

THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST

No. 1.

DUBLIN, OCTOBER 15TH, 1893.

VOL. II.

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OURSELVES.

“WE go right on!” We hope that the many shortcomings of the past year have been but an indication of our endeavours toward a more rounded perfection. Crude and sharply angular our initial effort has been, yet, we hope, not without promise of greater things. Although depending as much as ever on our friends elsewhere for interest and support, we intend to devote more of our attention during the coming year to Ireland.

In this country, perhaps, more than any other, the mutual distrust and intolerance, with which the devotees of the different sects—Roman Catholic and Protestant—regard each other, and the opposition by each, and all, against any attempt to harmonize the philosophy of things have been more marked. The Protestants’ faith and reason, have been aptly compared to boys playing at see-saw on a beam balanced by an immovable bar. Rome, however, does not see-saw at all. It stands solid on its feet; reason thrust down, and held there.

Some one has said, “Rome is a coal bed alike in its Theology, its art, custom, pageant, and ritual,” and here where she holds sway we find less aptitude in the art of competitive production, and the people less disposed, generally speaking, to industrial and mental energy. And why? Because that which was once light and heat, has become fossilized strata, hardened during the pressure of the ages. Protestantism too, that began as an assertion of the right of the individual to think for himself, in so far as it has receded from centralized Rome, has become weak and ineffective. It is noticeable also, that Agnostics find the satisfaction which the religion of Rome affords its adherents, by yielding themselves up to the pleasureable influences of Nature.

Strange as it may appear, through each and all the soul seeks for some fitting expression of itself. Each in a measure indicates the weakness of the other. Now, we think, it is just here where Theosophy comes in. It stands at the meeting of the ways. It recognizes that each system has its uses, but objects to the endeavours made to constitute each a finality. It asserts, that there can be no limits placed on the possibilities of the Soul, and that necessarily, all mental ligatures must be cut asunder, in the advance of wider culture and intelligence. It teaches us to disregard alluring promises, and threatenings of peril, and asks us to seek Truth for herself alone, for “there is no religion higher than Truth.”

As the mission of Theosophy in the world of to-day becomes understood, the old time prejudice will slowly disappear. Already those who were left on the one hand at the mercy of a bleak ecclesiasticism, and on the other, of a barren science,

have felt new joy and satisfaction in the channels of fresh discovery, and the vistas of thought opened up by a study of the old wisdom-religion; old, but ever renewing from that far off time, when "the morning stars sang together, and all the Sons of God shouted for joy."

It will be seen then, that we but seek to proclaim afresh, the old truths that have been almost obscured and obliterated, and so shed their light and warmth anew upon the many perplexing problems of to-day; to revive again that old joy and beauty through the forms of decay; to call forth the potency and promise of the God within every man. Beyond the warring of many creeds, there dwells harmony—the harmony of that deeper, fuller, song, which is the cradle of Man and of his living Soul.

Theosophy extends to-day over *every land*, but *our* message particularly is for Ireland. We are not without faith in its future. The fires were alight on its towers before England arose from the sea. The spirit of our ancient race still lives; still lives, and breathes. To her, we say, rise then! take your place once more in the van of spiritual freedom—"as beauty veiled like justice, might in thought"—and drink from the antique flagons of wisdom, filled with songs that by the world are heard no more.

Meantime "*we go right on*" full of hope and courage.

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THEOSOPHY IN PLAIN LANGUAGE.

XI. REINCARNATION (*continued*).

WE have endeavoured to show that the popular confusion and want of thought upon the question of the soul's nature, is one great reason why the doctrine of Reincarnation seems improbable and unwelcome to so many. When the modern Theosophical movement was started eighteen years ago, there existed but little interest in such enquiries—at all events of a widespread or general character. Two theories, not always very clearly distinguished, held the field; one that of materialism, which identified the soul with the body; the other that hazy conception of an "immortal something" conferred upon us at birth by God, which is still prevalent amongst the majority of Christians. Now one of the first and most characteristic features of Theosophy has been its analysis of man's inner being into *several* distinct constituents, some present to the ordinary consciousness, others still latent therein. A protest has been made, and an alternative suggested, to the old division, so crude and meaningless, of "soul and body." True, no very exhaustive or detailed account of the nature of the "seven principles" has been given, but the main point insisted on has been, that the roots of man's being extend far beneath and beyond that narrow circle of personal consciousness, of limited thoughts, emotions, desires, which we call our *self*, and that the Soul or Ego, far from being fully contained in and moulded by the physical brain and senses (as most people seem to imagine) is a distinct and complex entity, with subtle consciousness and faculties extending through many planes or realms of Nature besides this solid one of matter. It is therefore held that the real self acts *through* the body as one instrument only out of many; dwelling apart from it yet standing behind the "I" that it contains; and that as such it knows and participates in our actions as if from behind a screen—a screen transparent indeed to the inner vision, though opaque to the perceptions of what we term our "waking" selves.

An unexpected side-light upon this ancient doctrine of the Soul has come in recent years from the renewed interest awakened in the phenomena of somnambulism and kindred states. For often in these conditions, the outer senses being stilled, strange faculties and powers of the mind, an exalted intelligence and

clearness of memory have shone out, of whose presence the "waking" brain had given no sign. The confidence of materialist views of consciousness has received a check. More and more, among students of these things, the conviction has grown, that the brain is not the *cause* of thought but the *instrument* of the real Thinker, who remains behind it, and above its comprehension or perception; that in fact there exist in man two selves, an Inner and an Outer, one changeable, forgetful, perishable; the other calm, watchful, forgetting nothing, treasuring all experience for some mysterious purpose of its own. But whether or not hypnotism leads to or justifies such belief, the teaching is that of Theosophy, and this must be grasped ere the doctrine of Reincarnation can be properly understood, or its apparent difficulties explained.

Thus with regard to the question so often put, as to why we do not remember our past lives, the answer can soon be found in a true notion of what the Ego is who reincarnates. The truth (it will then be seen) is that the former lives are *not* forgotten. Their memory can be and has been recovered by some who have succeeded in reaching (whether by natural gift or by occult training) some unusual degree of union with the Inner Self. Where this is not attained, the outer memory naturally recalls but the doings of the personal self with which it has grown and developed, and only shows its heritage from the past in those special leanings, characteristics or aptitudes which most people exhibit more or less decidedly, from early infancy.

For it is held in the east, and in Theosophy, that what we call *character* is not the mere result of hereditary transmission (though heredity does supply the basis or material through which character works)—but far more the outcome of tendencies set up in past lives—tendencies which when strong enough impress themselves upon the permanent ego, and remain to form the seed, as it were, of new personalities, strictly continuous with those that have gone before. And here we find the *rationale* of the doctrine of *Karma*, or the great evolutionary law of adjustment and harmony which guides the soul's progress, and metes out to each man the opportunities or hindrances which his own hands have made him. Karma and Reincarnation are in fact corollary to one another. Together they afford us that solution of life's riddles, that clue to the enigma of existence, for which the West, with all her intellectual and material advance, feels herself so completely at a loss.

The objection is sometimes raised, that it is not consistent with justice that we should suffer the results of actions which we have forgotten. Perhaps, according to our notions of human justice, there is some force in the objection, which is, nevertheless, superficial, and not wholly applicable to the facts. One may point out, to begin with, that we all (or most of us) enjoy also many pleasures and comforts without in the least doubting our perfect right thereto. Yet if the suffering is unjust, the pleasures must, at least, be equally so. But (it will be answered) happiness is the natural and proper condition of man and requires no justification, whereas pain is *unnatural*, injurious, and wholly evil. Here is the crux of the whole matter. Here lurks the assumption which joined to the other false notion that loss of memory means change of identity, and that the person who suffers, and the person who produced the suffering, are different and distinct beings—underlies all complaints against Nature's just and wise law. Both assumptions are, however, gratuitous, hasty, and indefensible.

We hardly need to go even to the Theosophic doctrine of soul-evolution to find a beneficent office constantly fulfilled by pain. But in the light of such a design and purpose behind life as that doctrine reveals, one begins still more clearly to see that pain, equally with pleasure, is necessary for that deepening and purification of the inner nature that is to culminate in Godhood. So then if we regard all suffering as a discipline as well as a penalty, as a probation no less than as a punishment, the question of injustice no longer appears in the same light, and though we may not at

once arrive at that indifference to pain and pleasure which the Sages counsel, we shall be less ready to cry out about injustice, or to wish to lecture the wise nurse Nature on the faulty systems of education which she has adopted for the upbringing of her children.

As to that other objection that we really suffer, or are rewarded, for the deeds of someone else, because even if the Inner Self recalls the former life and its actions, we, the sufferers, do not remember—all that can be said is, that while such memory might or might not be gratifying, there is no injustice, but in all probability a benefit, in its non-possession at present. It sometimes happens that people lose their memory completely even of past events in their present life. They nevertheless are constantly liable to the direct effects, whether good or bad, of those events. This never strikes us as unjust. On the other hand, how often do we find memory a hindrance rather than a help to the acquirement of fresh faculties, the exercise of energies that we feel within us but have not courage to use. We think we have a tradition to keep up, or the influence of some false creed or culture lies heavy upon us, and life's calls and opportunities pass us by unheeded. Therefore Nature is ever drawing a curtain behind us as we advance, planting us down in new surroundings, setting before us fresh chances and tests. It is all strictly in the way of desert, of course. We reap but what we ourselves have sown. But is it not a possible advantage that we are not (as otherwise we might be) elated or depressed, or confused, or otherwise diverted from the present and its calls, by thoughts and memories of a past whose lessons, though pictured on the mind, might not yet be engrained within the heart?

Still, be it remembered that these memories are not beyond recall. Their secret is known to the enduring Self—that "Pilot" whom all may hope at some time to meet with, face to face, and of whom some great souls, even now, have knowledge. The time is not ripe as yet for most men, but some day, as Paul said, "we shall know, as we are known."

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LOSS AND GAIN.

"And find in loss a gain to match."

We weep and moan for what can never be,
 We raise a golden image of the past
 And bow before it, worshipping. Held fast,
 We know not yet the law that makes us free
 The law of our own being; cannot see
 That we from change to change advancing, cast
 Upon the flame which burns while time shall last
 The garments of the soul. "Come unto me"
 The Christos ever cries. We hear the call
 Even now, with half dimmed ears; to understand
 Is not yet ours. But when that day shall fall
 When we, sad wanderers in a weary land,
 Have found the promised rest, we know that all
 Will then be ours by that divine command.

E. M. D.

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AT THE DAWN OF THE KĀLIYUGA.

WHERE we sat on the hillside together that evening the winds were low and the air was misty with light. The huge sunbrowned slope on which we were sitting was sprinkled over with rare spokes of grass; it ran down into the vagueness underneath where dimly the village could be seen veiled by its tresses of lazy

smoke. Beyond was a bluer shade and a deeper depth, out of which, mountain beyond mountain, the sacred heights of Himalay rose up through star-sprinkled zones of silver and sapphire air. How gay were our hearts! the silent joy of the earth quickened their beating. What fairy fancies alternating with sweetest laughter came from childish lips! in us the Golden Age whispered her last, and departed. Up came the white moon, her rays of dusty pearl slanting across the darkness from the old mountain to our feet. "A bridge!" we all cried, "Primaveeta, who long to be a sky-walker, here is a bridge for you!"

Primaveeta only smiled; he was always silent; he looked along the gay leagues of pulsating light that lead out to the radiant mystery. We went on laughing and talking; then Primaveeta broke his silence.

"Vyassa," he said, "I went out in thought, I went into the light, but it was not that light. I felt like a fay; I sparkled with azure and lilac; I went on, and my heart beat with longing for I knew not what, and out and outward I sped till desire stayed and I paused, and the light looked into me full of meaning. I felt like a spark, and the dancing of the sea of joy bore me up, up, up!"

"Primaveeta, who can understand you?" said his little sister Vina, "you always talk of the things no one can see; Vyassa, sing for us."

"Yes! yes! let Vyassa sing!" they all cried; and they shouted and shouted until I began:—

"Shadowy petalled, like the lotus, loom the mountains with their snows:
Through the sapphire Soma rising, such a flood of glory throws
As when first in yellow splendour Brahma from the lotus rose.

"High above the darkening mounds where fade the fairy lights of day,
All the tiny planet folk are waving us from far away;
Thrilled by Brahma's breath they sparkle with the magic of the gay.

"Brahma, all alone in gladness, dreams the joys that throng in space,
Shepherds all the whirling splendours onward to their resting place,
Where at last in wondrous silence fade in One the starry race."

"Vyassa is just like Primaveeta, he is full of dreams to-night," said Vina. And indeed I was full of dreams; my laughter had all died away; a vague and indescribable unrest came over me; the universal air around seemed thrilled by the stirring of unknown powers. We sat silent awhile; then Primaveeta cried out: "Oh, look, look, look, the Devas! the bright persons! they fill the air with their shining."

We saw them pass by and we were saddened, for they were full of solemn majesty; overhead a chant came from celestial singers full of the agony of farewell and departure, and we knew from their song that the gods were about to leave the earth which would nevermore or for ages witness their coming. The earth and the air around it seemed to tingle with anguish. Shuddering we drew closer together on the hillside while the brightness of the Devas passed onward and away; and clear cold and bright as ever, the eternal constellations, which change or weep not, shone out, and we were alone with our sorrow. Too awed we were to speak, but we clung closer together and felt a comfort in each other; and so, crouched in silence; within me I heard as from far away a note of deeper anguish, like a horn blown out of the heart of the ancient Mother over a perished hero: in a dread moment I saw the death and the torment; he was her soul-point, the light she wished to shine among men. What would follow in the dark ages to come, rose up before me in shadowy, overcrowding pictures; like the surf of a giant ocean they fluctuated against the heavens,

NOTE.—Kaliyuga. The fourth, the *black* or iron age, our present period, the duration of which is 432,000 years. It began 3,102 years B.C. at the moment of Krishna's death, and the first cycle of 5,000 years will end between the years 1897 and 1898.

crested with dim, gigantesque and warring figures. I saw stony warriors rushing on to battle; I heard their fierce hard laughter as they rode over the trampled foe; I saw smoke arise from a horrible burning, and thicker and blacker grew the vistas, with here and there a glow from some hero-heart that kept the true light shining within. I turned to Primaveeta who was crouched beside me: he saw with me vision for vision, but, beyond the thick black ages that shut me out from hope, he saw the resurrection of the True, and the homecoming of the gods. All this he told me later, but now our tears were shed together. Then Primaveeta rose up and said, "Vyassa, where the lights were shining, where they fought for the True, there you and I must fight; for, from them spreads out the light of a new day that shall dawn behind the darkness." I saw that he was no longer a dreamer; his face was firm with a great resolve. I could not understand him, but I determined to follow him, to fight for the things he fought for, to work with him, to live with him, to die with him; and so, thinking and trying to understand, my thoughts drifted back to that sadness of the mother which I had first felt. I saw how we share joy or grief with her, and, seized with the inspiration of her sorrow, I sang about her loved one:—

"Does the earth grow grey with grief
For her hero darling fled?
Though her vales let fall no leaf,
In our hearts her tears are shed.

"Still the stars laugh on above,
Not to them her grief is said;
Mourning for her hero love
In our hearts her tears are shed.

"We her children mourn for him,
Mourn the elder hero dead;
In the twilight grey and dim
In our hearts the tears are shed."

"Vyassa," they said, "you will break our hearts." And we sat in silence and sorrow more complete till we heard weary voices calling up to us from the darkness below: "Primaveeta! Vyassa! Chandra! Parvati! Vina! Vasudeva!" calling all our names. We went down to our homes in the valley; the breadth of glory had passed away from the world, and our hearts were full of the big grief that children hold.

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NOTES ON THE ADWAITA PHILOSOPHY (*Continued*)

Compiled from "Monism or Adwaitism," "Vasudeva Manava," "The Theosophic Glossary," etc.

This spiritual wisdom which annihilates individuality is of two kinds, the indirect and the direct. The indirect kind is that which is gained by hearing the teaching of others, or by reading the sacred books. This kind of wisdom, as the Adwaita puts it, destroys disbelief in the Reality, or as we should put it, it breaks down Atheism or Materialism, and enables the student to realise that God *may* be a Reality. In short it converts an Atheist into an Agnostic. He hears or reads that others have known God, and by that means comes to see that a knowledge of God is not impossible. This, as the Adwaita says, is Hearing, or the first stage. Then after the removal of doubt through hearing, dawns the belief in the existence of the Real

and thus the way is prepared for direct knowledge, the second kind of wisdom, and the only path to final emancipation. This direct knowledge destroys not only Atheism but agnosticism. The indirect wisdom has destroyed disbelief in the Reality. The direct wisdom does more, it brings knowledge of the Reality. As the Adwaita says, "A man becomes firmly convinced of the Reality of the Cause and not of the Effects" (Vasudeva Manava). "It is the dictum of Vedanta that whoever, after due enquiry, becomes conscious of the fact that there is no other Reality in the Universe than Brahman, and that I (the Ego) is only that Brahman—he is freed from the trammels of birth." (Vasudeva Manava).

The Adwaita Philosophy also deals with the study of the evolution of the universe as a help to the acquiring of right knowledge or realising the omnipresence of Atma. The plan of evolution which it sets forth is similar in its main features to that given in the Secret Doctrine, but differs from it in various details. It is as it were another expression of the same set of truths. The best elementary presentments of it are given in "Monism or Adwaitism," and in an article in *Lucifer* for March, 1892. In each of these there is a table or plan of the evolution of the Universe as considered from the point of view of the Adwaita Philosophy, with an explanation in detail in each case. The system is much simpler and easier to grasp than that of the Secret Doctrine, and forms a useful prelude to it. It is possible to grasp it as a whole, and thus get some notion of what evolution means, whereas the method of the Secret Doctrine cannot be grasped as a whole by a beginner.

One of the main features in the Adwaita system is the omnipresence in the material universe of the three qualities or *gunas*, sattva, rajas, tamas, sometimes translated truth, passion and darkness, sometimes goodness, badness, and indifference; and in various other ways. These three qualities are frequently alluded to in all the ancient Hindu writings. They exist in all men, as well as in all aspects of nature. The Bhagavad-gita says "There is no creature on earth or among the hosts of Heaven who is free from these three qualities which arise from nature." But it also says that to obtain liberation it is necessary to rise above these three qualities, "*to sit as one unconcerned above the three qualities and understand by them.*"

Thus liberation does not mean goodness precisely, but a rising superior to both good and evil, a separating oneself from the acts of the personality, a realising of one's true nature as the Universal Spirit, who takes no part in the affairs of life, but simply watches and directs them. When a man gets into an impersonal frame of mind, ceases to identify himself with the acts of his personality, but merely studies these acts and analyses them as a disinterested spectator, from that time forward he makes no new karma. He is no longer the animal in which he dwells. He directs the animal, but he no longer *is* the animal, and its past misdeeds do not distress him. Then he begins to be independent of blame or praise, for he is no longer the person whom men praise or blame. He is the persons' master, whom neither praise or blame can reach. All the energy which was before spent in useless regrets, in vain desires, in childish self gratification, is now set free for useful work, so that his rate of progress towards the goal rapidly increases.

When the Ego has resolved to throw aside all hope of reward, and has thus ceased to attach itself to results, Karma will work itself out, but the Ego will be free from its effects, and will lay up no more Karma. "There is freedom under necessity. Man is free by his very nature so far as his spirit is concerned, but he is under strict necessity so far as his personality is concerned" (Monism or Adwaitism). The essence of the Adwaita Philosophy may be expressed in the following words from the Bhagavad-gita:—"A man is said to be confirmed in spiritual knowledge when he forsaketh every desire which entereth into his heart, and of himself is happy and content in the Self, through the Self. His mind is undisturbed in adversity, he is happy and contented in prosperity, and he is a stranger to anxiety, fear, and anger."

SARAH CORBETT.

THE GREAT BREATH.

Its edges foamed with amethyst and rose,
 Withers once more the old blue flower of day ;
 There where the ether like a diamond glows
 Its petals fade away.

A shadowy tumult stirs the dusky air ;
 Sparkle the delicate dews, the distant snows ;
 The great deep thrills, for through it everywhere
 The breath of Beauty blows.

I saw how all the trembling ages past,
 Moulded to her by deep and deeper breath,
 Neared to the hour when Beauty breathes her last
 And knows herself in death.

G. W. R.

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UNITY

“That light which burns inside thee, dost thou feel it different in anywise from the light that shines in thy Brother-men.

“It is in no way different, though the prisoner is held in bondage by Karma, and though its outer garments delude the ignorant into saying, Thy Soul and My Soul.”

I have failed ! how often that thought turns peace to pain, and life's sweetness into the very waters of Marah.

In some task bravely undertaken, some deed of mercy attempted, failure instead of success has apparently crowned our effort ; what does it matter if we have failed, if the motive has been unselfish, the work bravely done ? why should we be exempt from failure ? Why should we claim that results often only to be estimated in years to come, should be at once obvious to us.

“Have you heard that it is good to win the day ? I say that it is good to fall— battles are lost in the same spirit in which they are won ” writes Walt Whitman ; and it is well to remember that fact sometimes. “In our dark fortnights ” lit by no gleam of intuition ; in the hours of intense weariness that follow repeated and long sustained effort ; in the blankness and desolation that often come after moments of enlightenment ; when the struggle seems endless, and the forlorn hope not worth the battling ; when the tired feet stand still and no advance seems possible, and the helpful hands are folded for a time in despondency—then it is well to call to mind past days when the heart-light shone upon the path ; it is not extinguished ; although dark night envelope us it shines there still behind the clouds.

If the failure is real and not imaginary, what has caused it ? The hand could not accomplish the work the brain planned. True, but what hand ever did. The act has not expressed the feeling of the heart : but the motive was all, the deed nothing. The will has been hampered by the body : but to have willed is in itself surely something ; and we should learn to believe what is written for our guidance, that “each failure is success and each sincere attempt wins its reward in time.”

Let us look at the matter closely : our very words will themselves reveal the cause of failure. “I have failed.” The definitions, the words of separateness, may contain that letter. The alphabet of altruism has no *I* ; while we retain it we have not learned to kill out all sense of separateness, or recognized that before we can attempt

to work for humanity or in Master's name we must be equally willing to stand aside if needs be, and let others do the work.

Or want of harmony may account for it. Some "little rift within the lute" and the music of life is changed to discord; some harsh word repented of as soon as said, perhaps, but which hurt another; some bitter thought swift as lightning that swept across the lake of our consciousness, and ruffled the surface; some rebellion against the good Law; or impatience with our environment; some false note somewhere; at all costs we must restore harmony, accept our Karma, "kill out the sense of separation and erase the *I* from the future record of our life.

To find the place of peace, to be able to help others, to succeed, we must recognize the unity of all. "Thy soul and my soul" is not the language of the True, we cannot help others unless one with them. I fail to relieve my brother's sufferings as long as I regard him as an object of compassion. I read his heart, only when mine beats in union with his, and I suffer in his sufferings through oneness with him.

You cannot raise those whose feet are held fast in the mire of life, if you strive to reach down to them from levels you have reached. It cannot be done. The only place where help becomes possible is where they are. If they find footing there you can. Their sin, their sorrow is yours; until that lesson is learned it is useless to strive to raise them.

Your words of cheer cannot reach other hearts until you learn the heart language. Then only can you "be in full accord with all that lives," and become attuned to every sigh and thought of suffering humanity. The heart language spells one word, *Unity*, and translated means the intense conviction of non-separateness of all. To learn that language in all its fulness, the voice "must have lost the power to wound." If I am my brother I shall not vex him with hasty words, nor shall I strive for supremacy, or fancied rights, or be over careful to take offence at trifles.

Harmony in word and act, unity in all things—if these were attained what might not be achieved? One thing at least; the basis of Universal Brotherhood upon which the long-looked for age of equality and fraternity might rest, would be firmly laid.

Unity alone will make it possible for the gracious influence to flow from other planes to ours, until in the lapse of time peace would lie "like a bright shaft of light across the land."

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K. B. L.

PROOF AS TO MASTERS

(From *Path of October*, 1893.)

ALWAYS since the first proclamation by Madame Blavatsky and Mr. Sinnett of the existence and work of Masters, there has continued a controversy as to the nature and sufficiency of the evidence. Most persons outside the Theosophical Society reject the doctrine and despise the evidence; many within it regard both as having some plausibility, though to be treated rather as a "pious opinion" than an actual fact; a few are convinced that Masters are an evolutionary necessity as well as a certified reality; and a still smaller number have had their belief fortified by a personal experience which is conclusive. To the first, Masters are a chimera; to the second, a probability; to the third a truth; to the fourth, a certainty. Is there any reason to suppose that the assurance of the last can be made to extend to the others, and, if so, by what means and upon what lines? This raises the question of the evidence available in the specific case of Masters.

The asserted fact is that there exists a body of exalted men, with faculties, powers, and knowledge enormously transcending those we cognize, who, though usually unseen, are ceaselessly interested in the well-being of humanity and cease-

lessly working to promote it. It is an assertion of much the same kind as that there are Angels, though somewhat more unfamiliar, and a not unnatural tendency to distrust novelty prompts to exaction of explicit evidence. Such evidence in such a case may be (*a*) direct sight, or (*b*) the execution of marvels impossible to ordinary human beings, or (*c*) the disclosure of truths unknown to humanity on our level, or (*d*) an interior influence or impression upon the soul referable to no other source. And yet it is clear that direct sight would not of itself identify a Master, since his physical body is like that of other men, and also that an interior influence or impression would prove nothing to one not already convinced. Hence the evidence demanded is a visible appearance of a Master, coupled with a conclusive display of Occult power or knowledge.

But even this evidence, in the form of testimony, is pronounced inadequate. Various witnesses have desposed to a sight of Masters—Col. Oleott having had repeated interviews with them, Occult powers have been exhibited, and no small part of the early Theosophical literature is of letters written by them upon matters beyond the ken of any scientist or historian. The triple fact has received evidence copious in amount, more so, indeed, than have geographical explorations which the civilized world accepts as final. It is rejected, however, by very many readers because merely the assertion of others and therefore not demonstrative. "I must see for myself: if I am to believe that Masters exist, it must be because one has Himself appeared to me or otherwise evidenced certainly His power. Testimony is not proof: only experience can be *that*. And so a frequent attitude is of entire incredulity until and because a Master gives direct and visible demonstration to each separate critic.

At this point two questions arise: *first*, to what class of persons have Masters, in fact, vouchsafed proof of their existence?; *second*, with what object? Inspection of the cases shows that they were of individuals avowedly interested in the cause of humanity and actively at work on its behalf; not curiosity-seekers, not scientists examining a theory under test conditions, not indifferent members of the T. S. And the class discloses the object of their selection; *viz.* that they should be equipped with fact needful for their efficient work, be assured that the work was actually fostered by the real Founders, be strengthened and impelled by the consciousness of near relation. To reward for zeal and to endow with certainly was the motive of the demonstration.

If this has been the purport of such evidential disclosures of Masters as have been recorded in Theosophical literature, it is fair to infer that it rules in later cases and will persist unchanged. The primary object is not to furnish tested examples whereby an incredulous world may be coerced into acceptance, or even to satisfy lukewarm Theosophists that there is more in the doctrine than they are yet ready to concede. Whether a scoffer or an indifferentist believes in the existence of Masters can hardly be a matter of moment to Masters Themselves, for the absence of interest makes needless an attempt at conviction. Why should a Master concern Himself with demonstrating a fact for which the recipient is unprepared, for which he cares nothing, and of which he would make no use? Why should any power expend itself on a soil suspicious of it, unwilling to receive it, unfitted to utilize it? And if it be urged that irrefragable proof is the first requirement from agents soliciting an intellectual conviction, the answer is that Masters solicit nothing; if that there can be no blame to doubt unremoved by evidence, the answer is that no blame has been imputed, no criminality incurred. The evidence has been to a specific class, for a specific purpose: no one outside of it has material for grievance.

Since the departure of H.P.B., the exhibitions of Masters' activity in the Society, and even of Their interest in individual members, seem to have increasingly multiplied. In the published writings of those nearer to our Unseen Protectors than are we ordinary members, there are very striking indications of a loosening of reserve, a

freer disclosure, a more explicit statement, than has ever yet been ever supposed possible. Eyes not specially quick to discern have perceived marks of a changing policy, and are prepared for still fuller revelations in a future very near. Nay, on lower levels, in quarters where no favours had been anticipated or even coveted, this enlargement of Adept manifestation has had place. That in certain remarkable instances America should lately have been the scene need surprise no one who remembers H.P.B.'s prophecies of its future. If no proclamation of facts has startled the Section, if no details have crept through the ranks, this means only that the purpose of such manifestation is now, as it was formerly, a reward to faithful workers and an aid to their better work.

Certainly it is conceivable that there are epochs in organized labor and in individual career when extraordinary measures of help are fitting. Crises in work, crises in character, crises in time arise, wherefrom may come a permanent issue for good if all can be guided rightly. It may be that the turning-point means a sudden evolution of energy invaluable in the mission of the Society; or that a wounded spirit, wounded by suffering, needs succour from the Masters of Compassion; or that a group of united workers have reached the stage of fuller union and richer labor. To the Wise Ones all forms of want in Their servants appeal, and in the vast treasury of Adept resource is found every means to meet them. Counsel, sympathy, strengthening, help, revelation of the past and of the future, every necessary aid is at their disposal; and whether it is transmitted in messages or letters, or audible sounds, what matters it if the source is certain and the end secured.

In the more recent, as in the earlier, manifestations of Masters' interest, the recipients and the motive remain the same. It is to Their zealous, faithful servants and friends that the demonstration comes, and it comes as a reward for work, an encouragement, a stimulus to more work. Even if in no one mind had ever moved a doubt as to the assertion "We always help those who help us," there might have been in many a need for help,—and then the help came. But it came on the lines of the assertion.

This very simple truth is filled with a lesson for all Theosophists. There is heard at times a question as to the reality of Masters, or of the sufficiency of its proof, or of Their actual manifestation in the Society. Men say that they will not believe unless they see with their own eyes, and test with their own organs. Very well; let it be so. But then they must furnish the condition to the manifestation. It is not intellectual interest or critical acumen or even open-mindedness to proof; it is that sincere and unselfish devotion to the Theosophic Cause, that continuous and whole-souled labor on its behalf, which identifies them in spirit with Masters and makes relations fitting. When they have demonstrated that identification, and when need arises for distinct disclosure, it will be given. Anyone solicitous for proof of Masters should first test his claim to it, and it is easy to query in himself whether he and They are so far alike in aim and effort that it is proper they should meet. If the life is indolent, indifferent, self-seeking, what have the two in common? Why should be conceded to curiosity what is avowedly reserved for service? But if the searching question shows identity of purpose and of zeal, the community of character is assured and then manifestation in the hour of need becomes a promise. It may not be to the eyes, and it may not be in phenomena or marvel, but it will be abounding and conclusive, and the enriched soul, filled with peace and abiding trust, will rest as upon a rock, doubts and misgivings and forebodings powerless forevermore. "Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." "We ALWAYS help those who help us."

ALEXANDER FULLERTON, F.T.S.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

EXPRESSION OF BELIEF IS NOT DOGMATISM.

To the Editor of the "Irish Theosophist."

DEAR SIR.—In the course of conversation, and of reading Theosophical journals, I have gathered that there is an opinion afloat, that Theosophists should not express publicly their belief in certain tenets—the existence of Mahatmas especially—unless they are prepared to come forward with proofs of their statements; because to do so would be to dogmatise. But I must confess that I do not see where the dogmatism comes in, for I have always understood that a dogma is a proposition *forced upon* people by authority, a very different thing from merely stating one's conviction of a thing, and leaving others to accept or reject it as their reason dictates. Surely, Sir, it would be very prejudicial to the progress of Theosophic ideas, if we were all to abstain from proclaiming our beliefs merely from fear that a few weak-minded persons might accept them dogmatically? I cannot *prove* the existence of Masters to other people, but I do not see why I should be prevented from putting the idea before them for investigation, and from telling them what my own convictions are in the matter. People know the T. S. is not dogmatic, and if they accept my statements as dogmas it is not my fault. Hoping I may have the benefit of your views on this subject, I am, etc.—“NOT ASHAMED OF MY CONVICTION.”

—:O:—

LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

THAT pure great light which is radiant; that great glory; that verity which the gods worship; that by means of which the sun shines forth—that eternal divine being is perceived by devotees. The real and the unreal have both the same real entirely as their basis. The being who is the inner Self, is not seen, being placed in the heart. Meditating on him, a wise man remains placid.—*Sanatsugatiya*.

The good is one thing, the pleasant another; these two having different objects claim a man. It is well with him who clings to the good; he who chooses the pleasant, misses his end.—*Katha Upanishad*.

—:O:—

DUBLIN LODGE.

The Discussions at 3 Upper Ely-place, during the following month will be as follows:—

- Oct. 18th—“A Study in Mythology.”
- ” 25th—“Consciousness.”
- Nov. 1st—“A Seventeenth Century Theosophist.”
- ” 8th—“Reincarnation.”
- ” 15th—“The Three Qualities.”

Opened by Brothers Jordan, Roberts, Magee, Varian, and Harrison, respectively.

Good reports of some recent meetings have appeared in the local newspapers. The meetings have been very well attended.

The printing plant is now at 3 Upper Ely-place, and some useful reprints of valuable works may soon be undertaken.

FRED. J. DICK, *Secretary*.

THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST

No 2.

DUBLIN, NOVEMBER 15TH, 1893.

VOL. II.

The Theosophical Society is in no way responsible for any opinions, in signed or unsigned articles, that appear in this Magazine.

THE ASCENDING CYCLE.

THE teaching of the Secret Doctrine divides the period during which human evolution proceeds upon this globe into seven periods. During the first three-and-a-half of these, the ethereal humanity who appeared in the First Race gradually become material in form, and the psychic spirituality of the inner man is transformed into intellectuality. During the remaining three-and-a-half periods, there is a gradual dematerialization of form; the inner man by slow degrees rises from mere brain intellection to a more perfected spiritual consciousness. We are told that there are correspondences between the early and later periods of evolution; the old conditions are repeated, but upon higher planes; we re-achieve the old spirituality with added wisdom and intellectual power. Looked at in this way we shall find that the Seventh Race corresponds to the First; the Sixth to the Second; and the Fifth Race (which is ours) corresponds with the Third. "We are now approaching a time," says the Secret Doctrine, "when the pendulum of evolution will direct its swing decidedly upward, bringing humanity back on a parallel line with the primitive Third Root Race in spirituality." That is, there will be existing on the earth, about the close of Fifth Race, conditions in some way corresponding with those prevailing when the Third Race men began their evolution. Though this period may be yet distant hundreds of thousands of years, still it is of interest to forecast that future as far as may be, for the future is concealed in the present, and is the outcome of forces working to-day. We may find out from this enquiry the true nature of movements like the Theosophical Society.

One of the most interesting passages in the Secret Doctrine is that which describes the early Third Race. "It was not a Race, this progeny. It was at first a wondrous Being, called the 'Initiator,' and after him a group of semi-divine and semi-human beings." Without at all attempting to explain the real nature of this mysterious Being or Race, we may assume that one of the things hinted at is the consciousness of united being possessed by these ancient Adepts. Walking abroad over the earth as instructors of a less progressed humanity,

their wisdom and power had a common root. They taught truth from a heart-perception of life, ever fresh and eternal, everywhere prevailing nature and welling up in themselves. This heart-perception is the consciousness of unity of inner being. The pendulum of evolution which in its upward swing will bring humanity backwards on a parallel line with the primitive Third Root Race, should bring back something corresponding to this primeval hierarchy of divine sages. We should see at the end of the Kaliyuga a new brotherhood formed from those who have risen out of material life and aims, who have conquered self, who have been purified by suffering, who have acquired strength and wisdom, and who have wakened up to the old magical perception of their unity in true Being. "At the end of the Kali, our present age, Vishnu, or the 'Everlasting King,' will appear as Kalki, and establish righteousness upon earth. The minds of those who live at that time shall be awakened and become pellucid as crystal."—(Secret Doctrine, II., 483.)

Passing beyond the turning point of evolution, where the delusion of separateness is complete, and moving on to that future awaiting us in infinite distances, when the Great Breath shall cease its outward motion and we shall merge into the One—on this uphill journey in groups and clusters men will first draw closer together, entering in spirit their own parent rays before being united in the source of all light and life. Such a brotherhood of men and women we may expect will arise, conscious in unity, thinking from one mind and acting from one soul. All such great achievements of the race are heralded long before by signs which those who study the lives of men may know. There is a gestation in the darkness of the womb before the living being appears. Ideals first exist in thought, and from thought they are outrealized into objective existence. The Theosophical Society was started to form the nucleus of a universal brotherhood of humanity, and its trend is towards this ideal. May we not justifiably suppose that we are witnessing to-day in this movement the birth of a new race corresponding to the divine Initiators of the Third; a race which shall in its inner life be truly a "Wondrous Being." I think we will perform our truest service to the Society by regarding it in this way as an actual entity whose baby years and mystical childhood we should foster. There are many people who know that it is possible by certain methods to participate in the soul-life of a co-worker, and if it is possible to do this even momentarily with one comrade, it is possible so to participate in the vaster life of great movements. There will come a time to all who have devoted themselves to this ideal, as H. P. Blavatsky and some others have done, when they will enter into the inner life of this great Being, and share the hopes, the aspirations, the heroism, and the failures which must be brought about when so many men and women are working together. To achieve this we should continually keep in mind this sense of unity; striving also to rise in meditation until we sense in the vastness the beating of these innumerable hearts glowing with heroic purpose; we should try to humanize our mysticism; "We can only reach the Universal Mind through the minds of humanity," and we can penetrate into their minds by continual concentration, endeavouring to realise their thoughts and feelings, until we carry always about with us in imagination, as Walt Whitman, "those delicious burdens, men and women."

G. W. R.

INTERVIEW WITH MR. W. B. YEATS.

A FEW evenings ago I called on my friend, Mr. W. B. Yeats, and found him alone, seated in his arm-chair, smoking his cigarette, with a volume of Homer before him. The whole room indicated the style and taste peculiar to its presiding genius. Upon the walls hung various designs by Blake and other less well-known symbolic artists; everywhere books and papers, in apparently endless profusion.

In his usual genial way he invited me to have a cup of tea with him. During this pleasant ceremony little was said, but sufficient to impress me more than ever with the fact that my host was supremely an artist, much in love with his art. With a passion deep and entrancing he adores his art: "his bread is from her lips; his exhilaration from the taste of her." The Muse finds in him a tongue to respond to her most subtle beauties. In song was handed down the great Solar Religions that advanced the people of antiquity; in song those of a later day received that which caused them to emerge from their cold isolation and kiss "the warm lips of Helios"; and in these days, too, we look to the poets for that inspiration which will

"Overflow mankind with true desires,
And guide new Ages on by flights of living lyres."

Tea over, I disclosed the object of my visit. "Mr. Yeats," I said, "I understand that you saw a great deal of Madame Blavatsky in the earlier days of the Theosophical movement in England, and so I thought you might have something to say regarding her, which would interest the readers of the IRISH THEOSOPHIST."

"Yes," replied Mr. Yeats, "I had the privilege of seeing Madame Blavatsky frequently at that time, and so many interesting little incidents crowd in upon me, that I find some difficulty in selecting what might be most interesting to your readers."

"Well," I replied, "suppose you begin by giving your personal impressions."

"Madame Blavatsky," said Mr. Yeats, "struck me as being a very strong character. In her ordinary moods, rather combative, and inclined to rub people's prejudices the other way. When depressed, she dropped her combativeness, and, thrown back on herself, as it were, became most interesting, and talked about her own life. A clever American, who was not a Theosophist, said to me once: 'Madame Blavatsky has become the most famous woman in the whole world, by sitting in her arm-chair, and getting people to talk to her.'"

"I have heard it stated," said I, "in connection with the Coloumb incidents, that Madame Blavatsky showed great lack of insight into character."

"For so powerful a personality," replied Mr. Yeats, "she did seem to lack something in that respect. I remember, for instance, on one occasion she introduced me to a French occultist, whom she spoke of very highly, and even urged me to read his books. Within a short time he was expelled from the Society for what appeared excellent reasons. 'I have had to expel him,' said Madame Blavatsky to me; 'he sold a love elixir for two francs; had it been forty francs I might have overlooked the fact.' On another occasion she told me, quite seriously, that I would have a severe illness within six months, and I am waiting for that illness still. Attempts are made by people very often,"

continued Mr. Yeats, "to wash humanity out of their leaders. Madame Blavatsky made mistakes; she was human, and to me that fact makes her, if possible, the more interesting. Another peculiarity was her evident lack of proportion. An attack on the Theosophical movement (she did not seem to mind personal attacks) in some obscure little paper, was to her of as much importance as if it appeared in the *Times*."

In reply to another question, Mr. Yeats remarked that she had met Demussét a few times, and Bizac once. She had worked a little at occultism with George Sands, but, to use her own words, both were "mere dabblers" at the time.

"What did you think of Madame Blavatsky as a talker?" I asked.

"It has been said of Dr. Johnson," replied Mr. Yeats, "that the effeminate reader is repelled by him; and the same might be said of Madame Blavatsky as a talker. She had that kind of faculty which repelled the weak, and attracted those of a stronger temperament. She hated paradox, and yet she gave utterance to the most magnificent paradox I ever heard."

"As you heard her talk a good deal, perhaps you will kindly relate to me any interesting sayings that occur to you," said I.

"With pleasure," replied Mr. Yeats, lighting another cigarette. "I called on Madame Blavatsky one day, with a friend—a T. C. D. man. She was trying to explain to us the nature of the Akas, and was entering into an exceedingly subtle metaphysical analysis of the difference between fore-knowledge and predestination—a problem which has interested theologians of ancient, as well as modern times—showing the way in which the whole question was mixed up with the question of the Akas, when suddenly she broke off—my friend not following, and said, turning round, and pointing to one of her followers who was present: 'You with your spectacles and your impudence, you will be sitting there in the Akas to all eternity—no not to all eternity, for a day will come when even the Akas will pass away, and then there shall be nothing but God—Chaos—that which every man is seeking in his heart.'"

"At another time, when I called, she seemed rather depressed. 'Ah!' she said, 'there is no solidarity among the good; there is only solidarity among the evil. There was a time when I used to blame and pity the people who sold their souls to the devil, now I only pity them; I know why they do it; they do it to have somebody on their side.' 'As for me I write, write, write, as the Wandering Jew walks, walks, walks.'"

"On one occasion, too," said Mr. Yeats, continuing, "she referred to the Greek Church as the church of her childhood, saying: 'The Greek Church, like all true religions, was a triangle, but it spread out and became a bramble bush, and that is the Church of Rome; then they came and lopped off the branches, and turned it into a broomstick, and that is Protestantism.'"

In reply to a question, Mr. Yeats said, quoting her own words, with reference to Col. Olcott: "Ah! *he* is an honest man; *I* am an old Russian savage"; and, referring to Mr. Old, she said, with a hearty enthusiasm that, in certain respects, he was above all those about her at that time.

"Can you remember anything in the nature of a prophecy, Mr. Yeats, made by Madame Blavatsky, that might be of interest to record, notwithstanding the fact that you are yet awaiting your prophesied illness?" I asked.

"The only thing of that nature," replied Mr. Yeats, "was a reference to England." "The Master told me," said she, "that the power of England would not outlive the century, and the Master never deceived me."

"I am very much obliged to you, Mr. Yeats," said I, "for the kind manner in which you have responded to my enquiries regarding Madame Blavatsky; perhaps you will pardon me if I ask you one or two questions about your own work now. Do you intend, at any time, publishing a book on 'Mysticism'?"

"Yes; at no very distant date I hope to publish a work dealing with mystics I have seen, and stories I have heard, but it will be as an artist, not as a controversialist."

"And what about your present work?" I asked.

"'Celtic Twilight,' a work dealing with ghosts, goblins, and faeries, will be out shortly; also a small selection of 'Blake's Poems,' he replied. "Then, I am getting ready for publication, next spring, a book of poems, which I intend calling, 'The Wind among the Reeds'; and, as soon afterwards as possible, a collection of essays, and lectures dealing with Irish nationality and literature, which will probably appear under the title of the 'Watch Fire.'"

After due apologies for my intrusion, I bade my host good evening, and withdrew feeling more than satisfied with the result of my interview.

Mr. Yeats has often been spoken of as a dreamer, and many strange stories are afloat which go a long way to bear out such a statement. But, in my opinion, he combines the man of thought with the man of action; he is "whole of heart and sound of head," and Ireland may, indeed, be proud of one who promises to rank among her most worthy sons.

D. N. D.

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THEOSOPHY AND COMMERCE.

THERE is a disposition in certain quarters to look upon the Esoteric Philosophy as something altogether outside the sphere of the average man of business; and, to an extent, Theosophists are themselves responsible for this. When asked an innocent question upon some ethical subject, or invited to explain our position upon such a problem of universal interest, say as evolution, we are apt to overwhelm the questioner with an elaborate disquisition, full of Sanskrit words, which are utterly meaningless to him, and he goes away with the idea that Theosophy is an Oriental jumble, unsuitable for sensible matter-of-fact Britons. On the other hand, there are many students who look upon Commerce as a sort of necessary evil to be barely tolerated, and those engaged in it as the inheritors of unfortunate Karma, whose daily life unfits them for deep spiritual experiences, and from whom it is useless to expect a real application of the high morality necessary to occult development.

As a business man, fully alive to the enormous amount of human thought now necessarily devoted to commercial matters in our "nation of shopkeepers," I venture to think it may be a useful enquiry to consider—first, what we may take to be the relation of Theosophy to Commerce; and secondly, what are its advantages over other systems of thought, likely to attract men of business who possess some desire to satisfy the demands of their intellectual and spiritual nature?

Competent critics have declared that the secret of England's greatness is the intense selfishness and energy of her merchants. It is undoubtedly true that the growth of the British Empire is largely due to these and similar characteristics, which will assuredly dominate the great Anglo-Saxon race for many years to come. One of the most striking facts noticed by every serious student of history is that where races or nations have developed particular features of character, which differentiates them from other ethnical groups of humanity, it has invariably been at the expense of other qualities equally important in forming the perfect man. Ancient Mexico and Peru, and the long chapters of Chinese history, are conspicuous examples of an advanced civilisation progressing side by side with the grossest superstition, and an utter disregard of the sanctity of human life. In England, on the other hand, may be traced a remarkable colonising and industrial spirit, but a general neglect of those vast problems of life which lie beyond the domain of materialistic science. The Western world is just discovering how little it knows of psychology and cognate subjects, which to the Eastern mind has been the most attractive field for study during long ages. It is the especial mission of Theosophy to demonstrate the supreme importance of these subjects in order to secure a rational and philosophical basis for conduct, and the next century will probably immortalise many Western devotees of the sciences connected with mind and spirit, as deservedly as the nineteenth has placed the names of Darwin and Huxley in a permanent niche of fame.

In England—and the same would be true of America—our existence is centred around the industrial and commercial energy of the people—and the great majority of men pass their lives amid a competitive system of the most exacting nature. It is in the constant efforts to provide new markets for the output of our great seats of production that Western habits are primarily carried into distant lands. It must be confessed that the existing war of tariffs, and the severe international competition in the markets of the world, do not favour the early realisation of that universal Brotherhood among men and nations, which is the first object of the Theosophical Society, cosmopolitan societies and congresses notwithstanding. We did something by throwing open English markets to the world fifty years ago; but the entire system of international exchange must be largely modified, and business men must learn to recognise the rights of their fellows, without distinction, before we may hope to see a real Brotherhood of Humanity become an accomplished fact. I believe the gradual abolition of monopolies and restrictive tariffs will do much in this direction; but this is a matter for the economist and statesman.

The fact that what are regarded as necessities of life are found distributed over so many lands points to the wisdom of unrestricted interchange of commodities among nations, and to the occult truth that we are all a part of the One Life, affected not merely by our own small environment, and the life of our community, but actually related on all planes with men of every race, creed and colour. Nature supplies us with a better code of morals than the churches in this, as in other matters.

Unfortunately, competition is not confined to nations, but at home we have the same internicine war—London fighting Manchester; Leeds opposed to Bradford; and Southampton pitted against Liverpool.—while the struggle between

Newcastle, Belfast and Glasgow, shows what a really United Kingdom we are! The same applies to smaller areas, where large capitalists and co-operative societies are making the small tradesman a mere fly on the wheel. How like vipers in a barrel—seeing who can get his head uppermost! The awful *waste* in such a system must be apparent to everyone—not merely a material waste, but including the very health and character of the people.

(*To be continued.*)

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THE MEDITATION OF PARVATI.

PARVATI rose up from his seat under the banyan tree. He passed his hand unsteadily over his brow. Throughout the day the young ascetic had been plunged in profound meditation, and now, returning from heaven to earth, he was dazed like one who awakens in darkness and knows not where he is. All day long before his inner eye burned the light of the Lokas, until he was wearied and exhausted with their splendours: space glowed like a diamond with intolerable lustre, and there was no end to the dazzling processions of figures. He had seen the fiery dreams of the dead in Swargam. He had been tormented by the sweet singing of the Gandharvas, whose choral song reflected in its ripples the rhythmic pulse of Being. He saw how the orbs, which held them, were set within luminous orbs of still wider circuit, and vaster and vaster grew the vistas, and smaller seemed the soul at gaze, until at last, a mere speck of life, he bore the burden of innumerable worlds. Seeking for Brahma, he found only the great illusion as infinite as Brahma's being.

If these things were shadows, the earth and the forests he returned to, viewed at evening, seemed still more unreal, the mere dusky flutter of a moth's wings in space. Filmy and evanescent, if he had sunk down as through a transparency into the void, it would not have been wonderful. Parvati turned homeward, still half in trance: as he threaded the dim alleys he noticed not the flaming eyes that regarded him from the gloom; the serpents rustling amid the undergrowths; the lizards, fire-flies, insects, the innumerable lives of which the Indian forest was rumourous; they also were but shadows. He paused half unconsciously at the village, hearing the sound of human voices, of children at play. He felt a throb of pity for these tiny beings who struggled and shouted, rolling over each other in ecstasies of joy; the great illusion had indeed devoured them before whom the Devas once were worshippers. Then close beside him he heard a voice; its low tones, its reverence soothed him: there was something akin to his own nature in it; it awakened him fully. A little crowd of five or six people were listening silently to an old man who read from a palm-leaf manuscript. Parvati knew his order by the orange-coloured robes he wore; a Bhikshu of the new faith. What was his delusion?

The old man lifted his head for a moment as the ascetic came closer, and then he continued as before. He was reading the "Legend of the Great King of Glory." Parvati listened to it, comprehending with the swift intuition and subtlety of a mystic the inner meaning of the Wonderful Wheel, the Elephant Treasure, the Lake and Palace of Righteousness. He followed the speaker,

understanding all until he came to the meditation of the King : then he heard with vibrating heart, how "the Great King of Glory entered the golden chamber, and set himself down on the silver couch. And he let his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of Love; and so the second quarter, and so the third, and so the fourth. And thus the whole wide world, above, below, around and everywhere, did he continue to pervade with heart of Love, far-reaching, grown great, and beyond measure." When the old Bhikshu had ended, Parvati rose up, and went back again into the forest. He had found the secret of the True—to leave behind the vistas, and enter into the Being. Another legend rose up in his mind, a fairy legend of righteousness, expanding and filling the universe, a vision beautiful and full of old enchantment ; his heart sang within him. He seated himself again under the banyan tree ; he rose up in soul ; he saw before him images, long-forgotten, of those who suffer in the sorrowful old earth ; he saw the desolation and loneliness of old age, the insults to the captive, the misery of the leper and outcast, the chill horror and darkness of life in a dungeon. He drank in all their sorrow. From his heart he went out to them. Love, a fierce and tender flame arose ; pity, a breath from the vast ; sympathy, born of unity. This triple fire sent forth its rays ; they surrounded those dark souls ; they pervaded them ; they beat down oppression.

