that it was the most unfair and one-sided thing I had ever heard of, and that if I had not already been a member of your Society, I should have joined on the strength of that attack. He smiled a kind of sickly smile, and passed on."

"I am glad you think so, my dear," she answered in her courtly way; "for now I can offer you some tea with a good conscience." Louise had laid a white cloth on the corner table, brought in a tray, and lit the lamp. The secretary soon joined us, receiving a tart little sermon on being unpunctual, which he was not. Then we came back to her friends the *Psychical Researchers*.

"They will never do much," said H. P. B. "They go too much on material lines, and they are far too timid. That was the secret motive that turned them against me. The young Colonial went astray, and then the bell-wethers of the flock followed in his wake, because they were afraid of raising a storm if they said our phenomena were true. Fancy what it would have meant! Why it would practically have committed Modern Science to our Mahatmas and all I have taught about the inhabitants of the occult world and their tremendous powers. They shrank at the thought of it, and so they made a scapegoat of this poor orphan and exile." And her eyes were full of humorous pity for herself.

"It must have been something like that," I answered; "for there is simply no backbone in the Report itself. It is the weakest thing of the kind I have ever read. There is not a shred of real evidence in it from beginning to end."

"Do you really think so? That's right!" cried H. P. B.; and then she turned on her secretary, and poured in a broadside of censure, telling him he was greedy, idle, untidy, unmethodical, and generally worthless. When he ventured an uneasy defence, she flared up and declared that he "was born a flapdoodle, lived a flap-

doodle, and would die a flapdoodle." He lost his grip, and not unnaturally made a yellow streak of egg across her white table-cloth.

"There!" cried H. P. B., glaring at him with withering scorn, and then turning to me for sympathy in her afflictions. That was her way, to rate her disciples in the presence of perfect strangers. It speaks volumes for her, that they loved her still.

I tried to draw a red herring across the track,—not that there were any on the table. We were limited to tea, toast and eggs.

"The funny thing about the Psychical Researchers," I said, "is that they have proved for themselves that most of these magical powers are just what you say they are, and they seem to have bodily adopted, not to say, stolen, your teaching of the Astral Light. Take the thing that has been most made fun of: the journeys of adepts and their pupils in the astral body; you know how severe they are about poor Damodar and his journeys in his astral body from one part of India to another, and even from India over to London. Well, they themselves have perfectly sound evidence of the very same thing. I know one of their Committee, a professor of physics, who really discovered thought-transference and made all the first experiments in it. Well, he showed me a number of their unpublished papers, and among them was an account of just such astral journeys made quite consciously. I think the astral traveler was a young doctor, but that is a detail. The point is, that he kept a diary of his visits, and a note of them was also kept by the person he visited, and the two perfectly coincide. They have the whole thing perfectly authenticated and in print, and yet when you make them very same claim, they call you a fraud. I wonder why?"

"Partly British prejudice," she answered; "no Englishman ever believes any good of a Russian. They think we are all liars. You know they shadowed me for months in India, as a Russian spy? I don't understand," she went on meditatively, yet with a severe eye on her secretary, "I don't understand how these Englishmen can be so very sure of their superiority, and at the same time in such terror of our invading India."

"We could easily hold our own if you did, H. P. B.," ventured the patriotic secretary, pulling himself together, but evidently shaky yet, and avoiding her eye. She was down on him in an instant:

"Why!" she cried, "what could you do with your poor little army? I tell you, my dear, when the Russians do meet the English on the Afghan frontier, we shall crush you like fleas!"

I never saw anything so overwhelming. She rose up in her wrath like the whole Russian army of five millions on a war footing,

and descended on the poor Briton's devoted head, with terrific weight. When she was roused H. P. B. was like a torrent; she simply dominated everyone who came near her; and her immense personal force made itself felt always, even when she was sick and suffering, and with every reason to be cast down. I have never seen anything like her tremendous individual power. She was the justification of her own teaching of the divinity of the will. "But H. P. B."—hesitated the secretary. But she crushed him with a glance, and he desperately helped himself to more buttered toast only to be accused of gluttony.