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While Parvati, with spiritual magic, sent forth the healing powers, far away at that moment, in his hall, a king sat enthroned. A captive was bound before him ; bound, but proud, defiant, unconquerable of soul. There was silence in the hall until the king spake the doom, the torture, for this ancient enemy. The king spake : "I had thought to do some fierce thing to thee, and so end thy days, my enemy. But, I remember with sorrow, the great wrongs we have done to each other, and the hearts made sore by our hatred. I shall do no more wrong to thee. Thou art free to depart. Do what thou wilt. I will make restitution to thee as far as may be for thy ruined state." Then the soul no might could conquer was conquered, and the knees were bowed ; his pride was overcome. "My brother !" he said, and could say no more.

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To watch for years a little narrow slit high up in the dark cell, so high that he could not reach up and look out ; and there to see daily a little change from blue to dark in the sky had withered that prisoner's soul. The bitter tears came no more ; hardly even sorrow ; only a dull, dead feeling. But that day a great groan burst from him : he heard outside the laugh of a child who was playing and gathering flowers under the high, grey walls : then it all came over him, the divine things missed, the light, the glory, and the beauty that the earth puts forth for her children. The narrow slit was darkened : half of a little bronze face appeared.

"Who are you down there in the darkness who sigh so ? Are you all alone there ? For so many years ! Ah, poor man ! I would come down to you if I could, but I will sit here and talk to you for a while. Here are flowers for you," and a little arm showered them in handfuls ; the room was full of the intoxicating fragrance of summer. Day after day the child came, and the dull heart entered into human love once more.

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At twilight, by a deep and wide river, sat an old woman alone, dreamy, and full of memories. The lights of the swift passing boats, and the lights of the stars, were just as in childhood and the old love-time. Old, feeble, it was time for her to hurry away from the place which changed not with her sorrow.

"Do you see our old neighbour there?" said Ayesha to her lover. "They say she once was as beautiful as you would make me think I am now. How lonely she must be! Let us come near and speak to her"; and the lover went gladly. Though they spoke to each other rather than to her, yet something of the past—which never dies when love, the immortal, has pervaded it—rose up again as she heard their voices. She smiled, thinking of years of burning beauty.

* * * * *

A teacher, accompanied by his chelas, was passing by the wayside where a leper was sitting. The teacher said, "Here is our brother whom we may not touch. But he need not be shut out from truth. We may sit down where he can listen." He sat down on the wayside beside the leper, and his chelas stood around him. He spoke words full of love, kindness, and pity, the eternal truths which make the soul grow full of sweetness and youth. A small old spot began to glow in the heart of the leper, and the tears ran down his withered cheeks.

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All these were the deeds of Parvati, the ascetic; and the Watcher who was over him from all eternity made a great stride towards that soul.

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TO A POET.

Oh, be not led away,
Lured by the colour of the sun-rich day.
The gay romance of song
Unto the spirit-life doth not belong.
Though far-between the hours
In which the Master of Angelic Powers
Lightens the dusk within
The Holy of Holies; be it thine to win
Rare vistas of white light,
Half-parted lips, through which the Infinite
Murmurs her ancient story;
Harkening to whom the wandering planets hoary
Waken primeval fires,
With deeper rapture in celestial choirs
Breathe, and with fleeter motion
Wheel in their orbits through the surgeless ocean.
So, hearken thou like these,
Intent on her, mounting by slow degrees,
Until thy song's elation
Echoes her multitudinous meditation.

G. W. R.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

TO THE EDITOR OF 'THE "IRISH THEOSOPHIST."'

"DEAR SIR AND BROTHER,—I am inclined to think that your correspondent, 'Not ashamed of my Conviction,' who writes in your October number, is perhaps under a misunderstanding, though, as he does not specify any particular instance of supposed dogmatism, I cannot be sure of this. None the less, I imagine the position of affairs to be somewhat as follows:—Many members of the T.S. are convinced of the existence of Masters of Wisdom, and expressly state their conviction, in which they are quite right, of course; but if pressed for the grounds of their belief, they decline to give them. On the other hand, many other members are equally convinced of Masters' existence; they also expressly declare that conviction, and are prepared to state the grounds upon which they hold such belief. They may be unjust in saying that the other members are dogmatic, though certainly the first of the above-named positions certainly would bear that construction, especially in the eyes of beginners in the study of Theosophy. Now my object in writing, Mr. Editor, is to suggest that there are many valid reasons for believing in the existence of Masters; and that these reasons are such as to be easily and simply stated, and I hope that those who feel impelled to proclaim the existence of Masters will bear in mind that a mere assertion of conviction, unsupported by any grounds of belief, is likely to repel many enquirers, who would be quite willing and able to appreciate the reasons for the belief. I will give what I consider ample reasons for my conviction, which I insist upon, whenever opportunity arises, both in public and private.

First, then, everybody believes in evolution in some shape or other, and must readily admit that he himself is not its highest product; further, he will as readily admit that he knows no one who would comply with his own requirements as the highest possible present product of evolution. Then he must admit that the possibility of Masters' existence is to be conceded? Yes.

Secondly, comes the marshalling of the evidence that they do exist, and this naturally falls under the heads of (a) evidence that appeals to us directly, and (b) evidence consisting of the testimony of others. Under (a) we have the Esoteric Philosophy as a whole as presented most completely in the 'Secret Doctrine.' If Madame Blavatsky's claim is true, and I believe it is, that the Philosophy there expounded, though admittedly only a fragment, dealing with more of the subjects with which philosophical minds are occupied than any other system of philosophy (and this fact, be it noted, is entirely independent of anyone's agreement or disagreement with the conclusions therein promulgated) was taught to her by Masters. Now if her claim be true, Masters exist; if it be not true, she invented it, and was therefore herself a Master, as she has admittedly promulgated the most comprehensive system of Philosophy known; a performance far transcending the powers of any previous philosopher's intellect. Under (b) comes the testimony of Madame Blavatsky, Col. Olcott, Mr. A. P. Sinnett, and many others, who testify, among other things, to having met in the flesh men whom they had known by sight previously, through the medium of appearances in other than physical bodies, and who, in both states, satisfied our witnesses as to their identity by teaching portions of the Esoteric Philosophy.

In conclusion, let me appeal to all who are earnestly striving to spread Theosophical teachings, to give, when possible, some ground for the assertions they feel called upon to make. Assertion, by itself, is often insufficient as an appeal to many intelligent minds; backed up by reasons for the faith that is in us, it is more likely to be of benefit to the Cause, to enquirers, and to ourselves.

Again, having these firm convictions, will it not be well for us to assert them, to do the work they prompt us to do with all our might and main, so as to leave as little time as may be for the criticism of others' methods?"—Yours fraternally,

O. FIRTH.

Hawthorne House, Baidon, near Shipleigh.

REVIEWS.

*Reminiscences of H. P. Blavatsky and the Secret Doctrine.** By Countess Wachtmeister and others. As, one after another, stories of H. P. Blavatsky are related by those who were associated with her in her life-work, we begin to form some slight conception of her mystic personality. Her story, in its romantic interest merely, is unsurpassed by any in history or fiction. This little book will deepen the interest already felt. Students of occult science will find in the account of how the "Secret Doctrine" was written many a hint on occult practice. Here is H. P. B.'s own description of her method: "I make what I can only describe as a sort of vacuum in the air before me, and fix my sight and my will upon it, and soon scene after scene passes before me like the successive pictures of a diorama; or, if I need a reference or information from some book, I fix my mind intently, and the astral counterpart of the book appears, and from it I take what I need." Here is another quotation which shows how the deepest insight justifies and necessitates the highest Ethics. Let those listen who criticise her action with regard to her enemies; being worldly-wise let them hear diviner wisdom and deeper charity. It was a matter for scoffing that H. P. B., the clairvoyant, could not tell her friends from her foes. "Whom I," she said, "that I should deny a chance to one in whom I see a spark still glimmering of recognition of the cause I serve, that might yet be fanned into a flame of devotion? What matter the consequences that fall on me personally when such an one fails, succumbing to the forces of evil within him; though in his fall he cover me with misrepresentation, obloquy, and scorn? What right have I to refuse to anyone the chance of profiting by the truths I can teach him, and thereby entering upon the path? I tell you I have no choice. I am pledged by the laws of occultism to a renunciation of selfish considerations, and how can I dare to assume the existence of faults in a candidate, and act upon my assumption even though a cloudy forbidding aura may fill me with misgivings?" Everyone should read the chapter headed, "A Private Letter," in which one of her students reveals something of his experiences with this occult preceptor. "On waking in the morning from a sleep so profound that the attitude of the previous night was still retained, I would vividly remember that I had gone, as it were, to H. P. B. I had been received in rooms which I could and did describe to those who lived with her. . . . She would receive me in varying fashion, showing me pictures which passed like panoramas across the walls of the room. There are but few that I could verbally describe, containing, as they do, methods of motion, of vibration, of the formation of a world from the first nucleus, of "spirit-moulding matter" into form, of motion that was consciousness, and that was precipitated into my brain as a picture of a fact or a truth." We hear of many mystics who have awakened hills of strange memories: perhaps this may give them a clue. The extracts here quoted will give some idea of the nature of the contents of this book. No student should be without it. As we read of this heroic soul with indomitable will working in a worn out and diseased body, we arise full of reverence and gratitude. It was to her we owe what we can repay only in service to the cause—the re-awakening in our hearts of the antique ideals held by the Rishies of divine primeval truth, and the knowledge of the way to such attainment.

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LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

THE nature of all things near and dear to us, O King, is such that we must leave them, divide ourselves from them, separate ourselves from them. Pass not away, O King, with longing in thy heart. Sad is the death of him who longs, unworthy is the death of him who longs.—*Mula Suktassam Sutta.*

It is better to do one's own duty, even though devoid of excellence, than to perform another's duty well.—*Mhagavad-Gita.*

As the spider moving upward by his thread gains free space, thus also he who meditates, moving upward by the known word Om, gains independence.—*Upanishad.*

O man, thou thinkest thou art alone, and actest as thou likest. Thou dost not perceive the Eternal Love that dwells within thy heart. Whatever is done by thee, It sees and notes it all. The Soul is its own witness, and is its own refuge. It is the Supreme Eternal witness of man. Do not offend it.—*Mahabharata and Manu.*

The Wise guard the home of nature's order; they assume excellent forms in secret.—*Rig. Veda.*

Seek for one who has attained rest in the spirit, like the flame which has attained rest

* Published by the Theosophical Publication Society, 7 Duke Street, Adelphi, London. Price, 1s. 6d.

when the fuel is consumed, and one whose kindness is not actuated by personal considerations and who is anxious to befriend those who seek for help.

The Great and Peaceful Ones live regenerating the world like the coming of spring, and having crossed the ocean of embodied existence they help those who journey on the same path. Their desire is spontaneous; it is the natural tendency of great souls to remove the suffering of others.—*Viveka Chudamani*.

He lets his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of love, and so the second, and so the third, and so the fourth. And thus the whole wide world, above, below, around, and everywhere, does he continue to pervade with heart of love—far-reaching, grown great, and beyond measure.

Verily, this is the way to a state of union with Brahma.—*Tevigga Sutta*.

If a Bhikkhu should desire, Brethren, to hear with clear and heavenly ear, surpassing that of men, sounds both human and celestial, whether far or near, let him then fulfil all righteousness, let him be devoted to that quietude of heart which springs from within, let him not drive back the ecstasy of contemplation, let him see through things, let him be much alone.—*Ahankheyya Sutta*.

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HOME-SICKNESS.

When the hot wind of the summer day
Blew the dust of earth in my face,
As I walked along the desolate way,
I dreamed upon that other place,

When the bells in the lonely midnight towers
Struck and rolled on the long, long chime;
Again and again for the old earth's hours,
I dreamed upon that other time.

C. W.

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DUBLIN LODGE.—3 UPPER ELY PLACE.

The discussions to the end of the present month are:—

Nov. 15th	•	"The Three Qualities,"	-	G. W. Russell,
" 22nd	•	"The Ethics of Theosophy,"	•	A. Varian.
" 29th	•	"The Esoteric Side of Christianity,"		J. J. Nolan.

The departure of Bro. Harrison to America leaves a blank in the working staff which will be hard to fill. It was largely due to his quiet and unwearied industry that the IRISH THEOSOPHIST appeared so punctually up to time from the first. We hope the climate of America will agree better with him, and may wider areas of service come to him!

FRED J. DICK, *Secretary*.

All literary contributions to be addressed to the EDITOR, and business communications to the PUBLISHER, 71 Lower Drumcondra Road, Dublin.

THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST

No. 3.

DUBLIN, DECEMBER 15TH, 1893.

VOL. II.

NOTICE.

The Theosophical Society is in no way responsible for any opinions, in signed or unsigned articles, that appear in this Magazine.

All Literary contributions should be addressed to the EDITOR, and Business communications to the PUBLISHER, 71 Drumcondra Road, Dublin.

Yearly Subscription, 3s. 6d. post free.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

● OURSELVES.

The proposal, made in our last issue, to increase the size of the *I.T.* by four pages, and raise the price to 3d., has been favourably received by the majority of subscribers, who have communicated with me on the subject. These alterations, as will be observed, begin with this number. At the same time, I take the opportunity of returning thanks for the very felicitous terms in which most of the letters were written. Those responsible for the outlay connected with the *I.T.* were weak enough to look for some results in justification of the somewhat heavy expense. Nor have they looked in vain. One correspondent writes:—“I always read your paper with the greatest interest, and I know that what you say, and the way you say it, is both attractive and helpful to others.” So, with your help, dear readers, “we go right on.”

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NEW FEATURES.

With four more pages to fill, I have naturally been thinking over the best way to utilize them. I thought of the children, and felt there was a growing need to devote some of our attention to them. Some unexpected correspondence with Mrs. Cooper Oakley, who has lately been interesting herself particularly in this branch of activity, confirmed my opinion. A beginning, therefore, has been made in this number. Needless to say, such a feature cannot be successfully carried on without the co-operation and support of parents. I ask their kind attention and consideration to what has been said on the matter on another page. Then there are those who are children in quite a different sense, *i.e.*, as regards membership in the T.S. It occurred to me that a service might be done for them also. There exists a store-house of “good things” they have not had access to, so far, at least. For instance, in old numbers of *The Path*,

and elsewhere, there are many articles by H. P. B. and others, on very varied subjects, full of useful and practical teaching, which probably most of them have never seen at all. An effort will be made to gather together the best of what has been written, from time to time, on these different subjects, and in the hurry of modern life, I have no doubt this feature will be found helpful to all. Those who have time and opportunity can aid greatly in this work by sending me what they consider the most interesting extracts on the subject on hand for each month. The subject for next month will be 'Elementals.'

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THEOSOPHY AT THE
WORLD'S FAIR.

The report of proceedings and documents, in connection with the Theosophical Congress, at the Parliament of Religions, held at the World's Fair, is now before me. Glancing over its pages, I am not surprised that some of the Chicago newspapers spoke of the T. S. Congress as a competitor of the whole parliament. Speech follows speech in orderly sequence, covering the whole field of Theosophy. It is a record worthy of a great occasion.

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THE RESULT.

The Rev. H. R. Haweis, writing to the *Daily Chronicle* on the Parliament of Religions, says: "The experiment, endorsed by the Pope, discountenanced by the Archbishop of Canterbury, embraced by the Heathen Chinee, welcomed by Hindu, Parsee, Cingalese, and the chiefs of almost every acknowledged religion of the world, has resulted in a demonstration the like of which has perhaps not been seen since the days of Constantine, Arius, and Athanasius." And again: "On the whole, the message to the world from the World's Parliament of Religions has been peace to all that are near, and all that are afar off. It is time to proclaim the essential unity of all religions—they conflict only in their accidents. The "broken lights" bear witness to the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world—nay, are parts of that Light as much as the colours in the prism are parts of the sunlight. Henceforth to accept Christ the rejection of all the teachers that went before Him is not necessary, and to receive Christianity need not carry with it the dogma that all other religions are in all parts false."

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The following extract from the same article is not without its significance from such a source:—
"Vivekananda, the popular Hindu monk, whose physiognomy bore the most striking resemblance to the classic face of the Buddha, denounced our commercial prosperity, our bloody wars, and our religious intolerance, declaring that at such a price the 'mild Hindu' would have none of our vaunted civilisation. 'You come,' he cried, 'with the Bible in one hand and the conqueror's sword in the other—you, with your religion of yesterday, to us who were taught thousands of years ago by our Rishis, precepts as noble and lives as holy as your Christ's. You trample on us and treat us like the dust beneath your feet. You destroy precious life in animals. You are *carnivores*. You degrade our people with drink. You insult our women,

You scorn our religion—in many points like yours, only better, because more humane. And then you wonder why Christianity makes such slow progress in India. I tell you it is because you are not like your Christ, whom we could honour and reverence. Do you think, if you came to our doors like Him, meek and lowly, with a message of love, living and working and suffering for others as He did, we should turn a deaf ear? Oh, no! We should receive Him and listen to Him, just as we have done our own inspired Rishis' (teachers)."

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"SILLY UTTERANCES." Here comes a strange contrast. *The Irish Church Weekly*, of 25th ult., in a leader on "Spiritualism" complains of the manner in which newspapers chronicle the vagaries of "Spiritualists, Mesmerists, Theosophists, Swedenborgians, Mormons, Amateur Buddhists, and the like." "The ordination," it continues, "of a number of pious men to be Christ's servants, and to pursue the holiest of callings, is described in the same style as that in which the silly utterances of a Theosophist are narrated—thus giving the same authority to true and false."

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A REPLY. In reply, we cannot do better than cull the following paragraph from *The Northern Theosophist*: "To quote MaxMuller, 'It should be known, once for all, that one may call oneself a Theosophist without being suspected of believing in spirit rappings, table turnings, or any other occult sciences and black arts.' A Theosophist's time is not devoted to 'taking afternoon tea on the table lands of Tibet,' nor to promiscuous journeyings 'on the Astral plane.' He believes in human brotherhood, not as a beautiful ideal, but as an actual fact; and to him ethics are demonstrable laws of being. Repudiating the supernatural he recognises the metaphysical; and by scientific methods, as exact as those supposed to be the peculiar possession of physics, he reaches a knowledge of spiritual things of greater potency in the determination of conduct than is possible under any 'belief' founded only upon authoritative teaching."

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OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES ON OCCULTISM. Mention of Mr. Haws reminds me of an interesting character sketch, of Oliver Wendell Holmes, appearing over his name, in the current number of *The Young Man*. Relating how the Bishop of Gloucester, Dr. Samuel Smiles, and himself, formed a little social party one afternoon, at a London Club, he writes: "The talk wandered freely over all sorts of fields—literary, and scientific, and social—until it got entangled inevitably in 'occultism'—ghosts, double psychic phenomena—on all which questions the Bishop keeps a singularly fair and open mind. Talking of brain waves, Oliver Wendell Holmes went off in his best style. 'I think we are all unconsciously conscious of each other's brain-waves at times; the fact is, words and even signs are a very poor sort of language compared with the direct telegraphy between souls. The mistake we make is to suppose that the soul is circumscribed and imprisoned by the body. Now the truth is, I believe, I extend a good way outside my body; well, I should say at least three or four feet all round, and so do you, and it is our extensions

that meet. Before words pass or we shake hands, our souls have exchanged impressions, and they never lie."

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I have to herald the appearance of a new Theosophical *The Northern Theosophist*. Monthly. It hails from the Middlesboro' Lodge; is entitled *The Northern Theosophist*, and sold at the popular Penny. The contents are interesting, chatty, and varied, and it promises to be an excellent propagandist. I extend the hand of fellowship, and hope the *Northern Theosophist* will meet with the success it certainly deserves. Subscription—1s. 6d. per annum, post free, which should be sent to 10 West Terrace, North Ormesby, Middlesborough.

D. N. D.

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THEOSOPHY IN PLAIN LANGUAGE.

XII. WHAT IS KARMA ?

THERE is, perhaps, no term in the whole of our Theosophical vocabulary which calls up such a host of complex and far-reaching associations as that oft-used and much-discussed word, *Karma*. The idea itself, for which the word stands, is one of those elemental conceptions like *life*, or *mind*, or *will*, or *consciousness*, which we use constantly and freely without stopping much to reflect how little we actually know about the real meaning and essence of any one of them. It is easy to say that Karma is the "law of ethical causation," the law of Justice which secures that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Or we can define it as that tendency or trend in nature that is the cause of all evolution, growth, or progress. Karma is all this, and more, for in the last analysis it is Action itself, the principle of Cause and Effect that prevails throughout the entire universe, and, in fact, makes it a Uni-verse at all—a Cosmos and not a Chaos. But in the end, in any attempt to really explain and account for our belief in that principle of harmony and adjustment which we call Karma, we find ourselves at last falling back upon one of those primary perceptions or intuitions of the mind, out of which all philosophy takes its rise, and beyond which our thought cannot reach—upon the simple idea of law itself. Nobody can tell exactly what law is; or rather no two persons can be relied upon to give you quite the same account of what they mean by the "laws of nature." All are agreed that these laws exist. Disagreements arise when we try to interpret them, to trace back their origin, to ascribe to one set of causes or another the various facts and phenomena by which we are surrounded.

Now, one great characteristic of what is called occultism, or occult philosophy, is that it asserts the influence upon human life of forces and laws which are not recognised at present by normal perception, though their effects are felt by all. In the East especially, where men have always cultivated a habit of steady attention and analysis directed, not as here to the external phenomena of nature, so much as to the internal, unseen world of mind and consciousness—there has ever been taught the existence of certain hidden agencies affecting the destiny and development of human souls—forces which are as constant and as resistless upon their own plane as are the laws of gravity or electricity or chemistry upon this; and as capable of verification by proper methods. So great, indeed, has been the influence, in the East, of this subtle

occult view of life, that whole nations of men no more think of doubting, for instance, the certainty of the law which rewards each man "according to his deeds," and apportion to us joy or sorrow according to our conduct in former lives, than we would think of doubting the existence of gravitation. True, these people are believing in something which they have not discovered, or always verified, for themselves. But did *we* discover for ourselves even what seems so obvious when pointed out—that attractive force which acts on things and makes them "fall"? Should we in fact have ever thought of asking for a reason *why* things fall, content with knowing that they *do* fall, had it not been for the intuitive genius of Sir Isaac Newton? That great man had a habit of observing and reflecting upon what he saw—even if it were such a common and familiar occurrence as the falling of an apple. He saw with the *mind* what other men saw only with their *eyes*. By a precisely similar habit of observation and reflection, directed inward to the problem of life, consciousness, being itself, the Eastern mind arrived at the cognition of that evolutionary law, that principle of infallible justice or desert controlling human destiny which is known as Karma. And just as the difference between Newton and other men of his time, consisted in the fact that he demanded a *reason* for what they took as a matter of course, so it is with Eastern and Western thought when dealing with the familiar facts of everyday life and experience.

For example, we talk constantly of things "happening" to us, and whatever our state of mind, whether contented with our lot or the reverse, we are always attributing the cause to something outside of ourselves. Of course, the "personal factor" is recognised to count for something. We all know that the same event will affect no two people in quite the same way. This is commonly explained by saying, that so-and-so has a "morbid temperament," while such another is "naturally cheerful"; but how few go further than this, and ask, *why* these differences of character and disposition exist which all exhibit from very infancy. Simply to say with a shrug, "Oh! people are *born* that way" does not explain matters, for, unless we reject the idea of soul altogether (and with that position we cannot here turn aside to argue) the question must arise, *why* they were "born that way." To this question neither our Western theology nor our philosophy vouchsafe any reply. In the East the difficulty is faced and logically answered by the doctrine of pre-existence, and pre-existence leads us to the ideas of re-birth and of Karma. The former of these has been dealt with in earlier chapters of this series. To a more detailed examination of the Doctrine of Karma itself we shall devote our next article.

To be continued.

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GLEANINGS FROM THEOSOPHICAL LITERATURE.

. All who have time and opportunity are invited to send selections on the subject chosen for each month. These will be arranged, and appear under this heading.

Subject for January—"Elementals."

HINTS FOR OCCULT STUDENTS.

HERE is the key so much desired by enterprising—indeed all—students. It is by means of these correlations of colour, sound, form, number and substance that the trained will of the initiate rules and uses the denizens of the elemental world. Many Theosophists have had slight conscious relations with elementals, but always without their will acting, and, upon trying to make elementals see, hear, or act for them, a total indifference on the part of the

nature spirit is all they have got in return. These failures are due to the fact that the elemental cannot understand the thought of the person; it can only be reached when the exact scale of being to which it belongs is vibrated, whether it be that of colour, form, sound, or whatever else.—H.P.B. "*Path*," *May*, 1888.

Countless myriads of forms are in that ideal sphere, and matter exists in the astral light, or even in the atmosphere, that has passed through all forms possible for us to conceive of. All that the adept has to do is to select the "abstract form" desired, then to hold it before him with a force and intensity unknown to the men of this hurried age, while he draws into its boundaries the matter required to make it visible. How easy this is to state, how difficult to believe; yet quite true, as many a Theosophist well knows. The oftener this is done with any one form, the easier it becomes. And so it is with nature: her ease of production grows like a habit.—H.P.B. "*Path*," *May*, 1888.

The thinking of *oneself* as this, that, or the other, is the chief factor in the production of every kind of psychic or even physical phenomena.—*Secret Doctrine*, ii., 59.

If I fix my thought on the fault of another, an electric stream flows between that diseased moral part and myself, and draws elementals along it to torment me into a similar plague * * * May we confine our thoughts to universals, our loves and hates to principals.—*Julius*. "*Path*," *May*, 1887.

Do not take any man at his surface valuation or yours, but look to the spirit within his words. This discernment of spirits is a great power; it can be cultivated. Close your eyes, summon up the man before your thought, and try to *feel his total effect* as it impresses itself upon your passive mind.—*Jasper Nicmand*. "*Path*," *June*, 1887.

The symbol of the *living fire* is the sun, certain of whose rays develop the *fire of life* in a diseased body, impart the knowledge of the future to the sluggish mind, and stimulate to active function a certain psychic and generally dormant faculty in man.—"*Glossary*," *Page 119*. *Fire*.

The popular prevailing idea is that the theurgists, as well as the magicians, worked wonders, such as evoking the souls or shadows of the heroes or gods, and other thaumaturgic works, by *supernatural* powers. But this was never the fact. They did it simply by the liberation of their own astral body, which, taking the form of a god or hero, served as a *medium* or vehicle through which the special current preserving the ideas and knowledge of that hero or god could be reached and manifested.—"*Glossary*," *Page 330*. *Theurgist*.

For such states (dual consciousness) a far more plausible theory than that of the modern physiologist, is offered by occultism. When our astral man leaves the body, whether consciously or unconsciously, it may become the home of an elementary with a strong desire for a return to earth life, especially if our principles are loosely put together, and we have incautiously left the body of our own will.—*Julius*. "*Path*," *June*, 1887.

Take the case of one who determines to leave the body merely to go to another who is admired by him, or whom he desires to see. This other, however, is protected by high motives and great purity. The first is mixed in motive in waking life, which, as soon as the disengaged state comes on, is changed into a mere will or curiosity to see the second, combined perhaps with more or less selfish purpose, or perhaps a sensuous feeling or worldly intent.

The elementals and other guardians of the second protect that soul, and hurl vague horrors at the first, who, if he is not a skilled black magician, is—

- (a) Either merely pushed back into the body, or:
- (b) Is assailed with fears that prevent him from finding or entering his body, and that may be occupied by an elementary, good, bad, or indifferent, and his friends say he waked up suddenly insane.

Quoted by Julius. "Path," June, 1887

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THEOSOPHY AND COMMERCE.

(Concluded).

THE disputes between capital and labour, which now occur with such painful frequency, is a result of our modern industrial system scarcely within the scope of my paper. They constitute one of the most striking pieces of evidence that we are on the verge—aye in the very throes—of great social changes. The practical Theosophist will do well to note carefully the trend of modern ideas, and the certain effect of economic law. King Demos has come, and with the balance of political power passing into the hands of the sons of toil—men of many needs, but little knowledge how to best supply them—there will be plenty of work for the man of calm judgment, keen human sympathies, and a determination to secure the rights and liberties of the individual, even in a state recognising the benefits of collectivism in every department of social life. But I must not wander into the interesting region of politics and sociology now, although it is closely related to what I consider the aim and scope of Theosophical Ethics.

It is scarcely necessary for me to particularise any of the numerous shams connected with modern trading, as they are familiar to everyone. The whole system is of necessity honeycombed with deception under the régime which obtains in the commercial world to-day—from the Stock Exchange down to the humblest distributor. It would, however, be unfair to assume that business life is on a lower moral plane than any other part of our present civilisation—we all know that our whole social system is excessively artificial from root to branch. Nor would it be just to assume that because the outcome of centuries of selfish trading is demoralising, every business man is necessarily a rogue. The present complex state of things must have been evolved, under Karmic Law, from a previous civilisation far from simple or altruistic, and a return to higher ideals can not be accomplished all at once, even by the most drastic methods. What we require is that the fundamental principles of exchange may be altered in the direction of gradually putting the interests of the community and humanity before those of individual gain and expediency. I am rather disposed to the opinion that on the whole, the middle class is the most moral in this country, although the reason may be that it is the least independent. Just now it certainly exhibits a desire for obtaining the luxuries of life scarcely in accord with the depression of trade which undoubtedly exists. It is a class which has given the world many of the noblest men who have illumined the records of human progress—and with the spread of culture, elimination of class distinctions, and a sounder knowledge of man's destiny, in place of the very vague belief in a future state of reward or punishment which most men now believe—there is the right material from which to expect a consideration for others which the present code renders almost impossible.

What, then, is the message of Theosophy, and its relation to the trading world of to-day—is it a gospel of peace and hope for the distracted man of business, or merely one more “idiom” thrust upon an age already weary of the strife of contending dogmas and creeds?

Now it is not claimed for Theosophy that it is a religion at all, for it is rather a philosophy which synthesises and unites Religion with Science. Nor are its concepts “new,” for they are the base of all the great religious systems of the world, and have been felt and expressed by many of the greatest poets, seers, and thinkers of all time—from Guatama Buddha to Tennyson. It directs attention to aspects of life too long neglected by the materialistic West, and claims that man is a spiritual being, with infinite capacity for self-development. We are invited to look *within* to solve the mysteries of life, and recognise each in our Higher Self that which makes for righteousness. “*The Kingdom of Heaven is within you*” is the Master’s truism of nineteen hundred years ago which must be resurrected from the weeds grown around his many golden words by modern priestcraft and ecclesiasticism. The knowledge of a past as well as a future immortality must supplant the conventional shibboleths and vague sentimentalities taught regarding the soul.

Widespread teaching of Karma and Reincarnation will be invaluable towards lifting the whole tone of our commercial system. I will go so far as to say, that a real faith in the Great Law will do more than anything else to check its most serious evils. Some such basis for conduct is our most urgent need: for

“ . . . virtue in distress and vice in triumph
Make Atheists of mankind.”

It might be trusted to strengthen the good influences which should follow our association with other races, who so readily imitate the white man’s vices, while ignoring his self-reliant qualities. Reincarnation is the key to explain how artificial is the barrier raised by society between man and man, and points to Brotherhood as an essential factor in human progress. The problems of wealth and poverty, genius and ignorance, happiness and misery, love and hate, here find a reasonable solution congenial to a shrewd, business intellect. Where is a system of thought providing a more complete rest and peace from the daily worries of life—or which provides so clearly for design and order amid all the riddles of existence so puzzling to every thoughtful mind? Popular religion generally exalts a particular profession to a position of spiritual authority which ultimately includes other social influence. The average business man is quite willing to allow the priest considerable prestige so long as he confines himself to purely church matters; but clerical interference in commercial affairs is usually resented, and their want of mundane knowledge is a common subject of ridicule. With the growing opportunities for culture, and it is to be hoped greater independence of thought among the middle class, it is reasonable to expect that a philosophy so free from cant as Theosophy will be eagerly welcomed if only because it fills up the gaps which are so objectionable in current theology.

Evidence of Karmic Law will be met by the business man in his ordinary transactions, and be more congenial to his trained shrewdness than such a doctrine as vicarious atonement—once he has grasped the elementary proposition. It will appeal to those instincts of the inner man which his experience has specially developed, and tend to soften the often harshly expressed criticism of competitors and dependents. The doctrine of Reincarnation will attract him as the only possible theory to account for the inequalities thrust upon his notice in every relation of life. It will also raise the tone of his thoughts and conduct by pointing to the desirability of completing the Ego’s trading experience in this

life by acting honourably in that capacity now, and by encouraging ideals of a wider influence in future lives through the effect of causes set in motion by service to others in the present one.

The practice of meditation, and efforts to evolve the spiritual nature, so far from proving incompatible with business duties, will serve as the starting-point and stimulant to the daily routine, and ultimately will be appreciated as the most precious moments in life. There is nothing irreconcilable between the study of the Secret Doctrine and a busy life. The latter furnishes the facts upon which the former throws a brilliant light, giving an insight into the real soul of things which cannot be found elsewhere in English literature. In fact, Theosophy, rightly considered, so far from enticing us from the ordinary duties of citizenship, exercises a great humanising influence upon the individual, drawing him even nearer his fellows in the bonds of true Brotherhood.

I hope enough has been said to justify my conviction that Theosophical teaching and practice, added to the energetic self-reliant traits of the Western commercial mind, are calculated to evolve a type of man worthy of that heritage of wisdom we are so slow to claim—and also to produce principles of exchange and distribution, giving that confidence between nations and men which will make the commercial life of the future an occupation equal in dignity to those professions now esteemed in the greatest honour.

C. J. WHITTING.

—:O:—

A TALK BY THE EUPHRATES.

PRRIEST MERODACH walked with me at evening along the banks of the great river.

“You feel despondent now,” he said, “but this was inevitable. You looked for a result equal to your inspiration. You must learn to be content with that alone. Finally an inspiration will come for every moment, and in every action a divine fire reveal itself.”

“I feel hopeless now. Why is this? Wish and will are not less strong than before.”

“Because you looked for a result beyond yourself, and, attached to external things, your mind drew to itself subtle essences of earth which clouded it. But there is more in it than that. Nature has a rhythm, and that part of us which is compounded of her elements shares in it. You were taught that nature is for ever becoming: the first emanation in the great deep is wisdom: wisdom changes into desire, and an unutterable yearning to go outward darkens the primeval beauty. Lastly, the elements arise, blind, dark, troubled. Nature in them imagines herself into forgetfulness. This rhythm repeats itself in man: a moment of inspiration—wise and clear, we determine; then we are seized with a great desire which impels us to action; the hero, the poet, the lover, all alike listen to the music of life, and then endeavour to express its meaning in word or deed; coming in contact with nature, its lethal influence drowns them; so baffled and forgetful, they wonder where the God is. To these in some moment the old inspiration returns, the universe is as magical and sweet as ever, a new impulse is given, and so they revolve, perverting and using, each one in his own way, the cosmic rhythm.”

“Merodach, what you say seems truth, and leaving aside the cosmic rhythm, which I do not comprehend, define again for me the three states.”

“You cannot really understand the little apart from the great; but,

applying this to your own case, you remember you had a strange experience, a God seemed to awaken within you. This passed away; you halted a little while, full of strange longing, eager for the great; yet you looked without on the hither side of that first moment, and in this second period, which is interchange and transition, your longing drew to you those subtle material essences I spoke of, which, like vapour surrounding, dull and bewilder the mind with strange phantasies of form and sensation. Every time we think with longing of any object, these essences flow to us out of the invisible spheres and steep us with the dew of matter; then we forget the great, we sleep, we are dead or despondent as you are despondent."

I sighed as I listened. A watchfulness over momentary desires was the first step; I had thought of the tasks of the hero as leading upwards to the Gods, but this sleepless intensity of will working within itself demanded a still greater endurance. I neared my destination; I paused and looked round; a sudden temptation assailed me; the world was fair enough to live in. Why should I toil after the far-off glory? Babylon seemed full of mystery, its temples and palaces steeped in the jewel glow and gloom of evening. In far-up heights of misty magnificence the plates of gold on the temples rayed back the dying light: in the deepening vault a starry sparkle began: an immense hum arose from leagues of populous streets: the scents of many gardens by the river came over me: I was lulled by the splash of fountains. Closer I heard voices and a voice I loved: I listened as a song came

"Tell me, youthful lover, whether
Love is joy or woe?
Are they gay or sad together
On that way who go?"

A voice answered back

"Radiant as a sunlit feather,
Pure and proud they go;
With the lion look together
Glad their faces show."

My sadness departed: I would be among them shortly, and would walk and whisper amid those rich gardens where beautiful idleness was always dreaming. Merodach looked at me.

"You will find these thoughts will hinder you much," he said.

"You mean——" I hesitated, half-bewildered, half-amazed. "I say that a thought such as that which flamed about you just now, driving your sadness away, will recur again when next you are despondent, and so you will accustom yourself to find relief on the great quest by returning to an old habit of the heart, renewing what should be laid aside. This desire of men and women for each other is the strongest tie among the many which bind us: it is the most difficult of all to overcome. The great ones of the earth have passed that way themselves with tears."

"But surely, Merodach, you cannot condemn what I may say is so much a part of our nature—of all nature."

"I did not condemn it, when I said it is the strongest tie that binds us here: it is sin only for those who seek for freedom."

"Merodach, must we then give up love?"

"There are two kinds of love men know of. There is one which begins with a sudden sharp delight—it dies away into infinite tones of sorrow. There is a love which wakes up amid dead things: it is chill at first, but it takes root, it warms, it expands, it lays hold of universal joys. So the man loves: so the God loves. Those who know this divine love are wise indeed. They love not

one or another: they are love itself. Think well over this; power alone is not the attribute of the Gods: there are no such fearful spectres in that great companionship. And now, farewell, we shall meet again."

I watched his departing figure, and then I went on my own way. I longed for that wisdom, which they only acquire who toil, and strive, and suffer; but I was full of a rich life which longed for excitement and fulfilment, and in that great Babylon sin did not declare itself in its true nature, but was still clouded over by the mantle of primeval beauty.

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THEOSOPHICAL EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN.

AS the Theosophical Society grows day by day in numbers, the necessity of providing Theosophical Education for children becomes more and more evident. Complaint cannot be made of a lack of literature; but the question arises, have the "little ones" had their fair share of our attention? In America this question had to be met some time ago, and "Lotus Circles" for children were started, and have been carried on, we understand, with signal success. Lately, a step has also been taken in this direction in London, by the foundation of a Sunday class, conducted by Miss Stabler, who has had experience of such work in America.

A circular on the matter has come into our hands, from which we give the following extract:

A PLEA FOR THE CHILDREN.

"The pressing question then for Theosophists is this: Shall we leave the children to these vague foreshadowings of truth, until the pressure of material life has dimmed the prophecy of pure youth and eradicated the finer impulse? Or, where the psychic nature is strong, shall we leave them balanced between dread of these sights unseen by others about them, and the keener dread of their own sanity and health? Shall we leave them tossing there, or shall we put a rudder in their hands? The budding form, the starry gaze, the blossom-tinted cheek are so dear; are the hearts, the minds less precious to us? Do we say that these truths are too grand for them? They are not truths if they are not of a pristine simplicity. The limpid purity of the child reflects the True better than our troubled soul can do, and 'heaven is near us in our infancy.' Springtime is seed time the world over. While the parents are reaching out for Truth, shall the children go on imbibing error? Let us give them the bread of life, not the stone of materiality: let us give them the teachings of universal Justice, of Love. Let us show them how all things move by Law; the rebound of good and evil; the magnificent reaches of Life from world to world, from form to form. When we trace out Karma and Reincarnation to them, first in natural and afterward in ethical symbol, we shall endear the universe to them as they find it welded in links of harmony and love. This joy we owe them, and it is owed higher still, it is a debt to the Supreme.

"There should be Sunday Schools for the children of Theosophists who believe and practise what they profess. Each branch could start one. We seem to be irresolute for want of a practical method. Catechisms could be compounded. . . . Interesting dialogues and tales might be written by those versed in the labyrinths of these young minds: we all hold a clue to them; this clue is love. Let us pay our debt to the children."—*The Path*, iii. 222.

This "plea" is a forcible one, and it is hardly necessary for us to say

more. We have decided to devote a page or two, every month, to this department of Theosophic work. It is practically a new departure in our magazine literature, and therefore quite in the nature of an experiment. Without the entire co-operation of parents themselves, much will have to be left undone.

We invite our readers, especially those who are parents, to express their views on the following proposals:—

1. A page, or more of *I. T.* to be devoted to articles on Theosophical Education for Children, and for parents to exchange their views and opinions.
2. To form a "Lotus Circle" for Children in connection with this paper, somewhat on the following lines:—
 - (a) Membership for boys and girls, either of whose parents are members of the T.S., or who are in sympathy with its objects.
 - (b) Members to do work at home for the benefit of the Crèche, Bow Club, or any other needful institution that may be selected.
 - (c) Members to send in little contributions on whatever subject may be chosen from time to time.
 - (d) Members to have their letters answered on subjects connected with Theosophy upon which they desire information.
3. A page or more of *I. T.* to be devoted to articles based on Theosophic teaching, and written in a form suitable for children.

Those who avail themselves of our invitation (and we hope they will be numerous) should state their opinions as regards offering prizes, and the most suitable class book to begin—*Wonder Light? Golden Stars?* or what?

In conclusion, we would ask our friends everywhere, to draw attention to this new departure in the proper quarters, and so help us in carrying out what we think will be a work of much usefulness. We may mention, also, that we hope to arrange with Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, for special colonial matter every quarter.

D. N. D.

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THE PLACE OF REST.

"The soul is its own witness and its own refuge."

Unto the deep the deep heart goes,
It lays its sadness nigh the breast:
Only the mighty mother knows
The wounds that quiver unconfessed.

It seeks a deeper silence still,
It folds itself around with peace,
Where all its thoughts of good or ill,
In quietness unfostered, cease.

It feels in the unwounding vast
For comfort for its hopes and fears:
The mighty mother bows at last,
She listens to her children's tears.

Where the last anguish deepens—there—
The fire of beauty smites through pain,
A glory moves amid despair,
The mother takes her child again.

G. W. R.

OUR CHILDREN'S PAGE.

OPENING WORDS.

WITH the New Year, dear children, we are going to set aside a whole page for you, which is to be all your very, very own; and in the children's hour, which comes just before the lamps are lighted, some one who loves you all will think of you, and try to tell you every month what will help you.

For you tiny, toddling mites; you babies, whose heads do not even reach the top of the study table, we shall send messages, which mother will tell you, and you will understand. You little ones who look around with wide, round eyes, and ask *why* so many wonderful things happen, and sometimes think the grown-ups are so silly because they don't understand what you mean; you must look out in this page for answers to it all. We will try to understand you, because so many of you whisper to us strange wonderful thoughts. And you growing girls, there is much you want to know about the wonderland from whence you came, about your present life, and about nature; and when you "fink and fink big finks," as sweet baby says, and cannot understand, write and ask all about it. You boys, merry, restless, inquisitive; you shall have your place, too, in our thoughts. We want to hear what you do in your play-time, in your country walks, and in your long holidays by sea or mountain. This page is for you all, small and large. We shall talk about what nature teaches; about the animal kingdom; and about many other things. We will also tell you, if we can, quaint tales about fairyland; those tales you so often ask for when the boys sit upon the hearth-rug before the fire, and the small girls, tired with play, nestle with their dear, soft faces close together, and coax for "just one story more, only just one."

Now, dear ones, if we could give you the gifts of fairy-godmothers, we would give you wisdom; and had we the wishing-cap, we would wish *one* wish for you all; just one only—that, be your years few or many, you might always keep the child-heart. The best gift we could wish you, would be the most precious of all precious gifts—the inheritance that Prince Rahula claimed, and about which we shall tell you some other time.

—:O:—

THE GNOSTICS.

INTRODUCTORY.

IT is said that the period of Devachanic rest, between two incarnations of the same Ego, normally lasts from fifteen hundred to two thousand years. Accordingly we should expect to see reproduced in every age, the phases of thought, and life, that characterized the time somewhat less than two thousand years previously. In our own times we should look for a reproduction of the movements, and thoughts, that were peculiar to the first century or two of the Christian era; for the wheel has made one more turn, and the Egos now incarnate, informed the men that then lived, and through them impressed upon their age its characteristics. Many correspondences between present states of affairs, and affairs then, will suggest themselves to the reader. I shall content myself with briefly noticing the movement, that corresponded at that time, to the present movement of Theosophy.

The revival of the Esoteric Philosophy in our own days, is to be traced to the opening up of India, and the introduction to Europe of Sanskrit literature. In like manner, the birth of Gnosticism is referable to the grafting of Eastern culture, upon Western thought. The conquest of the East by Rome, opened up easy communication between countries, and races, that till then had kept themselves jealously separate, and to a great degree made common property the philosophies of Egypt, India, Persia, and Palestine. The Prophet of Nazareth had preached his gospel, and his followers who also adopted the mystic philosophies of the East are known to us as the Gnostics. Many of the tenets of the Gnostics are found in the system of Philo Indaeus, who was anterior to Jesus Christ; but his system leaves out necessarily the Christ principle, and redemption, which formed the thread that connects all the Gnostic schools together.

Most of our knowledge of the Gnostics, is derived from the writings about them, by the Church Fathers, who were invariably their opponents. Giving them every credit, for endeavouring to impartially describe the Gnostics, we must admit that it is not likely they succeeded in their task. Gibbon says that the Gnostics were the most cultured of the ancients; and the noblest and most learned of Rome and Greece belonged to one or other of the numerous Gnostic bodies.

At the beginning of Christianity there existed many schools of mystics, and philosophers, who sought to incorporate the new religion with the already existing ancient ones. Taking from the new sect, the Doctrine of the Christ, and the Redemption, they saw in all the other parts of the Christian religion, but another expression of the mystic truths which underlay all religions. They aimed to solve the problems, that then, as now, puzzle and perplex humanity; and in seeking to solve those problems, they trusted only to their own intuition, which they placed before all other means of acquiring knowledge—knowledge of the inner hidden life of things. As the first sect to be called Gnostics, the Naaseni or Ophetes, said "The beginning of perfection is the knowledge of man, but absolute perfection is the knowledge of God." Hence Gnosticism is the knowledge of God and man; of God's Being and Providence; of man's origin and destiny. God, man, and the universe, were what they wished to solve.

J. E. PARDON.

(To be continued.)

—:O:—

LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

I SHALL tell you the essential form of the supreme spirit, knowing which men freed from bondage attain true being.

An eternal somewhat, upon which the conviction relating to the Egoests, exists as itself, being different from the five sheaths and the witness of the three conditions, who during waking, dreaming, and dreamless slumber, knows the mind and its functions which are action and rest—this is the Self.—*Vircha Gbudaman*.

The Self is that by which this universe is pervaded, which nothing pervades, which causes all things to shine, but which all things cannot make to shine. By reason of its proximity alone, the body, the Manas and Buddhi apply themselves to their proper object as if applied [by some one else].—*Ibid.*

This Purusha is eternal, perpetual, unconditioned, absolute happiness, eternally having the same form and being knowledge itself—impelled by whose speech the vital airs move. This unmanifest spiritual consciousness begins to manifest like the dawn in the pure heart, and shining like the mid-day sun in the cave of wisdom illuminates the whole universe.—*Ibid.*

Krishna—even though myself unborn, of changeless essence, and the lord of all existence, yet in presiding over nature—which is mine—I am born but through my own *Maya*, the mystic power of self-ideation, the eternal thought in the eternal mind.—*Blagavad-Gita.*

Sri Krishna is the Lord of Lords; the King of Kings; his unthinkable glory irradiates all that is manifest and all that is unmanifest. Krishna reveals his infinity of attributes to his beloved worshipper, and yet he is devoid of attributes. Krishna is the sweet babe of Gokula, the delight of Queen Yasodâ's heart. On all fours the little baby runs over the house; he will not be restrained; he steals the cream from the pots of the milkmaids. His lisping prattle draws people from far and wide, mad with joy, to clasp in their arms the late flower on the nuptial tree of his parents. And yet the sages sing him the Ancient and Unborn.—*Vaishnava Scriptures.*

When this path is beheld, then, thirst and hunger are forgotten; night and day are undistinguished in this road. Whether one would set out to the bloom of the East, or come to the chambers of the West, without moving, O holder of the bow! is the travelling in this road. In this path, to whatever place one would go, that place one's own self becomes! How shall I easily describe this? Thou thyself shalt experience it.—*Devyaneswari.*

Those who belong to us, whether living or departed, and whatever else there is which we wish for and do not obtain, all that we find there if we descend into the heart, where Brahma dwells, in the ether of the heart. There are all our true desires, but hidden by what is false.—*Khandogya-Upanishad.*

The Self abides in the heart. He who knows this, that He is in the heart, goes day by day into heaven, into the Brahman of the heart. That serene being which, after having risen out from this earthly body, and having reached the highest light, appears in its true form, that is the Self, thus he spoke. This is the immortal, the fearless, this is Brahman.—*Ibid.*



THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

AND HOW TO JOIN IT.

The objects of the Theosophical Society are:—

1. To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.
2. To promote the study of Aryan, and other Eastern literatures, religions, philosophies and sciences, and to demonstrate its importance.
3. To investigate unexplained laws of nature, and the psychic powers latent in man.

Anyone who accepts the first object of the Society, without reservation, can become a member. The rules of the Society, and all information, can be obtained by writing to the General Secretary, Theosophical Society, 17 and 19 Avenue Road, Regent's Park, London, N.W., or to any of the Secretaries of Lodges or Centres.

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DUBLIN LODGE,

3 UPPER ELY PLACE.

The discussions to the end of January are:—

Dec. 20th	-	"Unity."	-	D. N. Dunlop.
Jan. 3rd	-	"The Buddhist Suttas."	-	P. E. Jordan.
" 10th	-	"What is Mysticism?"	-	H. M. Magee.
" 17th	-	"Karma."	-	J. Varian.
" 24th	-	"Self Analysis."	-	G. W. Russell.
" 31st	-	"Theosophy and Common Life."	-	J. Duncan.

The group for the study of *The Secret Doctrine*, by H. P. Blavatsky, continues to meet on Monday evenings from 8.30 to 9.30. The strength and activity of the Lodge would be greatly increased by united study; and as this group, which meets but once a week, is the only opportunity of the kind, it deserves better support.

A pleasant social reunion took place on the 30th ult. at the headquarters.

FRED. J. DICK, *Secretary*.

All literary contributions to be addressed to the EDITOR, and business communications to the PUBLISHER, 72 Lower Drumcondra Road, Dublin.

THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST

No. 4.

DUBLIN, JANUARY 15TH, 1893.

VOL. II.

NOTICE.

The Theosophical Society is in no way responsible for any opinions, in signed or unsigned articles, that appear in this Magazine.

All Literary contributions should be addressed to the EDITOR, and Business communications to the PUBLISHER, 71 Drumcondra Road, Dublin.

Yearly Subscription, 3s. 6d. post free.

Those who have subscribed at the old rate, and who intend to continue subscribers, will much oblige by remitting as early as possible the extra 2s.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

A FEW REFLECTIONS. At such a season I will readily be pardoned for indulging in a few reflections. As I write, the old year, like a dying ember, fades slowly out. In the dim light, the past, like a slumbering phantom, rises up, as if to rehearse of its dreams. I listen for a while to the strange, sad story. One by one, different scenes unroll, and quickly pass away. I think of the progress in the field of material science, since its definite birth, in the general acceptance of the law of evolution. What upheaval! All things set adrift! Bibles, creeds, dogmas, etc., etc., floating like so much wreckage on the stream. I turn to the social realm. Here, also, everything is giving way. It seems as if the governing class can only maintain their stronghold of power by "trimming to the wind." Mind cure invades the domain of the apothecary; the old familiar face of miracle peers out now through natural law.

"The mask and sardels of the perished year
Pass to the rag-picker."

—:O:—

SOME FACTS. My thoughts take a different turn. I think of the Theosophical Society. 1875 saw its birth. It enters 1894 with about 330 branches scattered throughout every part of the world, and literature in almost every language. And against what odds! The first tendency was to scoff and ridicule. Still it added steadily to its numbers. Those who considered themselves wiser, took the matter seriously. Among the latter were the Psychological Research Society, including Mr. Hodgson, of course. Then came the famous report, and who thought the Theosophical Society would live after that? "A bubble on the

stream," they said. The old maxim, "Never prophesy before you know," was lost sight of, or, at least, entirely disregarded, and so of prophecies there were no dearth. Those who *knew*, prophesied also, and theirs was a true prophecy. *Now*, Theosophy is the "stream," and Mr. Hodgson's report is the "bubble." Since the day Mrs. Besant laid aside Mr. Hodgson's report, to go and join the Theosophical Society, she has devoted almost every moment of her life to its service, with the result that "Theosophy" might almost now be termed "a household word."

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THE NEED.

It is well to reflect, if only for a few moments, even on facts so simple. To me, they are very eloquent. What valour! What self-denial! What patience! What immeasurable strength of purpose and devotion, on the part of one woman, aided by a few faithful comrades, with hearts beating true. They indicate very clearly, also, that the only limit to the possibilities of the future lies in ourselves. To realise the "terrible swift momentum" peculiar to this age, which enables us to do more, in the time, than any other, should bring home to each member of the T. S. a keener sense of responsibility. Things seem almost at a fever heat. The cry is for light! Never did men generally seem more anxious to lay aside the sinews of war; never such a desire for unity, for brotherhood. The Parliament of Religions focussed this desire for unity in the religious world. Does not the first object of our Society indicate that its founders anticipated this awakening? Has not the awakening, in great measure, been brought about by the Theosophical movement? It cannot be questioned that much of the pioneer work has been done by the T. S. But it is well to guard against reactionary tendencies. We have yet to pass through the heat of the day. Let us look, then, to "the rank and file." Let every Theosophist be interested in some kind of work for the cause. Apathy is the worst enemy we have to fear; it is the great enthraller. "So many people like Theosophy, and yet they at once wish to make it select and of high tone. It is for all men. It is for the common people who are ever with us. Others, again, come in and wait like young birds for food to be put into them: they *will not think*."

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I direct my thoughts to all members of the "HUMANISE THEOSOPHY." Theosophical Society who are seeking to restore to life its ancient heritage of wisdom. I hope, during the year, we will realise more strongly than ever that "just in proportion as we destroy separateness, do we begin to bear the one *Karma*, and share that one *Karma* of humanity." While the year is yet young: in the cold, clear whiteness of its early morn, let our hearts go out to humanity, so long nursed by sorrow, and for whom time is but a catalogue of hopes that die. Let us "humanise Theosophy." A better watchword for 1891, I think, would be difficult to find.

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H. Dharmapala, addressing the Congress at the A BUDDHIST ON THE T. S. World's Fair, said: "I am here as a Buddhist. I come to attend the Religions' Congress as such; but I am here to-day to express my deepest sympathy, my deepest allegiance to the

Theosophical cause, simply because it made me respect my own religion. I was in school, and read the name of the Theosophical Society, and when the founders arrived we welcomed them to Ceylon. They came there with a message of peace and love. They said: 'Study your own religion; abuse not the religion of others, and try to find out the truth: but lead a pure life.' That was the message they brought to Ceylon; I accepted it, and here I am to-day as evidence of that fact."

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Professor Chakravarti said, also addressing the
 A BRAHMAN ON THE T. S. Congress: "I come from a land hoary with antiquity. I belong to a race bent with age. I profess a religion, the dawn of which is, according to our mythology, simultaneous with the dawn of creation, and the greatest research has not been able to prove to the contrary. The religion I belong to was once gigantic in its strength. It was like the mighty oak, round whose trunk crept the various ivies, with all the moral, political, and social institutions and organisations of my mother country. But even an Indian sky is not without its cloud. Time came when this oak lost its sap. It seemed that all the institutions would wither away, with the passing away of the life of the oak, round which all of them clustered. It seemed that the mighty edifice, with all its grand architecture, was tottering, and once we were about to exclaim: 'Shrine of the Mighty, is this all that remains of thee?' At the moment of this crisis, help was bound to come, because India's death-note had not yet struck. It had yet its mission to perform in the history of the world. It had yet to help the coming tide of evolution; it had yet to send its ideas across oceans, to lift the million souls; therefore help came. But not from its learned priests and Brahmans, who were the traditional teachers. To that woman, H. P. Blavatsky, was given the proud privilege. And now I can see the withered and gaunt hands of the spirit of my motherland, land of mysteries, land of occultism, land of sanctity, stretching out across oceans and continents, shedding its blessings of peace and of love."
 D.N.D.

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A CHRISTIAN THEOSOPHIST.

JACOB BOEHME was a shoe-maker, who lived at Görlitz, in Silesia, upper Germany, at the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries. He was a man entirely devoid of all advantages of birth, education, or even of much intellectual talent or literary faculty. Nevertheless, he wrote books concerning the vastest and most subtle problems that can occupy the human mind; and these books have formed the study and delight of some of the deepest modern thinkers—men like Hegel, Schelling, Schopenhauer, Emerson, and Sir Isaac Newton.

From early boyhood, when he herded cattle near his native village, and in manhood, when in the midst of his daily work of making and mending shoes, he was subject to strange mystic experiences and visions. From the first, too, he gave evidence of unusual seriousness, and, as he grew to manhood, was wont to spend much time in prayer and the study of the Bible. Travelling as a journeyman from place to place, he was much struck and deeply depressed by the prevalence of sorrow, pain, and religious discord among his fellows. One day, after a long period of doubt and mental distress, he became suddenly illuminated

by a wonderful inner light, a vivid and glorious exaltation of consciousness. The mysteries which had been weighing upon him seemed to open up and clear away. He knew and saw himself simultaneously present in "all three worlds, namely, the divine, angelical, and paradisiacal world, and then the dark world, being the original of Nature; . . . and then, thirdly, the external or visible world, being a pro-creation or external birth, or as a substance expressed or spoken forth from both the internal and spiritual worlds." The source and nature of good and evil revealed themselves to his inner vision, and, in fact, he seemed to gain a glimpse into the workings of the universe "as in a *chaos*, wherein all things are couched and wrapt up; but it was impossible . . . to explicate and unfold the same."

This condition of ecstasy continued for seven days, during which Boehme went about the ordinary business of his vocation. Outwardly there was nothing specially noticeable about him, "but the triumph that was then in my soul, I can neither tell nor describe. I can only liken it to a resurrection from the dead."

The mystic vision passed away, but again opened itself within him from time to time, "as in a young plant," in ever-increasing clearness and coherence. At last what had formerly appeared to him chaotically, in isolated fragments, revealed itself as a harmonious unity, a distinct whole. He felt a "powerful driving and instigation" to write it down, and so in the morning before work-time, and in the evening after a hard day's toil, he would take up his pen, and "as a sudden shower, which hitteth whatsoever it lighteth upon, just so it happened to me: whatever I could apprehend and bring into the external principle of my mind, the same I wrote down."

The result was the book known as "Aurora, or the Morning Redness." It was intended by its author to serve merely as a "memorial" to himself; for he found he was liable to forget much of what he had seen in ecstasy. However, the manuscript was picked up by a nobleman in the shoemaker's shop, and so much impressed was he by its contents that he had it published, with the result of bringing to Boehme great fame and some considerable persecution and annoyance from a certain bigoted ecclesiastic, who professed to find in Boehme's writings nothing but blasphemy and the odour of bees-wax. On the other hand, many learned and cultured laymen eagerly sought his acquaintance, and considered it a privilege to correspond with him. The persecution came to a head when Boehme was cited to appear before the Elector of Saxony and a number of eminent theologians, including two professors of mathematics. The result of the examination for heresy was that Boehme quite captivated all his judges, who put him many knotty questions connected with their own special subjects, and who, while professing themselves unable always to follow him, bore witness to his "marvellously high mental gifts," as well as to his simple, noble, and modest bearing. "I would not take the whole world," said one of the most learned among them, "and condemn such a man." After this Boehme was left in comparative peace by his enemies, who contented themselves after his death by defacing his tomb.

His writings, subsequent to the "Aurora," were very numerous. In the later ones a great improvement in style and clearness is observable. This is due, not only to the fact that the visionary power from which he drew his inspiration, became more clear and apprehensible to his own intellect, but also to the effect of intercourse with those men of thought and learning who were his friends. They taught him the use of certain Latin words and philosophic terms which occur in his later works.

Boehme remained always a sincere adherent of the Lutheran church. He

died peacefully in 1624, after partaking of the Sacrament, and with the words on his lips, "Now go I hence into Paradise." He was married, and had four sons, for all of whom he was careful to provide.

The system of Theosophy set forth in Boehme's writings is remarkably similar in all essential points to that put forward by the Eastern adepts. "The book in which all mysteries lie," he says, "is man himself; he himself is the book of the Being of all beings, seeing he is the likeness or similitude of God"—words which contain the rationale of all mysticism, Eastern and Western, and show its universal, catholic, and authentic basis. Again, "In God all beings are but one being, viz., an eternal One or unity, the eternal only *good*, which eternal one without severalty were not manifest to itself. Therefore, the same hath breathed forth itself out of itself, that a plurality or distinct variety might arise, which variety or severalty hath induced itself into a peculiar *will* and properties, the properties into desires, and the desires into beings. . . . The centre of each thing is spirit . . . the separation in a thing is a self-peculiar *will* of its own impresseure or forming, where each spirit bringeth itself into being, according to its essential desire." Thus we see that for Boehme, as for the modern Theosophist, everything is *alive*. "A hard, rough stone hath no life that is movable, for the elemental vegetable life standeth mute and still therein, . . . there is not anything in this world wherein the elemental as well as the sidereal dominion doth not lie, but in one thing it is more movable, active and working than another."

The original *will*, out of which everything proceeds, thus becomes split up, as it were, and divided among the innumerable lives, elements, and properties of Nature. In the strife and interplay of these, it would lose and stultify itself, but for the fact that the whole of creation is in reality an emanation of Deity desirous of realising, consciously and knowingly, its own fullness of Being, its own infinite perfection and glory. Hence arises perpetually the redeeming impulse in Nature, the current of return—what we would call the *evolutionary* tendency. In Boehme's mystical doctrine of the Trinity, this is the work of the *Son*. The aboriginal, out-breathed, out-going life is from the *Father*; while that which is ever connecting, reconciling, or "making intercession" between the two opposing wills in Nature, is the *Holy Spirit*.

Man has in him these two contrasted tendencies—one, the "self-will" towards material life, egotism, separation; the other, or *Christ-will* towards liberation, unity, spirit. When the two wills are harmonised together, as they were in "Adam" before his "fall" (into matter, and into ignorance and the sexual state), the divine or "paradisiacal" life exists. Adam "fell" through "inducing his desire, longing, and lust into the outward, astral, elemental and earthly kingdom . . . and thereby he fell into the sleep of the external *magia*. And thus it is also with the *new birth* [whereby man regains his lost Paradise.] Through *imagination*, and an earnest serious desire, we become again impregnated of the Deity, and receive the new body in the old." This is the new Adam of which the New Testament speaks, and which was "brought to light" by Jesus of Nazareth. A mere "historical faith" in the latter is of no use. "The seeming holy flattering comfort with Christ's death availeth nothing, but to enter into Christ's death; and to spring up anew in Him; and to arise in Him and with Him, and become *Christ* in the new man."

This "new man" will not become truly and completely manifest in humanity until the "second coming of Christ," which would seem by Boehme's description to correspond with what modern Theosophists know as the "seventh race." Men, he says, will then have returned to the androgyne, or a-sexual state;

they will have a thorough knowledge and control of Nature and her qualities; and they will be pure, holy and divine as Adam was in Paradise.

One might easily dwell upon Boehme's limitations as a thinker, and point out how even his ethics would gain breadth and strength by the admixture of certain elements which we have gladly borrowed from the East. Such a task, however, would be a thankless one. He remains to us a wonderful example of the greatness and wisdom of the soul, and of its power to triumph over natural hindrances and disabilities, and to pierce through and illuminate the dead letter of a creed. How much might modern "orthodoxy" learn from the inspired shoemaker!

H. M. MAGEE.

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LETTER AND SPIRIT.

IT was not a vision, or a dream of the night that came to me with the birth of the New Year: at the most I had fallen into a brown study; but I saw the four narrow walls of the room where I sat thinking, and writing. The lamp burned brightly before me: I heard the regular monotonous ticking of the clock, and the noise of the traffic, that even at that hour, had not ceased in the busy street; my fingers did not relinquish their hold upon the pen; the ink was scarcely dry upon the paper, when I again continued my work.

I had lifted my eyes for an instant, and the firelight shone across the pictured faces of two whom I call friends—men of different temperaments, different creeds, and different minds, yet both striving with heart and hand to make at least some of earth's rough places smoother for the weary feet of their brother-men. As I gazed at their portraits, I wondered what was their past; and then, for a few seconds, I realise that time, and space, are illusions, and that the inner vision is not bounded by matter. The curtain of time was drawn aside; the gulf, that in our ignorance we place between that portion of infinite duration we call past, and that which we name present, was bridged over; once more I saw, as in a magic mirror, an age long gone by, and moved in the centre of a mighty civilisation in a land hoary with antiquity; and it was given to me to see something of other lives passed in that grander, calmer time.

Two youths sat together upon a grassy slope that overlooked a mighty river; overhead the crescent moon hung low in the clear, blue sky, and shed its silvery light over the fair rose garden, and softly outlined the distant mountains, and the ancient city. At their feet lay the scroll of parchment, over which their heads had bent together before the daylight died. An ancient stranger at the city gate that morning, had spoken words to them that awoke an answering chord in their hearts; brave, strong, true words, promise of treasure greater than that which they had set themselves to win; into their very souls he seemed to look, and bade them, when they left their home as merchants, bound for distant lands, to seek not alone for pearls or precious spices, or the costly fabrics of the Orient, but for the greater treasure—the wisdom of the ages.

Scene after scene passed before me; through many lands, among many races, I saw the two comrades, and marked how often they drew aside from the concourse of merchants, and the bustle of the busy bazaar, and visited shrine, temple and pagoda, questioning saints, and sages, and all from whom words of wisdom fell; sitting humbly at the feet of each, and asking: "Master, what is truth?" And some answered them in unknown tongues, and some said sadly, "We too seek it"; and those who knew the least, spoke in mysterious whispers, hard to understand—and no soul spoke to their souls.

After careful enquiry, and weary search, they determined to part with all their merchandise, and treasure, and spend their lives in finding the one whose voice first spoke to their hearts. Upon the edge of a bleak desert they found him, and tarried awhile beneath the humble shelter that served him for protection; and kept silence until he chose to speak. They tarried many days alone with the sage, and the stars, until he answered their unspoken questions, and said: "My sons, what can I tell you? I, myself, know not the truth, and if I knew, how could I express the infinite? for a spirit still imprisoned in matter, the highest truth is unattainable, and words are powerless to express the unexpressible; men seek truth under many forms; they weave for her fantastic garments from the woof and warp of their own many-tinged thoughts; they view her with distorted visions; under different names they worship her; each, and all, see but one aspect of truth, but truth is one and eternal; the mind can never open out or expand towards the true; only by heart-consciousness and heart-light can she be perceived; that alone can illuminate the path; where you perceive it within yourselves you will discern it in others, and know that words, and systems, are nothing—but the truth is all."

And they said: "Master, point out to us the first step towards that light."

And he said: "It lies always close at hand, and straight before you."

And the young men journeyed on, and, where the road branched off, to East, and West, they parted company, and each went their own way.

The scene changed; again I saw the moonlit garden, and the mighty river. Two old men sat together there, and each looking into the other's eyes, saw the heart-light reflected; and one, as his hand sought and clasped his comrade's, said with a voice thin with age: "After I left you, I travelled far, and grew old, and weary, and despairing, for in my heart was a perpetual longing; and I passed the shrines of Benares, and reached a spot beneath the Himalayan snows, where, in old times, Lord Buddha taught his own. I found there a holy ascetic with the yellow robe, and he received me graciously, and for years I followed him, carrying the beggar's bowl, until I found the way of peace, and then my thoughts turned to you, and I came to seek you, that you too might enter, and learn the love and pity, and Brotherhood, that the Master taught."

"I, too, have found it," said his comrade. "Beside a misty lake, in the early morning, I heard a calm, weary voice uttering the words of wisdom, and I drew near and listened, and followed him; love and compassion, and Brotherhood, my Master taught in Galilee."

"What drew you back here?"

"Ask me not my brother: men's hatred and blindness are not pleasant subjects: the sun was darkened, and darkness also fell upon my life when the Master crowned his teachings with his death, and ever in my ears unceasingly I hear a woman's wailing cry, until earth's melodies are drowned by it."

Two re-incarnating egos entered earth-life together at the close of the nineteenth century; but, at the gates of birth, they missed each other, and, grown to manhood, they sought the truth, as they had done once before, under different teachers; and the one found and recognised the same teaching unchanged in aught; it fell from a woman's lips, who was a servant of the same Masters as the teacher had been, who, long before, had worn the yellow robe, and carried the beggar's bowl by Benares. But the other searcher after truth, failed to find the teaching that haunted him; a dim, uncertain memory of a voice by the misty lake; but the lessons were not forgotten; the wail of the great

orphan humanity awakened that love and compassion that lay dormant within him, a heritage from his past.

The New Year bells ring out across christian England, a land of cant, and shams, and bibles, and slums; instead of a pæan of joy, the chimes seemed to one heart, at least, to be an inharmonious accompaniment to the unuttered "Miserère," which is the only psalm of life of the poor; and mingled with the carols, came the sound that had silenced earth's melodies for him once before—the echo of a woman's wailing borne adown the ages: "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." The figure of a dead prophet, fitting emblem of a lifeless creed, hangs upon the rood above the altars where the West kneels to pray, whilst the heavens above them are as brass, and over the portals of cathedral, church, and chapel, the one word, "Ichabod," is written; the spirit which animated and inspired the founder of Christianity, dwells not where the many-coloured windows shed their iridescent light in an aureole around the heads of kneeling worshippers; his teaching is not heard where the majestic organ peals; his message is seldom voiced from the pulpits of to-day; yet the same spirit that was in him lives wherever men give themselves for others in uttermost self-sacrifice, or in small daily acts of kindness; it breathes in the slums where the poor man is the poor man's friend; where the famished work-girl shares her last dry crust. The truth has not failed; the Christianity taught in Galilee has not failed; *humanity has.*

The bells ring out their message of peace, and good-will, and are answered by earth's discords; yet some are striving to restore the ancient harmony again, and it matters not by what name they call themselves, or under what shibboleths they veil their beliefs, if they strive towards the true; he who calls himself Theosophist stands beside a girl whom the laws of supply and demand have killed, in a damp, mildewed, narrow room, with rotten flooring, and broken roof; where the lamp flickers fitfully in the fever-burdened air, and the fire has died out upon the hearth; the sounds that make night hideous in many quarters of the city come in through the unglazed window, the drunkard's curses, and the childrens' cries; but as he stands there beside the dead (whose last hours were perhaps her best), he knows that with all humanity it shall at last be well.

And to the other, across the midnight air, a message flashed from the true, into a receptive heart, with the carols of the bells; it whispered the old secret, the teaching of the Wisdom-religion, and of the Christianity of long ago; sweeter than sweetest music, pure as the moonlight that flooded a prison cell, it whispered the secret of that spiritual alchemy, which alone is powerful to transmute the animal into the divine, the old secret of becoming—"be a Christ." And many who heard the message, said of him, as of his Master, "he blasphemeth"; what matter? words do not overthrow a truth the soul perceives; to be a Christ, to be a Theosophist, is the same thing; and both are but mortal forms through which the light shines, for "ye are the light of the world"; "the kingdom of heaven is within you"; "to whatever place one would go, that place one's own self becomes"; "the ancient gods and poets knew it"; "they became it, and were immortal."

K. B. L.

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GLEANINGS FROM THEOSOPHICAL LITERATURE.

*. All who have time and opportunity are invited to send selections on the subject chosen for each month. These will be arranged, and appear under this heading.

Subject for February—"Dreams."

ELEMENTALS.

ELEMENTALS are the creatures evolved in the four kingdoms of earth, air, fire, and water, and called by the Kabbalists gnomes, sylphs, salaman-

ders, and undines. They may be termed the forces of nature, and will either operate effects as the servile agents of general law, or may be employed by the disembodied spirits—whether pure or impure—and by living adepts of magic and sorcery, to produce desired phenomenal results. Such beings never become men.—H.P.B. *Isis Unveiled*.

Elementals proper are what Tertullian called the "princes of the powers of the air." This class is believed to possess but one of the three attributes of man. They have neither immortal spirits nor tangible bodies; only astral bodies, which partake, in a distinguished degree, of the element to which they belong and also of the ether. They are a combination of sublimated matter and a rudimental mind. Some are changeless, but still have no separate individuality, acting collectively, so to say.—*Ibid.* Page 311, Vol. I.

Elementals are living forces, and they may be perceived by him who has acquired the power to look within his own soul. Each of these forces corresponds to some animal desire, and if it is permitted to grow, is symbolised by the form of the animal which corresponds to its nature. At first they are thin and shadowy, but as the desire which corresponds to them is indulged in, they become more and more dense, and gain strength as our desires grow into a passion. These Elementals may live in the soul realm of man as long as he lives, and grow strong, for they live on his life principle, and are fed by the substance of his thoughts. They may even become objective to him, if during a paroxysm of fear, or in consequence of some disease they are enabled to step out of their sphere. They are only destroyed by the power of the *spiritual will* of man which annihilates them as the light annihilates darkness.—F. Hartman. *Magic.* Page 36.

"When you succeed in seeing a distant friend, that is not knowledge: that is the fact of *being* in the condition or vibration, that is that friend at the time. The translation of it into a mental reckoning or explanation, is what is called knowledge. To see an Elemental on the astral plane, is for the time to be, in some part of our nature, in that state or condition.—Quoted by Julius. "Path." January, 1888.

An Elemental is a centre of force, without intelligence, without moral character or tendencies, but capable of being directed in its movements by human thoughts, which may consciously or not, give it any form, and to a certain extent intelligence. The class which has most to do with us answers to the above description.—"Path." May, 1888. *Conversations on Occultism.*

As it (the Elemental world) is automatic and like a photographic plate, all atoms continually arriving at and departing from the "human system" are constantly assuming the impression conveyed by the acts and thoughts of that person, and, therefore, if he sets up a strong current of thought, he attracts Elementals in greater numbers, and they all take on one prevailing tendency or colour, so that all new arrivals find a homogeneous colour or image which they instantly assume.—*Ibid.*

Ceremonial magic involves at almost every step the use of a sword. After the invocator has used the ceremonial for some time, he at last creates within his aura, a duplicate of what he previously used and pictured on the floor or walls. In this he is no longer master, for, it being placed on that part of his nature of which he is ignorant, the sword of metal becomes an astral sword, with the handle held by the demons or influences he unwisely raised. They then attack him where no defence can be interposed—on the astral and mental planes, and just as surely as the wise man's words were uttered, he at last perishes by the weapon he himself used.—William Breton. "Path." June, 1888.

The production of phenomena is not possible without either the aid or disturbance of Elementals. Each phenomenon entails the expenditure of great force, and also brings on a correspondingly great disturbance in the Elemental world, which disturbance is beyond the limit natural to ordinary human life. It then follows that, as soon as the phenomenon is completed, the disturbance occasioned begins to be compensated for. The Elementals are in greatly excited motion, and precipitate themselves in various directions. They are able to enter into the sphere of unprotected persons, and especially those persons who are engaged in the study of occultism. And then they become agents in concentrating the Karma of those persons, producing troubles and disasters often, or other difficulties which otherwise might have been so spread over a period of time. This will go to explain the meaning of the statement that an adept will not do any phenomenon unless he sees the desire in the mind of another adept; for then there is a sympathetic relation established, and also a tacit acceptance of the consequences which may ensue.—*Conversations on Occultism.* "Path." June, 1888.

SOME THOUGHTS ON EDUCATION.

THE education of children is certainly a matter for grave consideration by Theosophists. In spite of the many modern improvements in methods of teaching, in schools, books, maps, and other up-to-date appliances, there still remains two great obstacles in the road to real development of the whole man, *i.e.*, the examination system, and the interference or, worse still, the indifference of parents. If an enlightened teacher determines to avoid the first, and to endeavour to train pupils in the way of learning for its own sake, virtue for its own sake, certain parents step in and say:—"I don't want new experiments tried on my children; if I do not find them up to the mark of others I must send them elsewhere. I cannot afford to let them fail in the race of life, and it would not be fair to them." Thus the system of competition invades the schoolroom; the Kindergarten even, where two or three little ones are gathered together, there is the prize and the punishment.

Now, how is this to be avoided? So long as parents are imbued with the spirit of false ambition for their children, they cannot be persuaded that any other system than that of marks or prize-giving will avail to advance them in life; they want to see *results*. And so they will, undoubtedly, but not of the best kind. The indifferent parents are more easily dealt with at first. But some day a clever friend will tell them that their children must pass examinations in order to "get on" in life, and then, if they fail, the want of success will be visited on the unfortunate schoolmaster with a fury proportionate to the parents' former indifference.

Quis custodiat custodes? Who shall examine the examiners; who shall educate the parents? Unless Theosophists are prepared to deprive their children of the advantages, and these are many and not to be despised, of public school life, I see no help for the present state of things, except the constant inculcation, during the home life, of principles in direct contradiction to those obtaining at school. They must show their children that they do not care for the marks and prizes, that the only things they value are an increase in habits of truthfulness, industry, moral courage, brotherliness, and all kinds of usefulness. And they, themselves, must set the example, and not expect their children to practice every kind of virtue, while they, themselves, walk in the broad paths of selfish pleasure.

After all, it is the home training that forms the character, so far as it is dependent on training, and that training begins in the nursery, in the very cradle itself. Wise nurses and mothers will take care to enforce such rules as are necessary for right living and order, and so teach the little ones wholesome lessons of obedience, and the relation of cause to effect, before they come to the sterner lessons they have afterwards to learn, at school and in the world. But they must be taught in the spirit of love, for love is the best teacher. Children must be made to feel unmistakably that they are restrained by a loving hand, and not by a mere iron rule. No one should undertake the office of teacher who has not a genuine love of the young, the power of sympathising in their joys and sorrows, who is not as much interested in making them happy as in making them good. Obedience must be enforced, but the *art* of enforcing it is a lifelong study.

A great help in training to prompt obedience is drill—if possible, musical drill. There is something catching in the feeling of all moving together; obeying the word of command in a body is easier than an isolated act of obedience. It is the *esprit-de-corps* which alone can move sluggish natures. Drill is also the best corrective of the “fidgets,” and should, therefore, be introduced as a break between mental studies.

An excellent means of mental training is the study of some science for which children can make their own collections; shells, seaweeds, birds' eggs, provided there is no cruelty shown, and here is an opportunity for teaching kindness to animals—all these are good, but the one open to the fewest objections is that of botany. For this it is not necessary to live in the country, now that our parks and gardens are so well stocked, and wild flowers can be so easily bought, even in London. Botany trains the observing powers, gives an interest to every new walk and each new place visited; and the arranging and classifying of plants is good scientific training, and may prove a life-long pleasure. The child who has been carefully taught botany may take up any science in after life, without feeling the least bothered by nomenclature or other difficulties; the method of one science is the method of all.

As regards moral teaching, it should be infused into every study and every act of life. Nevertheless, it may be well to give occasional direct instruction in ethics. Dr. Felix Adler has written an admirable work on this subject, called, “On the Teaching of Ethics,” which I heartily commend to the notice of parents and teachers. He recommends a gradual series of moral lessons, by means of fairy tales, fables, stories from the Bible, wisely chosen and told in the teacher's own words, at the same time inviting familiar conversation on the subject in hand.

And here I would like to say a few words on what is called, and certainly is, the religious difficulty. I think Theosophists will be wrong if they shirk imparting a knowledge of, at all events, certain parts of the Bible to their children. Every one should know the Shāstras of his own country before he studies those of other lands. I have known one or two examples of those so anxious to put all Scriptures on an equality, that they have remained in total ignorance of their own English Bible. They have, consequently, not known how to meet Christians in controversy, except by denial or abuse. Breadth often means shallowness, and a roaming disposition may be an excuse for want of sympathy nearer home. It is quite possible to teach the religion of your own land without prejudicing the mind against that of other countries and peoples, and an occasional lesson may, of course, be given from other sacred books, using such a collection as Conway's *Anthology*; but to teach exclusively from Indian sources is a practice I should, personally, think unwise.

Lastly, I would recommend Theosophists to consider a subject on which I have once before written in the pages of *Lucifer*, that is, the co-education of the sexes to a greater extent than is common at present. Men and women have to live and work together through life; why then should they be deemed unfit companions during the few years which separate their early home life from manhood and womanhood? Boys become brutalised by being herded together, learn to despise their mothers and sisters, to think home rule is "rot," and this is called making men of them. It is a denaturalising process. Girls get silly and simpering, lose in breadth and moral strength, and when again thrown together with young men, are shy and unnatural, prone to flirtation and fond of flattery. In fact, all faults in either case become accentuated, instead of getting mutually corrected.

These few hints are not merely theoretical. They are the result of long experience in the management of children. Their companionship has now become to me almost a necessity, so far more interesting and sympathetic are they than men and women whose characters are hardened. I have often felt the truth of Longfellow's lines:—

As the leaves are to the forest,
For light and air and food,
Ere their sweet and tender juices
Have been hardened into wood;
Such to the world is children,
Through them it feels the glow,
Of a brighter and happier climate,
Than reaches the trunks below.

If I may express an opinion as to the course most desirable for Theosophists to pursue, I should not advocate the entire separation of their children from all those not like-minded with themselves. Rather I should teach them to live in the world without being too much of it, and thus to cultivate independence of character and opinion. We do not want them to become sectarian, narrow-minded, and uncharitable, which they are sure to be if they are taught that every one is wrong but themselves, and those of their own particular sect. Plant the truth, and seeds of error will not easily spring up. But plant it in love, for love is the fulfilling of the law.

E. KISLINGBURY, F.T.S.

:o:

OUR LOTUS CIRCLE,

CHATS WITH CHILDREN.

DEAR CHILDREN—You love animals, I know. All children love to watch their pretty ways, and stroke their soft, warm coats, and look into their kind, trustful eyes. Did you ever fancy that the eyes of your four-footed brothers have a dumb, silent appeal in them, as if they asked your help and pity, and prayed you take care of them, and use your strength to protect their weakness?

I have seen this in the eyes of many a beast. Look next time that a cow comes up and puts his nose over the gate, and says "Good morning" to you, and you will see he asks your help and pity for his suffering kindred.

But I am so young, and weak, and powerless, you will say.

Do not say it. Do not think it. Never let such an idea enter your head while there is a creature in the whole world that needs your help. You, child though you are, are armed if you desire it, with all the strength of the strongest man. You can draw upon love—upon the universal love—upon love that is stronger than death—for all the power you need. And than love there is nothing stronger in heaven or earth.

I want you very much to understand about this wonderful power of love, because I am going to ask you to use it to help and protect all that suffers; so you must be patient while I try and make you realise what it is, and where it comes from.

The Old Book that your forefathers, the Puritans, studied more than any other, taught that God is love, and that God is everywhere, and that without God—that is love—was not anything made. Now you will remember that the Puritans were very strong men, and that they got their nickname because they tried to live pure lives. These Puritans were not perfect, or they would have been gods, and not men; but they were a great deal stronger than the other men of their time, because they tried to obey their consciences. They—in spite of their faults—taught us one thing. They showed us that a strong faith in God being around us, and *in* us, will enable each man and child to draw strength to himself from the universal strength that wraps him round. Yet this feeling that Love, or the great Unknown Power that men call God, is everywhere; that the world, earth, air, sea, and sky, the countless stars of heaven, the glittering dew-drop on the grass, are forms of Life and Love. Each form obeys the law of its being, each acts in a certain way, guided by a knowledge, or instinct, or conscience, that is one with its life. To illustrate this, I will tell you that sound is heard and obeyed by particles of sand. When certain sounds are made, the particles move themselves in a given direction. A lady, Mrs. Watts-Hughes, who noticed this law, has lately made experiments of the effects of musical notes on movement in sand, and on producing certain sounds she has seen the semi-fluid paste arrange itself into leaves and flower-forms and various beautiful designs. This shows us that even grains of sand are not the dead, unconscious atoms some have supposed, but that they are living and acting forces, obeying the law of harmony. Now I want you to get used to the idea that all things are full of Life and Love, and all things are responsive to Law. Also, that in living out their lives, they are actively engaged in carrying out the Law.

I have already told you that the source of all things is Love. Now you know Love produces harmony. When you love a little friend you wish to show your love by serving him. This love and service bring harmony between you. Service, then, is obedience to the Law of Love, and produces harmony. Harmony, as we have seen with the sand, sets in motion certain movements of the air, called vibrations. These vibrations produce regular and beautiful forms and figures. And so all goes on in regular and perfect action. Now to get everything, and everybody, to live out a life of *service*, that is, of obedience to the Law of Love, which is Harmony, is the lesson we are here to learn on earth. Until we have learned this lesson we must come again and again to school, and for us no lasting happiness is possible. You are old enough to know that at present we have not learned obedience to Law. Even children can, and do, break in upon harmony, and produce discord. When they are playing together, it sometimes happens that instead of each desiring to serve and make others happy, some one among the playmates forgets the wishes of his companions, and cares, for the minute, only for himself. Now, in this minute of disobedience, what has the child done? He has stopped the flow of harmony that was rolling through the spheres, and he has awakened discord. It is as though, in a lovely melody, a clumsy hand crashed upon a wrong chord, and set all ears tingling. See how powerful is a little child. Its self-love can check the current of Love, the Source of Life, in its flow. But remember, as each is powerful for evil, so is each powerful for good; and bear in mind that the initiate St. Paul taught

men that they were "heirs of the kingdom," "workers together with him" (the Christ). But what I want you particularly to notice is that as each atom responds to the law of harmony, so each is affected by the discord. Each is turned from its onward, happiness-producing course, and turned back upon itself. Each is, as we say, "put out." Notice what happens in your own mind when some ugly passion awakens in you, and makes you blind to all besides yourself, when the wants and wishes of others are hidden by a "I want this," "I will have that." You are a little mirror of the universe. What you see in yourself is to be seen in the movements of the sand, that will not flow forth into lovely forms while discord sounds. When anger or self-will lets the "I" shut out "the other" is there not a rush of blackness that clouds the mind and makes miserable the heart? Where, now, is the sunshine that lighted up your little interior world an hour ago? Look in the glass when you are "good," and then look again when "selfishness" has you in its ugly clutches, and see how the atoms that compose your body have changed their work. Now they are busy producing pain and ill health, and the face tells the tale. It is the punishment for disobedience to the Law of Harmony that they are working out. They cannot help it—poor little atoms. They, too, are under the law. You, their king, have let in upon them the enemy, discord, and stopped the flow of kindly Love, and thrown them into confusion and disorder, from which they will struggle by-and-by, giving you pain all the time, while they form their ranks anew. Now I am going to tell you what is happening every day to poor dumb animals that have been given into the keeping of man, and that look at you so pitifully, and ask you so plainly, with their beautiful beseeching eyes, to be kind to their brother and sister beasts who serve you faithfully, and deserve your protection. Far away over the sea, thousands of cattle are packed into ships that they may be brought to England for a beef-loving nation to eat. How are they packed? With nice clean straw to lie down in, and plenty of clean fresh water to drink, when the motion of the steamer makes them feel sick and ill? This is what the *Standard* newspaper tells us the other day:—"A floating cattle-shed is packed from end to end with as many beasts as can be crammed into it; almost like herrings in a barrel. The beasts are packed tightly together, with no room to move, to change their position, or even to lie down. During the whole voyage, lasting perhaps fourteen days or three weeks, the wretched brutes have to remain on their legs, stacked against each other, and tossed from side to side by the motion of the vessel. If an animal lies down he does not rise again, for the life is speedily trampled out of him by his companions, and therefore the drovers are employed during the whole of the voyage in goading, bludgeoning, and torturing the wretched animals, in order to keep them on their legs."

There is no love and harmony here, and this is what happens. The atoms that go to build up the bodies of these tortured creatures are thrown into, and kept in, horrible confusion, producing blood-poisoning, disease, and often death. "Instances are on record of fifty, one hundred, two hundred, and even three hundred dead bodies of animals being thrown overboard at a time. One vessel landed only fourteen cattle out of three hundred and sixty." But let us see what happens to the animals that are not tortured to death in the ocean journey, but which can be killed on landing, and taken to market as meat. The molecules of which the flesh of these animals is composed are in disorder; that is to say, in a diseased, disorganised condition, for hate and greed have been at work, and the reign of Love and Order has been displaced. Now people eat this diseased flesh, and the law of retribution—some people call it *Karma*—

begins its work. Disordered atoms are introduced into more or less healthy bodies, and cause at once morbid action—that is, diseased action. Presently we have hospitals and sick rooms, and lunatic asylums full of suffering people. The cruelty inflicted from desire to get money, or the desire to eat that which habit has taught some people to think pleasant to the taste has brought its own punishment, and the suffering of the poor helpless beast is avenged on man who has the choice of living in the law of loving kindness, or in wilful disobedience to that law, but who never, never can escape the fruit of his actions. For the law is unchangeable. “Perfect justice rules the world!” “As ye sow, so shall ye reap”; and every breath of air, every grain of sand, is an active instrument in working out the Law of Love and Harmony, even when this law has to be taught to the children of men through pain and anguish.

A child can understand this, and she can by right thought, right speech, and good-will to all that lives, help to bring that day more quickly when “The will of the Father shall be done on earth as it is in heaven.”—Lovingly yours,
K. E. M.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

THE THEOSOPHICAL EDUCATION OF CHILDREN.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—In entering the lists as a “parent” in response to your invitation last month, I hope that what I wish to say will not be understood as opposition to the plan of “Lotus Circle,” which has proved so successful a means in America of bringing the truths of Theosophy to children. I might also enter the lists as a teacher; for I have taught a good many children, and in that capacity would beg you earnestly not to offer prizes of any sort or kind for this work. Let there be no competition; it is the bane of our modern education: it is never necessary, and one of the first Theosophical lessons might, in my opinion, be usefully given to explain—how all competition strikes at the root of that feeling of brotherhood which we are trying to stir within our children.

Let the Sunday Schools of Theosophy teach other than this, and it will avoid a serious evil. When we have taught the love of good work for its own sake we shall have done much! But it is as “parent” that my thoughts have been chiefly turned to this subject, and I venture to put a few of them into words.

In the first place, I feel very strongly that in all cases, where it is possible (and I can hardly imagine a case where it is not possible), parents should teach their own children. It is agreed, perhaps, that all parents cannot teach; that it is not a wise thing to attempt with one's own children. In ordinary teaching there is much to be said in favour of this theory, but, to begin with, the genius for *teaching* is not the first essential. It is the genius of sympathy; the intimate knowledge of the character of our children, that provides the qualification; and, to go on with, if the attempt be unwise, there must be, I think, something wrong in the relationship between parent and child, and the sooner that is looked into the better for both.

Let us be quite sure, in handing over our children to the friend—however kind, however interesting—once a week, that we are neither lazy-hearted or minded; or, if we do hand them over once a week, let us see that they learn something from us in the remaining six days.

We are all agreed that our object is so to train our children that they may, in due time, and, by a natural growth, become Theosophists; the means to secure this end are many and varied, and we should not, naturally, all agree

as to the best means. Personally, I cannot feel it a wise thing to give children too much theory, or too much sugared information about the universe. Nothing is more easy than to over-stimulate a child's mind, to make him self-conscious, to give him facts that he is incapable of digesting or judging, and the greatest care is needed in the selection of facts suitable to his understanding and reasoning power: that power should also be carefully gauged and proved.

A child often appears to grasp the largest ideas, and, certainly, enjoys the presentment of them; but it is often marvellous to hear his own statement afterwards, of what he has really taken away with him.

To a child Theosophy should mean, in the main, Ethics; indeed I am one who believes that it should mean Ethics for grown people also.

But I do not mean to say that the basis of Ethics should be wholly withheld, only I think theories should be given most carefully, and, in all cases, as an outcome of practical experience. This, it seems to me, can be conveyed best to a child alone rather than in company. In so far then, as I contend that parents should be responsible for the moral and Theosophical training of children, I inevitably contend that Sunday Schools should not be a necessity. But, so long as parents do not feel this responsibility, it is natural that an attempt should be made to gather together the children to fill the gap; and I would only urge that common-sense should be used in selecting matter, and in the nature of the instruction. I am prompted to say this by the kind and loving, but, in my opinion, unwise, tone of the writer of your opening words. I seem to see a danger there of too much sentiment, too much fancy. It is not wise to let children know that we think their thoughts strange and wonderful, nor to let them think they can know all about everything. No one rates more highly than I do the necessity for keeping the links between those now working and those who must work when we are gone; and there is little doubt that if the bent of our hearts is truly and earnestly Theosophical, that fitting language will be found in which to translate to our children some dim notion of the value of life and its lessons. We burn to save Humanity. Humanity is represented in every human being: how much, then, should we burn to save those whose Karma has knitted them so closely to us, and has led them to us for help—and whom we have the best opportunity to save—our own children.

CAROLINE MARSHALL, F.T.S.

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DUBLIN LODGE,

3 UPPER ELIX PLACE.

The subjects for discussion to the end of February are as follows:—

Jan. 17th	-	"Karma,"	Opened by J. Vorian.
" 24th	-	"Self-Analysis,"	" G. W. Russell.
" 31st	-	"Theosophy and Common Life,"	" J. Duncan.
Feb. 7th	-	"Nature Spirits,"	" A. W. Dwyer.
" 14th	-	"The Responsibility of Thought,"	" A. Vorian.
" 21st	-	"Why do we not remember our Past Lives?"	" F. J. Dick.
" 28th	-	"Post-Mortem Existence,"	"

The annual business meeting will be held on Monday evening, the 22nd January, at 7.30., to receive Treasurer's report, and elect Council for current year. The further development of the Lodge activities will come up for consideration, and a full attendance of members is earnestly requested.

FRED. J. DICK, Secretary.

THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST

No. 5.

DUBLIN, FEBRUARY 15TH. 1894.

Vol. II.

NOTICE.

The Theosophical Society is in no way responsible for any opinions, in signed or unsigned articles, that appear in this Magazine.

All Literary contributions should be addressed to the EDITOR, and Business communications to the PUBLISHER, 71 Drumcondra Road, Dublin.

Yearly Subscription, 3s. 6d. post free.

Those who have subscribed at the old rate, and who intend to continue subscribers, will much oblige by remitting as early as possible the extra 2s.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

DUBLIN LODGE.

On Monday evening, 22nd January, the Dublin Lodge held its annual meeting. Brother Dick, as secretary and treasurer, submitted his report of the year's work, which was formally adopted. Then came the election of council and officers for 1894. This presented little difficulty, as everyone seemed anxious to manifest their confidence in the trusted and tried members who, during past years, have carried on the work of the Lodge so untiringly, by re-electing them as speedily as possible. The *I.T.* was the next subject for consideration, and its past shortcomings were treated very gently. I was reminded of Jasper Niemand's words, "To say with the whole heart, 'In his place I might do worse,' is truly to love the neighbour." On the whole, it was a satisfactory meeting. It was not "for tiresome or bureaucratic legislation," but "for mutual help and suggestion for the work of another year" that all gathered together.

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THE NORTHERN FEDERATION.

The Federation of the North of England Lodges is a pleasing and healthy sign. The different activities to which attention has been given, are sufficiently varied, and if carried out in the spirit in which they have been started, ought to bear good results in due season. In consolidated movements of this nature lie the elements of true progress in the T.S. "Long live" the N.F. in the love of doing *enduring* good to others.

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NEW CORRESPONDENCE SCHEME.

I notice from current *Valan* that the new correspondence scheme, proposed to be carried out on the lines adopted successfully by the American Section, has been abandoned, because "scarcely a dozen members" replied to the announcement made by the General Secretary in a previous *Valan*. This leads me to think that Lodges are apt sometimes to

become engrossed in purely local matters to the disadvantage of the Section at large. Such a state of affairs could easily be obviated by one member of each Lodge being delegated to look after proposals from headquarters, obtain the view of the members thereon, and report to General Secretary. It seems to me this would be more satisfactory than relying on each individual member to respond. We have to sink personal or local aims into "one great sea of devotion to the cause we have taken up." It is no easy task, but we can "try"!

—:O:—

INDIAN THEOLOGY.

It seems difficult indeed for Christian writers to exclude prejudice from their minds when dealing with any system of religion outside of Christianity. Here is a fitting example:—"The great Vishnavite apostle, however, was Chaitanya, born in 1485. He died at about the age of forty at Puri in Orissa, after a most remarkable life of labour, devotion, and faith. Contemplation he taught was one of the chief means of salvation. Obedience to the guru, or religious guide, is still one of the leading features of his sect. Caste was quite a secondary consideration, by him, indeed, it was all but ignored, all men alike were capable of faith. His teaching has led up to the assertion among his followers, of the spiritual independence of women. The great end of his system, however, was the liberation of the soul, that is to say, its deliverance from the stains, and frailties, and sinful desires of earth. Alas that he prescribed such inadequate means. For assuredly neither by contemplation, nor by obedience, nor by the assertion of equality, does this come. But in the Blood of Christ we find the power which cleanseth from all sin." It is about time that we had some definition of the phrase "Blood of Christ." It has become an expression utterly meaningless, used by those who disregard entirely any attempt to apply a spiritual interpretation to what is otherwise mere sectarian jargon.

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Near the great Ferris Wheel you might have chanced upon a Brahmin who was busy turning very pleasing effects, upon little cards, with his thumb nail. He had bright eyes and a plentiful flow of wit. He was usually surrounded by admiring ladies.

"Only one nickel, lady; will you buy?"

The lady had been studying him intently for some minutes.

"No, I believe not. But I would like to know if you are a Christian?"

"A Christian? No, indeed! Why should I be a Christian? I am a Brahmin. As well ask, 'are you a Brahmin?' But I know you could not be. No more could you be a Christian if you were born in Turkey. You would be a Mohammedan, sure; and for Bible you would read the Koran."

"That is not my opinion."

"Opinion! It is not opinion; it is fact. We are all born to our religion. But it is all the same, Mohammedan or Christian. Have a flower, lady?"

Another lady interposing: "I would like one with your autograph."

"Oh, sure! 'Tis but a moment to write it." As he writes: "This is not my profession. I wished to come to the Fair. My people say 'no.' But the vessel come, the vessel go; and I was gone too. So I make my thumb nail—I learned it when a boy—serve me. I earn some money; I see the Fair; I go home. As for my religion, I am nobody here. Here, the Christian on top, I am under; at home I am on top, the Christian under. But we should not be so

unkind. Apple pie you like; lemon pie I like; but it is pie all the same. So with religion; different, but the same."

"But, have you no fear of going to hell?" persisted the lady, intent on his soul.

"To hell? Oh, no! I fear to go nowhere; so hell is not in me, I am everywhere safe."—*Unity*.

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MRS. BESANT'S INDIAN
TOUR.

As it is likely a considerable number of *I.T.* readers do not see the larger Theosophical monthlies, it will not be out of place to give a few short extracts from January *Lucifer*, regarding Mrs. Besant's Tour in India. "Every mail brings news of the enthusiastic reception given to Annie Besant, both in Ceylon and Southern India, and of the splendid work that is being done by her. Space would fail us to give all the interesting details of the ubiquitous 'triumphal arches,' unceasing 'garlanding and incessant rose-water besprinkling that our travellers have had at every opportunity.' . . . On November 16th Annie Besant first set foot on Indian soil, where she and her companions were enthusiastically received, and again wreathed with flowers. Trimovelly was the first stop. A procession, as usual, conducted them to the bungalow, with tom-toms and other native music. The subject of the first lecture was *Life after Death*. The Countess writes enthusiastically as follows:—"The hall and corridors were packed. Annie Besant spoke as I have never heard her speak before. Those who really wish to hear her at her best must come and listen to her in the East. She spoke with a force and depth of feeling which seizes hold of one like a whirlwind. . . . All the Hindüs were surprised to find what knowledge she possessed of their own scriptures." . . . In Madura they found themselves installed in the Mahârâjah's palace, and the High Priest of the world-famous temple came in state to greet them. . . . At Kumbakonam Annie Besant was interviewed by a "palmist." She says, "they gave a very accurate sketch of my life with one or two details never printed—and then went on to the future, with reasons for future taken from events in past births." He said that she was to be a great religious teacher, besides other nice things. . . . Our latest news is from Bellary. Annie Besant writes:—"Bungalow from which I last wrote, developed into a fever of excitement. The Government gave us a big place to meet in, closed the public offices early that everyone might go to the last lecture; the Prime Minister came from Mysore, and we had some 3,000 people. Next morning the Minister came with some of the high Indian officials, and discussed the method of education in the Government schools, and especially the best methods for the girls' schools; we discussed also other questions, and the way of initiating reforms." So far Mrs. Besant's tour has been a complete success.

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RIGHT HON. A. J. BALFOUR
AND
PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

At a recent meeting of the Psychical Society, of which he is President, the Right Hon. A. J. Balfour said—"Each age has its own problems, and during the past century all the sciences outside the restricted sphere at present under discussion have been reconstructed from top to bottom. The laws relating to light and heat, the conservation of energy, geology, biology, the whole theory of evolution have all changed since the time of Mesmer. . . . But the time to study the more occult phenomena had now come. There are certain well attested facts that do

not naturally fit into the framework of the sciences. These facts await explanation and investigation, and it is the duty of science to aid us in investigating them. . . . We seem to come across facts which, if they be well established—and they appear to be well established—can by no amount of squeezing or manipulation be made to fit into any of the interstices of the physical world. We seem on the threshold of a whole set of the laws of nature which do not appear to harmonise, are not in drawing, do not fit in, so to speak, with the ideas of scientific men as regards the laws of the universe."

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Mrs. Besant, in one of her speeches at Chicago, contrasting the different methods of social reformers said—"I who have spent so many years of life in dealing with these problems on the material plane, I who have given so much of time and of thought to the effort to bring some remedy to the social ills of man, I take it to be my duty at the outset of this brief statement, to bear witness founded upon knowledge, that the employment of one hour in spiritual energy for the good of man works a hundred-fold more good than years of labour employed on the material plane." To many, the phrase "spiritual energy" suggests something nebulous and intangible—a want of energy, contrasted with physical effort. No sluggard can employ spiritual energy; the whole moral, intellectual and spiritual nature must be quickened, and the aim wide and lofty; only then can such means be employed in service for the good of man. When we hear complaint of how little one can do to help on the cause of righteousness, let us not forget the testimony of one who has used material and spiritual energy alike.

D. N. D.

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THEOSOPHY IN PLAIN LANGUAGE.

XIII. KARMA. (*Continued.*)

WE have already seen that Theosophy rejects altogether the "wild and absurd delusion"—as Schopenhauer justly terms it—that the birth of a man is his absolute beginning, and that there is a newly-created "immortal soul" implanted in every new-born infant. A sense of justice alone should be enough to show how irreconcilable is such a notion with any belief in the moral ordering of the universe. The hard lot experienced, whether from sickness of body or from bad surroundings, by vast numbers of our fellow-beings from their very birth, when contrasted with the luxury or the happy moral conditions amid which others pass almost unscathed through the manifold evils and temptations of life—this is the spectacle which, to believers in Providence, has always been an "inscrutable mystery," and to Atheists a striking example of the rule of chance and blind fate in human affairs. Viewed, however, in the light of pre-existence; of evolution through repeated re-births upon earth, and of Karma, the law which "adjusts effects to causes" and renders to us just those opportunities or hindrances which we have won for ourselves in former lives—the problem of human destiny appears in a new and hopeful aspect.

My brothers! each man's life
The outcome of his former living is;
The bygone wrongs bring forth sorrow and woes,
The bygone right breeds bliss.

Such is the essence of the Theosophic idea of Karma. Its justice and reasonableness commend it at once to our sense of right, and remove from the

laws of existence a standing Reproach. The mere statement of its possibility has taken a weight of oppression from many a doubting heart. And yet there is no tenet of Theosophy, as H. P. Blavatsky herself has said, which presents more difficulty in its deeper aspects; none more liable to misunderstanding or faulty statement.

One mistake which we are prone to fall into is to make a sort of fetish of Karma, to speak of it as a kind of external power or principle in the universe which mechanically renders good for good, evil for evil, with a kind of clock-work regularity as of some great automatic machine. This error is commoner than it should be, and cannot be sufficiently guarded against.