Again I attempted a diversion: "There is one thing about the S. P. R. Report I want you to explain. What about the writing in the occult letters?"

"Well what about it?" asked H. P. B., immediately interested.

"They say that you wrote them yourself, and that they bear evident marks of your handwriting and style. What do you say to that?"

"Let me explain it this way;" she answered, after a long gaze at the end of her cigarette. "Have you ever made experiments in thought-transference? If you have, you must have noticed that the person who receives the mental picture very often colors it, or even changes it slightly, with his own thought, and this where perfectly genuine transference of thought takes place."

*(To be continued.)*

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### GIVE UNTO ME THY PEACE!

Through the days of my life have I sought Thee.

In the dewy morning, sweet with song of birds; at the heat of noon-day; in the twilight of evening; in the silence of the midnight hour; in the chill of dawn have I laid bare my heart to Thee in silent communion.

In the ancient days I knew Thee,  
Thou beloved Friend and Guide!

I walked with Thee and spoke Thy tongue, and breathed the celestial air of Thy Life.

Anon, the darkness of the lower worlds fell upon me, and Thou wert lost to my outer vision. And though with outward senses I saw and knew Thee no more, nor heard Thy words of Love and Wisdom, yet did I not despair. Knowing what Thou art, my faith was in Thee. And never through all time wilt Thou desert me.

I have trusted in Thy Love, abided by Thine ancient promise that in the days to come when, remembering Thee in my heart I should call upon Thy Names, my voice would have power to reach Thee, and Thou wouldst call me to Thy side once more to walk the clean ways trod by Thy white feet; once more to live in purity with Thee, to share Thy celestial joys, partaker in Thy divine, immortal life. Now are come the days of my remembrance; when, aroused from the dark dreams of forgetfulness, I see Thy light like some star aflame in the heavens at the hour preceding the dawn; herald and messenger of the Sun of Light that is to come.

In reverence, in love, in humility, O Giver of Light and Life, I kneel to Thee. Take Thou my life and give me of Thy Light! For I perish without Thee in the nether darkness. And when I feel Thee not then is confusion and death in my soul.

For Lord Thou art of my life, Ruler over my destiny, Bestower of all gifts.

Thou hast guided my footsteps from the ancient days; but in mine ignorance and folly too often have I wandered from the Path; with proud heart defied Thee; in my ingratitude rebelled against Thee.

Yet knowest Thou that I am Thine.

Divine is Thy Love, infinite Thy Compassion; and, while my heart is true to Thee, neither waywardness, forgetfulness, nor my ingratitude can weigh with Thee more than feather's weight against me.

Shall I bewail my sins and cry Thy pardon, O Lord of Love and Mercy? Nay, Thou need'st it not. For Thine understanding is perfect and Thy forgiveness without measure. My faintest cry for help reaches Thy hearing; and even my longing for Thee quickly brings Thee to my side.

O Compassionate One, would that I were wholly Thine! that the maya of the lower self would lose its power to come between us, dimming Thy Light, and blurring the reflection of Thy gracious Image!

Yet will I have patience, knowing Thy Power; will I have faith, remembering Thy Promise; will I have endurance, assured of Thy Help.

And at last will I know and walk with Thee forevermore.

Even now I know Thou art with me.

As in the days of yore I hear Thy silent voice, I feel Thy protecting care, Thy tender guidance, and in the warmth of Thy Compassionate Love my heart softens and expands with longing for all men and all creatures. For they are Thine! And that which is Thine shall likewise become mine. Because once again, Thou art revealed to me my heart burns with love for Thee. And by this love and Thy gracious help shall I grow in power to do Thy work, and thereby serve and help mankind.

Give unto me and them Thy Peace O Lord of Compassionate Wisdom.