Now, Karma is said to be "the continuance of the act" (the word itself signifies "action"). Just as the rebound of an elastic ball from the wall against which we throw it may be said to be involved in the original discharge of the ball from the hand—in the same way it may be seen that Karma is but a convenient way of naming the after-effects of any action, separated from the first inception of that action in time, but not in fact. What has to be first looked at, therefore, is the nature of action itself, and of the agent or actor man who brings upon himself that reaction or response of Nature, whether agreeable or the reverse, which we call Karma.

Action, then, if we use the word in any real, and not merely conventional sense, is clearly the result of thought or intelligence. What is done without thought, unconsciously or mechanically, cannot properly be termed action, though we often apply the word thus incorrectly for convenience sake. Behind thought again stands desire, for it is obvious that no one sets his mind in motion without an object or motive of some kind in view. In every case, whether recognised or not, the wish is in some sense "father to the thought." Desire is thus the foundation of all human action. Indeed, if we take the word in its widest and deepest sense, desire may be said to be *the* moving or active principle of the universe itself, which is the outcome, or out-breathing, or *action*, the Highest Self, God. It is everywhere the disturber of Nature's equilibrium, the enemy of the existing order or *status quo*.

The effort of Nature to restore that equilibrium and harmony disturbed by Desire, is Karma. Such is the broader aspect of this law of laws—its cosmic aspect, we may say. But how are we to understand its actual method of operation as a moral agent, influencing men's individual lives and fortunes?

A full answer to this question would demand the wisdom of the highest adept or seer. Certain principles and teachings of the occult philosophy, however, will be found fruitful of suggestion, and a study of the known factors in the great problem will show us at least in what direction we must look for its final solution.

We have traced action to desire and thought conjoined, and defined Karma as the tendency towards equilibrium or harmony in Nature. This tendency must act in the long run against the original source of disturbance—in the present case man, viewed as a creature of emotion, thought, desire, passion, will—a *variable quantity*, in fact, not something fixed, constant, or simple in its nature. Men are always changing in some way, whether for better or worse; and were the physical exterior of even the most impassive and sluggish of men to change with each varying mood, we should no doubt be often at a loss to recognise our acquaintances! But what are these moods and desires which we harbour within us, and which take possession of us and work their will with us as though endowed with separate life and consciousness? Theosophy says that they *are* so endowed, and that the ego or "I" of each of us is a veritable colony of such lives, just as our bodies are composed of myriads

of living cells. They derive vitality and energy from the human will, and during our life as well as after that temporary withdrawal from physical existence—which we call death—carry far and wide through nature the reverberation of the desires and thoughts which gave them birth. These are the “elementals” said by occultists to exert so powerful an influence on the lives of nations, families, and individuals, and it is only by some knowledge of these living forces of nature that we may understand how Karma may be deferred from one lifetime to another, and how the good or bad deed is traced back by that law of recompense and retribution to its true author. The “creatures of our mind,” however far they may roam from us in space or time, remain bound to us by organic rapport, by natural affinity. They are the “skandhus” which are said to await, “at the threshold of Devachan,”¹ the return of the ego to earth-life. They act as the “good” and “bad angels” of our destiny all through life, and would seem in fact to be the agents *par excellence* of Karma in all its mysterious workings.

(To be continued.)

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THE CAVE OF LILITH.

OUT of her cave came the ancient Lilith, Lilith the wise, Lilith the enchantress. There ran a little path outside her dwelling; it wound away among the mountains and glittering peaks, and before the door, one of the Wise Ones walked to and fro. Out of her cave came Lilith, scornful of his solitude, exultant in her wisdom, flaunting her shining and magical beauty.

“Still alone, star-gazer. Is thy wisdom of no avail? Thou hast yet to learn that I am more powerful knowing the ways of error than you who know the way of truth.”

The Wise One heeded her not, but walked to and fro. His eyes were turned to the distant peaks, the abode of his brothers. The starlight fell about him: a sweet air came down the mountain-path fluttering his white robe; he did not cease from his steady musing. Like a mist rising between rocks wavered Lilith in her cave. Violet with silvery gleams her raiment; her face was dim; over her head rayed a shadowy diadem, the something a man imagines over the head of his beloved—looking closer in her face he would have seen that this was the crown he reached out to, that the eyes burned with his own longing; that the lips were parted to yield to the secret wishes of his heart.

“Tell me, for I would know, why do you wait so long? I here in my cave between the valley and the height blind the eyes of all who would pass. Those who by chance go forth to you come back to me again, and but one in ten thousand passes on. My delusions are sweeter to them than truth. I offer every soul its own shadow; I pay them their own price. I have grown rich, though the simple shepherds of old gave me birth. Men have made me: the mortals have made me immortal. I rose up like a vapour from their first dreams, and every sigh since then and every laugh remains with me. I am made up of hopes and fears. The subtle princes lay out their plans of conquest in my cave, and there the hero dreams, and there the lovers of all time write in flame their history. I am wise, holding all experience, to tempt, to blind, to terrify. None shall pass by. Why, therefore, dost thou wait?”

The Wise One looked at her and she shrank back a little, and a little her silver and violet faded, but out of her cave her voice still sounded.

“The stars and the starry crown are not yours alone to offer, and every promise you make, I make also. I offer the good and the bad indifferently. The

¹ Devachan; lit., “place of the gods.” The intermediate state of the soul between two incarnations.

lover, the poet, the mystic, and all who would drink of the first Fountain I delude with my mirage. I was the Beatrice who led Dante upward; the gloom was in me and the glory was mine also, and he went not out of my cave. The stars and the shining of heaven were delusions of the infinite I wove about him. I captured his soul with the shadow of space, a nutshell would have contained the film. I smote on the dim heart-strings the manifold music of being. God is sweeter in the human than the human in God: therefore he rested in me."

She paused a little, then went on.

"There is that fantastic fellow who slipped by me—could your wisdom not keep him? He returned to me full of anguish, and I wound my arms round him like a fair melancholy, and now his sadness is as sweet to him as hope was before his fall. Listen to his song." She paused again. A voice came up from the depths chanting a sad knowledge—

"What of all the will to do?
It has vanished long ago.
For a dream shaft pierced it through
From the unknown Archer's bow.

What of all the soul to think?
Some one offered it a cup
Filled with a diviner drink,
And the flame has burned it up,

What of all the hope to climb?
Only in the self we grope
To the misty end of time;
Truth has put an end to hope.

What of all the heart to love?
Sadder than for will or soul,
No light lured it on above;
Love has found itself the whole."

"Is it not pitiful? I pity only those who pity themselves. Yet he is mine more surely than ever. This is the end of human wisdom. How shall he now escape? What shall draw him up?"

"His will shall awaken," said the Wise One. "I do not sorrow over him, for long is the darkness before the spirit is born. He learns in your caves not to see, not to hear, not to think, for very anguish flying your delusions."

"Sorrow is a great bond," Lilith said.

"It is a bond to the object of sorrow. He weeps what you can never give him, a life never breathed in thee. He shall come forth, and you shall not see him at the time of passing. When desire dies, will awakens, the swift, the invisible. He shall go forth, and one by one the dwellers in your caves will awaken and pass onwards; this small old path will be trodden by generation after generation. "You, too, oh, shining Lilith, will follow, not as mistress, but as hand-maiden."

"I shall weave spells," Lilith cried. "They shall never pass me. With the sweetest poison I will drug them. They will rest drowsily and content as of old. Were they not giants long ago, mighty men, heroes? I overcame them with young enchantment. Shall they pass by feeble and longing for bygone joys, for the sins of their proud exultant youth, while I have grown into a myriad wisdom?"

The Wise One walked to and fro as before, and there was silence, and I thought I saw that with steady will he pierced the tumultuous gloom of the cave, and a heart was touched here and there in its blindness. And I thought I saw that Sad Singer become filled with a new longing to be, and the delusions of good

and evil fell from him, and he came at last to the knees of the Wise One to learn the supreme truth. In the misty midnight I heard these three voices, the Sad Singer, the enchantress Lilith, and the Wise One. From the Sad Singer I learned that thought of itself leads nowhere, but blows the perfume from every flower, and cuts the flower from every tree, and hews down every tree from the valley, and at the end goes to and fro in waste places gnawing itself in a last hunger. I learned from Lilith that we weave our own enchantment, and bind ourselves with our own imagination: to think of the true as beyond us, or to love the symbol of being, is to darken the path to wisdom, and to debar us from eternal beauty. From the Wise One I learned that the truest wisdom is to wait, to work, and to will in secret: those who are voiceless to-day, to-morrow shall be eloquent, and the earth shall hear them, and her children salute them. Of these three truths the hardest to learn is the silent will. Let us seek for the highest truth. Æ.

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GLEANINGS FROM THEOSOPHICAL LITERATURE.

* * * All who have time and opportunity are invited to send selections on the subject chosen for each month. These will be arranged, and appear under this heading.

Subject for March—"Dreaming and Deep Sleep" (continued.)

DREAMING AND DEEP SLEEP.

WE may roughly divide dreams into seven classes, and sub-divide these in turn. Thus, we would divide them into:—

1. Prophetic dreams. These are impressed on our memory by the Higher Self, and are generally plain and clear; either a voice heard, or the coming event foreseen.
2. Allegorical dreams, or hazy glimpses of realities caught by the brain, and distorted by our fancy. These are generally only half true.
3. Dreams sent by adepts, good or bad, by mesmerisers, or by the thoughts of very powerful minds bent on making us do their will.
4. Retrospective; dreams of events belonging to past incarnations.
5. Warning dreams for others who are unable to be impressed themselves.
6. Confused dreams.
7. Dreams which are mere fancies and chaotic pictures, owing to digestion, some mental trouble, or such-like external cause.

H. P. B. *Transactions of Blavatsky Lodge.*

The "principles" active during ordinary dreams—which ought to be distinguished from real dreams, and called idle visions—are *Kama*, the seat of the personal Ego, and of desire awakened into chaotic activity by the slumbering reminiscences of the Lower Manas.—H. P. B. *Ibid.*

The Higher Ego lives its own separate life within its prison of clay whenever it becomes free from the trammels of matter, *i.e.*, during the sleep of the physical man. This Ego it is which is the actor, the real man, the true human self. * * * * It acts independently during the sleep of the body: but it is doubtful if any of us—unless thoroughly acquainted with the physiology of occultism—could understand the nature of its action.—H. P. B. *Ibid.*

The ordinary non-concentrated man, by reason of the want of focus due to multitudinous and confused thought, has put his Swapna (dream) field or state into confusion, and in passing through it the useful and elevating experiences of Sushupti (deep sleep) become mixed up and distorted, not resulting in the benefit to him as a waking person which is his right as well as his duty to have.

Eusebio Urban. "Path." August, 1888.

By an increase of concentration upon high thoughts, upon noble purposes * * * a centre of attraction is set up in him while yet awake, and to that all his energies flow, so that it may be figured to ourselves as a focus in the waking man. To that focal point—looking at it from that plane—converge the rays from the whole waking man toward Swapna, carrying him into the dream-state with greater clearness. By re-action this creates another focus in swapna through which he can emerge into Sushupti in a collected condition. Returning he goes by means of these points through Swapna, and there, the confusion being lessened, he enters into his usual waking state the possessor, to some extent at least, of the benefits and knowledge of Sushupti.—*Ibid.*

Our consciousness is *one* and not many, nor different from other consciousness. It is not *waking consciousness*, or *sleeping consciousness*, or any other but *consciousness itself*. The one consciousness pierces up and down through all the states or planes of Being, and serves to uphold the memory—whether complete or incomplete—of each state's experiences. Thus, in waking life, *Sat* (Being) experiences fully and knows. In dream state, *Sat* again knows and sees what goes on there, while there may not be in the brain a complete memory of the waking state just quitted. In Sushupti—beyond dream and yet on indefinitely, *Sat* still knows all that is done, or heard, or seen."

Quoted by William Brehon. "Path." September, 1888.

(To be continued.)

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COMFORT.

Dark head by the fireside brooding,
Sad upon your ears
Whirlwinds of the earth intruding
Sound in wrath and tears.

Tender-hearted in your lonely
Sorrow I would fain
Comfort you, and say that only
Gods could feel such pain.

Only spirits know such longing
For the far away,
And the fiery fancies thronging
Rise not out of clay.

Keep the secret sense celestial
Of the starry birth;
Though about you call the bestial
Voices of the earth.

If a thousand ages since
Hurled us from the throne:
Then a thousand ages wins
Back again our own.

Sad one, dry away your tears:
Sceptred you shall rise,
Equal mid the crystal spheres
With seraphs kingly wise.

G. W. R.

A THEOSOPHIC VIEW OF LIFE AND DEATH.

FEW men know why they exist, and some have been found who ask themselves the question, "is life worth living?" Such men are beings absolutely blind as to their own destiny, and the reason of their existence. Their eyes are shut, and their minds so choked either by ignorance, by religious dogma, by the learning and science taught in worldly schools, or oppressed by poverty and work, that they are not capable of realising that there is any existence higher than the present. Yet they are dissatisfied with themselves and their life. Whatever they have, there is still something more to be reached, which is always beyond their grasp. No man can be found who is altogether satisfied with his earth-life, and the reason is found in the fact, that man was never intended to live for mere animal or even intellectual enjoyment, for he possesses a mind and will to aspire to higher things, and nothing less will satisfy his cravings. The divine instinct is so strong, that even those who possess all that earth-life can give of health, comfort, position, fame or power, still fail of satisfaction, because their nature requires other food—food that will nourish their spiritual nature. And man is thus starved, because he is utterly ignorant as to the cause of his existence, the truth as to his being. One day is like another to him. He lives but to eat, drink, sleep, and take his share of pleasure or work, as they present themselves: as to the future life, it is a blank. He avoids the subject; he knows nothing; and fears death above all things. Such a man may follow a religious life, and have the "praise of men," but if he takes the trouble to use his mind, and to bring the light of reason to his aid, he will very soon find that he is very far off from any answer to the burning questions, what is my life? and why do I exist?

It requires some courage to think apart from the multitude, to be able to face ridicule and contempt, and more than this, the sorrow of well-meaning friends; but those who do so will find that there is a solution to these questions; that there is knowledge to be had, which is life and light to those who can receive it, and an answer to many difficulties. This knowledge comes to us in the teachings of Theosophy—the "Wisdom Religion," the oldest truth—for this truth is no new thing, and though men had hidden it away in their ignorance, it has ever tried to enlighten their minds. This knowledge has never been lost, for there have always existed on this earth some "Sons of God" to preserve it in its purity, and who await the time when men will ask for instruction. That there are now hearts longing for the truth is shown by the fact that this truth *has* been put before us, and the key given which will open some part of the mystery of life and death. It cannot again be so entirely hidden, for the time has come when men's minds are opening to receive it. This is evident to all who will enquire into the great work Theosophy is doing, and each century will now bring birth to men in a higher stage of evolution, whose minds will grasp the realities of being, till, by degrees, all will come into this purer atmosphere.

The object of Theosophy is the enlightenment of men, teaching them to escape the fetters with which they are loaded, and to find their own divine nature. This enlightenment will come to them through the knowledge of their relation with "God" and with the "Universe." The great First Cause is an unapproachable mystery, for ever hidden from the comprehension of man. Yet this mystery is ever present with us in our Life—Life being one aspect of the manifestation of Deity. It is the vitality and consciousness produced by the presence of the "One Eternal Principle," and there is no being separated from it. It is the same, whether in mineral, plant, animal, or man; for the Universe

is *alive*, and every atom in motion, bathed in a great electric ocean of Life. When an object is spoken of as *alive*, it means that it contains a manifestation of this unknown Presence, this concealed Force. It is hidden away, as the spark is hidden in a stone—*yet we know that it is there*. And this spark, this vital principle, this life, is an aspect of what is called "God." We feel its presence, and we live in this great mystery.

The life that each person holds is not separate from the One Life; yet for the time it is his own, and every moment may be of incalculable value if used rightly. These earth-lives are short, but they are momentous, and we cannot over-estimate the value of a life-time; for notwithstanding the fact that man never loses his conscious being, he is only able to *work*, when he is in a body. This is his opportunity in which he has the power to make his own future—for good or evil.

Theosophy teaches, that in this manifested universe, the heavenly orbs, man, animals and plants, all obey a great law, called the "Law of Periodicity." The working of this Law is one of the fundamental teachings in Theosophic philosophy, and is also well known in all departments of nature. It shows that the universe is not constant; that it has its periods of "ebb and flow," of "flux and reflux," and that, as there is day and night, so has this whole universe its days and nights. Our lives also follow this law—we sleep—again we are awake; we are born, and we die—we die but to live again. Night follows day, and day night, in endless succession; the awakening always comes, for nothing is *dead*. We lay down our lives only to come again and again, for the experience of our life-time is but a fraction of what has to be gathered in our ceaseless effort to reach the eternal.

Fear of death comes only with ignorance, and is more to be found amongst western nations than any other. The state of death appears to them as an unknown and dreaded region, and even those who speak of departed friends as having gone to "glory," seem to lament them as though they had gone to "misery." And this because they have no knowledge of the Truth as to the cause of man's existence or of the doctrine of Reincarnation—that doctrine which shows how the Law of Justice (Karma) will bring every spirit back to manifested life over and over again, until it is in harmony with the one Great Principle.

The love of life is inherent in our nature; all creatures cling to it. Life is the one thing they are conscious of, and it is the apprehension of the Divine Essence which pervades them that causes them to dread separation from it. They hold on to it, they cannot bear to part from it; and because dissolution seems to produce this fatal separateness, men fear above all things to be disconnected with life and consciousness, and until this ignorance is put away, and they learn that they cannot be parted from the One Life, they will have this fear, for it is a natural horror that they cannot overcome.

But to those willing to receive Theosophic teaching comes the knowledge that the terrors of death are imaginary; that there is no place of punishment beyond this earth; that it is but a change of *state*, and that in this state we have a conscious existence free from the physical body, and a period of rest from earthly toil. Here we live according to our highest wishes, until the time when we are again called to earth-life; for death is but as a sleep from which we arise, *alive*, refreshed, and ready for our daily work.

In this life outside the body, there is a greater nearness to the "Light," an existence nearer to the "Great Soul," and, therefore, when the hour strikes for us to return to our task, such nearness must each time have made us stronger

and more fitted for work in earth-life. Our rest cannot have been in vain, and we return, refreshed as it were, by our flight on to a higher plane, bringing back something from its calmness which will help us on our upward way. Thus we come to know that in life and in death lives that which is incorruptible—that part of the Divine Essence called *our soul*—life and death are but different phases of our being, and each earth-life a sort of landmark from which we take a new departure. Our earthly bodies we part with for ever, but the soul exists evermore alive, and has other garments in which to clothe itself; and where we look for death we find Life, for this death is a valley of Light and not of darkness.

E. W.

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THE GNOSTICS.—II.

THE spirit of religious unrest, which so markedly characterises our own times, was also a prominent feature of the period we are considering. During the years preceding the establishment of Christianity the religions of the ancient world (Greece and Rome) were rapidly disintegrating. The paraphernalia of worship were maintained, and all the outward pomp of ceremony still observed; but from social and political considerations only. The multitude was rapidly sinking into a blind and selfish materialism, into which mere empty observance dragged them further; the cultured classes professedly disbelieved in the gods; the playwright and satirist openly caricatured them; and the philosophers argued against the current conceptions of them. Among the Jews, changes as great were to be noted. The letter of the law began to be thought capable of more than one interpretation; and Pharisee, Sadducee, and Kabbalist, each gave his rendering. In the general body of the teachings, also, many changes and additions appeared. During the captivity of Babylon, numbers of the Persian and Babylonian conceptions crept into the Sacred Books, and many more into the common life and thought of the people. Besides, the Jews, after the release from captivity, ceased in a great measure to be the exclusive race they had theretofore been. Numbers of them settled in and around the cities of Asia Minor, where, mixing in the daily life of the inhabitants, they could not fail to influence the life and thought of the people around them, and be influenced in turn.

I have but mentioned a few of the circumstances that could lead to only one result: a reaction. It was necessary that men should again turn to the old teachings of the mysteries, and seek for the spirit within them. The mixture of Greek, Roman, Jewish, Persian, and Babylonian systems gave new light to the truth-seekers, and material for a new presentment of the mystic philosophy. Those mystic searchers after truth, adopting Christianity as the outward expression of the goal they sought, are known to us as Gnostics. In the nature of their knowledge, and in their mode of cognition, they were Oriental Theosophists, moving amid symbols and notions, to the Western minds but abstract ideas, but to them living objective truths. They explained the outer world from the promptings of their own intuitions, which they said could not be doubted, and which should be men for all the test of truth.

In the writings of Philo Judaeus we find a convenient point at which to begin a sketch of the Gnostic doctrines. He was not a Gnostic, but a Hellenic Jew, one of those that lived out of Judea after the captivity; his date is generally given as about twenty years before the Christian era. He taught that God is the only Reality—the final cause of all things which emanate ceaselessly from Him. He is Absolute, Unknowable, and Unthinkable; and can only be named

in terms of His unnameableness. He is without qualities, or they are negative. An immediate influence of this Absolute Being upon the world cannot be imagined; hence, an intermediate class of beings must be created. These latter, infinite in number and degrees, are not merely ideals, but personal powers. Eternity is the motionless duration of the Absolute Being, and Time is but the illusion caused by the ever-shifting phenomena of life. Man is the middle point of creation: he is the microcosm of the macrocosm, and contains within himself the potentiality of all that has been, or that is to be. He is immortal by his heavenly nature, but there are degrees to his immortality corresponding to the degrees of spiritual development arrived at. Paradise is a Becoming-oneness with God; the human soul is a direct emanation of the Deity, subject meanwhile to the sense-bondage, and the object of development is to rise above sensuousness; for the souls that have so risen enjoy the direct vision of God. Matter is an eternal but purely passive principle; and the origin of evil and imperfection is not in the opposition of matter to spirit, but in that of the evanescent and impermanent to the eternal and permanent.

J. E. PARDON.

(To be continued.)

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MRS. BESANT ON EDUCATION.

EDUCATION can do no more than legislate, for legislation is only dealing with the plane of action, whereas education goes farther inward and deals with the plane of mind. But what mind? The lower mind alone. And even then, not the lower mind at its best, but the lower mind as it may be most easily turned into an instrument for struggle and the gaining of advantage over one's neighbour. For the whole of the educational system is founded on the idea that the child is to be trained into a successful man, and success on our modern lips does not mean success in service. It means success in self-aggrandizement, so that if you take one of the favourite books given as a prize in our English schools, you will find it a book called "Self-Help," and if you read the book "Self-Help" you will find that it is full of the stories of self-made men, so that the rather caustic remark arises in the mind when looking at the self-made man—proud, pompous, and self-opinionated—well, at least it is some consolation to find that he has made himself, because he would not be a credit to anyone else.

If education is to be real, you must change your system; you must put a stop to competition in the school; you must no longer set child against child in the struggle; you must give up the system of making the prize the symbol of victory over others, and the pride of the successful student that so many of his comrades are behind him and not in front. The whole thing is false, fitted only for a society which takes the law of the survival of the fittest which belongs to the beasts in the jungle instead of that law of self-abnegation by which only the soul of man can rise. So, when the child comes into your hands with its outer envelope ductile, with its nervous system plastic, the soul of the child has scarce yet got grip on its outer envelopment, and the contact is not yet complete between the thinker and its vehicle, what do you do with your modern education? You distort the outer vehicle that the soul is to use. You plant upon that fertile soil the evil seeds of competition, of desire for triumph, of wish to succeed at the cost of others; so that every child in your class is glad when the pupil above him stumbles, because it brings him nearer to the top of the class, and to stand

as the successful child when the examiner shall come round. Rather teach your children that the child who learns most quickly should be the helper of the child who learns most slowly. That every power of brain and body is to be given for the helping of others, and not for dominance. That is the duty to the souls that come into the hands of the teachers, and they ill perform their sublime mission who try to dwarf and stunt the habitation that the soul has to dwell in.

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"LOTUS CIRCLE" FOR CHILDREN.

THE "League of Theosophical Workers" has opened a Sunday class for children, in order to supply a want that has long been felt by parents who are members of the Society, and wish to have their children educated on unsectarian lines.

"Lotus Circles" for children were started in America some time ago, and have been a great success. Miss Stabler, one of the well-known workers in New York (now staying at Headquarters in London), and who has had much experience in starting the "Lotus Circles" in America, has kindly consented to take charge of the class.

The parents and friends of the children are cordially invited to attend and aid in giving the little ones a right conception of true Brotherhood.

The class will be held every Sunday at 2.30 p.m., in the Conservatory, 17 Avenue Road.

All Members of the Society who are in sympathy with the undertaking are invited to co-operate by sending any suggestions to the Secretary of the League, (MRS.) ISABEL COOPER-ORLEY, F.T.S., Hon. Sec. L.T.W., 17 and 19 Avenue Road, Regent's Park, N.W.

THE "LOTUS CIRCLE."

17 Avenue Road, London, N.W.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—The opening words of "Our Children's Page," in your January number, are so full of love for young people that the children of the "Lotus Circle" here think that all their papers and questions may be forwarded to you. They are sent just as they came in.

Last October the "League of Theosophical Workers" issued the enclosed leaflet, and Miss Stabler, from the New York Headquarters, put all the energy of her bright personality into the work, so that our "Lotus Circle," when once started, might prove a success. The young ones immediately responded to her sunny influence, and when she told them that all children should be sweet, like flowers, and send out kindly thoughts as perfume to all around, they were delighted at the idea. Each child at once took his or her name, and we have Forget-me-not, Hyacinth, Red Rose, Daffodil, Lily-of-the-Valley, Pansy, Violet, Primrose, White Rose, Carnation, Chrysanthemum, Marguerite, Sweetbriar, Sunflower, Loy, Wallflower, and Jasmine—altogether forming a sweet nosegay in our "Lotus Circle."

We meet on Sunday afternoon, from 2.30 to 3.30, in the Conservatory here. We sing the "Lotus Circle" songs, set to the pretty tunes in use amongst the children in America and Australia; broad Theosophical ideas are given to the children in simple language, and stories are told and their meaning discussed.

The flowers drooped their heads when Miss Stabler went back to New York, and many little hearts beat lovingly at her remembrance; but she has

promised to write and tell us about the "Lotus Circles" in America; and the promised assistance of Miss Kisingbury, Miss Haregrove, Mrs. Whyte, Miss Bright, Miss Stanley, Mr. Faulding, Mr. Price, and other kind friends, makes us certain of success. The parents and other "grown-ups" come to help or listen, and the wish underlying all that is done is to realise, as far as may be, H.P.B.'s ideas on the education of children, as given by her in the *Key to Theosophy*.

ANNIE F. WILSON (Sec. "Lotus Circle").

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QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS.

- I. Do our "thinkers" ever grow old?
- II. Do our "thinkers" ever die?
- III. If God did not make us, who did?
- IV. Do our physical bodies ever return to this world again?
- V. Has anyone ever known what is above the sky?
- VI. Could we ever see what is called "God"?
- VII. What is Reincarnation?
- VIII. What is the white colour caused by?

The Editor will be much obliged if all "grown-ups," who have the interest of the "Lotus Circle" at heart, will forward brief answers to above questions in a form suitable for children.

—:O:—

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM MEMBERS.

UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD.

UNIVERSAL Brotherhood is the first great principle of Theosophy. It has been taught by most religions, Christianity included, but it has been practised by few. In other words, the theory has been admitted, but the practise has never been pressed. This may be accounted for by the difficulties which attend it. Universal Brotherhood has been neglected for so long that it is almost a new teaching or, at least, a revival of a long disregarded principle. Class distinction is, and always has been, the great enemy of Universal Brotherhood. At the present day, in India, we see the effect of caste in preventing communication between those of the same race. But the Jews also had their Scribes and Pharisees, and the thing, if not the name, is not unknown among ourselves. This class-distinction has less foothold in America than elsewhere. But even there the evil has been evaded and not overcome. No one can pride himself on his honesty unless he has overcome the temptation to be dishonest; but what *are* the means which have been employed to get rid of these distinctions? The American Constitution admits of everyone reaching a high position in the State, and the Americans make this their boast. In this way a great race for material power has been entered upon which, as history shows us, is always the first step to decay. There always will be certain differences among us. For example, we are not the same as the Mahatmas or Adepts, but

the difference is not of kind, but of degree. All these things show that the only way to combat the evil is by example.

So it becomes the bounden duty of every Theosophist to carry out in practice this teaching of Universal Brotherhood, without which, Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity are but empty names.

G. H. WHITE (age 14).

The Editor thanks all the "flowers" for their interesting little contributions, and he will try and do justice to all, as space and time permits.

:O:
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
AND HOW TO JOIN IT.

The objects of the Theosophical Society are:—

1. To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour.
2. To promote the study of Aryan, and other Eastern literatures, religions, philosophies and sciences, and to demonstrate its importance.
3. To investigate unexplained laws of nature, and the psychic powers latent in man.

Anyone who accepts the first object of the Society, without reservation, can become a member. The rules of the Society, and all information, can be obtained by writing to the General Secretary, Theosophical Society, 17 and 19 Avenue Road, Regent's Park, London, N.W., or to any of the Secretaries of Lodges or Centres.

:O:
DUBLIN LODGE,
3 UPPER ELY PLACE.

Subjects for discussion to end of February:—

Feb. 21st - "Why do we not remember our Past Lives?" - F. J. Dick.
" 28th - "Post-mortem Existence."

The officers for the current year were duly appointed at the annual business meeting on 22nd January, and the following Balance Sheet for the year 1893 was submitted by the Hon. Treasurer:—

Dr.	£ s. d.	Cr.	£ s. d.
To Dues	17 5 6	By Deficit from 1892	14 7 11
" Entrance Fees	1 5 0	" Entrance Fees to European	
" Donations	20 0 0	Section	1 5 0
		" Dues to ditto	7 5 0
		" Rent of Meeting Rooms	20 0 0
		" Balance in hand	1 12 7
	44 10 6		44 10 6

Examined and found correct,

G. W. RUSSELL.

D. N. DUNLOP.

It was unanimously decided to take up the study of "Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms" on Monday evenings.

FRED. J. DICK, *Hon. Secretary.*

All literary contributions to be addressed to the EDITOR, and business communications to the PUBLISHER, 71 Lower Drumcondra Road, Dublin.

THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST

No. 6.

DUBLIN, MARCH 15TH, 1894.

VOL. II.

NOTICE.

The Theosophical Society is in no way responsible for any opinions, in signed or unsigned articles, that appear in this Magazine.

All Literary contributions should be addressed to the EDITOR, and Business communications to the PUBLISHER, 71 DRUMCONDR ROAD, DUBLIN.

Yearly Subscription, 3s. 6d. post free.

Those who have subscribed at the old rate, and who intend to continue subscribers, will much oblige by remitting as early as possible the extra 2s.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

A WORD ON SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

The question of all-absorbing attention at present is the political situation. The party game is one of "tactics," pure and simple, and the most successful in pandering to popular ruling religious, racial, or class prejudice wins the day.

*"The Name of Earth's crowned city is Contention;
The Name of its Religion is Dissension."*

Everywhere the struggle intensifies; bombs burst, developing public uneasiness, which bespeaks fear of some unlooked-for change. It seems as if we were nearing the close of one more act in the great world-drama. Below the thin veil of custom thrills and quivers the social passion of humanity. Every new impetus encounters corresponding resistance, and this in turn generates fresh heat. Every true Theosophist is endeavouring to spread light commensurate with this heat, so that when the gathering force shall burst asunder the shell in which mankind has incubated, the highest moral and religious truth shall be the ruling and active principle. As Mrs. Besant puts it, "the whole evolution of a race will change in its direction according as man is regarded as a soul, or only one of the highest of animals that live upon the earth."

—:0:—

TWO POLICIES.

There are two policies, the Ethical and the Material. Mr. Gronlund says, in his "Co-operative Commonwealth," "I am more and more convinced that Karl Marx's doctrine, that the bread and butter question is the motive force of progress is not tenable." The new social movement must rally round a common

good, not a common greed. It will be the outcome of a larger hope, of wider sympathy, unfolding in harmonious proportions. The central truth of its system shall be the unity of all being, the disregarding of which will involve injurious consequences, just as surely as any law of health. Count Tolstoi says, "The time will come—it is already coming—when the Christian principles of equality and fraternity, community of property, non-resistance of evil by force, will appear just as natural and simple as the principles of family or social life seem to us now." Utopia! Sweet dream! is the general exclamation. Yet there are a few who know "the dream is not a dream." The Ideal, ever-precedes the Real, and "the most solid and enduring organisations" first float before the world's thought as pictured imaginations.

—————:O:—————

CHINESE POETRY.

According to an article in a recent number of the *Nineteenth Century*, the Chinese word for poet is a "wind-man." Not that they are long-winded, for we are told that Chinese poems are "never very long," the limit at public examinations, for example, being twelve lines of five words each. Some of the translations given are really excellent:

Upon this tall pagoda's peak
My hands can nigh the stars enclose;
I dare not raise my voice to speak,
For fear of startling God's repose.

—————:O:—————

HINDU MAGIC.

The *Christian Commonwealth* a few weeks ago offered £1,000 for the production of a Mahatma who could perform the wonders usually attributed to such beings. Of course, the object of such an offer is obvious enough, and it probably would not suit C.C. purposes to despatch a special correspondent to India to investigate such matters on the spot. Dr. Heinrich Hensoldt has contributed an article to December *Arena*, relating wonders, of which he was eye witness, and which are surely sufficiently startling, even for the *Christian Commonwealth*. The "miracles" performed "by the average Yoghi" equal those recorded in the New Testament, he says. The Mango feat he saw many times, and once in a Kashmir valley he saw it done by a certain Ram Surash, a Rishi from Thibet. "The mango tree which this Rishi produced did not vanish in proportion as I approached it, but retained its full realism, and I not only touched it, but actually climbed several feet up its stem."

—————:O:—————

"'SECRET DOCTRINE:'
CORRESPONDENCE CLASS."

A SUGGESTION.

The *Secret Doctrine* Correspondence Class, proposed in current *Valian*, is, in my opinion, an excellent idea, and there can be little doubt that it will be readily responded to. All who desire to take up the study properly must have copies of the *Secret Doctrine*, and as many members do not possess copies, and cannot afford to purchase them right out, it would be well if the T.P.S. could devise some simple

method for supplying copies on the instalment system. Of course, there may be difficulties in the way of carrying out such a scheme; but it seems to me that it could be worked satisfactorily through Branch Presidents or Secretaries, who would, I think, be ready and willing to undertake the necessary responsibility.

—:O:—

At the Conference of the North of England Federation, Bro. Mead "pointed out the great desirability of communication between Lodges." I often think we are more than "25 minutes behind" in Dublin, so few visitors from other Lodges come our way. In the absence of a fund for such purposes, this can be hardly otherwise, but once in Liverpool vicinity, the distance is not very great, and I am sure members of the Dublin Lodge will extend a very hearty welcome, to Bro. Keightly or Bro. Mead, if either can see their way to pay us a short visit.

—:O:—

In an article on Shelley, in the *Weekly Irish Times* of 24th ult., the writer concludes by stating that, "if Shelley were alive to-day, I feel sure that he would lean enthusiastically towards Theosophy."

—:O:—

I have been requested to state that a non-sectarian club has been opened at 1 Kenilworth Lane, Harold's Cross Road, during this winter, with the aim of supplying instruction and wholesome entertainment to working boys and girls. Up to the present time it has only been possible to give the club a school-like nature, owing to the lack of helpers and the scarcity of funds. The promoters of the Kenilworth Club hope, with the increase of volunteer workers, to open the club-room several evenings each week for the comfort of readers. Games, magic lantern, and other entertainments are also prospected. Twenty boys, ten girls, and fifteen smaller children have attended the various classes. Many of them are anxious to attend oftener, but with the present small staff of teachers it is only possible to hold a boys' class on Wednesday evenings from 9 to 10 p.m. Spelling, reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, and carpentry being the subjects already taught. The girls' classes are on Monday, from 5 to 6 p.m.; Wednesday, 5.30 to 6.30 p.m. Hints on health and drilling taking the place of spelling and carpentry. The children meet from 4 to 5 on Wednesday for poetry, drilling and kindergarten. Visitors are invited. Full particulars may be obtained from the Hon. Sec., Mr. Fred Shackleton, 20 Rathmines Terrace, by anyone interested in the scheme.

—:O:—

EDITORIAL. I beg to acknowledge receipt of the following which will appear in due course:—

"Is the Illusion of Devachan necessary."—E.M.C.W.

"Pessimism from an Optimist standpoint."—Psy.

"Conventionality."—T.E.T.

"The Mission of the Christ."—W.K.

"The Divine in Man."—LEON LAUDSBERG.

"Thoughtfulness."—M.E.G.

I have also to thank an anonymous friend for a donation of 10s. to I.T. fund, which is very welcome indeed,

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THEOSOPHY IN PLAIN LANGUAGE.

XIV. KARMA. (Continued.)

DESIRE, then—the heart's-desire of many past existences, is the moving cause which determines the Karma or destiny of human souls. It is desire, too, which to-day enables that destiny to accomplish itself, by providing the field or basis through which it may operate. This aspect of Karma distinguishes it from any iron law of fate or necessity, and enables us to see in what way Karma may be changed or weakened or neutralized in its action.

The whole of this subject has been so well treated in an article which appeared anonymously in the *Path* magazine for September, 1886, that we cannot do better than quote from it the following passage in full:—

"A very important question is here presented: Can an individual affect his own Karma, and if so, to what degree and in what manner?"

"It has been said that Karma is the continuance of the act, and for any particular line of Karma to exert itself it is necessary that there should be the basis of the act engendering that Karma in which it can inhere and operate. But action has many planes in which it can inhere. There is the physical plane, the body with its senses and organs; then there is the intellectual plane, memory, which binds the impressions of the senses into a consecutive whole.

... Beyond the plane of intellect there is the plane of emotion, the plane of preference for one object rather than another. These three, physical, intellectual, and emotional, deal entirely with objects of sense-perception, and may be called the great battle-field of Karma. There is also the plane of Ethics, the plane of discrimination of the 'I ought to do this, I ought not to do that.' This plane harmonises the intellect and the emotions. All these are the planes of Karma or action, what to do, and what not to do. It is the mind as the basis of desire that initiates action on the various planes, and it is only through the mind that the effects of rest and action can be received.

"An entity enters incarnation with Karmic energy from past existences, that is to say, the action of past lives awaiting its development as effect. This Karmic energy presses into manifestation in harmony with the basic nature of the act. Physical Karma will manifest in the physical tendencies bringing enjoyment and suffering. The intellectual and the Ethical planes are also in the same manner the result of the past Karmic tendencies, and the man as he is, with his moral and intellectual faculties, is in unbroken continuity with the past.

"The entity at birth has therefore a definite amount of Karmic energy. After incarnation this awaits the period in life at which fresh Karma begins. Up to the time of responsibility it is the initial Karma only that manifests. From that time the personality becomes the ruler of his own destiny. It is a great mistake to suppose that an individual is the mere puppet of the past, the helpless victim of fate. The law of Karma is not fatalism, and a little consideration will show that it is possible for an individual to affect his own Karma. If the

greater amount of energy be taken up on one plane than on another, this will cause the past Karma to unfold itself on that plane. For instance, one who lives entirely on the plane of sense-gratification will, from the plane beyond, draw the energy required for the fulfilment of his desires. Let us illustrate by dividing man into upper and lower nature. By directing the mind and aspirations to the lower plane, a 'fire,' or centre of attraction, is set up there, and in order to feed and fatten it, the energies of the whole upper plane are drawn down and exhausted in supplying the need of energy which exists below, due to the indulgence of sense-gratification. On the other hand, the centre of attraction may be fixed in the upper portion, and then all the needed energy goes there to result in increase of spirituality. It must be remembered that nature is all-bountiful, and withholds not her hand. The demand is made, and the supply will come. But at what cost? The energy which should have strengthened the moral nature and fulfilled the aspirations after good, is drawn to the lower desires. By degrees the higher planes are exhausted of vitality, and the good or bad Karma of an entity will be absorbed on the physical plane. If, on the other hand, the interest is detached from the plane of sense-gratification; if there is a constant effort to fix the mind on the attainment of highest ideal, the result will be that the past Karma will find no basis in which to inhere on the physical plane. Karma will, therefore, be manifested only in harmony with the plane of desire. The sense-energy of the physical plane will exhaust itself on a higher plane, and thus become transmuted in its effects.

"What the means are through which the effects of Karma can thus be changed is also clear. A person can have no attachment for a thing he does not think about, and, therefore the first step must be to fix the thought on the highest ideal. In this connection one remark may be made on the subject of repentance. Repentance is a form of thought in which the mind is constantly recurring to a sin. It is therefore to be avoided if one would set the mind free from sin and its Karmic results. All sin has its origin in the mind. The more the mind dwells on any course of conduct, whether with pleasure or pain, the less chance is there for it to become detached from such action. The *manas* (mind) is the knot of the heart. When that is untied from any object, there will no longer be a link between the Karma connected with that object and the individual.

"It is the attitude of the mind which draws the Karmic cords tightly round the soul. It imprisons the aspirations and binds them with chains of difficulty and obstruction. It is desire that causes the past Karma to take form and shape, and so build the house of clay. It must be through non-attachment that the soul will burst through the walls of pain. It will be only through a change of mind that the Karmic burden will be lifted.

"It will appear, therefore, that although absolutely true that action brings its own results, 'there is no destruction here of actions, good or not good. Coming to one body after another they become ripened in their respective ways.'—Yet this ripening is the act of the individual. Free will of man asserts itself and he becomes his own saviour. To the worldly man Karma is a stern Nemesis; to the spiritual man Karma unfolds itself in harmony with his highest aspirations. He will look with tranquility alike on past and future, neither dwelling with remorse on past sin nor living in expectation of reward for present action.'

A STRANGE AWAKENING.

BY Æ.

CHAPTER I.

THAT we are living in the Dark Age we all know, yet we do not realise half its darkness. We endure physical and moral suffering; but, fortunately or unfortunately, we are oblivious of the sorrow of all sorrows—the Spiritual Tragedy. Such a rust has come over the pure and ancient spirit of life, that the sceptre and the diadem and the starry sway we held are unremembered; and if anyone speaks of these things he is looked at strangely with blank eyes, or with eyes that suspect madness. I do not know whether to call him great, or pity him, who feels such anguish; for although it is the true agony of the crucifixion, it is only gods who are so martyred. With these rare souls memory is not born: life flows on, and they with it go on in dreams: they are lulled by lights, flowers, stars, colours, and sweet odours, and are sheltered awhile from heaven and hell; then in some moment the bubble bursts, and the god awakens and knows himself, and he rises again with giant strength to conquer; or else he succumbs, and the waves of Lethe, perhaps in mercy, blot out his brief knowledge.

I knew such an one many years ago, and I tell of him because I know of no deeper proof of the existence of a diviner nature than that man's story. Arthur Harvey, as I have heard people describe him, in his early years was gentle, shy, and given to much dreaming. He was taken from school early, came up from the country to the city, and was put to business. He possessed the apathy and unresisting nature characteristic of so many spiritual people, and which is found notably among the natives of India; so he took his daily confinement at first as a matter of course, though glad enough when it was over, and the keen sweet air blew about him in spring or summer evenings, and the earth looked visionary, steeped in dew and lovely colour, and his soul grew rich with strange memories and psychic sensations. And so day-by-day he might have gone on with the alternation of work and dream, and the soul in its imaginings might never have known of the labours of the mind, each working by habit in its accustomed hour, but for an incident which took place about two years after his going to business.

One morning his manager said: "Harvey, take this letter; deliver it, and wait for an answer." He started up eagerly, glad for the unwonted freedom from his desk. At the door, as he went out, the whole blinding glory of the sunlight was dashed on him. He looked up. Ah! what spaces illimitable of lustrous blue. How far off! How mighty! He felt suddenly faint, small, mean, and feeble. His limbs trembled under him: he shrank from the notice of men as he went on his way. Vastness, such as this, breaking in upon the eye that had followed the point of the pen, unnerved him: he felt a bitter self-contempt. What place had he amid these huge energies? The city deafened him as with one shout: the tread of the multitude; the mob of vehicles; glitter and shadow; rattle, roar, and dust; the black smoke curled in the air; higher up the snowy and brilliant clouds, which the tall winds bore along; all were but the intricate and wondrous workings of a single monstrous personality; a rival in the universe who had absorbed and wrested from him his own divine dower. Out of him; out of him, the power—the free, the fearless—whirled in play, and drove the suns and stars in their orbits, and sped

the earth through light and shadow. Out of him; out of him; never to be reconquered; never to be regained. The exultant laugh of the day; the flame of summer; the gigantic winds careering over the city; the far-off divine things filled him with unutterable despair. What was he amid it all? A spark decaying in its socket; a little hot dust clinging together.

He found himself in a small square; he sat down on a bench; his brain burning, his eyes unseeing.

"Oh! my, what's he piping over?" jeered a grotesque voice, and a small figure disappeared, turning somersaults among the bushes.

"Poor young man! perhaps he is ill. Are you not well, sir?" asked a sympathetic nurse.

He started up, brought to himself, and muttering something unintelligible, continued his journey through the city. The terrible influence departed, and a new change came over him. The laugh of the urchin rankled in his mind: he hated notice; there must be something absurd or out of the common in his appearance to invoke it. He knew suddenly that there was a gulf between him and the people he lived among. They were vivid, actual, suited to their places. How he envied them! Then the whole superficies of his mind became filled with a desire to conceal this difference. He recalled the various characteristics of those who worked along with him. One knew all topical songs, slang and phrases; another affected a smartness in dress; a third discussed theatres with semi-professional knowledge. Harvey, however, could never have entered the world, or lived in it, if he had first to pass through the portals of such ideas! He delivered his letter; he was wearied out, and as he returned he noticed neither sky nor sunlight, and the hurrying multitudes were indifferent and without character. He passed through them; his mind dull like theirs; a mere machine to guide rapid footsteps.

That evening, a clerk named Whittaker, a little his senior in the office, was struck by Harvey's curious and delicate face.

"I say, Harvey," he said, "how do you spend your evenings?"

Harvey flushed a little at the unvoiced interest.

"I take long walks," he said.

"Do you read much?"

"A little."

"Do you go to the theatre?"

"No."

"Never?"

"Never."

"Whew! what a queer fellow! No clubs, classes, music-halls—anything of that sort, eh?"

"No," said Harvey, a little bitterly, "I know nothing, nobody; I am always alone."

"What an extraordinary life! Why, you are out of the universe completely. I say," he added, "come along with me this evening. I will initiate you a little. You know you must learn your profession as a human being."

His manner was very kindly; still Harvey was so shy that he would have found some excuse, but for that chance expression, "out of the universe." Was not this apartness the very thing he had just been bitterly feeling? While he hesitated and stammered in his awkwardness, the other said:

"There, no excuses! You need not go to your lodgings for tea. Come along with me."

They went off together through the darkening streets. One cheerful and irreverent, brimful of remark or criticism; the other silent, his usual dreaminess was modified, but had not departed, and once, gazing up through the clear, dark blue, where the stars were shining, he had a momentary sense as if he were suspended from them by a fine invisible thread, as a spider hung from her roof: suspended from on high, where the pure and ancient æther flamed around the habitations of eternity; and below and about him, the thoughts of demons, the smoke, darkness, horror and anguish of the pit.

(To be continued.)

—:o:—

WHY DO WE NOT REMEMBER OUR PAST LIVES?

(A Paper read to the Dublin Lodge.)

THIS is one of the questions so much easier to ask than to answer. Its enunciation involves half truths, and contradictions, which seem so obvious that it is easier to turn away from the problem than to face it, even intellectually. Yet it is capable of perfectly logical and scientific treatment, granting a sufficiently unbiassed mode of approaching the question, and we must try and shake ourselves out of our ruts and grooves in considering it.

First, who are we? Are we more, or less, than we suspect ourselves to be? Are we really *owners*, so to speak, of a long procession of varied lives amid all imaginable surroundings of power, of service, of brilliancy, and of gloom, the memory of which is merely lost for a time; or are we heirs to some vaster memory *not* our own? Are we merely bundles of mental impressions which flicker and die, never to reawaken; or are we like feeble candles burning outside the flame-temple of our real selves; to be entered sooner or later, or not at all, as we choose?

I love contemporary thought, notwithstanding its beautiful error, tottering metaphysics, and general denial of everything sacred. To what can we advantageously address ourselves if not to, and largely in terms of that thought? Good deeds and thoughts are a mighty power; but if we venture into the region where the men and women of our time are *asking* these questions, we should see whether it is not possible to answer very much in terms of the thought of the time. Be it noted that in order to do so, students may dig more or less deeply in Eastern psychology, but it does not follow that they should invariably offer the spoken *thought-forms*, to say nothing of the *words*, of the East, to those whom they would fain help; especially when we remember how little of really occult thought-forms is translatable by our ill-developed Western *brains*, even though these sometimes reach our *hearts*.

Our past lives! What an astounding conception! It is too astounding, perhaps. There must be a flaw somewhere. It rings true somehow, yet it seems not true; why is this? Who, then, are *we*? That is the point. The answer of Theosophy is, *we are Mind*. Now I venture to think this is not *obviously* true. It takes some time to make this out. We have to reflect a little before we will admit the truth of this. I will go further and say that one has usually to go through a good deal of pretty stiff self-analysis, and perhaps

suffering, before he is at all ready to admit it. As it is, many people would even be prepared to scout the idea. Yet it is most important to firmly grasp this conception, because until it is grasped we can make no progress with our subject. And let me say at once that by Mind we must *not* understand Intellect. *We* are more than intellect. The latter is a semi-automatic affair, a good deal connected with memory, of which we will speak presently. Intellect is not the real Thinker, and, moreover, does not suffer, is not swayed by emotion, does not aspire or despair. But *we* do, that is to say, *Mind* does. It is for want of due discrimination between intellect and mind that the control of the passionate nature, etc., seems at first to point to no other result than the production of a purely intellectual, and therefore cold and unfeeling being, whom we perhaps picture as "grieving neither for the living nor the dead." Mind really includes perception and experience of form and material qualities, of sensations of different kinds, of abstract ideas, of tendencies and desires, and of mental powers. These five are we, not separately, but collectively. Now this is also a creative and energising power that works from, and in the centre of our being, the heart. The brain, moon-like, in one aspect merely reflects the life of the heart. "Regard earnestly the life that surrounds you. It is formed by the hearts of men!" And this power selects and works with one or more of the five essential functions, thus creating, and being in turn affected by, its environment, on the one hand, and modifying, and being affected by, its essential organism on the other.

This organism must occupy our attention for a moment.

It is twofold in its essential history and evolution, the elements of form and sensation, etc., resulting from a long past, and prodigious evolution, and the others (really older; but joined to the former at a later date) partaking of the nature of mind, which at a certain period descended into, and ensouled the former elements. It is only necessary to consider one other point in this connection in order to prepare us for the solution, intellectually at least, of the problem which engages us.

This organism is held to be but the external shadow of a variety of subtle organisms, one within the other, in different regions of mind-substance, or on the subjective side of nature, and each of these regions has its atmosphere of mind-stuff, so to speak, on which are recorded the impressions therein produced.

In each region the mind and its five essential functions—its organism—react on each other in a certain manner. In our ordinary waking state the mind uses certain of these functions at present in such manner as (1) to prevent the equal action of the remaining ones in modifying and refining the organism, and (2) so preventing the conscious control, or rather the perfect co-operation of the mind over the whole. In other words, our minds, that is we ourselves, are largely absorbed in perceiving forms, material qualities, and sensations, and further swayed by certain mental tendencies and desires. The sphere of the mind is not rounded out by the partial suppression of these three essential functions with the simultaneous cultivation of the remaining two (which deal with abstract ideas and mental powers), in such manner that the whole action of the person shall be under the sway of mind joined to will, rather than of its vehicle. When this rounding out of the nature occurred, we would be sufficiently steady and purified to receive impressions from the inner and subtle organism hailing from an evolutionary period far exceeding that of the lower vehicle,

From these considerations it will be seen that we are entities using our outer mind-organisms in an imperfect manner, and that as the method of using them becomes more equable and perfect a subtle law connects them with the next higher mind-organism. Now the mental powers form part of our mind-organism, and these include memory. A procession of forms, sensations, abstract ideas, and mental tendencies impress themselves in detail during life, in the *atmosphere* of our ordinary mind-organism, and become reproduced in the brain in four different ways. Firstly, automatically, by the stimulation of form or of sense perceptions, as the odour of a flower recalling instantly a scene. This kind of action is frequent, and is what is ordinarily called *memory*. Secondly, by an idea taken up; as, for instance, we think of kindness and some observed event of that nature immediately recurs to our consciousness. This is also frequent and is called *remembrance*. Thirdly, by the wish to recall details of a certain subject or experience. This is generally accompanied by a more or less severe effort of the will, occasioning thereby a slight paralysis momentarily, of other centres, and thus allowing the pictures that exist in the atmosphere of the mind-organism to again impress the brain. This is less frequent and is called *recollection*. The fourth kind of *memory* of the before-mentioned procession of sensations and ideas which have occurred during present life is the abnormal one active in trance or hypnosis. It is of the same nature as the third, but the action is more perfect owing to the complete paralysis of the other centres of the ordinary mind-organism. Now, I have already referred to the nature of the action taking place in the whole organism during this procession of events. It moulds, and is in turn moulded by these events. In short, the dynamic *experience* of these events, and thoughts, is built into us, so creating continually a fresh sum total of mind-organism. The mind-organism then is built up, not by memory, but by experience. The physical memory is merely the recorder of passing events, and *not* the preserver of experience. "It is but the outer husk of experience." Experience relates to *feeling* and *consciousness*; memory but to time and sensation, and is at best but the record of an illusion. The events recorded in our atmosphere precipitate their essence (so far as it can be assimilated) into the mind-organism. Memory reproduces portion of this record in terms of time and sensation, but in the inner sphere they exist, as we have seen, *all at once*. "Time is but the space between our memories. As soon as we cease to perceive this space time has disappeared. The whole life of an old man may appear to him no longer than an hour, or less; and as soon as time is but a moment to us we have entered upon eternity."

So far, we have up to this spoken of ourselves as identical with our mind-organism, consisting of the five essential functions. This is *more* than the truth for many of us for the time being, but far less than the truth potentially and in actual fact. We have pictured this mind-organism solely in connection with recent experience, but we must remember that it was already a complete organism when this recent experience commenced. Most of the sensations and desires of early childhood have completely disappeared from voluntary recall, yet we were there at the time with our organism, inner as well as outer. Who among us could even trace back from day to day the events of school-life? Nay, could we trace in detail the events from the 31st January back to New Year's Day? If we consider the matter, the wonder is not, why do we not remember? but how can we possibly forget so much! One reason, of course, is that we are not yet masters of the five essential functions of our mind-organism as already stated. Another reason is, and this is the important one in connection with our subject,

that we have been building the experiences into us, while leaving the recording power in abeyance.

Thus it happens that there are many things we say we know, while yet we cannot recall the steps by which we know them. Now this is, so far as we are concerned at present, the essential and distinguishing quality of the fifth kind of memory not yet referred to, *remembrance*, the memory of the soul, the subtler mind-organism lying immediately behind or above, the one in current use; the Higher Ego in fact. The mind-organism that we have hitherto spoken of, and identified rightly enough with ourselves, is yet not the Higher Ego, but only its illusion-body, the personality. Now, this illusion-body (not the physical body) with its five essential functions modified continually* by present life experiences is yet the entity which has been developing upward slowly from mindless animal-man, under the fostering care of the descending Ego, through many lives. They are closely connected, though apart, and the consequence is that our personality is overshadowed by these built up experiences known without the power of recalling details. Most of this usually seems to lie dormant, but is far less so than we often suppose. Every one is largely guided by intuition. Many successful commercial and professional men have admitted this. It is an intuitional perception apart from the physical brain, or any known concatenation of experience. In its most obvious and easily recognised form it is seen as genius, an ecstasy of inward vision, the essence of many memories, the synthesis of former experiences. Now, there are two points that at once occur. First, this genius is not *memory* of past lives, and second, we have here the fuller entrance of the Ego into its vehicle, the illusion-body of an incarnation. Given the power of genius, why does this memory not accompany it? Here we have a really important re-statement of our question, because so evidently nearer the domain of our higher, though undeveloped nature.

The reason is that the personal mind-organism, though here more fully in touch with the Higher Ego, has not yet mastered the use of that mental power which examines or comes into *vapport* with the atmosphere of the higher organism. It cannot, in point of fact, do so without first paralysing all that goes to make up the lower mind-organism, or personality. In short, the Spiritual Ego can act only when the Personal Ego is paralysed. Or, again, the Spiritual Ego is the real Thinker, and the Personal Ego is occupied with the five essential functions, things thought of. Hence the meaning of Patanjalis aphorism. "In concentration, the soul abides in the state of a spectator without a spectacle." Thus only can the divine voice be heard. We see then that the Higher Ego speaks dimly to us in our waking life; not by records of past events, but through the small portion of their synthesised experience that can be reflected into the personality or mind-organism, appearing there as the voice of conscience, premonitions, intuitions, etc. But we also see then that the precipitated results of past experience endure in the subtler mind-organism, and are carried along with the Higher Ego, not as accretions, but as essences, which impress themselves more or less on the new mind-organism that is grown out of it in each new incarnation.

"Reminiscence is to memory, what the spirit is to the physical body."

It is clear then that in order to enter into the being of the Thinker, the Higher Ego, man should learn to gradually free his consciousness from the illusions of sense and time, and it is also clear that we need help and guidance as to the mode in which this is to be accomplished!

We see then, roughly, how it comes to pass that we do not remember our past lives. Firstly, they are the past lives of the emanations of the Higher Ego, not of our present personalities, and secondly, we have not led the life necessary to place our mind-organisms *en rapport* with that Ego. If we did so we should not be long, I think, in gaining some glimpses of the wider life-cycles of which we now but exploit a small corner.

We cannot get at the past by the intellect, but we can so train the memory as to observe the action of the synthesising power of experience. We should cultivate that particular mental power which enables us to recall in orderly sequence events from the present time backwards through our lives, tracing effects to causes in so doing. The steady pursuit of this form of concentration is indeed said ultimately to awaken the higher memory. Yet there is always the other side of this process to keep in view, equally necessary for harmonious progress in self-knowledge. "The Past! What is it? Nothing! Gone! Dismiss it. You are the past of yourself. Therefore it concerns you not as such. It only concerns you as you now are. In you, as you now exist, lies *all* the past. So follow the Hindu maxim: 'Regret nothing; never be sorry; and cut all doubt with the sword of spiritual knowledge.'"

F. J. DICK.

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BY THE MARGIN OF THE GREAT DEEP.

When the breath of twilight blows to flame the misty skies,
 All its vapourous sapphire, violet glow and silver gleam
 With their magic flood me through the gateway of the eyes;
 I am one with the twilight's dream.

When the trees and skies and fields are one in dusky mood,
 Every heart of man is rapt within the mother's breast:
 Full of peace and sleep and dreams in the vasty quietude,
 I am one with their hearts at rest.

From our immemorial joys of hearth and home and love,
 Strayed away along the margin of the unknown tide,
 All its reach of soundless calm can thrill me far above
 Word or touch from the lips beside.

Aye, and deep, and deep, and deeper let me drink and draw
 From the olden Fountain more than light or peace or dream,
 Such primeval being as o'erfills the heart with awe,
 Growing one with its silent stream.

G. W. R.

GLEANINGS FROM THEOSOPHICAL LITERATURE.

* * * All who have time and opportunity are invited to send selections on the subject chosen for each month. These will be arranged, and appear under this heading.

Subject for April—"Dreaming and Deep Sleep" (continued.)

DREAMING AND DEEP SLEEP.

SUSHUPTI (deep sleep) is the dreamless state in which the mystic's highest consciousness—composed of his highest intellectual and ethical faculties—hunts for and seizes any knowledge he may be in need of. In this state the mystic's lower nature is at rest (paralyzed); only his highest nature roams into the ideal world in quest of food. By *lower nature*, I mean his physical, astral or psychic, lower emotional and intellectual principles. * * * * The fifth principle, which is the one active in Sushupti, develops itself by appropriate exercise. * * * * In this state one might or might not find the object of his earnest search, and as soon as it is found, the moment the desire to bring it back to normal consciousness arises, that moment Sushupti state is at an end for the time being.

Murdhna Joti. "The Path." April, 1886.

The mystic might be interested in analyzing the real nature of the objective world, or in soaring up to the feet of the *Mannus*, to the spheres where Manava intellect is busy shaping the mould for a future religion, or had been shaping that of a past religion. But one essential feature of Sushupti is, as far as can now be understood, that the mystic must get at all truths through but one source, or path, viz.: through the divine world pertaining to his own lodge (or teacher), and through this path he might soar as high as he can.—*Ibid.*

The arteries of the heart, called Hita, extend from the heart of the person towards the surrounding body. In these the person is when sleeping, he sees no dream (Sushupti). Then he becomes one with that prana (breath) alone.

Kaushitaki Upanishad.

When the man sleeps here, my dear son, he becomes united with the True—in Sushupti sleep—he is gone to his own self. Therefore they say, he sleeps (Swapita), because he is gone (apita) to his own (sva).

Khandogya Upanishad.

The condition of the Plastic form (astral body) is to sleep with its body, unless projected by some powerful desire generated in the higher Manas. In dreams it plays no active part, but on the contrary is entirely passive, being the involuntarily half-sleepy witness of the experiences through which the higher principles are passing.—H.P.B. *Transactions of Blavatsky Lodge. Part I.*

It frequently happens that we are conscious and know that we are dreaming; this is a very good proof that man is a multiple being on the thought plane; so that not only is the Ego, or thinking man, Proteus, a multiform, ever-changing entity, but he is also, so to speak, capable of separating himself on the mind or dream plane into two or more entities; and on the plane of illusion which follows us to the threshold of Nirvana, he is like Ain-Soph talking to Ain-Soph, holding a dialogue with himself, and speaking through, about, and to himself.—*Ibid.*

Some of the dream experiences of students are full of instruction, not alone for the dreamer, but also for others. While our lives are aimless, or our motives and desires are numerous and fixed, our dreams partake of these confusing qualities. Once that our aim is determined towards higher things,

we are more and more liable to be instructed in dreams, although we do not always bring back a memory of them. Yet the instruction is registered all the same upon some higher plane of our nature which we as yet but dimly feel or grope after. Other students, again, have complained that they had hitherto slept the deep dreamless slumber which refreshes the soul, steeped then in devachanic experience. But since they had become students of truth, this state had inexplicably changed, and their slumbers were filled with senseless, confused, and idle phantasmagoria. This fact need not disturb them. By their studies they have set up a great agitation and disturbance in the whole life, and the first stir of the inner senses, the first response of the psychic nature, is like the blind, swift movements of the sap in spring. Later its flow will become regulated.—Julius. "The Path," November, 1888.

(To be continued.)

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A FEW IDEAS ON THE EDUCATIONAL QUESTION.

THE Kindergarten System should be studied by all who are anxious to help in righting the wrongs that our children, of the present generation, labour under. In that system we find the right principle insisted upon, viz., that what is *in* the child should be carefully drawn out; then the Ego has fair play—so to say—and the accumulated experiences of many lives, a chance of developing, and self-reliance above all things cultivated. Children should be taught the grand lesson that experience bought—and paid for—is so much gain. At the present time we hem them in so, by telling them they must do this, that, and the other—because *we* say so, or it is the custom so to do—not that it is right. We do not give them the chance of using their reasoning faculties, and learning to realise for themselves that they must suffer or enjoy as the result of their own acts; the laws of cause and effect must be kept ever before them as the basic truth to work from. Above all things cramming for exams. should be avoided: as the impression left on the child's mind is a hideous nightmare of words. We, of the T. S., must make a stand against the present miserable farce, called education. It ought to be labelled the "Social Strangulation Scheme," for it is certain death to all the higher parts of the nature. Look at the degrading competition for prizes. Instead of competing to *receive* a prize, children should be taught to strive for the honour of *giving*, *not* receiving—and the award should be by the unanimous vote of the whole school—which would help the young people to discriminate—then the leader, so chosen, should be the one to give the money, clothes, toys, books, etc.—collected by the children during the holidays—to some less fortunate than themselves. Let them seek out those who are in need, and so cultivate the Divine Gift of Compassion. Children are not born so selfish as we, in our ignorance, imagine: *we make them so*, and then build gaols and lunatic asylums to put them in when they grow beyond control!

Boys and girls should be instructed together, and the relationship between the sexes explained at the dawn of manhood and womanhood. Until that is done, we shall never stem the awful torrent of immorality that sweeps millions of our fellow beings into a living hell.

A school, conducted on a co-operative plan, would, I am inclined to think, prove a success. Boys and girls could there be taught to be useful in many

ways, to be helpers in the kitchen, to take their turn at house-work, learn laundry work, do gardening, and to use carpenters' tools. Instruction, to be of any use, must be practical. Our aim should be to turn out *Helpers* in all classes; and, the idea kept well in mind, that "We are parts of one stupendous whole whose body Nature is, and God—or Good—the Soul."

A FELLOW OF THE T. S.

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OUR "LOTUS CIRCLE."

DEAR LITTLE "FLOWERS,"—The Editor finds himself in rather an awkward position this month. The questions sent in—a few of which were asked through this column last month—have proved "puzzlers" to the "grown-ups" with the result that no suitable replies have been received in time for press.

He is, however, sanguine enough to hope that suitable answers—answers which you will easily understand—will be ready in time for next month, and that the arrangements for attending to your interests, will be more complete and satisfactory as time goes on.

—:O:—

LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

NOW that light which shines above this heaven, higher than all, higher than everything, in the highest world, beyond which there are no other worlds, that is the same light which is within man—*Khandogya Upanishad*.

They who are wise in spiritual things grieve neither for the dead, nor for the living. I, myself, never was not, nor thou, nor all the princes of the earth: nor shall we ever hereafter, cease to be. As the lord of this mortal frame experienceth therein infancy, youth, and old age, so in future incarnations will it meet the same. One who is confirmed in this belief is not disturbed by anything that may come to pass.—*Bhavadgita*.

That man who sees inaction in action, and action in inaction, is wise among men.—*Ibid*.

Assimilation with the Supreme Spirit is on both sides of death for those who are free from desire and anger, temperate, of thoughts restrained; and who are acquainted with the true self.—*Ibid*.

Tshwara is a spirit, untouched by troubles, works, fruits of works, or desires. In Tshwara becomes infinite that omniscience which in man exists but as a germ. Tshwara is the preceptor of all, even of the earliest of created beings, for He is not limited by time. His name is Om.—*Patanjali*.

There dwelleth in the heart of every creature, O Arjima, the Master—*Tshwara*—who, by magic power causeth all things and creatures to revolve, mounted upon the universal wheel of time. Take sanctuary with him alone; by his grace thou shalt obtain supreme happiness, the eternal place.—*Bhavadgita*.

When harmlessness and kindness are fully developed in the Yogee, there is a complete absence of enmity, both in men and animals, among all that are near to him. When veracity is complete, the Yogee becomes the focus for the Karma resulting from all works, good or bad. When desire is eliminated there comes to the Yogee a knowledge of everything relating to, or that which has taken place in, former states of existence.—*Patanjali*.

Unveil, O Thou who givest sustenance to the Universe, from whom all proceed, to whom all must return, that face of the True Sun now hidden by a vase of golden light, that we may see the truth and do our whole duty on our journey to thy sacred seat.—*The Gayatri*.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—I am told you have recently opened your pages to discuss the problem of Child Guidance according to the new light from the East, so that I venture to send you the following, in the hope that some of your readers will be able to assist me in the solution of the problem. Unfortunately, perhaps, my little boy of four is psychic, though I believe not more so than most children. Still, if this is the general condition of child-life it is worth while to study it attentively. In this case the boy is exceptionally strong physically, and in disposition very "good," but what he sees and hears subjectively terrifies him. He sleeps well, but rarely falls asleep without complaining that there is something in the room which frightens him.

Now this ought not to be allowed to continue, and I am puzzled sometimes how to deal with it. I do not think it would be wise to talk to him much about it, though of course I am careful not to let him feel any constraint about doing so. When we do speak of it, I do so casually, as though there is nothing unusual in the experience. Very possibly, as the child gets older, the physical nature will overpower the more subtle perceptions and the discomfort will cease, but anyone who values the delicate signs of differentiation in the development of a promising soul would understand the importance I attach to it. Is the experience an indication of a weak psychic nature, a Karmic burden which, if untended, may hinder the all-round development of the future man? or is it a transitory condition, the result of a shock to an impressionable nature? For the child's short life has been shadowed by a great sorrow. When only a few months old, his father, who adored him, was suddenly killed by an accident, and for some time afterwards the child may have suffered from a disturbed mental atmosphere in his home, though his outward life has since been a regular and uneventful one in country surroundings.

LIZZIE M'LACHLAN.

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DUBLIN LODGE,

3 UPPER ELY PLACE.

Subjects for discussion, during ensuing month, at the Wednesday Evening Meetings, commencing at 8.15 p.m.:—

March 21st	• "The Upanishads,"	P. E. Jordan.
" 28th	• "The Psychic Laws of Nature,"	D. N. Dunlop.
April 4th	• "The Seven Principles of Man,"	F. A. Roberts.
" 11th	"How Theosophy Affects One's View of Life,"	J. J. Nolan.

The Friday evening group continues the study of "The Ocean of Theosophy," and, on Monday evenings at 8.30, "Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms," from the subject of study for the present.

FRED. J. DICK, *Hon. Sec.*

All literary contributions to be addressed to the EDITOR, and business communications to the PUBLISHER, 71 Lower Drumcondra Road, Dublin.

THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST

No. 7.

DUBLIN, APRIL 15TH, 1894.

VOL. II.

NOTICE.

The Theosophical Society is in no way responsible for any opinions, in signed or unsigned articles, that appear in this Magazine.

All Literary contributions should be addressed to the EDITOR, and Business communications to the PUBLISHER, 71 Drumcondra Road, Dublin.

Yearly Subscription, 3s. 6d. post free.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

THE SEX PROBLEM.

OF all subjects engaging public attention, there are perhaps none hedged round by so many difficulties as that of the Sex Problem, and yet, on no subject is it so desirable to have a sound philosophy. Turn where we will the problem confronts us, and at no time more than the present. "Why cannot love be noble?" is a question much easier asked than answered. The apostle Paul endeavoured to grapple with the matter, and no one can deny that there is ample justification for the severe criticism passed upon his philosophy. Many of the hardships under which women have laboured so long can, undoubtedly, be traced to his crude teaching. Happily, however, he is no longer regarded as an infallible authority. It may be interesting to note some dominant influences that have been more or less silently at work during recent years, upon this momentous question.

PROBABLY the most important is the "Brotherhood of the New Life," founded by Mr. Thomas Lake Harris, which was brought into such prominent public notice by the late Laurence Oliphant, and which has often been erroneously confounded with the T.S. The tie that unites the members of this community is not credal, "not communistic, not in any sense hostile to existing religions or social systems, whilst they still continue to exist. To live in Christ, to grow in Christ, to share with each other as utility requires, both the fruits of industrial and ethical labours, to maintain the 'unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,' and so to prepare ourselves for a coming public service in the primary hours of an era of transposed respiration and perishing environments, that we think to be just at the doors;—this has been, is, and will be, the purpose that unites us all."

Mr. Harris is *par excellence* the woman's champion. "I sing to woman for her hour of need," he says, and, apart from a peculiarity of phrasing, there can be no doubt that he sings to much effect. He has issued a goodly number of volumes from his private press, all having woman for their inspiring theme.

"Not those are worst who seem the worst;
Defiled, degraded, and accurst,
Oft to the grave they stray,
As babes who lose the way."

"Not those are best who seem the best;
Young dovelets sheltered in the nest,
Till eyes and wings were grown,
They rose, but not alone,"

"Lifted by myriads of cares,
Their flight was not amid the snares;
They bloomed as flowers that grow,
Where glass shuts out the snow."

Mrs. PHILLIPS, writing in defence of Mr. Harris in the *National Review* a few months ago, gives a fair presentation of the fundamental points on which his teaching rests; and as Mr. Laurence Oliphant's *Syncretismata* and *Scientific Religion*, and Rev. John Pulsford's *Morgueurotis* are practically based entirely on the same idea, I quote pretty fully. She says:—"To him (Mr. Harris) was revealed the mystery of the duality of God, in whom is hidden the Divine Mother who constitutes with the Father the *Us* spoken of in Genesis. 'Let us make man in our own image, male and female created He them.' The impurity, the animality, of the race has caused pure souls to veil their faces rather than associate with God the idea of marriage; but in daring to grasp the thought subjectively and purely ('the pure in heart'—alone—'shall see God'), we touch the keystone of the arch of all Life and Truth. The Fall was a fall from subjective to objective marriage, whereby the holiest became externalized and perverted. Sin, the serpent, entered into the race through this perversion. The Divine Feminine was, in consequence, drawn into the subjective sphere of God: that is, not suffered to be understood or revealed to the gross mind of man, save only here and there to the initiated few who speak of Her as 'The Bride' who in the ultimate redemption of the race will be revealed once more to Humanity." "It is this dawning manifestation of the 'Bride' to Humanity which has caused everywhere the awakening so perceptible among women in these days. They are alive at last to their true position as the equal and complement of man by reason of the coming forth of their 'pattern in the heavens.' Hitherto the church, while praying to Our Father, has overlooked the fact that Fatherhood implies Motherhood. This duality in God—The Two-in-One—was the revelation given Mr. Harris to declare afresh. But, the time when mankind could accept his teaching without gross misrepresentation not being ripe, his later books were not issued for general circulation, but only to those whose minds, being 'open,' had eyes to see, without profaning the mystery."

Mrs. BESANT has pointed out clearly and forcibly in *Lucifer* the danger of Mr. Harris's symbolism, and in issuing his books "only to those whose minds being

'open' had eyes to see," Mr. Harris seems to have recognised the danger himself. Considering that he has lived so much in seclusion; that so much of his life has been enshrouded in mystery, it is surprising how far-reaching his influence is. "Eminent divines," he writes, "of the Church of England, and of the orthodox and liberal denominations, authors and professional men of well-known distinction, learned oriental scholars;—a body, in fine, distinguished at once by high character and unobtrusive philanthropy, scattered over three continents, have for these many years been co-labourers and co-discoverers with me in these fields of vital research. They, have, however agreed in the unanimous conclusion, that the hour had not quite arrived when publicity should be given to their ripe conclusions." Few men have been more fiercely attacked, and we cannot but admire a man who through all has pursued the even tenor of his way, "making no rejoinders, however powerful the weapons that are at his command."

If we take the Shaker Community of America as being, perhaps, the one most successful experiment made to form a social community composed of both sexes, where practical difficulties in the way of ideal relationship becomes most apparent, we find, to quote Elder Evans, of the Mount Lebanon Community, that, "as private or individual property forms the basis of, and is essential to, the marriage relation, so is virgin purity the basis of, and essential to, a community of property, without which it cannot be supported." Life in a Shaker community is by no means perfect however, and results seem to have fallen far short of expectations. Emotional religious exercises, combined with mediumship, have so dwarfed the intellect, and rendered impotent the will, that their power as an active living force in the world is practically *nil*.

MR. LAURENCE OLIPHANT'S attempt to found a community on somewhat similar lines proved, as all the world knows, a disastrous failure. With his writings it is unnecessary to deal, as there can be no doubt he was indebted to Mr. Harris for most of what was really of any value. A few regarded his books as a veritable message from heaven; others as the work of a man whose intellect had been weakened by mediumship.

To the Theosophist neither Mr. Harris's nor Mr. Oliphant's symbolism seems to rise above the "psychical states," where the distinctions of sex still exist. To those who recognise that "in the True there is no sex"; that in the Spirit "all forms of life and death are found at once," their philosophy is inadequate; but a perpetuation of existing differences involved in psychic subtleties, affording no permanent resting-place for the sense-tossed soul. Mr. Harris may retort that ours is a "cold" philosophy; but it is serene—a strange contrast to the "clime where every weed grows a yard in the night."

AND so I come to what Theosophy has to say on the Sex Problem, and here I cannot do better than quote Dr. Jerome A. Anderson, who seems to have made a special study of Reincarnation and its bearing on the subject before us:— "The Human Soul, or that which in Theosophy is known as the Higher Ego, the Thinker, the True Individuality, the Reincarnating Ego, is sexless. It has after an almost infinite cycle of duality rebecome Unity on its own plane, and that differentiation which would correspond to sex upon this is unknown. But as the Soul, the Pilgrim in the Cycle of Necessity, descends by incarnating in these human-animal forms, in order to consciously conquer this plane where

the dual action of the One Life, or Evolution, is in active operation, it has of necessity to incarnate in bodies having now the preponderance of the negative and again of the positive manifestations of the One Life. Hence, though being sexless, it incarnates now in a series of male forms, and again in a series of female forms, in its necessary alternating efforts to bring about conscious harmony or equilibrium upon the molecular plane. It can never know all the possibilities of life or consciousness here without touching the two poles, without thus experiencing here the two aspects of the One Life. Looked at from this higher view-point the sex problem is solved. . . . Therefore is all the talk and all the hope of man or woman becoming similar mentally, or in any other way, except as countless ages of Evolution shall have rounded out both aspects of life, but childish babbling. . . . Thus by recognising and teaching the true relations our souls bear to our bodies, that upon its own habitation the soul is sexless and passionless, Theosophy offers but another view-point from which to obtain a broader, more philosophic conception of human life, its duties, responsibilities, and opportunities. . . . We must recognise in woman not the weak, passive vehicle, created as an avenue to a sensuous Paradise, but a soul transiently at the opposite pole of material existence, which has in it as deep a significance, as God-like opportunities, as that which our ignorant, brutish egotism has caused us to regard as superior. It must be recognised that the sex which is her's in this life may be ours in our next—must be ours in many future lives . . . and by our attitude towards the opposite sex, be it that of man or woman, we are creating character traits which may have to be sharply corrected by unpleasant experiences in that opposite sex during our next life. . . . Let us restore marriage to its pristine purity; let us recognise that sex is of this plane only; that the soul ought to—is entitled to—live far above the unreasoning desires of the animal kingdom below us, to which, and even lower than which, we descend when our motive is but sensuous desire. By conquering this tyrant which we have invited to occupy the throne of our mind, we shall be free to use the creative energy, now perverted and wasted, upon intellectual and spiritual planes. So shall we enter the Paradise from which we have been expelled; so shall we reclaim once more our lost heritage."

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THE DIVINE MAN.

AS TAUGHT BY CHRISTIANITY, JUDAISM, BRAHMANISM, THEOSOPHY.

(A Paper read by León Landsberg, F.T.S., before the Aryian T.S., New York.)

WHILE meditating upon the subject of to-night's discussion, I was haunted by the thought of Kaspar Hauser, and, in order to rid myself of it, I made up my mind to tell you his story. Hauser had been brought up from his earliest childhood in strict confinement in a dark place underground, where he could not see the sun, or hear sound of the outer world. His food—bread and water—was supplied to him while he was in a state of natural or artificial sleep, and his only occupation was playing with two wooden horses. You can imagine the effect of such education, or rather want of education on the child's mind. When in 1828, a youth of about sixteen years of age, he appeared for the first time on the streets of Nuremberg, he was unable to give an account of himself, his language being confined to the few words: "Ich woais nit"—I don't know, which he repeated parrot-like in reply to all questions. His mind

was totally blank, he loathed all food except bread and water, and the sounds, sights and odours of the common world caused him pain. His case awakened at the time considerable psychological interest, and this the more so, as this victim of a hideous crime against the soul was claimed to have been of noble origin, and even heir to the throne of Baden.

I am sure you have seen already through my purpose for telling you this story. Indeed, if Hauser were not a historical personality, he might be looked upon as symbolizing man against whose divine nature a similar crime was committed by the churches. Man, too, was brought up within the confinements of narrow creeds; he, too, was kept in a state of artificial mental sleep, and his custodians, the priests, were careful too, not to permit a ray of reason or spiritual light to penetrate the night of ignorance with which he was surrounded. The food of his mind was fear and superstition, the sole occupation of his thoughts, a God of hatred and a devil, the shadows of his own brutalized consciousness. He of so noble origin, the image of God, nay a god himself, has been reduced to the condition of an animal, with all its low instincts, wild passions and animal desires.

In view of this fact, is his present moral and spiritual abasement to be wondered at? Is it to be wondered that he lost the memory of his divine origin; that the higher faculties of his soul became almost completely atrophied? He had so long been taught to look upon himself as a fallen creature, only good to serve for fuel of an everlasting hell-fire, that he actually became the contemptible, miserable wretch whose self-degradation is well portrayed in the following prayer which I take from an old hymn-book:

“I am a carrion of vermin and dust,
A dog, a hog, a devil,
And just as old iron is eaten by rust,
I am canker'd with sin and evil.
For what am I, old sinner, good,
Except to serve the raven for food?
O Jesus, have mercy, give me a kick,
And bounce me into thy heaven quick!
Amen.”

And now Theosophy steps in and tries to liberate man from the iron clutches of the church, and the fatal influence of a materialistic science. It says to him—“Your teachers have lied in telling you that you were a fallen creature; they have cheated you of your birthright; you are of divine origin; you yourself are the God, whom you worshipped in abject fear; and you need only to awaken to the full consciousness of your divinity in order to come into the possessions of your due inheritance—the power to command nature and all its forces.” And since man, bewildered by this divine revelation, blinded by the light of truth so suddenly breaking upon his darkened consciousness, still hesitates to believe this divine message, Theosophy, to support its assertion, untombs the religious tradition of hoary ages, purges the sacred Scriptures of the errors and interpolations added to them by an unscrupulous priestcraft, calls upon the noblest, greatest, and wisest of all nations and times, and produces them as witnesses before the court of human reason to testify in behalf of man's divinity. Let us examine some of these witnesses.

I begin with Christianity. Contrary to the teachings of the Church, according to which the man Jesus was the only begotten Son of God, and in whom we must believe or be eternally damned, Jesus himself, in the 10th chapter of John, testifies that the words of the King-psalmist—“You are Gods”

—were addressed to other men, claiming for himself the same privileges without any blasphemy. And St. Paul confirms his master's testimony by asserting in 2 Cor., chap. 6, v. 16, that "we are all the temple of God"; and further in 1 Cor., chap. 15, v. 47, that "the first man is of the earth, the second man is the Lord from Heaven." This God in every man is called the Christ, a name which the Christians identify with the man Jesus, but which long before him was also given to a Hindu Divinity. It represents the divine spirit manifested in man, of which, indeed, it may be said that it is the only begotten son, inasmuch as it is the first emanation of the invisible Supreme Cause, and it is this Christ also who can justly say of himself—"I and my Father in heaven are one." This Christ, which according to the clear statements of the Gospels, is the common property of all mankind, and in the sole possession of none, because man's true saviour, a saviour, alas! whom we can see daily crucified on the cross of man's physical body.

Our next witness is Judaism. But its little understood and therefore much abused Old Testament speaks too foreign and enigmatical a language, and we must call upon its interpreters, the Talmudists and Kabalists, to give us a translation of its testimony. They testify in substance as follows:—Man is not only the skin, flesh, bones, and nerves which make up his physical body. All these are only a garment of the true, invisible, spiritual man. This true man is both the image of the universe and of God, the Divine Presence on earth; the "Adam Illa-ah," or Upper Adam, who, emanating from the Supreme First Cause, produced this Lower, terrestrial Adam. The real man is the intricate union of soul and spirit which constitutes our spiritual nature; and the temporary alliance of these two superior principles with the physical senses, *i.e.*, the physical life that chains them to the earth, far from being represented as an evil, or a fall, is regarded as a means of education and a salutary trial. According to the Talmudists and Kabalists, it is a necessity inherent in the finite nature of the soul that it should, through a series of re-incarnations, attain self-consciousness, so that it may ultimately re-enter the source of light and life, called divine thought, without a loss of its own individuality. On the other hand, spirit cannot descend without elevating the inferior principles; and thus human life, if complete, is a kind of reconciliation between the two extremes of existence—the ideal and the real; between spirit and matter; or, to borrow an expression of the original, between the King and the Queen. The ultimate destiny awaiting the soul is a state of perfect bliss, called the seventh degree of the "Holy of the holiest," almost identical with the Hindu Nirvana, where all souls become one with the Supreme Soul and mutually complete one another. In this state the creature cannot distinguish itself from the Creator; they both are illuminated by the same thought, animated by the same will. The soul alike with God command the universe, and what the soul wills God does execute.

The next witness to be examined is the Brahmin. But here the testimony in favour of man's divinity is so abundant that in the *ambarras du choix* one hardly knows what to quote first. Whatever of their numerous Scriptures we interrogate, whether we examine the Vedas, the Upanishads, or the Vedanta system, its one fundamental thought is the identity of that which in our innermost soul is recognised as our true Ego, with that which we see outside and around us as Brahman. This identity is expressed in the words: "*Aham brahman asmi*—I am Brahman"; and "*Tat tvam asi*—That art thou."

It is on account of Avidya-ignorance that we identify ourselves with our senses, passions, desires, and fail to realise that God within us. He only can approach a knowledge of Brahman who meditates upon the mysteries of his

own innermost being. Not through the intellect but intuition springing up in the contemplation of the conscious Ego will he feel himself one with everything existing, his own Atman one with the Adyatma, the Supreme Spirit. "Self," says the Rig-Veda (i. 477), "is the lord of all things; 'Self' is the king of all things. As all the spokes of a wheel are contained in the nave and the circumference, all things are contained in this 'Self,' all Selves are contained in this 'Self.' Brahman itself is but 'Self.'"

And now what has Theosophy to say in this cause? Being the fundamental truth underlying all religions, it can but confirm all their testimony deposed in favour of man's divine nature. It says to man—"That Christ worshipped by the Christian as the only begotten Son of God; that celestial Adam of the Jew, representing the Divine Presence on earth; that Atman of the Brahmin, which is Brahman itself: they are your own self; not that imaginary self, your petty personality, that bundle of passions, emotions, and desires with which you are wont to identify yourself. This is transient, mortal, a mere animal in human shape; but that self within you which thinks, reasons, wills; that Self which searches for truth, strives for perfection, aspires after spiritual enlightenment; that Self which is free from pride, anger, and conceit, sees in every human being his brother, and feels compassion for all animate nature. This is the true Self, Manas illuminated by Buddhi and Atma, the God attaining to self-consciousness once that man recognises Him as the "I am" within himself.

This is what Theosophy, in accord with the most important religions, testifies in behalf of man's divinity; and if all this testimony should prove insufficient to convince you of your divine nature, it points to another, and the most important witness—your own heart. There, in its deepest recesses, is a voice which, if you would only listen to its pleadings, will tell you—"I am more than an eating, sleeping, and propagating animal. I am an immortal, divine soul. The body is but my habiliment. Shall the garment ignore the wearer?"

And Theosophy directs your attention to the birthmark of your divine origin, the great faculties latent in your soul, and points to the Adepts and Masters, your Elder Brothers, who knew how to use their talent, so that you stand now in awe and admiration before the wonderful powers of which they are capable. And it tells you their message that they are only waiting for your awakening to the higher life to help you in your struggles and efforts to conquer your divine inheritance. Then Theosophy unfolds before you the spectacle of infinite progression awaiting you on the spiritual path that leads to the Supreme goal, ever rising to more sublime virtues, ever advancing to the ultimate victory of spirit; and should you have attained these inexpressible perfections which shine in the spheres of the Budhas and Nirmanakyas, man-gods and saviours of mankind, there are still in store for you treasures of yet higher glory, of yet sublimer wisdom, of yet more marvellous powers, unfolding beyond all conception on the road of divine ascent.

Fellow Theosophists! I have endeavoured to delineate the religious and theosophic teachings concerning the divine man and his destiny. If, within your innermost hearts, you assent to the truth of these teachings, if you have awakened to the consciousness of your divinity, and are anxious to enter a new and higher cycle of spiritual progress, then you must, even like Arjuna in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, resolve to fight! To fight ignorance, delusion, ambition; to fight every animal desire, every passion, every sense, every weakness not worthy of a God, until the animal nature is completely subdued to the will of the divine

man within you. The fight will be long and wearisome, the defeats numerous and most humiliating, and the difficulties will seem to augment with each victory. Never lose faith! Never declare yourself vanquished, but, with your prize, ultimate liberation, in view, continue to fight. Mind not the sneers of the world, yield not to weakness and despondency—

“Fail not for sorrow, falter not for sin;
But onward, upward, till the goal ye win.”

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A STRANGE AWAKENING.

By Æ.

CHAPTER II.

I CANNOT tell all the steps by which the young soul came forth from its clouds and dreams, but must hurry over the years. This single incident of his boyhood I have told to mark the character and tendency of his development; spirituality made self-conscious only in departing; life, a falling from ideals which grew greater, more beautiful and luminous as the possibility of realizing them died away. But this ebbtide of the inner life was not regular and incessant, but rather after the fashion of waves which retreat surely indeed, but returning again and again, seem for moments to regain almost more than their past altitude. His life was a series of such falls and such awakenings. Every new experience which drew his soul from its quietude brought with it a revelation of a spiritual past, in which, as it now seemed, he had been living unconsciously. Every new experience which enriched his mind seemed to leave his soul more barren. The pathetic anguish of these moments had little of the moral element, which was dormant and uncultivated rather than perverted. He did not ponder over their moral aspect, for he shared the superficial dislike to the ethical, which we often see in purely artistic natures, who cannot endure the entrance of restraint or pain upon their beauty. His greatest lack was the companionship of fine men or noble women. He had shot up far beyond the reach of those whom he knew, and wanting this companionship he grew into a cynical or sensuous way of regarding them. He began to write: he had acquired the faculty of vigorous expression by means of such emotions as were engendered in his loose way of living. His productions at this time were tinged with a mystical voluptuousness which was the other pole to his inner, secret and spiritual being. The double strain upon his energies, which daily work and nightly study with mental productiveness involved, acted injuriously upon his health, and after a year he became so delicate that he could carry on neither one nor other of his avocations without an interval of complete rest. Obtaining leave from his employers, he went back for a period of six weeks to the village where he had been born. Here in the early summer and sunshine his health rapidly improved; his mind even more than his body drank deep draughts of life; and here, more than at any period in his life, did his imagination begin to deal with mighty things, and probe into the secret mysteries of life, and here passed into his consciousness, visions of the cosmic romance, the starry dynasties, the long descended line by which the human spirit passed from empire; he began to comprehend dimly by what cadence from starry state the soul of man is ushered into the great visible life. These things came to him not clearly as ideas, but rather as shadowy and shining visions thrown across the air of dawn or twilight as he moved about.

Not alone did this opulence of spiritual life make him happy, another cause conspired with it to this end. He had met a nature somewhat akin to his own: Olive Rayne, the woman of his life.

As the days passed over he grew eager not to lose any chance of speech with her, and but two days before his departure he walked to the village hoping to see her. Down the quiet English lane in the evening he passed with the rapid feet that bear onward unquiet or feverish thought. The clear fresh air communicated delight to him; the fields grown dim, the voice of the cuckoo, the moon like a yellow globe cut in the blue, the cattle like great red shadows driven homeward with much unnecessary clamour by the children; all these flashed in upon him and became part of him: readymade accessories and backgrounds to his dreams, their quietness stilled and soothed the troubled beauty of passion. His pace lessened as he came near the village, half wondering what would serve as excuse for visits following one so soon upon the other. Chance served as excuse. He saw her grey dress, her firm upright figure coming out from among the lilac bushes at the gate of her father's house. She saw Harvey coming towards her and waited for him with a pleasant smile. Harvey, accustomed to introspect and ideal imaginings, here encountered no shock gazing upon the external. Some last light of day reflected upward from the white gate-post, irradiated her face, and touched with gold the delicate brown hair, the nostrils, lips, chin, and the lilac at her throat. Her features were clear-cut, flawless: the expression exquisitely grave and pure; the large grey eyes had that steady glow which shows a firm and undisturbed will. In some undefinable way he found himself thinking of the vague objects of his dreams, delicate and subtle things, dew, starlight, and transparencies rose up by some affinity. He rejected them—not those—then a strong warrior with a look of pity on his face appeared and disappeared: all this quick as a flash before she spoke.

"I am going doctoring," she said. "Old nurse Winder is ill, and my father will not be back until late." Mr. Rayne was the country doctor.

"May I go with you?" he asked.

"Oh, yes, why not? But I have first to call at two or three places on the way."

He went with her. He was full of wonder at her. How could she come out of her own world of aspiration and mystic religion and show such perfect familiarity, ease and interest in dealing with these sordid village complaints, moral and physical? Harvey was a man who disliked things like these which did not touch his sense of beauty. He could not speak to these people as she did: he could not sympathize with them. The pain of the old woman made him shrink into himself almost with more disgust than pity. While Olive was bending over her tenderly and compassionately, he tried to imagine what it was inspired such actions and such self-forgetfulness. Almost it seemed for a moment to him as if some hidden will in the universe would not let beauty rest in its own sphere, but bowed it down among sorrows continually. He felt a feeling of relief as they came out again into the night.

It was a night of miracle and wonder. Withdrawn far aloft into fairy altitudes, the stars danced with a gaiety which was more tremendous and solemn than any repose. The night was wrought out of a profusion of delicate fires. The grass, trees, and fields glowed with the dusky colours of rich pottery. Everywhere silence; everywhere the exultant breathing of life, subtle, universal, penetrating. Into the charmed heart fell the enchantment we call ancient, though the days have no fellows, nor will ever have any. Harvey, filled up with this wonder, turned to his companion.

"See how the Magician of the Beautiful blows with his mystic breath upon the world! How tremulous the lights are; what stillness! How it banishes the memory of pain!"

"Can you forget pain so easily? I hardly noticed the night—it is wonderful indeed. But the anguish it covers and enfolds everywhere I cannot forget."

"I could not bear to think of pain at any time, still less while these miracles are over and around us. You seem to me almost to seek pain like a lover. I cannot understand you. How can you bear the ugly, the mean, the sordid—the anguish which you meet. You—so beautiful?"

"Can you not understand?" she said, almost impetuously. "Have you never felt pity as universal as the light that floods the world? To me a pity seems to come dropping, dropping, dropping from that old sky, upon the earth and its anguish. God is not indifferent. Love eternal encircles us. Its wishes are for our redemption. Its movements are like the ripples starting from the rim of a pond that overcome the outgoing ripples and restore all to peace."

"But what is pain if there is this love?" asked Harvey.

"Ah, how can I answer you? Yet I think it is the triumph of love pushing back sin and rebellion. The cry of this old nature being overcome is pain. And this is universal, and goes on everywhere, though we cannot comprehend it; and so, when we yield to this divine love, and accept the change, we find in pain a secret sweetness. It is the first thrill that heralds an immense dawn."

"But why do you say it is universal? Is not that a frightful thought?"

"If God is the same yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow, then the life of Christ on earth was a symbol—must be a symbol—of what endures for ever: the Light and Darkness for ever in conflict: a crucifixion in eternity."

This belief, so terrible, so pathetic, so strange, coming from this young girl affected Harvey profoundly. He did not reject it. The firmness and surety of her utterance, the moral purity of her character appealed to him who felt his own lack of clear belief and heroic purpose. Like all spiritual people, he assimilated easily the spiritual moods of those whom he came into contact with. Coming from her, the moral, pathetic, and Christian doctrine had that element of beauty which made it blend with his ideal paganism. As he went homewards he pondered over her words, her life, her thoughts. He began to find an inexpressible beauty in her pity, as a feeling welling up from unknown depths, out of the ancient heart of things. Filled with this pity he could overcome his dislike of pain and go forth as the strong warrior of his momentary vision. He found himself repeating again and again her words: "We find in pain a secret sweetness—a secret sweetness—a secret sweetness." If he could only find it, what might he not dare, to what might he not attain? And revolving all these things upon his restless pillow, there came over him one of those mystic moods I have spoken of: wandering among dim originals, half in dream and half in trance, there was unfolded within him this ancient legend of the soul:—

There was a great Gloom and a great Glory in nature, and the legions of darkness and the glorious hosts were at war perpetually with one another. Then the Ancient of Days, who holds all this within himself, moved the Gloom and the Glory together: the Sons of the Bright Fire he sent into the darkness, and the children of Darkness he brought unto the gates of the day. And in the new

Life formed out of the union of these two, pain, self-conscious, became touched with a spiritual beauty, and those who were of the Hosts of Beauty wore each one a Crown of Thorns upon the brow.

(To be continued.)

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THE MISSION OF THE CHRIST.

OUT of the depths of human misery and suffering, many a soul imprisoned in mortal frame has cried in anguish and despair: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" And a bitterer cry even than that may be heard from some lips—"There is no God!" Aye—for if God hath forsaken He may return; there is still that hope. But when there is no God—then, indeed, hath the soul touched the lowest depths of illusion, then, indeed, it hath tasted the bitterness of death, the horror of the outer darkness.

But how much of this despair might have been saved if the theological God and devil theory had never been perpetrated. The veriest child sees the absurdity of this theory; but his questions are silenced, the purity of his intention is soiled and poisoned, he grows up in conformity or acquiescence; then when the storms of life break he is swept away from the anchorage which can no longer hold him because it is *false*. Then, indeed, if unhappily he find not the path, he may cry out in despair, "there is no God." But, we shall be told, the theological theory has sufficed for thousands and millions, has been a firm anchorage for them all through the storms of life, and through the gates of death. We do not deny the fact. But a very little study of human nature shows us how prone it is to cling to conventional ideas and cherished ideals; and what is true of one religion is also true of another, each has its devotees for whom its ideas and ideals are all-sufficient, however dissimilar they may be.

My friends we want TRUTH, not ideals, we want men and women who can face FACTS, not those who are afraid to question lest their "faith" should become unsettled. And that man who has cried out of the bitterness of his heart, "there is no God," is nearer to "the place of peace" than he who cherishes the ideal of a heaven of bliss for ever and ever.

And to those who can find no God in this evil world; who can find no answer to the problem why an all-wise, and all-powerful, and all-loving God should *permit* such an evil world, we would offer the key which Theosophy presents, of a God *within*, not without. There is all the difference in the universe between a God who rules *over* the universe and a God who is the innermost of all that is manifested in time and space. For if you turn to the God within, if you look for him in your own heart, a wonderful light dawns upon the darkness of the problem of evil. For you yourself in your own innermost nature, in your own "Higher Self," are God.

We have heard of one who took upon himself the form of a man, yet thought it not robbery to be equal with God. And if you have understood aright that divine allegory of the incarnated Christ, neither will you think it robbery to make your SELF equal with God.

But what follows? If the Christ be incarnated in you, the mission of the Christ is your mission. Did it never occur to you that you are here in this lower world to accomplish a purpose which not God Himself but only you can accomplish? Then how can we any longer cry out against God for the evil He permits? It is not He, it is we who permit it; and the man who has once realised that everything works from within without, that the root-cause of all that manifests in the phenomenal world lies hidden in the secret chambers of his own being, will no longer seek helplessly for a personal God who only exists in a materialised theology; he will seek the SELF within, and having found the cause of the illusions of sane life, he will destroy it for ever.

That is the mission of the Christ—a mission which only you yourself can accomplish. When you have realised it, all theological difficulties vanish, all creeds become merged in one; and the name we give to that knowledge which is the sum of creeds, of all science, of all knowledge, is rightly and truly termed THEOSOPHY—*Divine Wisdom*. W. K.

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THE SECRET.

One thing in all things have I seen :
 One thought has haunted earth and air ;
 Clangour and silence both have been
 Its palace chambers. Everywhere

I saw the mystic vision flow,
 And live in men, and woods, and streams,
 Until I could no longer know
 The dream of life from my own dreams.

Sometimes it rose like fire in me,
 Within the depths of my own mind,
 And spreading to infinity,
 It took the voices of the wind.

It scrawled the human mystery,
 Dim heraldry—on light and air ;
 Wavering along the starry sea,
 I saw the flying vision there.

Each fire that in God's temple lit
 Burns fierce before the inner shrine,
 Dimmed as my fire grew near to it,
 And darkened at the light of mine.

At last, at last, the meaning caught :
 When spirit wears its diadem,
 It shakes its wondrous plumes of thought,
 And trails the stars along with them.

G. W. R.

GLEANINGS FROM THEOSOPHICAL LITERATURE.

* * * All who have time and opportunity are invited to send selections on the subject chosen for each month. These will be arranged, and appear under this heading.

Subject for May—*"The Potency of Sound."*

DREAMING AND DEEP SLEEP (*Continued.*)

Man is represented as a prismatic trinity, veiling and looked through by a primordial unity of light—gross outward body; subtle internal body or soul; a being neither body nor soul, but absolute self-forgetfulness, called the cause-body, because it is the original sin of ignorance of his true nature, which precipitates him from the spirit into the life-condition. These three bodies, existing in the waking, dreaming, and sleeping states, are all known, witnessed, and watched, by the spirit which standeth behind and apart from them, in the unyinking vigilance of ecstasy or spirit-making.

—*The Dream of Ravan. Dublin University, May, 1853.*

The first or spiritual state was ecstasy: from ecstasy it forgot itself into deep sleep; from profound sleep it awoke out of unconsciousness, but still within itself, into the internal world of dreams; from dreaming it passed finally into the thoroughly waking state, and the outer world of sense. Each state has an embodiment of ideas or language of its own. The universal, ever-present intuitions that be eternally with the spirit in the first, are in the second utterly forgotten for a time, and then emerge reversed, limited, and translated into divided successive intellections, or gropings, rather, of a struggling and as yet unorganised intelligence, having reference to place and time, and an external historical world, which it seeks, but cannot all at once realise outside itself. In the third they become pictured by a creative fantasy into phantasms of persons, things and events, in a world of light and shade within us, which is visible even when the eyes are sealed in dreaming slumber, and is a prophecy and forecast shadow of the solid world that is coming. In the fourth the outforming or objectivity is complete—*Ibid.*

Ask a good clairvoyant to describe the aura of a person just refreshed by sleep, and that of another just before going to sleep. The former will be seen bathed in rythmical vibrations of life currents—golden, blue, and rosy: These are the electrical waves of life. The latter is, as it were, in a mist of intense golden-orange hue, composed of atoms whirling; with an almost incredible spasmodic rapidity, showing that the person begins to be too strongly saturated with life: the life essence is too strong for his physical organs, and he must seek relief in the shadowy side of that essence, which side is the dream element, or physical sleep, one of the states of consciousness.

—H.P.B. *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge. Part I.*

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OUR "LOTUS CIRCLE."

ALL ABOUT THE SMALL PEOPLE CALLED FAIRIES.

This is an old, old land, this country we call Ireland, and which some folks who live in it call the Isle of Saints, and the Isle of Destiny; and the fairies dwelt in many parts of it long ago, and some, I think, are with us still,

Down on the wild Kerry coast you can find ferns and flowers growing that are not found wild anywhere else in the British Isles; and the grey, moss-starred, rugged rocks stretching out to sea formed part of a mighty continent that sank beneath the ocean-bed so long ago that you will never read of it in your history books. In those happy, bright days long ago great teachers lived in Eire, and taught the people such beautiful, true things, that the fame of their teaching spread far and wide, over land and sea; and wise men from other lands came to hear them, and to grow wiser still, as they listened to the teaching of the Great Ones.

But when times grew troubled, and the people did not care to learn, the teachers left our Irish shores; but I know, my dear ones, that they are not so far off that they cannot help those who are wise enough to wish for the old true teaching.

But though the teachers left us, their thoughts remained, and the very air is full of them; and thoughts are *things*, thoughts are *living*, thoughts are *fairies*.

You can't see thoughts, you say. That is true; but there are many things you cannot see. When the wind catches your hat, and blows your hair into your eyes, you don't see the wind; but it is there all the same; and although you do not see the fairies, some folks who are very wide-awake still see them. And round the turf fires, when they sit together closely, old people tell strange stories that their grandfathers heard their grandfathers tell, when they were children, like you are now. Only remember this. The old people, however softly they whisper, never *speak* of the fairies, because they know right well that you often grow like what you speak of or think of much; and so they call the fairies *the good people*. As I have told you, because the Great Ones once lived here, their thoughts remain; and that is why, even in this dark age, our land is full of good and gracious influences. And Irish hearts are true, and the nature spirits kindly, and the island fresh and fruitful, for the grass grows greener here than elsewhere, and the breezes are soft and sweet; and there are no hills the wide world over like the fair, blue, Irish hills; and the little rippling streams of Ireland laugh down the mountain-sides like children at their play, flowing faster, and ever faster, towards the ocean.