ŒDIPUS.



## ORIENTAL DEPARTMENT.

## SONGS OF THE MASTER: IV.

The secret of Life is whispered for ever in our ears, summoning us to enter the hall of everlasting youth, bidding us unbar the door of our present divinity, pointing the path of unconquerable power, revealing to mortal man the secret of man the immortal. We are challenged to make true for ourselves the dreams we have dreamed of God.

There is a newborn hope in the message of the unseen as it comes to us. We have passed out of the shadow into the sunshine. The clouds that hung so long about the door have lifted. The burden of the world's anguish has melted away. Since the Cross first threw its black shadow along the earth, the promise of immortal life was held forth to those only who turned back in bitterness from the world, whose garb was sackcloth, their best hope despair. Their master was the Man of Sorrows. Their password was Renunciation. But we have left behind us the old evangel of pain. Our new watchword is Victory. Our Genius is the lord of Joy. We are to renounce no longer but to conquer: to overcome the world not by flight but by possession. No longer exiles but victors shall knock at the immortal doors.

The genius of our age has drawn very near to the secret. We have merged all ideals in one: to conquer, to be strong. Power and valor are our divinities. We no longer worship wealth but the will that wins it. Our one goal is the sense of success, and we see nothing but the goal. Even death we have almost forgotten, transforming the old king of terrors into a gentle and not unwelcome shadow. Nothing is remembered but the lust of strength. One step forward will change it to the lust of immortality.

For a little experience of life is enough to teach us that in sensual success we miss our ideal. The sense of power slips past us into our works, leaving us poor and empty-handed. When in the very glow of victory we see the tinsel glitter fade, we are at the threshold of the unseen world; we are ready to understand that we were better than our goal, that we were born to more lasting triumphs. The time has come for us to claim our divinity. In the midst of our success, the finger of the hidden immortal touches us, and we are called forth from the arena of the world, to hear the whispered secret of our inheritance. The glamor of sensual life has fallen from our eyes, and we are ready to lift the black veil of death.

When we draw back from life and sensual success, as something very good, yet not good enough to satisfy our heart's desire, we come to a lull of quiet loneliness, a hush of silence in the dark. In that solitude and gloom we may catch the vision of the truer way, and surprise the world-old secret of human life. Hitherto we have lived believing ourselves closed in by the visible world, buried in the heart of sensual life, and held there firmly by our bodily fate. But we begin to divine that we are really set firm in the immortal world, leaning forward into sensual life from the life above it, never losing our firm foundation there. In the midst of death we are in life.

Thus our destinies are passed between two worlds: the world of desire and death, and the world of will and immortality. When we learn to live from the will as we tried to live from sensual desires, we shall be already immortal, and enter living an immortal world. Therefore our worship of will brings us near to the portal of peace.

This is the secret that shadows itself forth in the stillness and darkness. Soon will follow clearer vision that we have drawn our life from the world of the immortal, day by day since the beginning. But this simplest of all secrets was hidden from us by the seething of our desires. We and all creatures enter every day into the immortal world, though we know it not. Nor shall we remember, until the hush of stillness comes upon us when we draw back victorious yet disappointed from our battle with the material world. Not till we have renounced can our eyes open.

Every day we wage our warfare with the world. Every night, when the throb of desire and the whirl of the senses grow still, we sink, as we call it, to sleep. We might more truly say we arise to our awakening. The shadows of our desires hover awhile around us, haunting us as we linger in the borderland of dreams. As our desires were, so are our dreams: things fair or hideous, grim or radiant with lovely light. But dreams soon fade and desires cease, and we enter into our rest. We pass from the world of the senses to the realm of immortal will. We enter in through the golden portal, far better than the fabled gates of ivory or horn, and for awhile we are immortal in power, immortal in peace. For without power, there is no peace.