For nature is all alive and joyful, and the little buds open with a soft, cooing sound; and the flowers turn their dew-wet faces to the sun; and the lark sings offaith, and hope, and peace; the trees whisper great thoughts; the daffodils nod their heads together, as if they whispered many things; and the streams sing nature's song; and if on some fine day you are quiet enough to hear the grass grow, it, too, will tell you some of nature's secrets.

And the people's hearts are kind and true here, and the Irish faces are sunny ones, and if you ask me why the small Irish children are like our weather, all sun and showers; and why they love their comrades so that they laugh with them, and cry with them, I shall tell you it is all owing to the fairies, or good people.

Where are the fairies now? you ask me. Well, that's another matter; if you want to see them you must grow brave and true, and pure in heart; and then some day perhaps you may catch just one peep at them, but not with the eyes you look so astonished with as you listen to me now.

It is of no use for you to creep out of your soft warm beds after mother has kissed you good-night: you may climb upon the window-sill, and press your face against the pane hoping to see the nice, gay, fairy folk dancing hand in hand around the ring of grass that is higher and brighter than the rest of the

field; but you will never see them, dear children, around the fairy-ring in the moonlight, and so you need not try to do so. When the lights are out think lovingly of those who love you, and fall asleep; and maybe you will see bright creatures in your dreams.

But before I go on to tell you how fairies are *made* there is just the story you may like to hear about the fairy Queen Niam and the Prince Oisín.

This Feni prince who lived long ago grew tired of wars and fighting, and longed for peace; and one day when his friends were hunting, Queen Niam came to take him away and teach him wisdom. She was fair, and tall, and gracious, and clothed all in pure white, and her eyes were like the sunlight. And some call her a fairy queen, but others call her *Truth*.

And she took Prince Oisín to the "Land of Youth," and kept his heart young. Many people in after ages tried to find that land of Tirnanogue or youth; it lies, they tell us, just on the ocean's rim, where sea and water meet; and many grown-up people who were silly have tried to sail to it, but they never reach it any more than they can reach the end of the rainbow. Grown-ups *never* get there: it is the children's land, a place of delight for the little ones who love the fairy Queen of Truth. But, my dear ones, when you are no longer little, and grow up into men and women, I tell you what you must do if you would be happy: *Leave your heart in the "Land of Youth,"* and then however old you *seem* to grow, however white your hair becomes, and however wrinkled your face, you will never be really old. For the heart that rests with the Queen, the white Queen Truth, in the land of youth, is always young and glad. But Oisín grew tired, and *Truth* no longer pleased him. He would not listen to her message any more, so he journeyed to the "Land of Forgetfulness." Don't go there, my children; happy, contented people shun that shore. In the "land of forgetfulness" one falls asleep, and no whisper either from the fairies or the Great Ones reaches you; and when at last you wake up, like the prince did you will be sad, and old, and weary; and however much you may long for it, you will never find the fairy realm again.

And the prince died sadly after all, and the fairy queen was not near him. When he comes again perhaps he will remember, and be wiser.

But who makes the fairies? and where do they come from? Why, *you* make them; and they come from your busy brains—good fairies, and nasty, ugly, spiteful ones. You give them life: you dress them, too, although you do not mean to do so; and when you have made them, and given them strength, they do so many good or evil things. There are many kinds of them:—happy, merry ones, born of bright thoughts. They are the white fairies, and when they fly away from you they do kind things. And there are black fairies, ugly and deformed—these are made from ill-temper, and hasty words, and untrue thoughts; and folks say these have no feet, only bodies and wings, and they fly far, and grow larger every time anyone lets them stop near them; but at last they come back to the children who made them. And there are red fairies, made from angry wishes, and they are not nice to see. So, children, try to make only white fairies.

An old man who was very wise, and could see a great deal further than I can, sat by his fire one evening, and his heart was sad and lonely, until he fell asleep; and he woke himself up by laughing, and he saw a white, sweet fairy nestling near his heart; and he knew that a little child who loved him had sent a loving thought to him before she fell asleep, and he was glad once more. And I knew a little child who sent a flower to a sick comrade, and in the heart of the lily, just where you always see the tear that is in the lily-cup, dwelt a

beautiful fairy, no bigger than the drop of dew, and it whispered to the dying child stories of long garden-paths, and great flower-beds; and he forgot his pain.

And I have heard of hearth-fairies, who live in a busy home, where mother gets very, very tired sometimes, because there are so many to wash, and dress, and mend for; but in the evening-time, when the children speak softly and lovingly to her, the tired look goes from mother's eyes, and she looks young and happy, because the fairies gather round her.

Some of you little ones make ugly fairies when the rain patters on the pane, and you cannot run into the sunlight to play; but that is stupid of you; you want the fairies inside the house to help you, and being cross only makes things grow worse, and worse; and then red fairies grow; and sometimes I have heard tell that children slap each other—I have only heard it said—I hope it was not any of you.

Get rid of your black and red fairies, by making white ones, and you will be happy then, and good, and truthful.

I wonder could we bring back the fairy queen again?—the fair, white, fairy Truth. And would she, do you think, bring back the fairies of the Long Ago?

Could we do it, you and I, if we tried, and kept on trying, right heartily together? I think we could, do you know; and the black ones would go away then, for they never live long near the white ones. Shall we try? Listen! Think only kind thoughts; listen to the voice of the White Queen in your heart, and do what she tells you; think of each other, and never of yourselves; and the Great Ones will help you to bring the fairies back, perhaps.

K. B. LAWRENCE.

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DUBLIN LODGE,

3 UPPER ELY PLACE.

Our Wednesday Evening Public Meetings continue to be fairly well attended, and the discussions on the various Theosophical topics selected, while, often eliciting wide diversities of thought, are invariably characterised by good feeling, and a general desire to *learn* something. The subjects for the next month are:—

April 18th,	-	-	"The Druids."
" 25th,	-	-	"The Future of Humanity,"
May 2nd,	-	-	"A Philosophy of Life."
" 9th,	-	-	"The Use of Analogy."

Opened by Brothers Coates, Russell, Duncan and King.

In connection with the *Secret Doctrine* Correspondence Class, a number of the members are purchasing copies of the S. D.; and I hope the scheme will be fairly under way by next month.

FRED. J. DICK, *Hon. Sec.*

THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST

No. 8.

DUBLIN, MAY 15TH, 1894.

VOL. II.

NOTICE.

The Theosophical Society is in no way responsible for any opinions, in signed or unsigned articles, that appear in this Magazine.

All Literary contributions should be addressed to the EDITOR, and Business communications to the PUBLISHER, 71 Drumcondra Road, Dublin.

Yearly Subscription, 3s. 6d. post free.

The Editor will gladly send a parcel of copies of IRISH THEOSOPHISTS free of charge, and carriage paid, to anyone who will place them judiciously among those likely to become readers.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

WE are not indebted to the Hebrews for the primitive idea and form of intelligent religion. From the roots of the Aryan tree, the Israelite derived his first feeble image, hugging himself, meanwhile, in the fantasy that he alone knows the true God. He did not know that his local religion was but a dwindled off-shoot of the paternal tree, and that other off-shoots of that tree survived among races of a sweeter amenity, and of a deeper and loftier learning, who kept more perfectly the divine law.

READING a rather strange book some time ago, I came across the following passage:—"There was a primitive people living in the highlands of India, the progenitors of the Aryans, indeed, our primeval forefathers, who were preserved from becoming wholly brutal in their sensations. They were preserved as the seed grain of the world—the future civilizers of humanity. These never abandoned themselves to animal promiscuity and man-eating, and they had a form of monogamic marriage. Woman was not a slave among them. They had the family and the household, and thus the *germ* of civilization." The writer went on to say that this people, dominant among the sons of man, first absorbed the inferior races, and taught them the primitive arts of human society. They migrated at an early date into Egypt, forming there the ruling caste. Afterwards they established themselves in Greece, founding the Hellenic culture. "Abraham was derived from this stock, and the writing preserved in his family, and now known as the first record in Genesis, was a poem of the early religious scriptures."

GRADUALLY, however, the ideal worship of the Ayrán became an idolatry. The despotism of priest-craft dates far back. It fought and slew the poets, seers, and prophets of these early days, and held in bondage the spiritual freedom of the race.

RATIONAL religion shatters no true sacredness; it will keep all that is true in our own Scripture with unfailing care, and welcome all that is Truth in all other Scriptures with equal joy, and thus it will never close the Canon of the continually uttered Word of Revelation! It knows that all Holy Scripture is not in the Bible, nor is all that is in the Bible Holy Scripture. The wind of the Spirit "bloweth where it listeth," and whatever it touches it consecrates. We need not go to Jerusalem to find the "Word of God;" and the "Cross of Christ" is lifted up wherever temptation is bravely met, and painful duty well and patiently done. There is "a book of God" whose syllables are in every spherule of the revolving universe, and whose "Word" is from everlasting to everlasting.

THE evolution of the religious sentiment is going on as rapidly now as in any former age—yea, more rapidly. The mustard seed of rational religion is growing, and its grateful shade shall yet cover the earth. This religion teaches that nowhere in the Universe, outside of the morbid fancies of priest-ridden men, is found a revengeful and jealous Deity. An angry God is as obsolete to its thought as is the tree-worship of the savage, or the grotesque beast-worship of old Egypt. It teaches that law governs; that there is no space, no possible crevice anywhere in the Creation for caprice, miracle, parenthesis, or interpolation. There is very little "other worldliness" in its creed, and that little will continually grow less.

FOR though we may live hereafter in another, we are in *this* world. Here we get our bearings, and take our direction. Here we learn lessons, which nothing that we may learn in any other world can ever contradict. We ripen best for the future by being heartily devoted to the work and duty of the present moment. True religion dwells with man, and asks to be put to service. It will teach society to be more humane, and to become more brotherly. It will persuade the forces of the world to work in amity, so that tyranny and greed shall be a mutual blunder, and concert and co-operation a mutual success. It will leave off the paltry business of scattering tracts and preaching revivals through the world; for the present age needs not tracts, not effusions of ecclesiastical piety, but the abatement of moral griefs and wrongs, the suppression of intemperance, the purifying of vice and crime, the protection of the helpless, and the uplifting of woman.

NOR promises of a distant and future heaven, but righteousness and justice prevailing *now* on earth. If we do well the duty of the passing hour, the broad Universe has nothing, and holds nothing that we need dread. Safe and sound as our souls are to-day, so shall they ever be.

THIS faith comes "eating and drinking" as did the Son of Man. Its ministry has no more formal piety than the wild roses in a hedge-row. "Every man will

hear the Gospel preached in his own tongue"—that is, through his own peculiarities of mind and ways of life. It sets men, not, to building costly Cathedrals and Temples, to be inhabited during the week by rats, while childhood and womanhood are left crowded and smothered in the slums; but the Industrial Palaces, where Labour justified at last, leaves the social horde, sheds its sordidness and rags, and enters with singings and rejoicings. Alms-giving feeds and breeds poverty, but the organization of Industry will abolish poverty. This religion will enlist the whole of our Intelligence, and use all the tools of science and civilization, until Humanity shall be born again in its inalienable rights in this new cradle of mankind. The sacrament which it offers is its own worship of Truth and Beauty, whose elements it distributes to all communicants.

I HAVE endeavoured to give a short summary of a sensible book. No Christian can misinterpret the language: many Theosophists will regard it as a fair statement of their ideas on "rational religion;" and it may appeal to some stray readers—a class I have been asked to bear more in mind, now that the *I. T.* is to be seen on so many railway bookstalls.

THE "Lotus Circle" page has not been so well supported as I expected, and it would seem as if I must discontinue it. I looked for more contributions from parents on the Theosophical Education of children. In any case I hold over this month's article, and shall be pleased to receive suggestions on the matter. The N. E. Federation have at their meetings expressed their approval, and promised support to a Magazine dealing with this department of theosophical work, and yet—well! I would like to hear from some member of the N.E.F. on the subject.

I HAVE to thank an anonymous friend for 5s. received for "*I. T.*" fund. Would it be too much to ask his or her name and address?

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THOUGHTFULNESS.

THOSE who believe that in the teachings of Theosophy they have found the Path that leads to the Highest, are beset by dangers unknown to other men, and as we look round and mark what is going on in our midst, we would sound a note of warning against one in particular that almost bars the entrance to that Path. We have awakened to the knowledge of a new Spiritual faculty, a limitless Force both within and without ourselves: and with Thought centred on this Force we become conscious of new powers opening before us in every direction. The position we have held heretofore appears, in retrospect, almost incomprehensible; the ignorance darker by contrast; and there is a tendency to disparage the past, to cast the natural world (so-called) behind us, as of the Earth, earthy; to fix the will chiefly on the attainment of Individual Spiritual development, and to forget that the Higher Revelation never could have reached man, except as manifested through the flesh.

This confusion at first perhaps is natural, for the Spirit has asserted its right to rule, and we do not realize the absolute inability of the Higher Self to work *independently*, save on its own plane. The mass of humanity have no knowledge of its existence; to most of our brethren amongst whom we labour it is a dead letter; it, therefore, cannot make itself understood in any way,

except by working in and through the corporeal man. It is vain to imagine that we are treading the Path—that we can attain to Selflessness, if the Divine within keeps apart, as it were, wrapt in Self centration, intent only on its own development. Granted that there are hours necessary to the very life of the Spirit when we must be alone, when like the Christ we must depart into the mountain to pray; but the everyday training must be in the world and by the world; we must make use of every earthly faculty, make the Body veritably the vehicle of the Spirit, before we can raise our fellow-men, and in them lose ourselves. The body, subject at every point to the law of Christ, becoming day by day purified, etherealized, spiritualized, will gain a power over others, and will speak with a voice that many otherwise deaf will hear.

"What a man thinks, that he becomes"—such are the words of wisdom. Our aim is to attain to Selflessness, to become one with the Eternal Life manifested now around us in all that lives and moves and breathes—the Universal Self that inhabits all things. Thoughtfulness for all is then to become one with all. To be filled with thoughtful kindness for the rich, for the poor, for the sorrowful, for the glad, is to empty oneself of self, becoming, through thoughtfulness, one with the whole. The world around is our opportunity; the Godhead made man the field of our labours; we must not speak in an unknown tongue—we must use the earth language, to be understood. It is the little human kindnesses and pleasures that we can bestow; the conscious thoughtfulness in absolute trifles that appeals to the men and women around us. If we can bring one added ray of sunshine into any human heart, we have led that heart a little nearer to the light; if we throw ourselves unselfishly into the daily interest of each we meet, we teach the Universal Love; and, above all, if we are ever to be counted upon, always the same, invariable in our moods, calm and steadfast, we show forth the power that is constant and enduring, and in this world of change and illusion we lead others to believe in the Unchangeable, the Eternal Rule.

We must begin very humbly at the bottom of the ladder; we must conquer Spiritual Pride, we must arm ourselves with Spiritual Patience before we can begin to rise. The pride that in our newly-attained knowledge makes us feel ourselves "not as other men" must be overcome; the patience that makes us bear with outward forms sacred to other men must be attained. It signifies not what creed they hold, let us lose ourselves in thoughtfulness for them; let us touch it gently, reverently—if not, we sin against the Highest.

"Unto all such,
Worship what shrine they will, what shapes in faith—
'Tis I who give them faith! I am content!"

We are not bound on an armed crusade—we must go weaponless to the warfare, and by the power of Silence we must overcome. The Spirit grows in silence, works by silence; so, working and growing in us, men "will have knowledge of us that we have been with the Christ."

M. E. G.

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COMFORT.

WE are continually called upon to give comfort, and it is a problem to many what to say. For there are people who can see no outlet from their pain other than this, that they shall obtain that which they desire. The lover longs for the one who is absent or cold; the poor demand wealth;

the tortured cry out for relief from suffering; and so on through all phases of human life we continually meet such people. We, perhaps free from such afflictions, have schooled ourselves into a heroic mood. These are not things to sorrow over, we think; therefore, we are in a dilemma. We cannot aid them, for their ideals often seem ignoble to us—their wish accomplished would only bring on the renewal of old pain, and bind them closer to the weary wheel. Yet we cannot be cold, we who would identify ourselves with all life, for the soul must “lend its ear to every cry of pain, like as the lotus bares its heart to drink the morning sun.” In the many cases where the suffering is unavoidable, and cannot be otherwise received, what are we to do? Some, a little above the ignoble view that the only relief is in the satisfaction of desire, say reverently to those in pain: “It is God’s will,” and some accept it as such with dull resignation. But with some the iron has entered the soul—the words are empty. “What have I to do with God, or He with me?” they demand in their hearts. They join in the immemorial appeal and fierce revolt which at all times the soul of man makes against any external restraint. We who are disciples of old wisdom may touch some chord in them which may awaken eternal endurance.

It is not, we say, a pain imposed upon us by any eternal power; but the path we tread is one which we ourselves very long ago determined. To the question, “What have we to do with God?” we make answer that we are the children of Deity—bright sparks born in that Divine flame, the spirit in its primal ecstasy reflected in itself the multitudinous powers that throng in space. It was nourished by Divine love, and all that great beauty thrilled through it and quickened it. But from this vision which the spirit had, it passed to climb to still greater heights—it was spiritual, it might attain divinity. The change from the original transcendental state of vision to that other state of *being*, of all-pervading consciousness, could only be accomplished by what is known as the descent into matter where spirit identifies itself with every form of life, and assimilates their essences. This cyclic pilgrimage it undertook, forseeing pain, but “preferring free will to passive slavery, intellectual, self-conscious pain, and even torture, ‘while myriad time shall flow,’ to inane, imbecile, instinctual beatitude,” forseeing pain, but knowing that out of it all would come a nobler state of life, a divinity capable of rule, a power to assist in the general evolution of nature. It is true in the experience of many that going deep within themselves, an elemental consciousness whispers comfort; it says all will be well with us; it is our primal will which so orders. And so we justify the pain and hearts that break; and that old appeal and fierce revolt we make dies out in the inner light which shines from “the Goal, the Comforter, the Lord, the Witness, the resting-place, the Asylum, the Friend.” We can then once more go forth with the old, heroic, Titan will for mastery, seeking not to escape, but rather to meet, endure, and assimilate sorrow and joy alike; for so we can permeate all life—life which is in its essence one. This is the true centre on which all endurance must rest; this is the comfort the soul may take to itself; and beyond and after this we may say we struggle in a chaos indeed, but in a chaos whose very disorder is the result of law. That law is justice that cannot err. Out of confidence in this justice may spring up immortal hopes; our motives, our faith shall save us. We may dare more, give ourselves away more completely, for is not the root of this law declared to be beauty, harmony, compassion. We may trust that our acts shall have full fruition, and remain careless of the manner, nor seek for such results. We may look upon it if we will as the sweetest of the sweetest, the tenderest of the tenderest; and this is

true, though still it is master of the fiery pain. Above all it is the law of our own being; it is at one with our ancestral self. In all this lies, I think, such consolation as we may take and offer for pain. Those who comprehend, in their resignation, shall become one with themselves; and out of this resignation shall arise will to go forth and fulfil our lofty destiny. R.

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NORTH OF ENGLAND FEDERATION OF THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

MEETING AT HARROGATE, 5TH MAY, 1894.

THE fourth meeting of this Federation took place at Harrogate on Saturday, about sixty-five members being present, including delegates from the federated lodges and centres, and Annie Besant as representing the London headquarters.

Assembling at 3.30 in a comfortable room in the People's Hotel, A. B. was voted to the chair, and opened the proceedings with an address on the good of federation. Harmony being the first note of the T. S., united action is the first essential to its realization; and just as the whole society forms a circle composed of a number of sections or sub-circles in different parts of the world, so the uniting of smaller centres into spheres of effort, by means of local federations, has a great practical effect in promoting the brotherhood and union of action of the Society.

The first motion was a cordial vote of gratitude to Oliver Firth for his work in starting and managing the Federation during the first nine months of its existence.

Then short reports of the work done in the several lodges and centres were read.

An interesting discussion on methods of making the lodge libraries more useful arose from the Liverpool report. That lodge has accumulated a library of about 850 volumes, and hopes soon to make it a free public library of Theosophical literature. Circulation of books from one library to another was suggested, and also the advisability of trying to get Theosophical books into the free libraries of our towns. The value of definite lines of study, and the scope and methods of the Secret Doctrine class organized by Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, were next considered. Small groups were recommended for study and for collecting references, so as to elucidate particular points of teaching. A. B. cited the practice of the London Lodge as worthy of imitation. They study a subject for months, collecting all allusions, and discussing its aspects, and then one member collates the results into a paper or lecture.

The relation of Theosophy to the Christian Churches was then taken up. The difficulties of putting Theosophy before Christians without hurting their feelings was touched upon, and the great need for care and tact to put theosophical ideas into language they can understand, without in any way shirking the expression of the beliefs held by Theosophists.

The possibility of reviving the real meaning of such terms as Faith, Grace, Prayer, and Mercy was alluded to, and the great value that would result to Christianity from such revival of its spiritual essence and basis. Members were advised to avoid controversial argument, especially with those who are satisfied with their present beliefs, and have no desire to search elsewhere; also to remember that we can only reach relative truth, and cannot see the whole of any truth; therefore, let us be ready to supplement our views with those of others.

A. B. wound up the discussion by showing how the masters are trying to help us to see; and what we have to do is to keep our spiritual eyes open, so as to receive their help, and thus promote the spiritual life of the world. The spirit speaks to every man in his own tongue, and all, whether Christians, Mahomedans, Zoroastrians, or Hindus, of can find a bond of union if they will try to sympathetically comprehend the aspects of truth as seen by others.

An adjournment for tea, talk, and tobacco, was then made, and at 6-30 the Federation re-assembled for the evening session. The greater part of the evening was occupied by an address from A. B. on her experiences in India, and the relations of East and West.

She shewed how propoganda work there differed from here, on account of the different atmosphere of thought and life. An Indian audience believes in the reality of mental potencies and in the possibility of separating spirit and body. It believes in Spiritual Life, Reincarnation, and Karma. What is required there is to make them realize the real original meaning of their sacred books, and their teachings. For instance, the doctrine of Karma has been degraded into a fatalistic idea that we are the puppets of destiny; and she taught them that thought and spiritual effort can modify the currents of destiny so that we may by effort alter our conditions. Generally, the spiritual life there has become so encrusted with form and ceremony as to be almost dead, but even among the westernized Indians this crust may be broken through, and then the real belief in soul and spirit enables them to rise up, and grasp the higher idea of man and his destiny.

A great part of her work there was devoted to shewing the value of H. P. Blavatsky's teachings in reviving the appreciation and knowledge of the Indian religions and their spirituality. The Indian Scriptures contain Theosophy, and H. P. B. shewed it.

Many interesting details of A. B.'s life and work in India were given, but, as they have appeared in the *Theosophist* and elsewhere, they need not be repeated. But an important point brought out was the different view of phenomena there held. The fakereers and Hatha Yogis have made phenomena of very remarkable character familiar to Indians, and they look upon all phenomena workers with distrust. Not as doubling the phenomena, but because they know that the power to perform wonderful physical and psychic feats does not necessarily imply real spiritual power. And they also know that unless such feats are the results of purity of life they are dangerous to all who have anything to do with him.

The development of Hatha Yoga is a direct bar to spiritual progress.

The whole Yogi system of India witnesses to the dominance of mind over body, and of spirit over mind. Thousands who believe this throw aside all material aims such as form the guiding force of most Western lives—Wealth, Power, Learning, &c.

Afterwards a number of questions were asked, and many valuable hints and thoughts were brought out. A suggestion was made by A. B. that the Western Lodges should link themselves to Indian Lodges by exchange of literature, information, and ideas, so as to help the union of thought and brotherliness which the T. S. advocates.

It was arranged that the next meeting should be held at Middlesboro' on August 4, when it is hoped there will be another large and strengthening gathering.

On Sunday A. B. delivered two lectures at Harrogate to crowded audiences, and on Monday at York.

C. C.

A STRANGE AWAKENING.

By Æ.

CHAPTER III.

HARVEY rose up early; as he walked to and fro in the white dawn, he found the answers to every question in his mind: they rose up with a sweet and joyful spontaneity. Life became filled with happiest meaning: a light from behind the veil fell upon the things he had before disliked, and in this new light, pain, sorrow, and the old moralities were invested with a significance undreamt of before. In admitting into his own mind Olive Rayne's ideas, he removed something of their austerity: what he himself rejected, seen in her, added another and peculiar interest to the saintly ideal of her which he had formed. She had once said, peace and rest were inconceivable while there existed strife and suffering in nature. Nowhere could there be found refuge; drawing near unto the divine, this pain only became wider, more intense, almost insufferable, feeling and assimilating the vastness of divine sorrow brooding over the unclaimed deep. This pity, this consciousness of pain, not her own, filling her own, filling her life, marked her out from everyone he knew. She seemed to him as one consecrated. Then this lover in his mystic passion passed in the contemplation of his well-beloved from the earthly to the invisible soul. He saw behind and around her, a form unseen by others; a form, spiritual, pathetic, of unimaginable beauty, on which the eternal powers kept watch, which they nourished with their own life, and on which they inflicted their own pain. This form was crowned, but with a keen-pointed radiance from which there fell a shadowy dropping. As he walked to and fro in the white dawn he made for her a song, and inscribed it

TO ONE CONSECRATED.

Your paths were all unknown to us:
We were so far away from you,
We mixed in thought your spirit thus—
With whiteness, stars of gold, and dew.

The mighty mother nourished you:
Her breath blew from her mystic bowers:
Their elfin glimmer floated through
The pureness of your shadowy hours.

The mighty mother made you wise;
Gave love that clears the hidden ways:
Her glooms were glory to your eyes;
Her darkness but the Fount of Days.

She made all gentleness in you,
And beauty radiant as the morn's:
She made our joy in yours, then threw
Upon your head a crown of thorns.

Your eyes are filled with tender light,
For those whose eyes are dim with tears;
They see your brow is crowned and bright,
But not its ring of wounding spears.

We can imagine no discomfiture while the heavenly light shines through us. Harvey, though he thought with humility of his past as impotent and ignoble in respect of action, felt with his rich vivid consciousness that he was capable of entering into her subtlest emotions. He could not think of the future without her; he could not give up the hope of drawing nigh with her to those mysteries of life which haunted them both. His thought, companioned by her, went ranging down many a mystic year. He began to see strange possibilities, flashes as of old power, divine magic to which all the world responded, and so on till the thought trembled in vistas ending in a haze of flame. Meanwhile, around him was summer: gladness and youth were in his heart, and so he went on dreaming—forecasting for the earth and its people a future which belongs only to the spiritual soul—dreaming of happy years even as a child dreams.

Later on that evening, while Olive was sitting in her garden, Dr. Rayne came out and handed her a bundle of magazines.

"There are some things in these which may interest you, Olive," he said; "Young Harvey writes for them, I understand. I looked over one or two. They are too mystical for me. You will hardly find them mystical enough."

She took the papers from him without much interest, and laid them beside her on the seat. After a time she took them up. As she read her brows began to knit, and her face grew cold. These verses were full of that mystical voluptuousness which I said characterised Harvey's earlier productions; all his rich imagination was employed to centre interest upon moments of half-sensual sensations; the imagery was used in such a way that nature seemed to aid and abet the emotion; out of the heart of things, out of wild enchantment and eternal revelry shot forth into the lives of men the fires of passion. Nothing could be more unlike the Christ-soul which she worshipped as underlying the universe, and on which she had reliance.

"He does not feel pity; he does not understand love," she murmured. She felt a cold anger arise; she who had pity for most things felt that a lie had been uttered defiling the most sacred things in the Holy of Holies, the things upon which her life depended. She could never understand Harvey, although he had been included in the general kindness with which she treated all who came near her; but here he seemed revealed, almost vaunting an inspiration from the passionate powers who carry on their ancient war against the Most High.

The lights were now beginning to fade about her in the quiet garden when the gate opened, and someone came down the path. It was Harvey. In the gloom he did not notice that her usual smile was lacking, and besides he was too rapt in his own purpose. He hesitated for a moment, then spoke.

"Olive," he said tremulously, "as I came down the lanes to say good-bye to you my heart rebelled. I could not bear the thought: Olive, I have learned so many things from you; your words have meant so much to me that I have taken them as the words of God. Before I knew you I shrank from pain; I wandered in search of a false beauty. I see now the purpose of life—to carry on the old heroic battle for the true; to give the consolation of beauty to suffering; to become so pure that through us may pass that divine pity which I never knew until you spoke, and I then saw it was the root of all life, and there was nothing behind it—such magic your words have. My heart was glad this morning for joy at this truth, and I saw in it the power which would transfigure the earth. Yet all this hope has come to me through you; I half hold it still through you. To part from you now—it seems to me would be like turning away from the guardian of the heavenly gateway. I know I have but little to bring you. I must make all my plea how much you are to me when I ask can you love me."

She had hardly heard a word of all he said. She was only conscious that he was speaking of love. What love? Had he not written of it? It would have emptied Heaven into the pit. She turned and faced him, speaking coldly and deliberately:

"You could speak of love to me, and write and think of it like this!" She placed her hand on the unfortunate magazines. Harvey followed the movement of her arm. He took the papers up, then suddenly saw all as she turned and walked away,—what the passion of these poems must have seemed to her. What had he been in her presence that could teach her otherwise? Only a doubter and a questioner. In a dreadful moment his past rose up before him, dreamy, weak, sensual. His conscience smote him through and through. He could find no word to say. Self-condemned, he moved blindly to the gate and went out. He hardly knew what he was doing. Before him the pale dry road wound its way into the twilight amid the hedges and cottages. Phantasmal children came and went. There seemed some madness in all they were doing. Why did he not hear their voices? They ran round and round; there should have been cries or laughter or some such thing. Then suddenly something seemed to push him forward, and he went on blankly and walked down the lane. In that tragic moment his soul seemed to have deserted him, leaving only a half-animal consciousness. With dull attention he wondered at the muffled sound of his feet upon the dusty road, and the little puffs of smoke that shot out before them. Every now and then something would throb fiercely for an instant and be subdued. He went on and on. His path lay across some fields. He stopped by force of habit and turned aside from the road. Again the same fierce throb. In a wild instant he struggled for recollection and self-mastery, and then the smothered soul rushed out of the clouds that oppressed it. Memories of hope and shame; the morning gladness of his heart; the brilliant and spiritual imaginations that inspired him; their sudden ending; the degradation and drudgery of the life he was to return to on the morrow: all rose up in tumultuous conflict. A feeling of anguish that was elemental and not of the moment filled him. Drifting and vacillating nature—he saw himself as in a boat borne along by currents that carried him, now near isles of beauty, and then whirled him away from their vanishing glory into gloomy gulfs and cataracts that went down into blackness. He was master neither of joy nor sorrow. Without will; unpractical; with sensitiveness which made joy a delirium and gloom a very hell; the days he went forward to stretched out iron hands to bind him to the deadly dull and commonplace. These vistas, intolerable and hopeless, overcame him. He threw himself down in his despair. Around his head pressed the cool grasses wet with dew. Strange and narrow, the boundary between heaven and hell! All around him primeval life innocent and unconscious was at play. All around him, stricken with the fever of life, that Power which made both light and darkness, inscrutable in its workings, was singing silently the lovely carol of the flowers.

(To be continued.)

—:O:—

"A VISIT TO A GNANI."

STUDENTS of Eastern treatises, such as that of Patanjali, or the sacred science of Raj-Yoga, or Union with the Higher Self, are apt to be repelled at first by the somewhat meagre and abstract style of the language employed. It is not easy to divine, behind the brief hints given, the serious, earnest, living

presence of the teacher, or to realise the actuality and deep significance of the process of training laid down. This is, of course, more especially true of students in the West, where the existence of such a science is practically unknown or unrecognized. But even in the East it would seem that true followers of the higher forms of Yoga are seldom met with—least of all by Europeans, and therefore it is with peculiar interest that we turn to the account given* by so competent and sympathetic an observer as Mr. Carpenter, the well-known Socialist and poet, of the personality and teachings of a certain Hindu Yogi of the Southern School, who seems, indeed, to have merited to a considerable extent the title of Gnani or Initiate, which Mr. Carpenter accords to him.

“These gurus or adepts,” he writes, “are to be found scattered all over the mainland of India; but they lead a secluded existence, avoiding the currents of Western civilisation—which are obnoxious to them—and rarely come into contact with the English or appear on the surface of ordinary life. They are divided into two great schools, the Himalayan and South Indian—formed probably, even centuries back, by the gradual retirement of the adepts into the mountains and forests of their respective districts before the spread of foreign races and civilisations over the general continent.”

With regard to the “outer man” of this particular teacher—his appearance, mode of life, etc., Mr. Carpenter gives the following account:—

“We found ourselves in a side-chamber, where, seated on a simple couch, his bed and day-seat in one, was an elderly man (some seventy years of age, though he did not look nearly so much as that), dressed only in a white muslin wrapper wound loosely round his lithe and even active dark-brown form; his head and face shaven a day or two past, very gentle and spiritual in expression, like the best type of Roman Catholic priest—a very beautiful and finely-formed mouth, straight nose, and well-formed chin: dark eyes, undoubtedly the eyes of a seer, dark-rimmed eyelids, and a powerful, prophetic, and withal childlike manner.”

“. . . . He seemed to spend the greater part of the twenty-four hours wrapt in contemplation, and this not in the woods, but in the interior of his own apartment. As a rule he took a brief half-hour's walk mornings and evenings, just along the road and hack again, and this was the only time he passed out of doors. Certainly this utter independence of external conditions—the very small amount of food and exercise, and even of sleep that he took, combined with the great vigour that he was capable of putting forth on occasion both bodily and mentally—all seemed to suggest the idea of his having access to some interior source of strength and nourishment.”

“Finally his face, while showing the attributes of the sun, the externally penetrating quick eye, and the expression of *illumination*—the deep mystic light within—showed also the prevailing sentiment of happiness behind it. *Sandósiam, Sandósiam Eppótham*—“Joy, always joy”—was his own expression, oft repeated.

* In his book entitled “From Adam's Peak to Elephanta.” London: Swan, Sonnenschein, and Co., 1892.

On his conversations with the holy man, carried on by means of an interpretation, and on the methods and aims of *yoga* in general, Mr. Carpenter writes with wonderful freshness and interest—wisely cautioning the reader, however, against drawing hasty or sweeping conclusions with regard to Indian teaching or religion as a whole. In a chapter entitled “Consciousness without Thought,” we have a well-drawn contrast between the ideals and aspirations of East and West.

“The West seeks the individual consciousness—the enriched mind, ready perceptions and memories, individual hopes and fears, ambitions, loves, conquests—the self, the local self, in all its phases and forms—and sorely doubts whether such a thing as an universal consciousness exists. The East seeks the universal consciousness, and in those cases where its quest succeeds, individual self and life thin away to a mere film, and are only the shadows cast by the glory revealed beyond.”

“The individual consciousness takes the form of *Thought*, which is fluid and mobile like quick silver, perpetually in a state of change and interest, fraught with pain and effort; the other consciousness is *not* in the form of thought. It touches, sees, hears, and is those things which it perceives—without motion, without change, without effort, without distinction of subject and object, but with a vast and incredible Joy.”

On the much-vexed question of *Nirvana*, Mr. Carpenter says excellently:—

“Great have been the disputes of the learned as to the meaning of the word *Nirvana*—whether it indicates a state of no-consciousness or a state of vastly-enhanced consciousness. Probably both views have their justification; the thing does not admit of definition in terms of ordinary language. The important thing to see and admit is, that under cover of this and other similar terms, there does exist a real and recognisable fact (that is a state of consciousness in some sense) which has been experienced over and over again, and which, to those who have experienced it in ever so slight a degree, has appeared worthy of lifelong pursuit and devotion. It is easy to represent the thing as a mere word, a theory, a speculation of the dreamy Hindu; but people do not sacrifice their lives for empty words, nor do mere philosophical abstractions rule the destiny of continents. No; the word represents a reality, something very basic and inevitable in human nature. The question really is not to define the fact, but to get at it and experience it.”

Proceeding then to deal with the “methods of attainment” pursued in the East, our author points out that these fade into two, or rather three, main divisions—the external physical on the one hand (*Karma Yoga*, or *Hatha Yoga*); and the mental and moral on the other (*Gnana*, and *Bhaktayoga*).

“The methods that are mainly physical produce certain results—clairvoyances and controls—which are largely physical in their character, and are probably for the most part more or less morbid and dangerous. They are, however, very widely spread among the inferior classes of *Yogis* all over India.”

In *Gnana Yoga* the main object is the absolute control and mastery of the mind, the power to completely efface or suppress all thought at will, in order to gain the state of *samadhi*, which is *above* thought. The first step in the process

shows, however, that by this control of thought no mere dreamy surrender of the thinking faculties to a condition of blank abstraction is intended.

"It is a doctrine much insisted on by the Gurus that in life generally the habit of undivided concentration of the mind on that which one is doing is of the utmost importance. . . . To concentrate at all times wholly and unreservedly in what you are doing at the moment is, they say a distinct step in *gnānam*."

Again:—

"While at work your thought is to be absolutely concentrated in it, undistracted by anything whatever irrelevant to the matter in hand—pounding away like a great engine, with giant power and perfect economy—no wear and tear of friction, or dislocation of parts owing to the working of different forces at the same time. Then, when the work is finished, if there is no more occasion for the use of the machine, it must stop equally absolutely—stop entirely—no *worrying* (as if a parcel of small boys were allowed to play their devilments with a locomotive as soon as it was in the shed), and the man must retire into that region of his consciousness where his true self dwells."

The Yogi himself seems to have exhibited this power in a remarkable degree.

"Though exceedingly animated and vigorous, as I have described, when once embarked in exposition—capable of maintaining his discourse for hours with unflagging concentration—yet the moment such external call upon his faculties was at an end, the interest which it had excited seemed to be entirely wiped from his mind, and the latter returned to that state of interior meditation and absorption in the contemplation of the world disclosed to the inner sense, which had apparently become his normal condition."

The faculty of concentration is attained by regular exercise and practice, the thoughts being resolutely fixed upon some one subject, to the exclusion of all else. Then follows:—

"The next step is the effacement of thought, a much more difficult one. Only when the power of concentration has been gained can this be attempted with any prospect of success. The body must be kept, as before (in concentration) perfectly motionless, and in a quiet place, free from disturbance, not in an attitude of ease and slumber, but sitting or standing erect with muscles tense. All will-power is required, and the greatest vigilance. Every thought must be destroyed on the instant of its appearance. But the enemy is subtle, and failure, over a long period, inevitable. Then when success seems to be coming, and Thought is dwindling, Oblivion, the twin-foe appears, and must also be conquered. For if thought merely gives place to sleep, what is there gained? After months, but more probably years, of intermittent practice, the power of control grows, curious but distinct physiological changes take place; one day the student finds that Thought has gone; he stands for a moment in Oblivion; then *that* veil lifts, and there streams through his being a vast and illumined consciousness, glorious, that fills and overflows him, 'surrounding him so that he is like a pot in water, which has the liquid within and without.' In this consciousness there is divine knowledge, but no thought. It is *Samudhi*, the universal 'I am.'"

With regard to the more purely moral part of the Yogi's training and teaching, the key to it is found in the idea of non-differentiation, *i.e.*, of the one-ness, in essence of all life and Nature.

"The higher esoteric teachers naturally lay the greatest stress on the moral [element], but any account of their methods would be defective which passed over or blinked the fact that they go *beyond* the moral—because this fact is in some sense the essence of the Oriental teaching. . . . On no word did the 'Grammarian' insist more strongly than on the word 'non-differentiation.' You are not even to differentiate yourself in thought from others; you are not to begin to regard yourself as separate from them. Even to talk about helping others is a mistake; it is vitiated by the delusion that you and they are twain. So closely does the subtle Hindu mind go to the mark! What would our bald commercial philanthropy, our sleek æsthetic altruism, our scientific isophily say to such teaching? All the little self-satisfactions which arise from the sense of duty performed, all the cheese-parings of equity between ourself and others, all the tiny wonderments whether you are better or worse than your neighbour, have to be abandoned; and you have to learn to live in a world in which the chief fact is *not* that you are distinct from others but that you are a part of, and integral with them."

Such is the doctrine of the Advaita (non-dualistic) philosophy of India. Its ideal is complete union with Nature—re-absorption into God. That there is a higher ideal still—one more actively philanthropic and compassionate—taught in the Esoteric Himalayan School, we have learned through the writings of H. P. Blavatsky, its messenger. The question, however, need not be discussed here. We conclude by recommending to our readers the perusal for themselves of the very interesting chapters from which the above quotations have been made. Were such travellers as Mr. Carpenter and such books as the present more frequent, we should find more appreciation for Theosophic teachings, and less of ignorant contempt amongst educated Westerns for the religious beliefs and aspirations of "heathen" India.

—:O:—

DUST.

I heard them in their sadness say,
 "The earth rebukes the thought of God;
 We are but embers wrapt in clay
 A little nobler than the sod."

But I have touched the lips of clay—
 Mother, thy rudest sod to me
 Is thrilled with fire of hidden day,
 And haunted by all mystery.

G. W. R.

NOTES ABOUT BOOKS.

Of recent books, interesting and useful to students of the Esoteric Philosophy, one of the most notable and almost invaluable is—"Thoughts on the Bagavad Gita"; a series of twelve lectures read before the Keembhakonam Branch, T.S., by A. Brahmin, F.T.S. (price 2/- net.) Unfortunately, the book is poorly printed and the spelling is faulty, but this, for the sake of the good matter, the students can well afford to overlook. The work is an attempt to interpret the "Bagavad Gita" in the light of the "Secret Doctrine," and those portions which relate to "Jagna" deserves serious study. In treating of Jagna, the author has occasion to touch upon the philosophy of sound, and in doing so recalls to us one important but often overlooked fact.

"Every sound that emanates from man, passes into the exterior world, and imparts its influence to the various classes of devas that exist in the ethereal body of Nature, according to the nature of the sound and the part of the human body from which that sound is produced."

Speech is a dangerous weapon, double-edged, as apt to harm friend as foe, and it is ever wise to remember that idle gossip, careless and loose talk, and ungenerous criticism are not the means by which the Brotherhood of Humanity shall be attained.

The Theosophical Publishing Society has published a new edition of "The Pymander of Hermes," or, as it is more generally known, "The Divine Pymander of Hermes Trismegistees." Dr. W. Wynn Westcott has written a preface for the volume, which is reproduced in a convenient size, and at a much lower price than any previous edition—viz., 3s. nett. What the Bhagavad Gita is to the Indian, the Pymander may be said to have been to the Hermetic Schools of Ancient Egypt. It is one of the few fragments of the wisdom of Egypt which have been preserved for us.

There is a steadily-increasing demand for any works by Paracelsus; and we notice announced for early publication, The Hermetic and Alchemical Writings of Paracelsus, in two volumes. Subscription price, £2 12s. 6d.

The essence of the teachings of Paracelsus in relation to the science of medicine, has been embodied in Dr. Hartman's recent book, "Occult Science in Medicine," which has been favourably received, and is being widely read.

The new edition of "Nature's Finer Forces," by Rama Prasad, is ready for publication. The work has been thoroughly revised, and is finely printed in clear type. The price is 4s. 6d.

Students of Theosophy will extend a ready welcome to the new edition of that exceedingly useful book, "Five Years of Theosophy." The price has had to be slightly raised, and is now 10s. nett. A full index has been added to the work, and the glossary made more complete.

DUBLIN LODGE,

3 UPPER ELY PLACE.

The Public Meetings to the end of this month are to consider the following topics:—

- | | | |
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| May 16th, | - - | "Miracles." |
| " 23rd, | - - | "Harmony in Nature." |
| " 30th, | - - | "The Soul in Relation to Experience." |

A Meeting of the Lodge will be held in June to elect Delegates for the Annual Convention in July. Members will receive due notice of the date of meeting, and a full attendance is most particularly requested, as questions of grave importance will come before the Convention in London.

FRED. J. DICK, *Hon. Sec.*

THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST

No. 9.

DUBLIN, JUNE 15TH, 1894.

Vol. II.

NOTICE.

The Theosophical Society is in no way responsible for any opinions, in signed or unsigned articles, that appear in this Magazine.

All Literary contributions should be addressed to the EDITOR, and Business communications to the PUBLISHER, 71 Drumcondra Road, Dublin.

Yearly Subscription, 3s. 6d. post free.

The Editor will gladly send a parcel of copies of IRISH THEOSOPHISTS free of charge, and carriage paid, to all those who will place them judiciously among those likely to become readers.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

AN Executive notice has come to hand from which I learn that the Judicial Committee which is to deal with "certain accusations" with reference to certain letters, and in the alleged writings of the Mahatmas' injurious to the character of W. Q. Judge, Vice-President of the T.S., will meet in London on 27th prox., and that Colonel Olcott will be present. A fortnight afterwards the Fourth Annual Convention of the European Section of the T.S. will be held. This seems a most satisfactory arrangement, as the "charges" above referred to will have been investigated, and the work of Convention proceed without interruption.

At such a juncture it is well that we should have confidence in the out-heads of the movement. Colonel Olcott and W. Q. Judge are entitled to this, by reason of their years of service and devotion to the T.S.; and of Annie Besant we know that the highest and purest motives have been the mainspring of all her actions before and after joining the T.S. We are pledged to brotherhood; it is sufficient to remember this, and act up to our pledges. Let us think kindly, firmly, strongly, to each in the true spirit of loyalty. The Elder Brothers—whom some know to exist, and in whom others believe—look on with unceasing watchfulness over the T.S. as an entity which they have created for the service of humanity. Whether we regard them as "facts" or "ideals," they should inspire us to higher service, purer love, more untiring devotion. Obligated to become radicals, protestants against every circumscribed form which dwarfs the conception of man as a divine being, and the realization of life which that conception implies—our radicalism is not incompatible with loyalty—loyalty to what we conceive to be true; loyalty to those whom we believe to be the custodians and exponents of truth.

The "keynote" of the N. of E. Federation Quarterly Meeting, a report of which we gave in last issue, seems to have been "Unity." No watchword could be more appropriate at the present time. As we near the close of the century, the very nature of the forces at work tend to accentuate differences, and hinder the realization of unity. The conflict of interest against interest, class against class, sect against sect, is naturally intensified as the struggle proceeds. What can be said, from the individualist point of view, has been said, and men are gradually coming to the conclusion that its justification and righteousness is of form merely, not of fact.

This desire for unity is world-wide; it is the significance of the hour. It shows of what seed we are. Men touch the ideal in their dreams, and awaken but slowly to its reality.

All the Gospels of the ages,
Since the human round began,
Re-appear in living pages,
Scriptured to the social man.

The first object of the T.S. is based on the essential unity of all existence, and so every member of the T.S. stands pledged to this principle. In almost every land, societies, unions, federations, &c., are being formed to help in bringing about some practical realization of this fundamental truth. Without forming any "social wing," or any new section, the attitude of every member of the T. S. who fulfils his pledge, is necessarily one of kindly sympathy and good feeling towards all. What a wonderful bond is sympathy. It unites us to all. It awakens a similar feeling—a synchronous vibration—in the hearts of those with whom we are brought in contact, and establishes a medium through which soul touches soul. In its human atmosphere, the sense of separateness fades, and in the clear light we read the old-new truth written on the tablets of the heart. "The only ultimate good is unity, and in reality nothing else exists."

I wish to emphasize what I have already said, that the T.S. is united with every organization, religious or social, striving towards a realization of unity, however widely different their ways and means. What is orthodoxy or heterodoxy but the gleam of the same bubble on its opposite sides? Mankind, imbued with the spirit of brotherhood, will outgrow both. Engrossed in material things; crusted over, within and without; with "no loophole for darts of the stars," little wonder men have given themselves over to that false gospel of despair which "sets its morality in private gain, and shuns the common care." Let us then, have that Liberty which means the effacement of every barrier that interposes between the common man and the achievement of a common destiny.

Wake the lyres to break the slumbers—
So Pythagorus well said;
"By the charm of tones in numbers
The starred universe is led."

I am indebted to the *Northern Theosophist* for a few notes on Mrs. Besant's lecture on "How Indians Search for the Soul," and to the *Pacific Theosophist* for the extract from one of the speeches of the Countess Wachtmeister at the

American Convention. I thought both would be of interest to a large number of our readers who do not see these magazines. I have also to acknowledge another 5s. for the *I.T.* Fund from the same anonymous friend.

The IRISH THEOSOPHIST sends greeting to all who will be assembled in Convention in July. It has no vote; but, as Bro. Judge said at last Convention, "it is not a vote which tells in our movement; it is energy, work, work, work." It hopes to have its share of this.

MRS. BESANT ON MEDITATION.

NOTES FROM A LECTURE AT HARROGATE ON "HOW INDIANS SEARCH FOR THE SOUL."

WE all find that meditation helps right conclusion in any matters that come before us. In our ordinary every-day affairs, if any difficulty arises, the best way to solve it is to retire from disturbing influences and quietly study it out. Raja Yoga makes this a possibility for its students by teaching them how to meditate by training these powers of concentration until they are able to abstract their thoughts from all surroundings and retire into themselves even when amongst others. To do this requires steady, patient effort. The first step is to cease from all wicked ways and thoughts, and practice a stern morality, so as to become a nobly moral character. Ordinary untrained persons are destitute of the power of concentrating thought and keeping it sternly to the line desired.

We are too desultory, too paragrafhy, as is shewn in our modern Western literature. How many of our Western young men or women are capable of pursuing a line of argument right through to its conclusion? We are so in the habit of taking information in small disjointed bits, swallowing it without mastication or digestion, that very few of us can keep our minds sufficiently under control to really think a thing out for ourselves. A common Eastern simile is to liken the human being to a chariot and horses. The body is the chariot. The passions and desires are the horses. The soul is the driver; the mind and thoughts are the reins. An untrained Western is like a chariot whose driver carries the reins loosely and does not control the horses, allowing them to go as they will and where they will. But a Raja Yoga is like a chariot driven by a wise and strong driver who controls the horses, making them obey his wishes.

In order to pursue Raja Yoga we must first practice good and truth. A common method is to begin by meditating for say ten minutes on first rising in the morning on truth, and then keeping the whole action of the day closely to the ideal thus evolved. Analysis of all failures and stern determination to avoid them in future has to be steadily practised until the pupil has gradually obtained power over his thoughts and actions so as to keep his conduct in the exact line that his highest ideals direct. This is not done in a casual way, but of set purpose.

The second stage is concentration of mind apart from the senses. Here we fritter away our powers, careless of the fact that our capacities and opportunities are limited. We are never content to think, we always wish to be doing something, and so waste our time and our minds in doing what is not worth doing.

Far better to do nothing than to wilfully waste one's mind in reading trash. The mind requires rest at times, and for some, light reading forms a suitable form of rest for the mind when it has been actively engaged on other and weightier matters. But I think there are very few who would not soon find, if they tried it, that it was better to look into yourself and think instead of frittering away time and intelligence on what requires no thought, and is not good in itself. The third stage of the Raja Yogi is when the soul can withdraw from the mind and get to consciousness above all reason. Then desires cease, not by killing out the below, but by controlling it, by out-growing the lower desires. Then he feels he is one with the All—he desires nothing for self, but everything for all others, and so helps others.—*Harrogate Herald*.

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A STRANGE AWAKENING.

By Æ,

CHAPTER IV.

LITTLE heaps of paper activities piled themselves up, were added to, diminished, and added to again, all the day long before Harvey at his desk. He had returned to his work: there was an unusual press of business, and night after night he was detained long beyond the usual hours. The iron hand which he had foreseen was laid upon him: it robbed him even of his right to sorrow, the time to grieve. But within him at moments stirred memories of the past, poignant anguish and fierce rebellion. With him everything transformed itself finally into ideal images and aspects, and it was not so much the memory of an incident which stung him as the elemental sense of pain in life itself. He felt that he was debarred from a heritage of spiritual life which he could not define even to himself. The rare rays of light that slanted through the dusty air of the office, mystic gold fallen through inconceivable distances from the pure primeval places, wakened in him an unutterable longing: he felt a choking in his throat as he looked. Often, at night, too, lifting his tired eyes from the pages flaring beneath the bright gas jet, he could see the blueness deepen rich with its ancient clouds of starry dust. What pain it was to him, Child of the Stars, to watch from that horrible prison-house, the face of all faces, immemorial quiet, passivity and peace, though over it a million tremors fled and chased each other throughout the shadowy night! What pain it was to let the eyes fall low and see about him the pale and feverish faces looking ghostly through the hot, fetid, animal, and flickering air!