Beyond the land of dreams and the shadows of desire stands the gate of peace. All men enter there and all creatures. Were it not so, all men must go mad. And within that portal all are equal. All alike awake to their immortal selves. Sinner and saint have left their difference at the threshold. They enter in together as pure living souls. Weak and strong are one there, high and lowly

are one. The immortal sunshine, the living water, are for all. For great Life has wrapt us round with beneficence, so that even now we are in the midst of the everlasting.

Thus we all enter the power beyond the veil of dreams. We all draw our lives alike from the sea of life. In the radiance we are all one, wrapt in the terrible flame of Life. Yet we forget. We come back again shivering across the threshold, and hasten to wrap our pure divinity in a mist of dreams. The saint once more takes his white garment: the sinner, his red vesture of desire. The weak is weak again, and the strong exults. Their dreams are once more real to them; and these dreams are the world of our mortality.

We return to the world of daylight to live for a few more hours in the strength brought back from the immortal world. Our earthen lamps are replenished for another watch. We strain and stagger under the burden of our dreams, driven by hope and fear, by desire and hate. Fear is the fiercest scourge of all; making us cowards, it makes us also cruel. Thus we fall away from our divinity, robbed of every shred of memory by the army of shadows that meet us on the threshold, with their captain, fear. Yet in all our phantom-world, there is no illusion so absolute a lie as fear. We are the gods, the immortals; yet we cower and cringe. We are children of the will, yet slaves of fear. Therefore our ideal of valor brings us near the threshold, for it bids us kill the captain of the shadows who bar our way. But for a long time yet, the shadow of fear will lurk in the haunted darkness of our human hearts.

Another day ends, and our tide ebbs. The storm of our desires has worn us out, and overcome with weariness, we sink to rest, we rise to power. And all our prayer and aspiration, all the fervor of our faith has no aim but this: to reach awake the sea of power we bathe in, while asleep. Therefore we close our eyes in aspiration, seeking once again the light behind the veil. So great is the beneficence of sleep, so mighty a benison is ever near to us. We enter perpetually, but we always forget. Our power slips from us as we return through the cloud-zone of dreamland. Round every pillow gather thick the terrors and pains of life, not less than its ambitions and its hopes, instantly invading us as we come back to waking.

Therefore we gain this clew to the secret. The door of our immortality is open to us day by day. But we are so ridden with dreams that our immortal inheritance brings us no profit. Therefore we must elude the army of dreams. We must bring back to the light of day the present sense of our divinity which illumined

us in dreamlessness. A thing so simple as that is the open door of our salvation. Our Genius bids us gather power and conquer fear. And fear once mastered, we may begin to disband the army of dreams, the ghosts that haunt our borderland and make us forget. The diminished army on the frontier is no longer strong enough to keep us from smuggling through with us something of our dreamless vision, some memory of the immortal world. We glean these memories day by day, in the silence of the morning, in the first hush of waking, as we bring back into every morning something of the freshness of everlasting youth.

At first, what we carry back with us will seem more dreamlike than dreams. Yet dreams have their power, as we should know, whose whole lives are guided by dreams. First a dream-memory only: a haunting shimmer of other worlds; a secret freshness and gladness, coming we know not whence. Yet a vision so full of unearthly fascination and allurements that we would follow it rather than the solidest reality of day. Thus far all the poets have reached. This is the secret of their inspiration. They are haunted by the dreamless dream; it lingers in beauty over all their works. Even the faint memory of this vision is brightness enough to illumine hearts throughout all the world.

Yet poets and the devout do not hold all the secret. They are still in the grayness of the morning. We are heirs to the full glory of the noonday sun. With fidelity and strong will we are to make real the fragments of our remembered dream, imposing them upon the shadows of the day, and in their light transforming all our world. The seers and poets fail, because they do not rest in will. The vision bursts from their hearts in a rapture of song and prayer, leaving their wills unenkindled. We are the richer, but they are poorer. They should have sealed their lips, guarding the vision in their hearts till they had wrought it into the fabric of their lives.