His work over, out into the night he would drag himself wearily—out into the night anywhere: but there no more than within could he escape from that power which haunted him with mighty memories, the scourge which the Infinite wields. Nature has no refuge for those in whom the fire of spirit has been kindled: earth has no glory for which it does not know a greater glory. As Harvey passed down the long streets, twinkling with their myriad lights fading into blue and misty distances, there rose up before him in the visionary air solemn rows of sphinxes in serried array, and starlit pyramids and temples—greatness long dead, a dream that mocked the hives around him, hoarding the sad small generations of humanity dwindling away from beauty. Gone was the pure and pale splendour of the primeval skies and the lustre of the first-born

of stars. But even this memory, which linked him in imagination to the ideal past, was not always his: he was weighted, like all his race, with an animal consciousness which cried out fiercely for its proper life, which thirsted for sensation, and was full of lust and anger. The darkness was not only about him, but in him, and struggled there for mastery. It threw up forms of meanness and horrible temptations which clouded over his soul; their promise was forgetfulness; they seemed to say: "Satisfy us, and your infinite longing shall die away; to be of clay is very dull and comfortable; it is the common lot."

One night, filled with this intolerable pain, as he passed through the streets he yielded to the temptation to kill out this torturing consciousness: he accosted one of the women of the streets and walked away with her. She was full of light prattle, and chattered on and on. Harvey answered her not a word; he was set on his stony purpose. Child of the Stars! what had he to do with these things? He sought only his soul's annihilation. Something in this terrible silence communicated itself to his companion. She looked at his face in the light of a lamp; it was white, locked, and rigid. Child of the Stars, no less, though long forgetful, she shuddered at this association. She recoiled from him crying out "You brute—you brute!" and then fled away. The unhappy man turned homeward and sat in his lonely room with stupid, staring eyes, fixed on darkness and vacancy until the pale green light of dawn began to creep in upon him.

Into this fevered and anguished existence no light had yet come. Drunken with wretchedness, Harvey could not or would not think; and the implacable spirit which followed him deepened and quickened still more the current of his being, and the Gloom and the GLOW of his dream moved still nearer to each other. Mighty and mysterious spirit, thou who crownest pain with beauty, and by whom the mighty are bowed down from their seats, under thy guidance, for such a crowning and for such agony, were coiled together the living streams of evil and good, so that at last the man might know himself—the soul—not as other than Thee!

The ways by which he was brought to that moment were unremembered; the sensations and thoughts and moods which culminated in the fire of self-consciousness could be retraced but vaguely. He had gone out of the city one Sunday, and lying down in the fields under the trees, for a time he grew forgetful of misery. He went once more into the world of dreams. He, or the creature of his imagination, some shadow of himself, lived in and roamed through antique forests where the wonderful days were unbroken by sense of sorrow. Childhood shared in an all-pervading exultation; through the pulses of youth ran the fiery energy that quickened the world; and this shadow of the dreamer dwelling amid the forests grew gradually into a consciousness of a fiery life upon which the surface forms were but films. He entered this kingdom of fire; its life became his life; he knew the secret ways to the sun, and the sunny secrets living in the golden world. "It was I, myself," rushed into Harvey's mind: "It was I. Ah, how long ago!" Then for the first time, his visions (dreams and imaginations) became real to him, as memories of a spirit travelling through time and space. Looking backwards, he could nowhere find in the small and commonplace surroundings of his life anything which could have suggested or given birth to those vivid pictures and ideas. They began to move about swiftly in his mind and arrange themselves in order. He seemed to himself to have fallen downwards through a long series of lines of ever-lessening beauty—fallen downwards from the mansions of eternity into this truckling and hideous

life. As Harvey walked homewards through the streets, some power must have guided his steps, for he saw or knew nothing of what was about him. With the sense of the reality of his imaginations came an energy he had never before felt: his soul took complete possession of him: he knew, though degraded, that he was a spirit. Then, in that supreme moment, gathered about him the memories of light and darkness, and they became the lips through which eternal powers spake to him in a tongue unlike the speech of men. The spirit of light was behind the visions of mystical beauty: the spirit of darkness arrayed itself in the desires of clay. These powers began to war within him: he heard voices as of Titans talking.

The spirit of light spake within him and said—"Arouse now, and be thou my voice in this dead land. There are many things to be spoken and sung—of dead language the music and significance, old world philosophies; you will be the singer of the sweetest songs; stories wilder and stranger than any yet will I tell you—deeds forgotten of the vaporous and dreamy prime.

The voice came yet again closer, full of sweet promise, with magical utterance floating around him. He became old—inconceivably old and young together. He was astonished in the wonders of the primal world. Chaos with tremendous agencies, serpentine powers, strange men-beasts and men-birds, the crude first thoughts of awakening nature was before him; from inconceivable heights of starlike purity he surveyed it; he went forth from glory; he descended and did battle; he warred with behemoth, with the flying serpents and the monstrous creeping things. With the Lords of Air he descended and conquered; he dwelt in a new land, a world of light, where all things were of light, where the trees put forth leaves of living green, where the rose would blossom into a rose of light and the lily into a white radiance, and over the vast of gleaming plains and through the depths of luminous forests, the dreaming rivers would roll in liquid and silver flame. Often he joined in the mad dance upon the highlands, whirling round and round until the dark grass awoke fiery with rings of green under the feet. And so on and on through endless transformations he passed, and he saw how the first world of dark elements crept in upon the world of beauty, clothing it around with grossness and veiling its fires; and the dark spirits entered by subtle ways into the spheres of the spirits of light, and became as a mist over memory and a chain upon speed; the earth groaned with the anguish. Then this voice cried within him—"Come forth; come out of it; come out, oh king, to the ancestral spheres, to the untroubled spiritual life. Out of the furnace, for it leaves you dust. Come away, oh king, to old dominion and celestial sway; come out to the antique glory!"

Then another voice from below laughed at the madness. Full of scorn it spake, "You, born of clay, a ruler of stars! Pitiful toiler with the pen, feeble and weary body, what shall make of you a spirit?" Harvey thrust away this hateful voice. From his soul came the impulse to go to other lands, to wander for ever and ever under the star-rich skies, to be a watcher of the dawn and eve, to live in forest places or on sun-nurtured plains, to merge himself once more in the fiery soul hidden within. But the mocking voice would not be stifled, showing him how absurd and ridiculous it was "to become a vagabond," so the voice said, and finally to die in the workhouse. So the eternal spirit in him, God's essence, conscious of its past brotherhood, with the morning stars, the White Æons, in its prisonhouse writhed with the meanness, till at last he cried, "I will struggle no longer; it is only agony of spirit to aspire here at all; I will sit and wait till the deep darkness has vanished."

But the instruction was not yet complete; he had learned the primal place

of spirit; he had yet to learn its nature. He began to think with strange sadness over the hopes of the world, the young children. He saw them in his vision grow up, bear the burden in silence or ignorance; he saw how they joined in dragging onward that huge sphinx which men call civilization; there was no time for loitering amid the beautiful, for if one paused it was but to be trampled by the feet of the many who could not stay or rest, and the wheels of the image ground that soul into nothingness. He felt every pain almost in an anguish of sympathy. Helpless to aid, to his lips came that cry to another which immemorial usage has made intuitive in men. But It is high and calm above all appeal; to It the cries from all the sorrowing stars sound but as one great music; lying in the infinite fields of heaven, from the united feelings of many universes It draws only a vast and passionless knowledge, without distinction of pleasure or pain. From the universal which moves not and aids not, Harvey in his agony turned away. He himself could fly from the struggle; thinking of what far place or state to find peace, he found it true in his own being that nowhere could the soul find rest while there was still pain or misery in the world. He could imagine no place or state where these cries of pain would not reach him; he could imagine no heaven where the sad memory would not haunt him and burn him. He knew then that the nature of the soul was love eternal; he knew that if he fled away a divine compassion would compel him to renew his brotherhood with the stricken and suffering; and what was best forever to do was to fight out the fight in the darkness. There was a long silence in Harvey's soul; then with almost a solemn joy he grew to realize at last the truth of he himself—the soul. The fight was over; the GLOOM and the GLORY were linked together, and one inseparably. Harvey was full of a sense of quietness, as if a dew fell from unseen places on him with soothing and healing power. He looked around. He was at the door of his lodgings. The tall narrow houses with their dull red hues rose up about him; from their chimneys went up still higher the dark smoke; but behind its nebulous wavering the stars were yet; they broke through the smoke with white lustre. Harvey looked at them for a moment, and went in strangely comforted.

THE END.

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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.*

THE Theosophical Society was organized in the last century by Count St. Germain, Cagliostro and others. At that time there was a powerful Lodge in Paris, one also in Denmark, another in Germany, and three in Italy. But the revolution of '93 came and swept all away. And that is one reason why we now, in this century, have such a terrible Karma to work out. That organization was the physical basis of the Society, which is really, in itself, an entity, formed by all the members who belong to it. The Theosophical Society has its seven Principles, and has to work through all of these. In the last century it worked through the physical basis, and now, in this century, it has had to work through Karma, or through the psychic state. We are now, happily, I think, emerging from that state, and hereafter we may hope to enter upon a condition of very great activity.

* An address given before the 8th Annual Convention of the American Section, by the Countess Wachtmeister.

In 1831, in this century, Madame H. P. Blavatsky went to London with her father to take lessons in music, in which she manifested great talent. One day, while walking in the street, she saw coming towards her some Indian Princes, and, amongst these, a very fine looking Indian—a man of seven feet high—and to her great surprise, recognized in this man one whom she had always looked upon as her guardian angel. Ever since childhood she had seen him, and in moments of trial he had helped her. She had great love and affection for this person, and when she saw him in the physical form in London, she wanted to rush up to him and tell him how delighted she was to see him. But he made a sign to her to move on, and she went home and told her father, and all that night was unable to sleep, thinking of this strange thing—of how she had met her guardian angel. The next day, she went to Hyde Park, and while there this man came again to her, and said it was true that he had watched her from childhood, because he saw in her a good instrument for the formation of this Society. He said it was on account, first of all, of her psychical power, for she had been a medium. Secondly, on account of her great intellectual and mental powers, and because of her partly Eastern and partly Western birth, as, he said, she would have to work in all countries. Then he told her he had this work given to him to do by those above him, and that therefore he was most anxious that she should accept this position he offered her, which was to form this Society. He told her to go home to her father, consult with him, and then, if she would undertake this work, to return in three days to the Park and tell him. He pointed out to her that it would be a position of great trial, that she would be persecuted, and told her many things which would happen to the Society, and to herself. She went home, consulted with her father, who said she might do as she pleased, and that if she chose to take up the work, he himself would give her money and help her; but she was to decide for herself. After three days' cogitation, she decided to accept this position offered her, and she returned to the Park and told this to her Master. He then said she must go to Egypt, and that there she would have to stop for some time to be taught, so that she might be enabled to teach others. Then she went to India, and was taken, hidden in a hay cart, through a country where no European is ever permitted to pass. She lay in the cart, covered with hay, and was conducted safely through that part of the country by Indians. At last she reached the place where the Masters live, was received by the sister of one of them, and lived in the Master's house for three years.

But these three years were years of very great trial. In the first place, she was taught how to use her will. She had to do lessons just like a child; had to get up early and work hard and learn mental lessons. At the end of three years she was told to go to Egypt, and there was placed under the charge of another Master, who taught her about the Book of the Dead and many other works. After that she was put in charge of a Jewish Rabbi and taught the Kabbala. When she had passed through all these, she was told she was ready, and should go to America, and that when she reached here, she would meet a man named Olcott, who was to be President of the Theosophical Society. She came to America, and I know people who have told me it was a standing joke against her when she came, because whenever she met anyone she would ask: "Do you know anybody by the name of Olcott?" "Do you know a man called Olcott?" They would say, no, they had never heard of such a person. But at last some one said, Yes, they had heard that Col. Olcott was with the Eddy Brothers, studying Spiritualism, and if Madame Blavatsky would go there she could meet him. An hour later she was on the train which conducted her

to the Eddy homestead, and there met Col. Olcott. She was quickly able to prove to him that all the phenomena witnessed at the Homestead, she could produce by will-power. She was able to tell him beforehand just what she was going to do. She was also able to duplicate any particular kind of phenomenon produced by the Eddy Brothers in a state of unconsciousness and passiveness, by mere will-power and in full possession of her own consciousness.

Some time passed, and then she, with Col. Olcott and William Q. Judge, formed the nucleus of the Society, and Col. Olcott consented to become its President. Some time afterwards they went to India, and there established the Society. Such was the beginning of this grand movement. At first but two or three meeting together in a drawing-room; then growing larger and larger, until it is what you now see it—a huge Society, with branches all over the face of the earth—in every country of the world. We have members belonging to all nationalities and to every religion of the world. And all these people call themselves brothers; and this Theosophical Society is one vast brotherhood extending all over the globe. And it is a brotherhood not only in name, but in reality; for I, who have travelled in so many countries, can tell you that wherever I go I am received as a sister. In India, among the Hindus, I have been received as a sister, taken into their homes (where they are not accustomed to take strangers or Europeans at any time), and I have not only been treated as a sister, but as a much-loved sister. And now I come over here to the opposite end of the world, and all receive me kindly; and wherever I travel, I feel I am welcome. This is a beautiful thought—to think we have created in the world such a brotherhood as this. I will not insist that it is a real brotherhood, but it is a nucleus which, as time goes on, will, I hope, become a real brotherhood.

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A PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE.

(FROM A PAPER READ AT THE DUBLIN LOUGE BY J. DUNCAN.)

EVERY thinking man is confronted at some period of his life with the problem: "What am I here for—what purpose, if any, does my life attempt to fulfil?" This question would seem to arise naturally in the human mind in the very earliest stage of introspection, and it is perhaps fair to assume that all the religions and systems of philosophy which the world has seen owed their existence to an attempt to furnish an answer to this, the supreme riddle of life. For what object can religion or philosophy serve except to give us a justification for our existence, a *raison d'être*, a basis upon which to ground our right to thought and action. And as long as a religious or philosophical system continues to supply the needs of humanity—or even of a considerable section of humanity—in the direction which I have indicated, just so long will that system justify its own existence, and have a right to live.

The various religions with which the world is filled at the present day are therefore the product of a spiritual and intellectual evolution in the human mind, and have served, and to some extent continue to serve, a definite purpose. They have attempted to satisfy a want, a desire, an aspiration after spiritual things which has ever been present in humanity as far back as it can be traced.

But the mind of man has expanded, his needs have grown with the ages, and the narrow limits of creeds and dogmas become every day more and more intolerable to the free soul, which feels its strength and clearness of vision growing with every sunrise. "Away with beliefs," we cry; "give us

knowledge. We want no more dogma; let us have experience." And, seeking that experience, we go out into the life of the world, we mingle with our fellows, we taste the sensations which have been the portion of myriads of our race before us. And here a notable phenomenon awaits the man who can regard himself, as it were, experimentally—who can investigate his own thoughts and feelings with the calm eye of an outside observer.

Let us suppose that he enters upon life with the distinct purpose of getting the greatest possible amount of personal satisfaction out of it. With this end in view he cultivates to the fullest possible extent every appreciative faculty he possesses, the sense of beauty, of harmony, of form, of colour, of sound—all that can give him the power of feeling to the full every delicate shade of enjoyment that can be drawn out of every passing moment of time. Surely it may be said that such an one has reached the summit of human happiness. Is not his every desire satisfied? His ideal realised? Alas, no! The moment of attainment is also the moment of satiation, and his cloyed faculties ever crave fresh sensations. But, where are the fresh sensations to come from? Has he not run through the whole gamut of human enjoyment? Has he not, like Alexander, conquered all the world, so that there is no more to conquer? While pausing to consider his life, its purpose, its current, its apparent failure, it may be that a recollection strikes him of a sense of keener delight, of more complete satisfaction with life than has ever come to him through his æsthetic methods. On looking back over his past to trace the occasion of this feeling he finds that it has come to him at times when he has rendered some service, done some sympathetic act to one of his fellow-travellers on the voyage of life. This sense of happiness has come to him unsought, spontaneously, the result of some chance action not done in accordance with his theory of life, but rather in spite of it. He remembers, perhaps, one or two such acts, and recalls with some surprise his own feeling at the time. He recollects that, so far from expecting thanks from the person he has served, he has experienced an extraordinary sense of gratitude to that person—gratitude for the wonderful glow of sympathy, which has filled his own soul at the time, and rendered the whole universe beautiful and harmonious.

Now, surely here is something which needs to be accounted for; something utterly at variance with all our experimentalist's preconceived theories of life. To the trained mind, obviously the next step must be to seek for some law or fact in nature behind this phenomenon—at any rate for some hypothesis which will furnish a reasonable theory on which to account for it. And the inevitable conclusion to which he is forced is, that between all human souls there is distinct actual connection, so that all that we do for humanity is done also for ourselves, and what we do for ourselves to the exclusion of our fellows, fails even of its own object. We cannot, therefore, if we would, be independent of, or separate from our fellow-beings; an eternal bond unites us to them; our fate, for good or ill, is bound up with that of the race.

We have now got the length of enunciating a natural law which will, at any rate, go far towards furnishing us with a basis on which to found our actions and attitude of mind—the law of solidarity.

Having experimentally verified this truth, it is, perhaps, natural to look around at the religious and philosophical systems which surround us, and enquire if any of them can supply us with a corroboration of our own experience in the form of a distinct statement of the truth we have discovered.

Roman Catholicism offers us salvation through the Church, enjoining on us strict obedience to her prescribed forms, and the absolute acceptance of her formulated dogmas.

Orthodox Protestant Theology offers us redemption through the substitution of Jesus Christ, asserting that faith in this substitution saves us from the frightful hell with which all Christian churches have for ages terrified their adherents. But in neither of these creeds, as now taught, do we find the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood clearly set forth; on the contrary, both postulate the possibility of the eternal happiness of some, co-existent with the eternal misery of others.

And, if we turn to the philosophy of negation, Materialism, do we find our needs satisfied? I think not. We do, indeed, find a high ethical ideal among most Materialists, but without any reason given. For, indeed, the distinguishing characteristic of Materialism would appear to be a deep-rooted objection to looking for the reason of anything.

But let us turn our eyes towards the East—the source of light—the ancient birth-place of religion. Here at last we find in the teachings of the sages, who have been the custodians of mystic truth from time immemorial, a clearly set forth doctrine which corresponds with our own experience. Here we learn that each soul is a ray of the divine light, an emanation from the uncreated spirit, and is therefore eternally united with its source. Hence the connection between ourselves and our race is absolute, indestructible, ever-persistent, so that we cannot truly help ourselves except by service done to humanity.

The true philosophy of life then, is the philosophy of service—of service rendered not so much with the feeling of altruism, which implies separation, but because we recognise that we are one and indivisible—an integral part of the Universal Spirit. For the thinker, the philosopher, the occultist, there can be no truer motto than the simple one "I serve."

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GLEANINGS FROM THEOSOPHICAL LITERATURE.

* * * All who have time and opportunity are invited to send selections on the subject chosen for each month. These will be arranged and appear under this heading.

Subject for June—"The Potency of Sound" (continued).

THE POTENCY OF SOUND.

NOW we may consider that there is pervading the whole universe a single homogeneous resonance, sound, or tone, which acts, so to speak, as the awakener or vivifying power, stirring all the molecules into action. This is the word, the *verbum*, the *Logos* of St. John, who says: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." This is creation, for without this resonance or motion among the quiescent particles, there would be no visible universe. That is to say, upon sound, or, as the Aryans called it, *Nada Brahma* (divine resonance), depends the evolution of the visible from the invisible. *Hadji-Erivan. The "Path."* April, 1886.

Since, then, the homogeneous tone acts upon all the molecules of creation, may not this singing resonance cause such a transformation of brain energy as to vivify or awaken it, in time, to the True or Central Idea? We have seen that sound, so to speak, polarises certain particles of matter, attracting them to the earth, the great magnet from which they came. It confers upon other particles this same magnetic power as in the case of crystallisation; it awakens similar tones as when several untouched harps vibrate in harmony when the musical key-note is struck upon one alone. Why, then, may not the thought awakened by a fixed musical sound be in time attracted to the real source of that sound, of all sound? And as thought causes a disturbance among the molecules of the brain, some sound, however aerial, must accompany this vibration: does not my

brain then answer this singing resonance with the note homogeneous to all the ethereal space.—Julius. *The "Path," August, 1886.*

Mantrika-Sakti is the force or power of letters, speech, or music. The power of the ineffable name is the crown of this Sakti. *Subba Row. Five Years of Theosophy.*

Om or Aum. A mystic syllable, the most solemn of all words in India. It is "an invocation, a benediction, an affirmation, and a promise"; and it is so sacred as to be indeed *the word at low breath* of occult, primitive masonry. No one must be near when this syllable is pronounced for a purpose. It is a compound of three letters—*a, u, m*, which, in the popular belief, are typical of the three Vedas, also of three Gods—A (Agni), V (Varunna), and M (Maruts), or Fire, Water, and Air. In Esoteric Philosophy these are the three sacred fires, or the "triple fire" in the universe and man. Occultly, this "triple fire" represents the highest *Tetraktys* also.—*H.P.B. Glossary.*

In the Sanskrit, as also in the Hebrew and all other alphabets, every letter has its occult meaning and its rationale; it is a cause, and an effect of a preceding cause, and a combination of these very often produces the most magical effects. The vowels, especially, contain the most occult and formidable potencies.—*Secret Doctrine. Vol. I., '94.*

This word (Om), when properly pronounced, produces a certain regulation of the breathing process. The constant repetition of this word has the effect of tranquilizing the mind, and thereby restraining the force of the passions. In incantations, sound is so modulated as to produce the same state of the body as that which invariably accompanies the generation of any desired psychic or spiritual force.—*Man, page 101.*

Never receive and pass onward a thought which you do not feel and understand. On this point accept no authority other than your own soul. It is better that you seem to lose a ray of truth than to accept and defect it by a want of understanding, a want of assimilation of it. If it be yours in the law, you cannot lose it. It will be sent to you again and again until you do receive it. Take, then, what your nature selects until you reach a point where you can rise above nature. When this is reached you will not need to read any longer, except from the wonderful book of life, and from those Blessed Scriptures wherein the Divine has spoken to the ages through men who had attained to some share in His being.—*Jasper Nicmand, F.T.S. "Path," June, 1888.*

Begin the work of thought for the good of others by first forgetting self; as fast as possible get away from the dominion of Materiality. Live in the love of doing enduring good to others—these conditions are the true and upward advancement of ourselves. The doing of these things is the reward—it is the advancing into God-life. It is part of our real Eternal selves. It is living in the Eternal—the everlasting good; for the God-life—the good life is the only eternally active one. By living thus, the gross and material now enchainning our entities will be broken down, and will die and leave us—and die they must, sooner or later, or the "I am I" shall perish.—*H.N.H., F.T.S. "Path," Feb., 1887.*

(To be Continued.)

PRACTICAL THEOSOPHY.

(LOTUS CIRCLE PAPERS.)

THE foundation of Practical Theosophy is Brotherhood, and the foundation of Brotherhood is the realization of the unity of mankind—nay, more than

that, the unity of the whole universe. All is but an expression, an outbreathing of the Divine Life, the Universal Spirit; therefore, in essence all is one, and when all experience has been gained, all will again unite and become one in fact. It is one aim of Theosophy to hasten the time when all shall be one; and as the oneness must be brought about on all planes and in all things, so there is an infinite number of aspects to Practical Theosophy, an infinite number of directions in which it may work.

Two of the most important of these directions are the home and our treatment of animals. For we cannot immediately attain to the love for Humanity which will express itself in Universal Brotherhood. As Confucius says:—“Above all men to love his father and his mother is his (man's) main and principal duty, from the practice of which he afterwards proceeds as by degrees to the practice of that universal love, whose object is all mankind.” And so to reach universal brotherhood we must begin by brotherhood in our own homes. This seems a very commonplace thing, one which it is quite unnecessary to mention; for it is surely easy to be brotherly to our own relatives—surely very few, if any, fail in that. And yet, when we come to think of it, there are some ways in which we do not always reach the perfect ideal of Brotherhood set before us by all the greatest teachers. We do sometimes find fault with those over whom we have control, not so much because we are anxious to correct the wrong, and by pointing out their mistakes help them to overcome them, as because these same mistakes irritate us, and it is a relief to our own injured feelings to inflict punishment for them; and our motive being thus impure and wrong, the way in which the punishment is inflicted is likely to aggravate the evil rather than correct it. We should not do this if we recognised the oneness of all, and the responsibility that rests upon us of acting always in the way that will best develop the higher nature of those “other selves” that have been entrusted to us.

And towards those over whom we have no control, we are not always brotherly. Is there not in many homes one, it may be the mother, or the eldest sister, who is so unselfish and so ready always to work for others, that all the burden and responsibility is left on her; and, if there is anything unpleasant to be done, it is taken forganted that she will do it, for she “will not mind.” This is not brotherly. If we fully recognised our oneness, we should try all to share equally the burdens, responsibilities, and troubles of the home.

These points affect chiefly the elder members of the home; but there are many ways in which the children, even the very little ones, can help to spread the spirit of Brotherhood. By yielding to their elders that ready and willing obedience which springs from confidence and love; by showing towards their playmates that unselfishness which will prompt them to share all their toys and sweetmeats, instead of quarrelling over them, and being angry because one seems to have a little more than another; by helping each other, the older and stronger taking care of the younger and weaker, instead of tyrannising over them. By trying always to say and do what will best please those dear to them rather than what will please themselves, they, too, will do their share, and it will not be a small one, towards bringing about that “Heaven on earth,” which is within the reach of us all, if only we will take the trouble to win it.

And it is by all these little actions, by cultivating the spirit of brotherly love in our ordinary, everyday life, that we shall best purify our own natures, and fit ourselves for doing afterwards a wider work for all humanity. And, even though it may not be our privilege to have any great work to do, we shall at least create around ourselves a pure atmosphere of good thoughts and

good actions, that will radiate from us, and help to purify this broader atmosphere of humanity.

But while we may remember that all other men and women are our brothers and sisters, we are apt to forget that there is also a bond connecting us with the animals. For they are animated by the same life which pulsates in us, and though they are now on a far lower plane than we, yet they also are on the upward path of evolution, and in the course of long ages they, too, will become human. They have not yet reached the stage when they can consciously hasten their own progress as we can do ours. They, like us, are subject to the law of Karma, but, unlike us, they are unable to modify its effects—they are powerless in its grasp. It is we that have the power, by our treatment of them, to hasten or retard their development. The master who manages his dog or his horse by love, not by fear, develops in him those higher instincts which verge on the human, and so prepares him to rise in the scale of evolution; while he who treats his animals cruelly, only intensifies the brute element in them, so thrusting them lower in the scale and retarding their progress. When we see the overloaded cart-horse, or omnibus-horse, urged on by a cruel driver to do work for which he is really unfit, we should remember not only that such a driver is adding to the burden of pain and oppression that is weighing down our dumb brethren, but also that all those who are a party to the cruelty by allowing, or too often actually insisting on the overloading, are participators in his sin, and may be more guilty than he.

Another question that is suggested by this thought of the bond between ourselves and the animals is: to what extent are we justified in taking their life? Is it, or is it not, in accordance with the law of Brotherhood that animals should be slain to supply us with food? Or, to carry it still further, are we, or are we not justified in killing a spider or a fly that we imagine to be in our way, or even in killing a gnat to avoid a momentary slight pain or inconvenience to ourselves? A Buddhist would not hesitate to answer these questions; nor would most of our modern christians, but their answer would probably differ from that of the Buddhist.

If we would not only show in our own conduct, but also cultivate in our children, that tender regard for others which would make us shrink from inflicting pain of any kind on even the least of our brethren, whether human or only animal, we should then be doing much towards helping on the work of those great teachers—our masters and leaders—who have devoted their lives to spreading peace and love amongst mankind, and so we, too, should help in leading humanity on to that day of perfect rest, perfect light, and perfect love, when we shall all be one with the eternal.

LILIAN EDGER, F.T.S.

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NOTES ABOUT BOOKS.

THE London Lodge of the Theosophical Society have recently published two further numbers of their Transactions. The first of these is entitled "Masters of Wisdom," by Bertram Keightley, with some additional passages by Mr. A. P. Sinnett. This number is a most interesting one, and contains some new and important statements.

The second of the new Transactions is—"Vehicles of Consciousness," by

W. Scott Elliot. It treats of the various vehicles in which the consciousness of man can function on the different planes of nature. The writer says that his statements are no mere speculations but have been obtained from those who can at will function on both the Astral and Devachanic planes. And that this information has been checked by those who have developed similar faculties. The price of the Transactions is 1s. 1d. each, post free.

The most recent publication of the *Theosophist* Office is "The Book of the Path of Virtue" or a Version of the Tao-Teh-King, of Lao-Tze, the Chinese Mystic and Philosopher; with an introduction and essay on the Tao as presented in the writings of Chuang-Tze, the Apostle of Tao Tze, by Walter R. Old. This little work is largely Ethical, and will, we feel, be welcomed by a large circle of readers. The price is 1s.

Any addition to that well-known series, "The Sacred Books of the East" is sure to be well received. The latest volume, now before us, is a very important one, and consists of translations into English of some of the most famous of the Mahāyāna treatises. The volume opens with a translation from the Sanskrit, by E. B. Cowell, of the Buddha-Karita, of Asvaghosha, an early Sanskrit poem on the legendary history of Buddha, containing much interesting matter concerning the early history of Buddhism. Among the other Sūtras here translated we may mention, as well worth studying, the larger and the smaller Sukhāvātī-Vyūha, the Vagrakkhedikā or Diamond-Cutter. This Sūtra is very popular in Japan, and is one of the most highly valued metaphysical treatises in Buddhist Literature. The volume concludes with translations of the larger and the smaller Pragnā-Pāramitā-Hridaya, Sūtras, and of the Amitāyur-Dhyāna, Sūtra. The price of this volume is 12s. 6d., and to students of the Mahāyāna doctrines no more useful book is obtainable.

In March last, Professor Max Müller delivered a series of three lectures at the Royal Institution on the Vedānta Philosophy. These lectures have now been issued in book form. The first lecture treats of the origin of the Vedānta Philosophy; the second of the Soul and God; the third of Similarities and Differences between Indian and European Philosophy. The lectures form a useful introduction to the study of the Vedānta Philosophy, but the student must carefully guard against a blind acceptance of the learned professor's views on not a few debatable points. In one place he states that there is no esoteric Vedānta School, and in another writes that "there is some truth" in the statement that there is such a school. Some day, perhaps, the Professor will find himself forced to admit that Indian Philosophies have their esoteric as well as exoteric schools. The price is 5s.

"Lux Naturæ: Nerve System of the Universe." A new demonstration of an old law, by David Sinclair, is a curious little work on the lines of thought chiefly associated with Keely and his discoveries in vibratory forces. In this work these forces are discussed as relating more particularly to the mental and moral evolution of man. Price 3s 6d.

The Theosophical Publishing Society has just issued the third volume of The Collectanea Hermetica Series. It is entitled "A Short Enquiry Concerning the Hermetic Art," by a Lover of Philalethes. London, 1714. Preface by Non Omnis Moriar. An Introduction to Alchemy and Notes by S. S. D. D. Much of the present volume has reference to the Science of Alchemy in relation to human improvement. Price 2s. 6d. nett.

Many of our readers may be glad to hear that a new edition of Dr. Anderson's most useful work on "Reincarnation" is now on sale by the T.P.S.

Mrs. Besant's four lectures at the Adyar Convention on "Sound," "Fire," "Yoga," and "Symbolism" will very shortly be ready for publication. The price will be 2s. nett.

MAGIC.

After reading the Upanishads.

Out of the dusky chamber of the brain
Flows the imperial Will through dream on dream ;
The fires of life around it tempt and gleam ;
The lights of earth behind it fade and wane.

Passed beyond beauty tempting dream on dream,
The pure Will seeks the hearthhold of the light ;
Sounds the deep "ou" the glorious word of might ;
Forth from the hearthhold breaks the living stream.

Passed out beyond the deep heart music-filled,
The kingly Will sits on the ancient throne,
Wielding the sceptre, fearless, free, alone,
Knowing in Brahma all it dared and willed.

G.W.R.

DUBLIN LODGE,

3 UPPER GAY PLACE.

The past Session was brought to a close on the 30th, as regards the public meetings, by a capital discussion on a brilliant essay by Mr. Norman, entitled, "The Soul and the Senses in Relation to Experience."

The Midsummer Meeting of Members will be held on the 18th inst., at 8 p.m., when the election of Delegates to the July Convention, and other important business, will be dealt with. A full attendance of members is requested.

FRED. J. DICK, *Hon. Sec.*

THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST

No. 10.

DUBLIN, JULY 15TH, 1894.

VOL. II.

NOTICE.

The Theosophical Society is in no way responsible for any opinions, in signed or unsigned articles, that appear in this Magazine.

All Literary contributions should be addressed to the EDITOR, and Business communications to the PUBLISHER, 71 Drumcondra Road, Dublin.

Yearly Subscription, 3s. 6d. post free.

The Editor will gladly send a parcel of copies of IRISH THEOSOPHISTS free of charge, and carriage paid, to anyone who will place them judiciously among those likely to become readers.

THE ETHICS OF THEOSOPHY.

(A PAPER READ BY MRS. VARIAN AT THE DUBLIN LODGE.)

ETHICS may be defined as the science of conduct. My object is to show that Theosophy includes all Ethics. The whole tendency of Theosophy is to point the way to the purest and most unselfish life in thought and deed—putting thought first as the cause of action, and as moulding and determining the character to an even greater extent than mere action. None the less is the importance of work insisted upon “Therefore, thy task prescribed, with spirit unattached gladly perform, since in performance of plain duty man mounts to his highest bliss.” And again, “Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin.” Any true scheme of life must not only supply us with a reason for right conduct, but with a standard by which to judge our moral position. Such a religion, investing life with infinite possibilities, holding all action and thought to be not merely of passing importance, concerning us no more when we shall have lived one little life here, but acting and reacting on ourselves and others for age after age, through endless rebirths, invests life with a sense of seriousness and solemnity, which grows upon us.

The teaching of the brotherhood of man, and the real unity of each with each, really sums up the whole Ethical question, and gives the reason why it is incumbent on us to live for each other, helpful and sympathising, and at the same time explains the misery, indifference, and sense of isolation that is so prevalent. We are one at heart; all expressions of the divine, differentiated only in form and circumstances; and it is our misunderstanding of this, our effort to break away from each other, to be separate,

to possess things for our own gratification, that causes discord and jarring. We are so invoven with each other that none can be quite free when any remain bound ; the more nearly perfection is reached, the more keenly is felt the agony of compassion for the weak and miserable ; every thought or deed, good or evil, affects the whole race ; we are not able to trace it, but we know not whether the wrong we see, which fills us with fiery indignation, may not have been set in motion by some wrong-doing of our own in past ages ; we are each responsible while there remains on earth one wrong, one cruelty, one unkindness ; and it is our duty to help, and our glory that we *may* help, " the rolling wheels of this great world."

There is no royal road, no fixed rule or creed, by which we may invariably act ; but each must act by their own sense of right, guided only by love and tolerance. Conventions and creeds are useful only to those who have not yet learned to trust their own intuitional knowledge of right, or who are too weak to stand against the disapproval of others. The ideal character is that which is entirely self-supporting, indifferent to praise or blame, acting from the eternal right within.

When thy firm soul hath shaken off those tangled oracles
Which ignorantly guide ; then shall it soar
To high neglect of what's denied or said
This way or that way in doctrinal writ,
Troubled no longer by the priestly lore,
Safe shall it live, and sure ; steadfastly bent
On meditation ; this is joy, is peace.

Though Theosophy lays down no creed which adherents must follow, still there are lines of thought pointed out to the student, by following which he may arrive at an increasing knowledge of the unity of all life, and the divine in the universe and develop a power of will over desire, which very few of us comprehend, or suspect the possibility of. The very general practice of " doing in Rome as Rome does" is simply a relinquishing of the right and privilege of private judgment. Liberty of person and of conscience is rightly considered to be the dearest possession of the individual, but very few of us have the courage to claim our undoubted right ; we only make-believe to act by our own ideas ; we really are constrained by the ideas of the majority of our associates, and modified by their qualities ; and while this is so, while we act in consonance with the desires or principles of others, we are only reflections of them—false to the divine in ourselves, and necessarily weak and wavering.

In Theosophical literature is indicated the way to strengthen the will, develop the character, and cultivate the higher powers which are latent in all of us—so that we may eradicate the selfish, the ignoble, the changeable and inconstant ; and by first purifying and ennobling ourselves, be fit to help others in their struggle against their lower qualities. It is obvious that we cannot give what we have not got, and it is only in proportion as we have made a quality our own that we can impart it to others.

It is difficult to find an impelling reason for right conduct, apart from the inherent sense of justice, and a belief in justice pervading the universe. It has been asked : " What reason have we to consider that there is universal justice, or any justice, apart from the necessities of social life?" Such a

question seems to predicate a total absence of any reason for action, other than that prompted by desire or fear, and surely every life comes in contact with numberless actions prompted by neither of these. As I understand Theosophy, it teaches that deep in the human heart, underlying the consciousness, is an absolute knowledge of the source from which we spring, and to which we shall return; and the apparent difference in knowledge, The same causes under the same conditions bring forth the same results, happiness, and virtue, merely indicate the stage of the development of the Ego, and these results which we see are the absolutely just effects of the cause which we do not see. The satisfaction of the sense of justice lies in the fact that we only reap what we sow, and will all eventually reach the perfect end.

If we take the best known tenets of Theosophy, and examine them separately, we shall see how they make for the right, so that whoso accepts even isolated points of the Theosophical teaching finds immediately a stronger and deeper necessity for purer life, greater helpfulness to others, and more self-reliance. Theosophy emphatically teaches immortality—not the eternal life of a disembodied soul in some vague Heaven, or vaguer Hell, but an immortality of progress through the human form on the earth on which we dwell. This is our theatre; here we have striven and failed, and striven and conquered; and here we will return again and again, until we have reached a mastery over ourselves, and also over Nature, inconceivable to us now. It is hardly possible to overestimate the strong moral compulsion of such a belief. To know that we are here to become "perfect," "even as our Father in Heaven is perfect," and that we must return life after life, age after age, until we have become masters of life, infinite in wisdom and love, stimulates us to greater efforts in self-denial and helpfulness.

The doctrine of reincarnation for the purpose of progression toward perfection, and therefore happiness, takes the horror from the idea of death, and makes it easier for us to face it for those we love, and for ourselves. That frantic fear of death, which many of us feel, robs us of the necessary calmness and steadfastness in times of emergency and danger, and disturbs our whole moral atmosphere.

The tenet spoken of as the law of Karma, approximately the adjustment of effects to causes—which causes we ourselves set in motion; the realisation that our troubles and pains are brought about by our own weakness of character and infirmity of purpose; that it rests with ourselves to correct these faults, and that no one can bring us certain happiness or calm of mind except ourselves, is a great incentive to cultivate self-reliance, rather than dependence on others. It is easier to consider ourselves merely creatures of circumstance or the puppets of a higher power, but surely grander and nobler, to say:—

"It matters not how straight the gate,
How charged with circumstances the scroll,
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul."

And since our moral position must depend upon our sense of responsibility (for

of what use would a moral sense be to an irresponsible being), what a deeper significance all our thoughts and actions take upon themselves when considered as the results of past thoughts and actions, and the causes of future ones.

We sometimes hear objections to Theosophy on the ground that it is a dreamy abstraction, full of a beautiful vagueness, but of no use in practical life. But, on the contrary, Theosophical literature is full of the most lofty Ethical teaching. It holds ever before its votaries the ideal of absolute selflessness; it requires every act, every thought, every movement of mind or body to be under the control of the higher self. It imputes nothing to chance or accident, but shows everything to be the ordered outcome of causes set in motion in the past. And this is why I say that Theosophy includes Ethics. It covers the whole Ethical ground.

I cannot end better than by quoting from the "Song Celestial" the signs of the aspirant to heavenly birth:—

Fearlessness, singleness of soul, the will
Always to strive for wisdom, opened hand,
And governed appetites, and piety,
And love of lonely study, humbleness,
Uprightness, heed to injure nought which lives,
Truthfulness, slowness unto wrath, a mind
That lightly letteth go what others prize;
And equanimity, and charity
Which spieth no man's faults, and tenderness
Toward all that suffer, a contented heart
Fluttered by no desires; a bearing mild,
Modest, and grave, with manhood nobly mixed
With patience, fortitude, and purity;
An unrevengful spirit, never given
To rate itself to high—such be the signs,
O, Indian Prince, of him whose feet are set
On that fair path, which leads to heavenly birth.

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THE MIDNIGHT BLOSSOM.

** Arhans are born at midnight hour * * * * together with the the holy flower that opens and blooms in darkness."—*The Voice of the Silence.*

WE stood together at the door of our hut: we could see through the gathering gloom where our sheep and goats were cropping the sweet grass on the side of the hill: we were full of drowsy content as they were. We had naught to mar our own happiness—neither memory nor unrest for the future. We lingered on while the vast twilight encircled us; we were one with its dewy stillness. The lustre of the early stars first broke in upon our dreaming: we looked up and around: the yellow constellations began to sing their choral hymn together. As the night deepened they came out swiftly from their hiding places in depths of still and unfathomable blue; they hung in burning clusters; they advanced in multitudes that dazzled: the shadowy shining of night was strewn all over with nebulous dust of silver, with long mists of gold, with jewels of glittering green. We felt how fit a place the earth was to live on, with these nightly glories over us, with silence and coolness upon its lawns and lakes after the consuming day. Valmika, Kedar, I and Ananda watched together;

through the rich gloom we could see far distant forests and lights—the lights of village and city in King Suddhōdana's realm.

"Brothers," said Valmika, "How good it is to be here, and not yonder in the city where they know not peace, even in sleep."

"Yonder and yonder," said Kedar, "I saw the inner air full of a red glow where they were busy in toiling and strife. It seemed to reach up to me; I could not breathe. I climbed the hills at dawn to laugh where the snows were, and the sun is as white as they are white."

"But, brothers, if we went down among them and told them how happy we were, and how the flowers grow on the hillside, and all about the flocks, they would surely come up and leave all sorrow. They cannot know or they would come." Ananda was a mere child though so tall for his years.

"They would not come," said Kedar. "All their joy is to haggle and hoard. When Siva blows upon them with his angry breath they will lament, or when the Prets in fierce hunger devour them."

"It is good to be here," repeated Valmika drowsily, "to mind the flocks and be at rest, and to hear the wise Varunna speak when he comes among us."

I was silent. I knew better than they that busy city which glowed beyond the dark forests. I had lived there until, grown sick and weary, I had gone back to my brothers on the hillside. I wondered would life, indeed, go on ceaselessly until it ended in the pain of the world. I said within myself—Oh, mighty Brahma, on the outermost verges of thy dream are our lives; thou old invisible, how faintly through our hearts comes the sound of thy song, the light of thy glory! Full of yearning to rise and return, I strove to hear in the heart the music Anahata spoken of in our sacred scrolls. There was silence, and then I thought I heard sounds, not glad, a myriad murmur. As I listened it deepened, it grew into passionate prayer and appeal and tears, as if the cry of the long-forgotten souls of men went echoing through empty chambers. My eyes filled with tears, for it seemed world-wide, and to sigh from out many ages, long ago, to be and yet to be.

"Ananda! Ananda! where is the boy running to?" cried Valmika. Ananda had vanished into the gloom. We heard his glad laugh below and then another voice speaking. Presently up loomed the tall figure of Varunna. Ananda held his hand and danced beside him. We knew the Master Yogi, and bowed reverently before him. We could see by the starlight his simple robe of white. I could trace clearly every feature of the grave and beautiful face, the radiant eyes; not by the starlight I saw, but because a silvery shining rayed a little way into the blackness around the dark hair and face. Valmika, as elder, first spake.

"Holy sir, be welcome. Will you come in and rest?"

"I cannot stay now. I must pass over the mountain ere dawn; but you may come a little way with me—such of you as will."

We assented gladly—Kedar and I; Valmika remained. Then Ananda prayed to go. We bade him stay, fearing for him the labour of climbing and the chill of the snows, but Varunna said: "Let the child come; he is hardy; he will not tire if he holds my hand."

So we set out together and faced the highlands that rose and rose above us; we knew well the way even at night. We waited in silence for Varunna to speak, but for nigh two hours we mounted without words, save for Ananda's shouts of delight and wonder at the heavens spread above us. But I was hungry for an answer to my thoughts, so I spake.

"Master, Valmika was saying, ere you came, how good it was to be here rather than in the city where they are full of strife, and Kedar thought their lives would flow on into fiery pain and no speech would avail. Ananda, speaking as a child indeed, said if one went down among them they would listen to his story of the happy life. But, Master, do not many speak and interpret the sacred writings, and how few they are who lay to heart the words of the gods! They seem, indeed, to go on through desire into pain, and even here upon our hills we are not free, for Kedar felt the hot glow of their passion and I heard in my heart their sobs of despair. Master, it was terrible, for they seemed to come from the wide earth over, and out of ages far away."

"There is more of the true in the child's hope than in your despair, for it is of much avail to speak though but a few listen. Better is the life which aids, though in sorrow, than the life which withdraws from pain unto solitude. Yet it is not well to speak without power, for only the knower of Brahma can interpret the sacred writings truly. It is well to be free ere we speak of freedom; then we have power and many hearken."

"But who would leave joy for sorrow, and who being one with Brahma may return to give council?"

"Brother," said Varunna, "here is the hope of the world. Though many seek only for the eternal joy, yet the cry you heard has been heard by great ones who have turned backwards, called by these beseeching voices. The small old path stretching far away leads through many wonderful beings to the place of Brahma: there is the first fountain, the world of beautiful silence, the light that has been undimmed since the beginning of time—the joy where life fades into being; but turning backwards, the small old path winds away into the world of men, it enters every sorrowful heart, and the way of him who would tread therethro' is stayed by its pain and barred by its delusion. This is the way the great ones go; they turn with the path from the door of Brahma the warriors and the strong ones: they move along its myriad ways; they overcome darkness with wisdom and pain with compassion. After many conquered worlds, after many races of men, purified and uplifted they go to greater than Brahma. In these, though few, is the hope of the world; these are the heroes for whom, returning, the earth puts forth her signal fires, and the Devas sing their hymns of welcome."

We paused where the plateau widened out; there was scarce a ripple in the chill air; in quietness the snows glistened, a light reflected from the crowes of stars that swung with gay and glittering motion above us. We could hear the immense heart-beat of the world in the stillness; we had thoughts that went ranging through the heavens, not sad, but full of solemn hope.

"Brothers! Master! Look, the wonderful thing! and another, and yet another!" We heard Ananda calling; we looked and saw the holy blossom—the midnight flower—oh, may the earth again put forth such beauty—it grew up from the snows with leaves of delicate crystal, a nimbus encircled each radiant bloom, a halo pale yet lustrous. I bowed down before it lost in awe. I heard Varunna say:—"The earth, indeed puts forth her signal fires, and the Devas sing their hymn; listen!" We heard a music as of beautiful thought moving along the high places of the earth, full of infinite love and hope and yearning.

"Brothers, be glad, for One is born who has chosen the greater way. Now I must pass onwards. Kedar, Narayan, Ananda, farewell! Nay, no further; it is a long way to return, and the child will tire."

He went on and passed from our sight. But we did not return; we remained long, long in silence, looking at the sacred flower.

Vow, taken long ago, be strong in our hearts to-day. Here where the pain is fiercer, to rest is more sweet. Here where beauty dies away, it is more joy to be lulled in dreams. Here the good, the true, our hope, seem but a madness born of ancient pain. Out of rest, dream, or despair, let us arise. Let us go the way the Great Ones go. Æ.

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PESSIMISM, FROM AN OPTIMIST STANDPOINT.

HOWEVER right may appear to many the view of those who consider Pessimism as an unmitigated evil, to others the Pessimistic view of life seems to have its own place in the plan of human progress. For some few people believe in "divine discontent," and feel that an acknowledgment of the predominance of evil in the world marks the saturation point of enjoyment in material pleasures, and that the prevalence of Pessimism is a sure sign that those holding these views are, in the mass, waiting to be shown that the life outside matter (in the gross form known to us) has yet to be explored, and that the prizes it offers are of such a lofty and ennobling nature that words fail to afford a faint conception of them.

Freed themselves from the saddening and enervating influence of unrelieved Pessimistic thought by their broader view of life, of its present objects and future aims, such people welcome discontent in the men and women around them. No one who has not in past lives tasted to the full, in person or by sympathy, the cup of material sensation in its forms of joy and sorrow, pain and pleasure, seed-sowing and harvest time, until the imprint of all this past experience is indelibly fixed in both the brain mind, and in the mind of each cell that composes the body, can find time to be Pessimistic. When that point has been reached by a number of persons the *blasé* class appears. Men and women, young and old, often in appearance better qualified to "enjoy life" than their pleasure-loving neighbours, calmly view with bored contempt the race after pleasure going on around them. Often lazily unselfish, and with a vague standard of morals, they go through life without knowing why—a latent force, instead of an active, intelligent power.

In this class are many who can be aided by such a movement as the Theosophical Society, a movement the understanding of which gives a new spring to action, and still permitting them to view calmly, but with increased apprehension of its meaning, their neighbour's struggle for enjoyment, at the same time opens up such a vast new field for investigation that the sixty or seventy years between a birth and death only afford space for the veriest dabbling on the borders of life's wider interests.

Another, more pronounced, class of pessimist who declares that too much evil prevails in the world to make life worth the pain of living in the midst of such wrong, deceit and suffering, are harder to help, because they often literally hug their painful belief and refuse to perceive the wider hope. But if it can be shown to them that the seeming unmerited pain, from which they revolt, is only as the pain of the spur urging on to quicker movement, that they may the more swiftly force their way through the barrier raised by selfish thought around them,

out into the broader, grander, life of thought and action, blended with the thought and action of their fellow men, then they will be glad of the pain that pricked them on, and they will look with tender understanding eyes on those who are yet suffering as they once suffered, and with all the freedom and power gained by that past suffering, they will stretch out strong helping hands to make their comrades *feel* the truth they cannot yet perceive, and, by their lives and by their words, seek to make known to all the world, that every man and woman may come into contact with it, the wider knowledge and the larger hope.

PSY.

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THE STUDY OF HYPNOTISM.

“A PARABLE” AND TWO “FABLES.”

WHEN many years ago I made up my mind to enter seriously into the study of Occultism, I long hesitated as to which part of the great Whole it would be best to commence with; should I begin by investigating Spiritualism, or Astrology, or Mesmerism, or any other branch?

If Eliphas Levi, the greatest Kabbalist of this century, had still been alive, I could have gone to seek advice; but his sublime spirit had, a few years before, passed to the next stage of its eternal progress.

I thought that perhaps his friend, Louis Desbarolles would help me, and having obtained an introduction from a mutual acquaintance, I had the pleasure of an interview with the celebrated Chiromancist, who received me with his usual kindness.

After he had heard of my perplexity: “My young friend,” said Desbarolles, “I see you are in earnest, and I need not remind you that you are entering the most serious of studies, and I may add, a life-long one. I feel confident that the advice I am going to give you, if you follow it, will save you from many pitfalls and from much disappointment.”

“In order to impress it upon you more forcibly, I shall give it in an allegorical form, and shall therefore ask you to picture in your own mind one of these Eastern Palaces, which consist solely of ground-floor rooms, opening into a central courtyard.”

“From the outside, no window is to be seen, and you can only gain admittance through a few narrow doorways.”

“All the light inside the Palace should come from that central, roofless courtyard, which is protected from the sun-rays by a large cloth blind of several colours. But the cloth is so thick that the courtyard and the chambers opening into it are in semi-darkness; and the little light which filters through the blind, partaking of its various hues, gives unreal and false colours to everything within.