The highest valor is needed, to make our vision real. We must battle with the whole army of shadows, the princes and powers of the air. We must fight to the death, if we would inherit life. As the fight is waged with dauntless courage, we are ever more penetrated with the piercing intuition that our waking world is the real dream; the true waking is elsewhere, a better reality than this. Thus we begin to remember. Thus far the sages go. Their message is full of whispers that our life is a dream. But they do not go far enough. They should pass on dauntless to the other shore, to the real world of their immortality. It lies about us in sleep. It is not far from us in our waking.

Thus we gather the fruits that drift to us in the dawn from the other shore. There will come a time when that world begins to out-shine this. Then we shall be ready for undimmed illumination. We shall really launch our boat upon the waves. Rapt from our mortal bodies into paradise, we shall hear words not lawful for our mortal lips to utter, for the only lips that can tell of them are already immortal. No longer dimly overshadowed by the Soul, we enter through the silence into the very being of the Soul itself. We know with awe that we have inherited our immortality. We have found our treasure. With undimmed and boundless vision, we behold the shining ocean of life. The radiance and the realm are ours. We are filled full of infinite power, infinite peace.

### "REINCARNATION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT."

[By *James M. Pryse*. Page & Co., New York.]

I have just finished reading Mr. Pryse's new book and the pleasure it gave me is still fresh in me. Though a book it should not be called, as both its literary form and the number of its pages are those of an essay rather than a book.

A book, written on so serious a subject as reincarnation—and in the New Testament too—, prepares the reader to expect something solid and exhaustive, something ponderous.

Now, Mr. Pryse's talent never is that: it never is ponderous.

A witty friend of ours once made the remark, that reading Carlyle's account of the French Revolution was like studying history by lightning flashes. The same saying can be applied, with still better justice, to Mr. Pryse's writings. Evenness of tenour is not their strong point.

"Reincarnation in the New Testament" has all the good qualities and all the defects we have always found in the works of the same author. It is highly suggestive. It gives the readers the desire to open once more their long neglected Bibles, to look up the quotations, to compare, to think, to draw conclusions. Yet a truly exacting scholarship would never be wholly satisfied with Mr. Pryse's rendering of the Greek original. This is a defect, yet a defect, I personally overlook easily and readily, on the grounds that too much academical learning makes a man shy of his own originality and generally ends by killing his inspiration. Only to think of the endless rows upon rows of theological books in any well furnished library. They are wonderfully accurate in their information, their scholar-

ship, like Caesar's wife, is above suspicion—yet how uninteresting they all are, how dull, how useless.

This is certainly not the fate we should wish for our friends the "Sermon on the Mount" and the "Reincarnation in the New Testament."

Our really serious quarrel with their author is that in them the line between that what is proved and that which it would be a good thing to prove is not drawn distinctly enough. Yet the most brilliant and likely conjecture is not the same as a proven fact, and Mr. Pryse ought to know it.

On page 66 Mr. Pryse says: "Without answering the question directly whether the man's blindness was due to heredity or to his own sins in a *past* life, Jesus gave out the broader teaching that all sin and suffering are disciplinary, etc., etc."

This broader teaching Jesus certainly did give out, but neither in the four Gospels as we have read them in several languages, nor in Mr. Pryse's preceding argument is there anything to show that Jesus really meant a *past* life of the blind man and not merely his past life, that is the twenty, or thirty, or forty years since his baby form left his mother's womb.

Again on page 63 Mr. Pryse says: "The words 'beneath the fig tree' may be taken to mean, 'before you were born'; the symbolism is that of the ripe fruit concealed beneath the leaf, coupled with this the statement about the Angels (Souls) 'going up and coming down' is extremely significant". I can not but feel sorry that Mr. Pryse said *is extremely significant* instead of *would be extremely significant*. It certainly would be so, but there is nothing whatever to show that it is so, in the passage of John's gospel Mr. Pryse quotes. Mr. Pryse refers the reader to Gen. iii, 7. I did look up the passage in the Genesis, but, with the best will in the world, could not find in it anything to convince me that Jesus did not know the difference between standing under a fig tree and being concealed behind a leaf. Neither can I see why Mr. Pryse should bracket the word *Souls* after the word *Angels* in the passage I have copied above. I can not help thinking that souls either incarnated or disincarnated have nothing to do with it, that Jesus actually meant angels, messengers between God and man, continually descending, hence forward, on the Son of Man, in a way visible to the eye of a seer.

It is not enough to wish that a thing should be this or that way to actually make it so. Yet, in his eager and perfectly disinterested,

therefore highly creditable, desire that reincarnation-should be taught in the New Testament, Mr. Pryse fails to see that, however regrettable, it is not so. In his concluding chapter, he says: "That reincarnation, not only in the case of particular men, but also as a law of life that applies to all men, is distinctly taught in he New Testament, has been shown."

Perhaps, it is. But it certainly has not been shown to me. As I said before, Mr. Pryse's little volume gave me great pleasure—also profit, in ways I shall mention further—, but after reading it, I still think, as I did before, that all that can be justly said on the subject is that reincarnation is *not* disputed in the New Testament, that in the utterances of Jesus there is nothing to oppose it. We even may venture so far as to say, that reincarnation is referred to in many instances, in the New Testament, but invariably in a more or less covert and cautious way.

That is all. And that is certainly not the same as openly and distinctly taught. Possibly, it would more conform with facts, if we said, that the New Testament teaches a system of Avatars, that is the periodical reappearance of divinity, of the breath of God on earth. Adam, David and Jesus, Elijah and John the Baptist, being instances of it. But even in this case the expression "distinctly taught" would be far too strong.

The most open minded, cautious and reliable of orientalists, Theodore Goldstücker, says on the subject :

"Among the early Christians, St. Jerome relates, the doctrine of transmigration was taught as a traditional and esoteric one, which was only communicated to a selected few; and Origenes, like the Kabbalists, considers it as the only means of explaining some biblical traditions, as that of the struggle of Jacob and Esau before their birth, or the selection of Jeremiah when he was not yet born, and many more events, which would throw discredit on divine justice, unless they were justified by good or bad acts done in a former life. of Christian sects, the Manichaeans especially adhered to this belief, but the church always rejected it as a heresy."

It is not only probable, but it is evident that Jesus knew the teachings of reincarnation and often spoke of it, in a covert way, to his direct pupils, but neither he nor his immediate followers have taught it openly and decidedly. After reading Mr. Pryse's book I am not any further advanced than I was before, simply by having studied Theodore Goldstücker's essay on transmigration.

No, Mr. Pryse has not shown that reincarnation was taught in the New Testament. And so much the better, because to show this would be to show something that was not.

But what Mr. Pryse has shown—and that above any doubt—is that to know anything of the Gospels or the Epistles, the whole Bible or the whole life of man, one has to consider them in the light of reincarnation. Otherwise the sacredest of sacred writings and the most complete of human lives would be nothing but a collection of pompous prophecies, which never came to be true, of grandiloquent sayings which signify nothing, an unsolved and unsolvable enigma.

This, Mr. Pryse has certainly shown. He also has shown that the utterances of the Bible can yield newer and more complete meaning than the one familiar to us. And for this our sincerest gratitude is due to the author of the "Sermon on the Mount" and the "Reincarnation in the New Testament."

Mr. Pryse's exposition and style, in his last little volume, are all we are accustomed to expect from his pen. The opening chapter is positively brilliant. As to the last one, it does not strike us as an apposite summing up of what was said before, but as an extremely interesting rough sketch, which it would be a good thing to work into a complete book of perhaps two hundred pages and more. A few more words, before I sign my name. Mr. Pryse's translations of the Greek original have been objected to in our hearing, on the grounds of their lacking the beauty of the accepted English version. From the point of view of literary style, severe yet magnificent, the English Bible certainly is the most perfect treasure the English language possesses.

I can quite understand that for the lovers of perfect language it must be quite an unpleasant shock to meet John the *Lustrator* (p. 4) instead the *Baptist* and *Gnosis* (p. 69) instead of *understanding*. Still more—I would be outrageously grieved myself were the word "Baptist" to be replaced by the word "Sprinkler". Yet *lustrare* does mean *to sprinkle* in Latin, and it is as good a word as any.

Such is the force of habit.

Yet we all know that the most familiar objects, pictures in our rooms, for instance, give new effects and look new, when we change their habitual places. Likewise, the utterances of the Bible, when clad in new apposite words, are sure to yield a new meaning and pour enlightenment into our hearts we have never received from them as yet.



And in view of this possibility, we must overlook an unhappily chosen word here and there in the new translations. In fact, we can afford to face all the "lustrators" and the "sprinklers" in the world, if they are to be the means of giving as a new impulse for investigation, thought and self-examination:

And this impulse Mr. Pryse's new book certainly does give us.

VERA JOHNSTON.

### THE NEW CYCLE.

The present cycle, a period of seventy-five years, beginning with the present year, is to be a time of assimilation—assimilation by humanity at large of Theosophical truths. The Lodge has given sufficient teaching to last until their next direct and public effort, and we now have to work on that material, making it our own and giving it out for the welfare of all. This we must do of our own motion if we are going to do it at all, "by self-induced and self-devised efforts." We cannot make it our own unless we try at the same time to give it expression in thought, word, and deed.

But we shall no longer be urged, entreated, pleaded with, and incited to make Theosophy our Ideal. The time for persuasion is past. If we cannot work without constant stimulus, we can be idle. The only stimulus we shall get is that which we shall receive, through our own efforts, from our higher nature. If we are too lethargic to reach our higher nature we may take root and return to the vegetable kingdom from which we prematurely emerged. If we need constant excitement and novelty to encourage us to work we shall not find it in this movement. We may try elsewhere. If our interest depends on immediate, visible results, or the plaudits of others, our interest is doomed. If we find the pleasures of the world—refined or coarse, it matters not—more to our liking than the development of our own natures, than the helping of others to come to themselves, no one will ask us to turn away from that which we find so attractive. If the details of our business, social, and domestic lives are so absorbing that we have neither time nor thought for the Soul, no one will seek to free us from our slavery. If we expect a few workers to tickle our mental palates with papers at meetings, while we graciously look on, languidly listen and do nothing, we shall be disappointed. If we think that magazines, paid for by someone else, will be provided for our kind acceptance, we are mistaken. What we get we shall have to *earn* and give its equivalent in

time, money, or work. If we are unwilling to give up bodily luxuries for Soul necessities, then our Souls will have to starve.

The new cycle is the cycle of individual work, of applied Theosophy. It demands SELF-moved men and women; puppets are not required.

J. Z. in *The English Theosophist*.

## NOTES AND REVIEWS.

Business first, pleasure after.

Before I give myself a refreshing plunge into *our own* theosophical literature of the month, I must state—though I do not like to do so—that hundreds of copies of the “Forum”—*our own* “Theosophical Forum” I mean, for it appears there is another “Forum” older and much wealthier than ours, yet not half as good—have been regularly given away for nothing for the last two years. Yet the printers’ bills, the addressing bills, etc., come in all the same, and have to be paid. If the true esoteric purport of this remark is taken by our readers in the right spirit, it is quite on the cards, that when next the printing bills, the addressing bills, etc., do come in, the “Forum” will be able to meet them with a serene smile on its careworn face, and our honorary readers will become entitled to the new volume.

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Let us give honor to whom honor is due. The first place, in this number of the “Forum” is given to an article entitled “Helena Petrovna Blavatsky.” And that is certainly as it should be. How vividly its opening lines have carried us back to our own first impressions of London, of H. P. B., of the theosophical doings and goings on, of these already remote times. So much is changed since then, we have lost so much and still more we have gained. Yet the tasks before us are still the same: we must open our eyes and see ourselves and the world not as we should like to see or are accustomed to see, but as we and the world really are. For that was the true message of H. P. B. The most interesting part of this article is held over for our new number.

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We hear so often that matters discussed for the last five or six years, in the “Oriental Department”, pass far above people’s heads. This may be so or it may not, but one thing is sure: passing above people’s heads is not synonymous with being unprofitable. For if

we do give the matter an honest consideration, most things, that are of true and even vital importance, do pass above our heads. Yet the world's life is and always has been influenced only by this class and no other class of things.

There was an old lady once, who, when asked what impressed her the most in a preacher's sermon, answered: "That sweet word Mesopotamia". It kept revolving in her mind, exercising her imagination, possibly her highest aspirations, yet she certainly did not know what the "sweet word" meant.

Lead, kindly Light.

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We can not help wondering how is it that Mr. James M. Pryse did not pay sufficient attention to the following passage in the eighth chapter of St. John's Gospel:

"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him: Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them: Verily, verily I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am."

And yet another to shed light on it:

"And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bore to him, Isaac." Gen. 21:3. (B. C. 1898.)

And still more light: The dictionary of Scripture proper names gives us the following information: Isaac—laughter, sporting,—otherwise rejoicing.

The three together might be taken to mean that Isaac was one of the incarnations of that spiritual part of Jesus, which "is before Abraham was born", and over which so far as one can judge, all the covenants between God and man are made to this day.

\* \* \*

The Booksellers complain that the author's course, in selling "The Memory of Past Births" at reduced prices, makes it impossible for them to handle the book profitably, and are inclined to drop it from their lists. This, needless to say, would act very unfavorably on this and all future works of the same class and from the same source, and thus defeat the very object which the author had in view in selling it so cheap. This object, as it stands to reason, being—the largest possible distribution of the ideas they contain. Therefore it would be both right and expedient for the author to conform to the trade prices from the present date, and he has consequently fixed the prices at 25 cents for a single copy of "The

Memory of the Past Births": \$1.25 for six copies: a copy bound in cloth, 50 cents.

A quarter on six copies surely is not as heavy an increase of what the price was formerly as to prevent the spread of the book by all those who truly hold the ideas therein true and important.

\* \* \*

We have our usual monthly harvest of theosophical periodicals. We regret that space and time do not allow us to go into their discussion as we should like to. Yet we must mention "Æ's" poem in the "Lamp" and the lines that struck us the most in it.

"Still above the waters brooding, spirit, in thy timeless quest!  
"Was the glory of thine image trembling over east and west,  
"Not divine enough, when mirrored in the morning water's breast?"

\* \* \*

Also we must mark the fact, that Dr. Franz Hartmann, with his usual luck, has apparently discovered no less a person than the *perfect woman*,—for otherwise what signifies the following passage from the "Letter-Box" of the March "Lotus-blüthen":

"My view of the woman's movement is, that though it is highly necessary to lift the woman to the intellectual level of the man, it is still more necessary to lift the man to the spiritual level of the woman."

For our own part we must confess, that though we have often enough met women who intellectually could compete with any man, as man goes, we have seen little spiritually amongst them, in any country or continent. The enormous failing of modern women most assuredly is the great materiality of her tastes and even her aspirations. In that respect she is a drag on man, who, though having a better sense of the true value of things, has not half her motive power.

\* \* \*

As to our other German comrade the "Theosophisher Wegweiser", we think so highly of his tactful and apposite idea of giving almost a whole number to Giordano Bruno on the 300th anniversary of his death, that we shall try and find somebody amongst ourselves who understands German and can write English to rearrange the same article for our own "Forum".

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