“That Palace is called ‘Occultism.’ Each of its numerous chambers has a different name; one is called ‘Astrology,’ another ‘Chiromancy,’ another ‘Spiritualism,’ and so on; the central courtyard is called ‘Hypnotism,’ and the sunblind’s name is ‘Mesmerism.’

“Some of these rooms are empty, others contain beautiful things. If you look around you may perceive a few of them, but the colourings thrown upon the contents through the sunblind are false, and the semi-darkness and your imagination helping, their shapes will appear fanciful and fantastic; you will see things where there are none, and fail to see anything where there are plenty.

“ Well, my young friend, if you were in that Palace, and wished to find out the real from the unreal, what would you do ? ” “ I should go into the courtyard, pull down the sunblind, and let the sunlight in ! ”
 “ That is, indeed, the best advice I can give you ; but you will not find it so easy to follow, as the sunblind has been up for many years, and will require tearing piece by piece.”

“ However, a few clear sighted men have been at that work for some years past ; Braid in Manchester, Azam in Bordeaux, Charcot in Paris, Liebault in Nancy ; the latter especially has been successful ; go, and join them, step boldly into that courtyard, help them to tear off that deceitful blind called mesmerism, and allow the clear sunlight of truth to fill the courtyard. When that is done, study carefully the contents of the courtyard called Hypnotism, before you attempt entering the other rooms which, as they are so large, will perhaps still remain rather dark, but at least, to your eyes the false colours will have vanished and also the shadows.”

I heartily thanked Monsieur Desbarolies and followed his advice. For fifteen years I have remained in that courtyard ; the blind has long been torn into shreds, and I have had many a peep into the rooms.

The tearing of the blind proved so hard a work, and afterwards the studying of the courtyard's contents took so long, that I have never yet found time to penetrate each room thoroughly, but a great deal of their contents can be seen from the courtyard, and some day I intend writing an account of some of my experiences in that marvellous palace.

Already, in my lectures, I have described the wonderful *coup de theatre* at the fall of the blind, the unexpected change of scenery in the courtyard, the flight of the shadows at the entrance of light, the sudden disappearance of the so-called “ Animal Magnetism,” “ Odic Force,” “ Will-Transfer,” the transformation of the whole scarecrow of Mesmeric Power (??) into one single, simple, real, tangible, and yet tremendous power called “ suggestion,” and the so-called Clairvoyance, Clairaudience, Prevision, etc., understood at last as hyperaesthesia of the senses.

But all this concerns solely the courtyard, and the results in the rooms have yet to be told, as they cannot be entirely known before the end of the century ; for many of these rooms are full of early investigators who, having spent a lifetime in describing the shadows and explaining the non-existent, are not anxious to admit the light, and to suddenly perceive their room—empty, or perhaps full of realities always denied before ; stern realities those ; and some of them bearing unpleasant names, such as Fraud, Illusion, Hallucination, and Madness.

Also, what a hatred has gradually sprung up against the tearers of the sun-blind ! ! From every room the same speech is heard :—“ Friends, this light is dazzling, let us seize the few rags left of the sun-blind, and nail them at the entrance of our room.”

“ This light is unhealthy ! This light is dangerous ! Friends, if we admit it we shall become crazy ! ”

Such are the accusations now levelled at Hypnotism !

We understand their motives ! and we do not trouble to answer them ! !

But the leaders of the Theosophical Society cannot be suspected of having such motives, and when we hear Mrs. Annie Besant discountenancing altogether the use of Hypnotism, the fact becomes at once worthy of our consideration, for no

one who knows the high-minded lady can doubt that she is speaking in good faith, and that her sole motive for condemning the use of this Power is the fear of its possible dangers and abuse.

Nevertheless, as I also firmly believe that "there is no religion higher than truth," I hope it will not be deemed too bold on my part if I, in equally good faith, venture to protest in this periodical against such wholesale condemnation of Hypnotism.

No one who has studied the subject can deny that Hypnotism may, indeed, become a very dangerous weapon in the hands of the ignorant or the evil-minded, and that every "reasonable" restriction should therefore be placed by law against the possible "abuse" of this power; but I contend that the cautious "use" of Hypnotism by those who have taken care of previously studying its phenomena, is not only perfectly harmless, but in many cases highly beneficial to the patient, and this has been proved by the large number of medical men who have practiced it during the last twenty years.

I further contend that the immense amount of good which can be done, and *is done*, every day, by the proper use of Hypnotism, such as, for instance, the relief of pain, the cure of many dreadful mental and nervous complaints *not otherwise curable*, the checking of evil and vicious tendencies in children, and of intemperance in all its worse forms in adults, greatly outweighs the possible harm which could be so easily prevented.

Indeed, I may add that, in my opinion, after what I have seen of Hypnotism during fifteen years' practice, I consider that anyone who "knowingly" condemns its "proper" use, and therefore endeavours to deprive humanity of such a boon, is taking a terrible moral responsibility, and I am prepared to prove that my opinion is shared by hundreds of medical men in every country.

I cannot help thinking that in this case it is only an incomplete knowledge of Hypnotism which has led the present leaders of the Theosophical Society to such a surprising conclusion, and I am all the more inclined to think so when I remember that the late Madame Blavatsky certainly held no such opinion, and that I had the pleasure of witnessing in her own house some of the most interesting Hypnotic experiments I have ever seen.

In fact, she agreed with me in the belief that Hypnotism can be of immense help in demonstrating experimentally many of the Truths of Theosophy, such as for instance, the various states of consciousness and the increase of memory in direct proportion with the depth of the sleep.

As an outsider I have, of course, no right nor power, nor desire to judge the reasons why, since the regretted death of its originator, the T.S. has discountenanced every kind of experimental investigation, even, I believe, among its Inner Circle; and all I wish to say is that having, during fifteen years' practice of Hypnotism, so often succeeded in conclusively proving by comparatively easy hypnotic experiments, the undeniable veracity of many principles of Theosophy, I sincerely regret the systematic antipathy against a science which could prove of such valuable help to Theosophy, and I repeat that the reasons given for such an antipathy are based upon an insufficient practical knowledge of the subject.

We all know that experimental ground is generally very uncertain and very slippery, but I have long since recognised that if the experiments are made upon the solid basis of a reality, such as Hypnotism, that ground is always the best in the end to stand upon, and I often succeed in conclusively proving in five minutes, by actual experiments, facts which would still be doubted after a two hours' lecture.

Besides, it is a mistake to forget that there is such a strong tendency in all human beings to transform thoughts into actions, that there always comes a time in the life of every earnest student of Occultism, when he begins to feel an uncontrollable desire to leave all "theories" aside for a time, and to enter into "practice;" a longing to prove by actual experiments, firstly to himself, and afterwards to the world at large, that the Occult really exists, and can be demonstrated to all in a tangible way.

"My kingdom for a horse," once said a king of England! "My fortune to see a ghost!" said a gentleman to me not long ago who was by no means a sceptic with regard to the existence of "spooks," but who after studying for many years in books, the phenomena of Borderland, had at last felt a desire "to read a little less and to see a little more."

As it happened, I succeeded in that instance in gratifying his wish. (it was done, of course, under Hypnotic Hallucination), and he was delighted to see at last, the long wished for "spook," and still more afterwards, I believe, in finding that I did not claim the promised fortune.

To conclude this perhaps already too long digression, the best advice I can give to those anxious to investigate Occultism is the same which I myself received so many years ago. Always remember that real Hypnotism is as different from mesmerism as English is from Greek, and begin by a careful study of Hypnotism and its phenomena, specially Hypnotic Hallucinations, illusions and post Hypnotic suggestions. This should undoubtedly be the entrance "courtyard" of the wonderful "Palace" called Occultism, for it is only to those who have passed through that "courtyard" that the contents of the rooms assume their real shapes. And in order to render it more easy for my reader to remember this advice I shall conclude by illustrating it in the two following fables:—

Once upon a time there was a monkey whose master used to make a living by showing the magic lantern in village fairs. That monkey used to sit night after night, during the performance, watching his master, listening to his speech, and thinking to himself that there was, after all, nothing so difficult nor so clever in such a performance, and he felt confident that he could give, at any time, a much better show and a much cleverer speech (for this occurred in the days when animals could talk).

So it happened that one day his master being taken suddenly ill, the monkey eagerly took the opportunity of giving the performance in his stead. The speech was, indeed, highly satisfactory:—"See, ladies and gentlemen, this magnificent view represents the Boulevards of gay Paris at night." And the audience applauded, thinking it was a joke, for no view was really to be seen. "This other fine sight is that of the city of Constantinople a little after sunrise." And the villagers kept on rubbing their eyes, for the canvas still remained quite dark as description after description followed, until at last they got angry, and began wrecking the place, nearly killing the unfortunate monkey, who remembered too late that he had forgotten but one, small, but vital point, which was to light the lamps of the magic lantern before commencing, without which all remained dark.

Once upon a time in the good city of London there was a society called the Psychical Research Society, formed to collect together, and investigate, all the most remarkable occurrences and appearances which took place in Great Britain, and which could not be explained by any of the acknowledged sciences.

Year after year the reports of that society were full of marvellous reports of unexplainable events, and the general public, who could see nothing, kept on applauding, although scientists went on laughing.

And year by year the occurrences became more and more extraordinary, and the outsiders kept on rubbing their eyes, although some of the gifted members of that society succeeded in explaining many of these remarkable occurrences by some still more remarkable and unheard of theories; and yet, scientists (Hypnotists specially), kept on laughing!!

Until at last one day some bold member of that learned society, being weary of rubbing his eyes, ventured to respectfully suggest that, perhaps, some small unimportant point might have been neglected from the commencement.

And in the year, 1894, the astounding news came upon the world that the P.R.S. had formed a committee "to begin" the investigation of Hypnotism (one of these official and acknowledged sciences which is of so little value). And everyone shall now join in the laughter.

They had only forgotten during thirty years to light the lamp of their magic lantern!!

GEORGE ANDRE.

We invite replies to Dr. André's Article.—ED.

—:—

IS THE ILLUSION OF DEVACHAN NECESSARY?

THIS question is very often asked by young students of Theosophy, and before I try to answer it I will explain the meaning of the word Devachan, so often occurring in Theosophical literature. Devachan, or more correctly, Devachana or Devayanah, is a word derived from the Sanskrit, and means literally the *dwelling of the gods* (corresponding thus to the Christian's idea of "heaven,") although it is not, strictly speaking, a place or locality, but a state or condition of subjective consciousness, which in no way can be called an illusion when we remember that the unseen or subjective is *the real*, and the objective only a fleeting, perishable shadow.

When what we call *death* comes, the body is dissolved, *i.e.*, the energising life-principle, which in Sanskrit is called *Prana*, is withdrawn, and does not longer hold together the innumerable little lives or microbes that constitute our physical body; but these are allowed to run their own way, and decay sets in.

Now what in the Christian Church is called Soul, among Theosophists *the Triad*, or three higher immortal principles (Atma, Buddhi, Manas) cannot immediately after death enter heaven or Devachan for the following reason:— Closely allied to the physical body (*sthula sarira*) is the astral or ethereal body (*linga sarira*) the exact counterpart of the physical and no less material than this, although built of molecules. United to this is the body of desires (*kama rupa*), earthly longings, and fleshly appetites, the animal part of man, and the stronger these are the longer time it takes before they fade away and disentangle themselves from the immortal Triad, which alone enters Devachan to there assimilate the experiences gathered during the last earth-life, and await in the subjective world the next descent into matter. These periods of activity and rest—cycles of subjectivity and objectivity—is a divine law which runs through all nature, for longer or shorter duration, from the immense period of years that constitute what is called a day and night of Brâhm, or the mani-

festation and withdrawal of the objective universe, to the birth and so-called death of living beings and their days of activity and nights of rest.

"When a long life on the earth-plane has been lived," says Mrs. Annie Besant in her excellent book, "Reincarnation" * "and a store of experiences has been gathered, longing for physical existence is satiated for the time, and the desire turns towards rest. Then comes the interval of disembodiment, during which the Ego, re-entering, as it were, into himself, ceases to energize externally on the physical plane, and bends all his energies to internal activities, reviewing his gathered store of experience, the harvest of the earth-life just closed, separating and classifying them, assimilating what is capable of assimilation, rejecting what is effete and useless. This is the work of the Devachanic period, the necessary time for assimilation, for gaining equilibrium. As a workman may go out and gather the materials for his work, and, having collected them, may return home, sort and arrange them, and then proceed to make from them some artistic and serviceable object, so the *Thinker* (Manas) having gathered his store of materials from life's experiences, must weave them into the web of his millennial existence. He can no more be always busied in the whirl of earth-life than a workman can always be gathering store of materials, and never fabricating them from goods; or than a man can always be eating food, and never digesting it and assimilating it to build up the tissues of his body. This, with the rest needed between periods of activity by all forms of being, makes Devachan an absolute necessity, and rebukes the impatience with which ill-instructed Theosophists chafe against the idea of thus 'wasting time.' The rest itself is a thing, be it remembered, that we cannot do without. The tired and worn-out Manas (the thinking Ego) needs it, and it is only the now rested Ego that is ready and fit for Reincarnation. We have not the energy needed for taking up the burden of the flesh again until this period of refreshment has enabled the forces of life, mental and spiritual, to store themselves up once more in the spiritual man.

It is only at the approaching close of the cycle of re-births that the Ego, grown strong by his milleniums of experience, is able to gird himself for the awful strain of his last swiftly-recurring lives, without Devachanic break, "sealing those last seven steps of the ladder of existence with the tireless muscles hardened by the long ascent that lies behind."

We have been told that "immediate re-birth is for those who are always working with their heart on Master's work and free from self-interest." And when have we reached this point? When we can answer yes to the question put by the Master: "Hast thou attuned thy heart and mind to the great mind and heart of all mankind? For as the sacred river's roaring voice, whereby all nature's sounds are echoed back, so must the heart of him who in the stream would enter, thrill in response to every sigh and thought of all that lives and breathes. †

ELIN M. C. WHITE, F.T.S.

* Jyn. 52, 53.

† Voice of the Silence.

GLEANINGS FROM THEOSOPHICAL LITERATURE.

*All who have time and opportunity are invited to send selections on the subject chosen for each month. These will be arranged and appear under this heading.

Subject for July—"The Potency of Sound" (continued).

THE POTENCY OF SOUND.

THE "Army of the Voice" is a term closely connected with the mystery of Sound and Speech, as an effect and corollary of the cause—Divine Thought. As beautifully expressed by P. Christian: "To pronounce a word is to evoke a thought, and make it present: the magnetic potency of the human speech is the commencement of every manifestation in the Occult World. The word (Verbum) or the speech of every man is, quite unconsciously to himself, a BLESSING or a CURSE."—H.P.B. *Secret Doctrine*. Vol. i., 93.

All the thoughts and emotions, all the learning and knowledge, revealed and acquired, of the early races, found their pictorial expression in allegory and parable. Why? Because *the spoken word has a potency unknown to, unsuspected and disbelieved in by the modern "sages."* Because sound and rhythm are closely related to the four Elements of the Ancients; and because such or another vibration in the air is sure to awaken corresponding powers, union with which produces good or bad results, as the case may be. No student was ever allowed to recite historical, religious, or any real events in so many unmistakable words, lest the powers connected with the event should be once more attracted.—*Ibid.* Vol. i., 307.

The *magic* of the ancient priests consisted, in those days, in addressing *their gods in their own language*. "The speech of the men of the South cannot reach the Lords. Each must be addressed in the language of his respective element. This element language is composed of *sounds*, not words; of sounds, numbers, and figures. He who knows how to blend the three will call forth the response of the superintending Power (the regent-god of the specific element needed). Thus this "language" is that of *incantations* or of Mantras, as they are called in India, sound being *the most potent and effectual magic agent, and the first of the keys which opens the door of communication between Mortals and Immortals.*—*Ibid.* Vol. i., 455.

Space is the first entity. . . . Now space (Akâsa, or the noumenon of Ether) has one quality. . . . And that is sound only. The seven notes of the scale are the principles of sound.—*Ibid.* Vol. i., 534.

SOUND. . . . is a tremendous occult power. . . . It may be produced of such a nature that the pyramid of Cheops would be raised in the air, or that a dying man, nay, one at his last breath, would be revived and filled with new energy and vigour. For sound generates, or rather attracts together the elements that produce an *osone*, the fabrication of which is beyond chemistry, but within the limits of Alchemy. It may even *resurrect* a man or an animal whose astral "vital body" has not been irreparably separated from the physical body by the severance of the magnetic or odic chord. As one *thrice saved from death* by that power, the writer ought to be credited with knowing personally something about it. *Ibid.* Vol. i., 555.

"Om" is considered by the ancient Hindu philosophers, as an "Elixir of Sound" which, on being pronounced properly, hinges an undying immortal principle in man on to a corresponding principle in nature. A.N.S. *Indian Section Branch Paper*. XIII.

(To be Continued.)

IMMORTALITY.

We must pass like smoke, or live within the spirits' fire ;
 For we can no more than smoke unto the flame return.
 If our thought has changed to dream, or will into desire,
 As smoke we vanish o'er the fires that burn.

Lights of infinite pity star the grey dusk of our days ;
 Surely here is soul ; with it we have eternal breath ;
 In the fire of love we live or pass by many ways,
 By unnumbered ways of dream to death.

G.W.R.

—:O:—

LOTUS CIRCLE.

TO THE EDITOR, IRISH THEOSOPHIST.

Ponsonby Cottage,
Auckland N.Z.,

19th May, 1894.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER,—Mrs. Cooper-Oakley sent me three or four copies of the *I.T.* and we were very much interested in the "Lotus Circle" work, and at a meeting held in my house, a number of us decided to inaugurate the same thing here, and commence to-morrow. In addition to our Lodge meetings, we hold a Theosophical Reception every Saturday evening at home, and at several of these have read some of the articles in the *I.T.*

Will you please send us a copy to the above address regularly for the Branch, and a note of the subscription to the colonies, when I will forward P.O.O.

If there is anything we of "Brighter Britain" can do to aid you by notes, etc., just let me know.—Yours fraternally,

W. H. DRAFFIN,

Hon. Sec. Auckland T.S.

[We welcome Bro. Draffin's letter, and shall at all times be glad to make room for news of "Lotus Circle," or general T.S. work, in "Brighter Britain."—ED.]

A NEW ZEALAND LOTUS CIRCLE.

For some time past several members of the Auckland (New Zealand) Branch of the Theosophical Society have been considering the best way of reaching the youth growing up amongst us, so as to impart to them some knowledge of the principles of Theosophy ; and at a Theosophic "At Home," held at Mr. Draffin's on May 12, the question was taken into serious consideration. Several papers relating to the establishment of Lotus Circles, which have been published in *THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST*, were read and discussed, and though it was generally admitted that there were many differences in the condition of children in the Colonies as compared with children at home, it was thought that, as the Lotus Circle scheme was now being so vigorously started in America and Britain, it would be wise to follow in the same direction. By so doing, whatever currents of thought and sympathy are flowing in this direction will no doubt be shared by us to some extent, even though we are at the opposite side of the globe from the spheres of activity now established.

The result of the meeting was that it was decided to form a Lotus Circle, and several members have agreed to take charge of it for a month at a time until it is seen how the movement will meet with public sympathy. If more attend than would be convenient for one class, then other teachers will be forthcoming, and a classification of the scholars be made. At present we are but a small community, and the families of several of our members have already attained to the estate of manhood and womanhood, so that but a limited number of children are obtainable within our non-membership. A few months will show how our effort is to be appreciated, for now that the work has been resolved upon, it will have a fair and earnest trial.

THE MASTERS.

(A Paper by a Young Member of the Lotus Circle.)

The masters are those of us who have reached a state of spiritual perfection by their great endeavours, and they have command over both the spiritual and physical worlds. But when they became fit to pass into Nirvana, and thereby to lose all connection with humanity, so great was their love, or rather pity for it, that they chose to come back and help their stumbling brethren.

This is the greatest and noblest deed to which an adept can aspire; and those who have made this sacrifice live among us at present as Masters or "Mahatmas." A great many people doubt, and a still greater number deny the existence of Mahatmas. But no one who admits reincarnation can deny the logical necessity of Mahatmas, because without such beings what has become of the reincarnations of such philosophers and teachers as Confucius, Buddha, Christ, and many others, some of whom would undoubtedly have lived again. No one of course would assert that those great teachers lived again in the bodies of our present philosophers. So Mahatmas are as necessary to reincarnation as reincarnation is to progress. It is objected also by some that if there are these Mahatmas who possess such wonderful powers, why do they not exhibit them, and in this way almost compel people to believe in them. But even the little we have heard of their great power has been mocked at and set down as mere conjuring. Others, again, ask why the Mahatmas who are the great teachers do not proclaim their teachings from the housetops. But they must remember that it is proverbially folly "to cast pearls before swine." The initiative must be taken by the seeker for knowledge, and he will find the masters always ready. For they look upon humanity as a great river, and its wavelets represent those who, striving upwards, reach a higher point than their fellows, and as these wavelets sparkle in the sunshine and absorb the light, so those more advanced bask in the light of knowledge, and drink in its pleasant rays.

"CARNATION."

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DUBLIN LODGE,

3 UPPER ELY PLACE.

The Monday evening group continues the systematic study of *Patanjali*, and is well supported by the members.

The Friday evening group, intended for more elementary work, has taken up No. 3 Manual, by Annie Besant, *Death and After*. This group is open to all inquiring into Theosophy and the broad teachings of the Esoteric Philosophy. It meets from 8.30 to 9.30 p.m.

FRED. J. DICK, Hon. Sec.

THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST

No. 11.

DUBLIN, AUGUST 15TH, 1894.

VOL. II.

NOTICE.

The Theosophical Society is in no way responsible for any opinions, in signed or unsigned articles, that appear in this Magazine.

All Literary contributions should be addressed to the EDITOR, and Business communications to the PUBLISHER, 71 Drumcontra Road, Dublin.

Yearly Subscription, 3s. 6d. post free. Next number ends Vol. II.

Donations for the Publishing Fund will be gratefully received.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

A PAMPHLET has come to hand, entitled "The Neutrality of the Theosophical Society," dealing with the charges made against W. Q. Judge. A copy will reach every member of the T.S., so that there is no necessity to enter into particulars here. The neutrality and unsectarian nature of the Society has been carefully guarded, and the true spirit of brotherhood maintained. It is satisfactory to note also, that the charges against Mr. Judge were reduced, one might say, to a difference of opinion, as to the methods he (Mr. Judge) employed in transmitting messages from the Masters. What seems to stand out clearly above everything else is the fact that Mrs. Besant starts out on a long fatiguing tour, saying, there is no price too high to pay to serve the Great Ones of the White Lodge, and W. Q. Judge, from the day he held Lodge meetings by himself in New York, till to-day, when Theosophy, mainly by his exertions, stretches across the whole American Continent, has served these Great Ones in the same devoted spirit. What is such practical testimony not worth? Considering the nature of the T.S. and the character of the opposing forces at work, it is not unlikely that, from time to time, personal differences may arise; but those who have realized the true import of Theosophy, to whom it has come as a new hope, a new joy in life, transforming their entire outlook, and who have a profound trust, based on knowledge and experience in the soundness of the esoteric philosophy, will remain unshaken—workers, whose efforts will only be increased to meet the fresh strain. The lesson which this crisis has again emphasised will only be further accentuated—that with the fundamental idea of unity ever present, nothing can upset our movement. In this lies our strength; but, where strength is, weakness is present also; and as has often been said, unselfish work for others is in the end our only safeguard. Letters! messages! phenomena!—these can come after, and time enough then.

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It is pleasing to see efforts being made in certain quarters to find what has been termed the "common denominator," and that there are good prospects of arriving at it. The method, which has obtained so long, of emphasising differences, and searching, as it were, for points on which disagreement would

arise, is likely, at last, to give way to the more rational and wholesome one of finding what is *common* to all. It may fairly be taken that all forms of religion are one in recognizing *unselfishness* as the very basis of Ethics. Within our own shores every sect which turns for inspiration to the teaching of the Nazarene accepts, in theory, at least, altruism, brotherhood, unselfishness as "the alpha and omega" of his message, and yet their separate sectarian existence rests entirely on quite an opposite principle. In gatherings composed of representatives of widely differing creeds and opinions, I have observed that when allusion was made to anything, which appealed to what in them was *human*, as apart from any consideration of creed, opinion, or dogma, differences—which previously were strongly asserted—have disappeared, and for the moment all were in unison. If such moments could be more often repeated, very soon would this human quality be the dominant note of life. Differences that now appear so pronounced would naturally cease to exist; they would no longer be found useful or necessary; men would emerge from under the clouds of dissension and sorrow; in the clear daylight their divinity, hitherto obscured and almost obliterated, would be revealed. No further need then for argument—the truth will justify itself. If this seems impossible of realization, it is because *we* fail. Let us alter our direction completely; let us find the point of least resistance: of agreement, rather than of disagreement; of unity, rather than of disunion; let a recognition of this truth influence our every act until we see "one thing in all things." Ah! says one, what will become of our churches, our beautiful cathedrals, our wonderful organizations? The answer is obvious enough. They will be utilized for a more humane and brotherly service; hitherto landmarks of disagreement, they will become symbols of our unity; the "thieves and robbers" will have been turned out, and they will become veritably, houses of the gods.

—:O:—

"Social Evolution," by Benjamin Kidd, is a book which has been, in a sense, epoch-making. While reasoning as a Darwinian philosopher, he yet regards the religious instinct as the main factor in the evolution of Society. He is opposed to Socialism—"the grand aim of Socialism," he says, "is to suspend that personal rivalry and competition of life which is the impetus behind all progress"—and argues that our social development is moving in the direction of equal social opportunities for all, which will increase the rivalry of existence, and raise the people to the highest efficiency. The point of view is well put, and of peculiar interest, in that the author states that the highest conditions of progress are the result of the softening influence of the Ethical Spirit, rather than the intellect, which has no power to check our instinctive selfishness.

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If Mr. Kidd is correct, the Socialistic movement is opposed to biological truth; and Mr. Pearson, writing from the Socialist point of view, in the *Fortnightly Review* (July), says it is his firm conviction that the "biological truths" are "no truths at all, mere misapplications of ill-defined terms," and urges "that 'the great fund of altruistic feeling which is gradually saturating our entire social life' is quite as much opposed to the unlimited triumph of the individually strong in body or mind over the individually weaker, as to the unlimited triumph of one class at the expense of another." The writer advances the possibility of the Socialistic movement reacting on biological science as it has already done on economic science.

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Mr. Balfour has contributed an article to the *International Journal of Ethics*, in which he states that "Man, so far as natural science by

itself is able to teach us, is no longer the final cause of the universe, the heaven-descended heir of all the ages. His very existence is an accident, his story a brief and discreditable episode in the life of one of the meanest of the planets. Of the combination of causes which first converted a dead organic compound into the living progenitors of humanity, science, indeed, as yet knows nothing." . . . "We sound the future, and learn that after a period, long compared with the individual life, but short, indeed, compared with the divisions of time open to our investigation, the energies of our system will decay, the glory of the sun will be dimmed, and the earth, tideless and inert, will no longer tolerate the race which has for a moment disturbed its solitude. Man will go down into the pit, and all his thoughts will perish. The uneasy consciousness, which in this obscure corner, has for a brief space broken the contented silence of the Universe, will be at rest. Matter will know itself no longer. "Imperishable monuments" and "immortal deeds," death itself, and love stronger than death, will be as though they had never been. Nor will anything that is better or worse for all that the labour, genius, devotion, and suffering of man have striven through countless generations to effect."

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From this pessimistic gospel of Natural Science, let me direct attention to what a mystic has to say with reference to man, and the "ordinary days" that make up the substance of his being. M. Maeterlinck, in a preface to a French translation of Emerson's essays, writes as follows in connection with the tendencies of the newer Continental school of poets:—"The face of our divine soul smiles at times over the shoulder of her sister, the human soul, bent to the noble needs of thought, and this smile which, as it passes, discovers to us all that is beyond thought, is the only thing of consequence in the works of man. They are not many who have shown that man is greater and profounder than himself, and who have been able to fix some of the eternal suggestions to be met with every instant through life, in a movement, a sign, a look, a word, a silence, in the incidents happening round about us. The science of human greatness is the greatest of sciences. Not one man is ignorant of it; yet hardly one knows he possesses it. The child who meets me cannot tell his mother what he has seen; and yet as soon as his eye has touched my presence, he knows all that I am, all that I have been, all I shall be, as well as my brother, and three times better than myself.

In truth, what is strongest in man is his hidden gravity and wisdom. The most frivolous among us never really laughs, and in spite of his efforts never succeeds in losing a moment, for the human soul is attentive and does nothing that is not useful. *Ernst ist das Leben*, life is serious, and in the depths of our being our soul has never yet smiled. On the other side of our involuntary agitations we lead a wonderful existence, passive, very pure, very sure, to which ceaseless allusion is made by hands stretched out, eyes that open, looks that meet. All our organs are the mystic accomplices of a superior being, and it is never a man, it is a soul we have known. I did not see that poor man who begged for alms on my doorstep; but I saw something else: in our eyes two self-same destinies greeted and loved each other, and at the instant he held out his hand the little door of the house opened for a moment on the sea. . . . But if it be true that the least of us cannot make the slightest movement without taking account of the soul and the spiritual kingdoms where it reigns, it is also true that the wisest almost never thinks of the infinite

displaced by the opening of an eyelid, the bending of a head, or the closing of a hand. We live so far from ourselves that we are ignorant of almost all that takes place on the horizon of our being. We wander aimlessly in the valley, never thinking that all our actions are reproduced and acquire their significance on the summit of the mountain. Someone has to come and say; lift your eyes; see what you are, see what you are doing; it is not here that we live: we are up there. That look exchanged in the dark, those words which have no meaning at the base of the hill, see what they grow into and what they signify beyond the snow of the peaks, and how our hands which we think so little and so feeble, touch God everywhere unknowingly.

If one could ask the intelligence of another world what is the synthetic expression of the face of men, it might doubtless reply, after having seen them in their joys, their griefs, their anxieties—*they seem to be thinking of something else*. Be great, be wise, and eloquent; the soul of the poor man who holds out his hand at the corner of the bridge will not be jealous, but yours will perhaps envy him his silence. The hero needs the approbation of the ordinary man; but the ordinary man does not ask for the approbation of the hero, and he pursues his life with calmness, like one who has all his treasures in a safe place. . . . If I think I have wasted my day in miserable undertakings, and if you can prove to me that I have yet lived as deeply as a hero, and that my soul has not lost its rights, you will have done more than if you had persuaded me to save the life of my enemy to-day, for you will have augmented in me the sum and the greatness of life; and to-morrow, perhaps, I shall know how to live with reverence."

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Most of our readers will be familiar with the contributions that have appeared regularly in our columns from the pen of Æ, and they will, no doubt, be glad to hear that the verses by G. W. R., which are from the same pen, along with many others, have been published in a book form under the title of "Homeward: Songs by the Way." The book is produced in perfect taste. The preface is quaint and original, and will be found quoted in our Review Column. I see that Mr. W. B. Yeats describes the book as the "most haunting" he has seen these many days, and this aptly describes its effect. Most of the lines have a peculiar fascination, and their melody lingers long in the memory. Theosophical ideas have seldom received a more graceful setting. Nature sings her song, but we require the poet to interpret for us the numbers of her exquisite lyre. Æ has listened to her song with some purpose, and we look forward to still greater things from him. The price of the book is only 1s. 6d., and can be had through this office, postage extra.

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I am anxious to devote a column of the *I.T.* to Lodges and Lodge Work, and will be glad if members would send me particulars of any activity which they had found useful, and which may help other Lodges. Suggestions of any kind connected with branch work will be gladly accepted. Almost every Lodge has a class for study connected with it. Would it not be useful if condensed notes of their studies could be published? Lodges studying the same books would no doubt be helped by the interchange of notes, besides being of general usefulness for references, &c. I will be glad to try this if any are sent to me. I would be glad also to print a list of those who have books to lend, exchange, or give away. Those who have books to exchange might send a list of them, and state what books they would like in return.

We have been unavoidably compelled to hold over our Review of "Homeward Songs by the Way"; also a communication from Bro. Firth, of Bradford; and a report of Northern Federation Meeting at Middlesboro', kindly sent by Bro. Corbett, but arriving too late for insertion.

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HYPNOTISM. *

* This article was written for the *N. Y. World* at request.

WHAT is the hypnotic force or influence? What really happens when a hypnotic experiment is performed? What is proved by it? What force is exerted that, after making a man sleep, rouses him to a false wakefulness, in which he obeys a suggestion, seems to lose his identity, becomes apparently another person, speaks a language he knows nothing of, sees imaginary pictures as real ones? How is it that in this state his physical body follows the operator's suggestion, and becomes blistered by a piece of paper which possesses no blistering power, sneezes when there is no actual titillation of the olfactory nerves, shivers over a hot stove, and perspires if it be suggested that a block of ice is a mass of fire?

All this and very much more has been done in hypnotic experiments, just as it was done many years ago by mesmerizers, electro-biologists, and wandering fascinators of all sorts. Then it was outside the pale of science, but now since physicians re-named a part of it "hypnotism," it is settled to stay among the branches of psychology, theoretical and applied. The new schools, of course, went further than the first did or could. They added a species of witchcraft to it by their latest claim to be able to externalize and localize the nerve-sensitiveness, and hence mental impressionability of the subject; to put it in his photograph or within a glass of water, so that if the former be scratched or the latter touched, the patient at once jumped or screamed. This is the old way of making a wax image of your form and sticking pins in it, whereupon you pined and died; men and women were burned for this once. This, while interesting and important, if true, possesses the interest of a nightmare, as it suggests how in the near future one's picture may be for sale to be blistered and stabbed by an enemy, provided the extraneous localization of sensibility is first provided for. But the other experiments touch upon the great questions of identity, of consciousness, of soul, of personality. They raise an issue as to whether the world be physical and mechanical, as Descartes thought, or whether it is fleeting and a form of consciousness existing because of thought, and dominated by thought altogether, as the Theosophists modern and ancient always held.

Professor James, of Harvard, has published his conclusion that experiments in hypnotism convince him, as they have convinced many, of the existence of the hidden self in man; while the French schools dispute whether it is all due to one personality mimicking many, or many personalities wrapped up in one person, and showing one phase after another. Facts are recorded and wonderful things done, but no reasonable and final explanation has been made by the modern schools. Except here and there they, being ignorant of man's hidden real nature and powers, or denying the existence of such, see no cause for alarm in all these experiments, and no danger to either society or the individual. As the true evolution of man's inner powers at the same rate and time concurrently with all other racial and planetary evolution is not admitted by these schools, they cannot perceive in the future any possibly devilish use of hypnotic powers. The Theosophist, however, suggests an explanation for the phenomena, points to similar occurrences through history, and intimates a

danger to come if the thinking world does not realise our true nature as a being made of thought and consciousness, built in and on these, and destructible by them also, so far as his personality is concerned. The danger is not in knowing these things and processes, but in the lack of morality and ethics, in the use of them both now and in the future.

One theory for use in explaining and prosecuting research is about as follows:—Man is a soul who lives on thoughts and perceives only thoughts. Every object or subject comes to him as a thought, no matter what the channel or instrument, whether organ of sense or mental centre, by which it comes before him. These thoughts may be words, ideas, or pictures. The soul-man has to have an intermediary or connecting link with Nature through, and by which he may cognize and experience. This link is an ethereal double or counterpart of his physical body, dwelling in the latter: and the physical body is Nature so far as the soul-man is concerned. In this ethereal double (called astral body) are the sense-organs and centres of perception, the physical outer organs being only the external channels or means for concentrating the physical vibrations so as to transmit them to the astral organs and centres, where the soul perceives them as ideas or thoughts. This inner ethereal man is made of the ether which science is now admitting as a necessary part of Nature, but while it is etheric it is none the less substantial.

Speaking physically, all outer stimulus from nature is sent from without to within. But in the same way stimuli may be sent from the within to the without, and in the latter mode is it that our thoughts and desires propel us to act. Stimuli are sent from the astral man within to the periphery, the physical body, and may dominate the body so as to alter it or bring on a lesion, partial or total. Cases of the hair turning grey in a night are thus possible. And in this may a suggestion of a blister may make a physical swelling, secretion, inflammation, and sore on a subject who has submitted himself to the influence of the hypnotiser. The picture or idea of a blister is impressed on the astral body, and that controls all the physical nerves, sensations, currents, and secretions. It is done through the sympathetic nervous plexuses and ganglia. It was thus that estatic fanatical women and men, by brooding on the pictured idea of the wounds of Jesus, produced on their own bodies, by internal impression and stimulus projected to the surface, all the marks of crown of thorns and wounded side. It was self-hypnotisation, possible only in fanatical hysterical ecstasy. The constant brooding imprinted the picture deeply on the astral body; then the physical molecules, ever changing, became impressed from within, and the *stigmata* were the result. In hypnotising done by another the only difference is one of time, as in the latter instances the operator has simply to make the image and impress it on the subject after the hypnotic process has been submitted to; whereas in the self-hypnotisation a long-continued ecstasy is necessary to make the impression complete.

When the hypnotic process—or subjugation, as I call it—is submitted to, a disjunction is made between the soul-man and the astral body, which then is for the time deprived of will, and is the sport of any suggestion coming in unopposed, and those may and do sometimes arise outside of the mind and intention of the operator. From this arises the sensitiveness to suggestion. The idea, or thought, or picture of an act is impressed by suggesting it on the astral body, and then the patient is waked. At the appointed time given by the suggestor, a secondary sleep or hypnotic state arises automatically, and then the disjunction between soul and astral body coming about of itself, the suggested act is performed unless—as happens rarely—the soul-man resists sufficiently to prevent it. Hence we point to an element of danger in the fact

that at the suggested moment the hypnotic state comes on secondarily by association.

I do not know that hypnotisers have perceived this. It indicates that although the subject be dehypnotised, the influence of the operator once thrown on the subject will remain until the day of the operator's death.

But how is it that the subject can see on a blank card the picture of an object which you have merely willed to be on it? This is because every thought of anyone makes a picture; and as thought of a definite image makes a definite form in the astral light in which the astral body exists and functions, inter-penetrating also every part of the physical body. Having thus imaged the picture on the card, it remains in the astral light or sphere surrounding the card, and is there objective to the astral sense of the hypnotised subject.

Body soul, and astral man, properly in relation, give us a sane man; hypnotised, the relation is broken, and we have a person who is not for the time wholly sane. Acute maniacs are those in whom the disjunction between the astral man and soul is complete. When the hypnotised one remains for months in that state, the astral man has become the slave of the body and its recollections; but as the soul is not concerned, no real memory is present, and no recollection of the period is retained.

The varied personalities assumed by some subjects brings up the doctrine of a former life on earth for all men. The division between soul and astral man releases the latter from some of the limitations of brain memory, so that the inner memory may act, and we then have a case of a person re-enacting some part of his former life or lives. But a second possibility also exists—that by this process another and different entity may enter the body and brain and masquerade as the real person. Such entities do exist, and are the astral shells of men and women out of the body. If they enter, the person becomes insane; and many a maniac is simply a body inhabited by an entity that does not belong to it.

The process of hypnotising is as yet unknown in respect to what does happen to the molecules. We claim that those molecules are pressed from periphery to centre, instead of being expanded from the inside to the surface. This contraction is one of the symptoms of death, and, therefore, hypnotising is a long step towards physical and moral death. The view expressed by Dr. Charcot that a subject is liable to fall under the influence at the hands of anyone should be admitted, as also that in the wake of the hypnotiser will be found a host of hysterics, and that it all should be regulated by law is unquestionable. I go still further, and say that many persons are already in a half-hypnotised state, easily influenced by the unprincipled or the immoral; that the power to hypnotise and to be sensitive to it are both progressive states of our racial evolution: that it can and will be used for selfish, wicked and degrading purposes unless the race, and especially the occidental portion of it, understands and practises true Ethics based on the brotherhood of man. Ethics of the purest are found in the words of Jesus, but are universally negated by Church, State, and individual. The Theosophical doctrines of man and nature give a true and necessary basis and enforcement to Ethics, devoid of favouritism or illogical schemes of eternal damnation. And only through those doctrines can the dangers of hypnotism be averted, since legislation while affixing penalties, will not alter or curtail private acts of selfishness and greed.—*The Path.*

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE, F.T.S.

THE STORY OF A STAR.

THE emotion that haunted me in that little cathedral town would be most difficult to describe. After the hurry, rattle and fever of the city, the rare weeks spent here were infinitely peaceful. They were full of a quaint sense of childhood, with sometimes a deeper chord touched—the giant and spiritual things childhood has dreams of. The little room I slept in had opposite its window the great grey cathedral wall; it was only in the evening that the sunlight crept round it, and appeared in the room strained through the faded green blind. It must have been this silvery quietness of colour which in some subtle way affected me with the feeling of a continual Sabbath; and this was strengthened by the bells chiming hour after hour: the pathos, penitence and hope expressed by the flying notes coloured the intervals with faint and delicate memories. They haunted my dreams, and I heard with unutterable longing the astral chimes pealing from some dim and vast cathedral of the cosmic memory, until the peace they tolled became almost a nightmare, and I longed for utter oblivion or forgetfulness of their reverberations.

More remarkable were the strange lapses into other worlds and times. Almost as frequent as the changing of the bells were the changes from state to state. I realised what is meant by the Indian philosophy of Maya. Truly my days were full of Mayas, and my work-a-day city life was no more real to me than one of those bright, brief glimpses of things long past. I talk of the past, and yet these moments taught me how false our ideas of time are. In the ever-living, yesterday, to-day and to-morrow are words of no meaning. I know I fell into what we call the past, and the things I counted as dead for ever were the things I had yet to endure. Out of the old age of earth I stepped into its childhood, and received once more the primal blessing of youth, ecstasy, and beauty. But these things are too vast and vague to speak of; the words we use to-day cannot tell their story. Nearer to our time is the legend that follows.

I was, I thought, one of the Magi of old Persia, inheritor of its un-forgotten lore, and using some of its powers. I tried to pierce through the great veil of nature, and feel the life that quickened it within. I tried to comprehend the birth and growth of planets, and to do this I rose spiritually, and passed beyond earth's confines into that seeming void which is the matrix where they germinate. On one of these journeys I was struck by the phantasm, so it seemed, of a planet I had not observed before. I could not then observe closer, and coming again on another occasion it had disappeared. After the lapse of many months I saw it once more, brilliant with fiery beauty—its motion was slow, rotating around some invisible centre. I pondered over it, and seemed to know that that invisible centre was its primordial spiritual state, from which it emerged a little while and into which it then withdrew. Short was its day; its shining faded into a glimmer, and then into darkness in a few months. I learned its time and cycles; I made preparations and determined to await its coming.

THE BIRTH OF A PLANET.

At first silence, and then an inner music, and then the sounds of song throughout the vastness of its orbit grew as many in number as there were stars at gaze. Avenues and vistas of sound! They reeled to and fro. They poured from a universal stillness quick with unheard things. They rushed forth and broke into a myriad voices gay with childhood. From age and the eternal they rushed forth into youth. They filled the void with revelling and exultation. In rebellion they then returned and entered the dreadful Fountain.

Again they came forth, and the sounds faded into whispers; they rejoiced once again, and again died into silence.

And now all around glowed a vast twilight: it filled the cradle of the planet with colourless fire. I felt a rippling motion which impelled me away from the centre to the circumference. At that centre a still flame began to lighten; a new change took place and space began to curdle: a milky and nebulous substance rocked to and fro. At every motion the pulsation of its rhythm carried it further and further away from the centre, it grew darker and a great purple shadow covered it, so that I could see it no longer. I was now on the outer

verge, where the twilight still continued to encircle the planet with zones of clear transparent light. As night after night I rose up to visit it they grew many coloured and brighter. I saw the imagination of nature visibly at work. I wandered through shadowy immaterial forests, a titanic vegetation built up of light and colour; I saw it growing denser, hung with festoons and trailers of fire and spotted with the light of myriad flowers such as earth never knew. Coincident with the appearance of these things I felt within myself as if in harmonious movement, a sense of joyousness, an increase of self-consciousness; I felt full of gladness, youth and the mystery of the new. I felt that greater powers were about to appear, those who had thrown outwards this world and erected it as a palace in space.

I could not tell half the wonder of this strange race. I could not myself comprehend more than a little of the mystery of their being. They recognised my presence there, and communicated with me in such a way that I can only describe it by saying that they seemed to enter into my soul breathing a fiery life; yet, I knew that the highest I could reach to was but the outer verge of their spiritual nature, and to tell you but a little I have many times to translate it, for in the first unity with their thought I touched on an almost universal sphere of life, I peered into the ancient heart that beats throughout time; and this knowledge became changed in me, first, into a vast and nebulous symbology, and so down through many degrees of human thought into words which hold not at all the pristine and magical beauty.

I stood before one of this race, and I thought, "What is the meaning and end of life here?" Within me I felt the answering ecstasy that illuminated with vistas of dawn and rest, it seemed to say:

"Our spring and our summer are an unfolding into light and form, and our autumn and winter are a fading into the infinite soul."

I thought, "To what end is this life poured forth and withdrawn?"

He came nearer and touched me; once more I felt the thrill of being that changed itself into the vistas.

"The end is creation, and creation is joy: the One awakens out of quiescence as we come forth, and knows itself in us; as we return, we enter it in gladness, knowing ourselves. After long cycles the world you live in will become like ours; it will be poured forth and withdrawn; a mystic breath, a mirror to glass your being."

He disappeared, while I wondered what cyclic changes would transmute our ball of mud into the subtle substance of thought.

In that world I dared not stay during its period of withdrawal; having entered a little into its life, I became subject to its laws: the Power on its return would have dissolved my being utterly. I felt with a wild terror its clutch upon me, and I withdrew from the departing glory, from the greatness that was my destiny—but not yet.

From such dreams I would be aroused, perhaps by a gentle knock at my door, and my little cousin Margaret's quaint face would peep in with a "Cousin Robert, are you not coming down to supper?"

Of such dreams in the light of after study I would speak a little. All this was but symbol, requiring to be thrice sublimed in interpretation ere its true meaning can be grasped. I do not know whether worlds are heralded by such glad songs, or whether any have such a fleeting existence, for the mind that reflects truth is deluded with strange phantasies of time and place in which seconds are rolled out into centuries, and long cycles are reflected in an instant of time. There is within us a little space through which all the threads of the universe are drawn, and surrounding that incomprehensible centre the mind of man sometimes catches glimpses of things which are true only in those glimpses; when we record them, the true has vanished, and a shadowy story—such as this—alone remains. Yet, perhaps, the time is not altogether wasted in considering legends like these, for they reveal, though but in phantasy and symbol, a greatness we are heirs to, a destiny which is ours, though it be yet far away. E.

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SILENCE.

Among the wise of secret knowledge I am their silence.

These are the strong ones of the earth, the mighty for Good or evil, who can at times keep silence when it is a pain to them.

AMID unrest and discord, the fever and the fret, the jarring and strife of the warring senses the soul longs with an intensity that is pain for that deep, that "Divine silence which is the knowledge of it and the rest of all the senses," to enter that Kingdom of Heaven which is within, where the dim spark burns by whose light alone the realms of the real are lighted.

Across the ages a quiet voice reaches me from one who, in some measure, strove and achieved; a great soul who in the quiet of a monastic cell sought in prayer and aspiration the perfect silence, and heard at times "mysterious sounds" within that silence. "There are three silences he taught: the silence of speech, the silence of desire, the silence of thought; these three commingling each with each make up the perfect silence which is knowledge." The secret of silence how great it is! what power is his who possesses it! golden silence, power won by self-conquest only and after much strife, greater is he who can keep silence when it is a pain to him than the greatest conquerer earth's battle fields have ever known: "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright for the end (or aim) of that man is peace," the peace of quiet heart and lips, the peace born of silence and strength.

The strength to know, to will, to dare, and to be silent must be possessed by those whose intense yearning is to find the wisdom religion, to tread the "path that stretches far away"; those who find it walk among men unperceived, unknown, yet kings among their fellows, "great and peaceful ones," making the highways and byeways of this world brighter for others, moving like a benediction, yet speaking not of whence their peace came; like Arthur's knight, if questioned they could say, "I saw it, but I may not speak of it"; the seal of the mysteries is on the lips for ever; for of the realm, the place in which the voice of the Silence can be heard who can speak? How explain by word or symbol the laws of the planes whose secrets are not of speech but of vibration? Planes that can be entered, not understood by brain-knowledge, since the mind cannot open out upon the real; *to be* is to know since "it cannot be reached by speech, by mind, or by the eye, it cannot be apprehended except by

him who says it is." Devotion, aspiration, vibration are the key-notes perhaps ; each seeks, each finds for himself, each is to himself way and truth and life, and he who has learned to keep silent has taken at least some steps towards the goal. To keep silence, to strive to find "one's one place," "the place that is undefiled," He who would learn must first plant his own feet firmly there, and in his soul keep silence, whatever the tumult without ; by silent meditation, not at set times only, but constantly in the cave of the heart, to develop that intuitive perception of the true that he will be able to recognize the message when it comes, no matter who the messenger may be, perhaps the words of a little child will be fraught with meaning, or the blundering inadequately expressed sentence given from the heart by one whom we thought ignorant ; a line hastily scanned, a thought that comes unsought, yet full of illumination, each, all may be indirect messages to the waiting soul.

Silence of speech ; content to wait quietly until be are sure that what we say will help ; willing to be dumb and learners only, until sure that what we give to others is not coloured by our own imagination, or impressions, or personality.

To keep silence awhile, no matter how our hearts long to pass on the message, or to seek out those who know still less, and "let them hear the law." We need, if we would help by our teaching, to be able to say the right word to the right person at the right moment. The power to do this is not the learning of a day, the mushroom growth of a night, but the reward of many lives of one-pointed aspiration, of persevering devotion, of unselfish love for others, and impersonal work for humanity. The longer we strive for such devotion the more the channels we become through which the gracious influences from higher planes may reach others. When we get to that stage we shall have lost all feeling of personality in the matter, be content to speak or hold our peace and the message will be theirs, not ours ; as theirs it will be given with no thoughts of ours as to results. Better to give the message silently by our life and acts and loving sympathy than in words, since those alone have the gift of right speech who have first learnt the secret of silence.

Silence of speech where others are concerned, the silence of kindness that remains unbroken when it cannot praise ; the silence that condemns not and is not critical ; where all is said in the helpful act, the cheery smile, the hands of brotherhood held out to those who stumble, or fall, or sink in the mire of life ; we can see nothing in others to condemn that is not in us, the like alone recognises the like, and it is a sure sign that we, too, have the same faults to combat when we condemn, we have not yet reached those heights of purity where we can stand with one of old who said "neither do I condemn." Our own garments cling still too heavily around our feet weighted by the mire and dust for us to think of, much less expose the faults of others ; far better to cultivate the attitude of mind that sees beneath all faults, all failure, how beautiful our brother is.

The truth is, we cannot dry the tears of others, we cannot help them to help themselves if we try to be self-constituted angels of mercy and judges at the same time. The service of those who love in the cause of those who suffer must be like the dew that falls in silence upon the arid ground of hearts parched with passion and pain, if we would help them. Ours must be the silence that sanctions rather than answers the careless words that wound us, the wrongful judgment, the wilful scandal, the bitter taunt ; silence kept when to be silent is a pain to us ; silence when by some word of ours we might remove wrong impressions at the cost of pain to some other one, and discord and friction in striving to set right what time will surely heal.

What do the pains spring from but personality ; our task then lies before us to hinder not the words of others, but the feeling of separateness which makes us suffer ; to enter into the place of peace, and take refuge there from the sharp arrows of bitter words.

The silence and refraining from self-praise ; the silence of acceptance of our lot in life, of not murmuring or chafing like a coward against our Karma, since "He who believes in what he professes, and in his Master, will stand it, and come out of the trial victorious : he who doubts, the coward who fears to receive his just dues, fails." The silence that accepts all if not cheerfully at least in the spirit of thankfulness for trials permitted, which are opportunities for development.

K. B. LAURENCE.

(To be continued.)

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H. P. B.

(In Memoriam.)

Though swift the days flow from her day,
No one has left her day unnamed ;
We know what light broke from her ray
On us, who in the truth proclaimed

Grew brother with the stars and powers
That stretch away—away to light,
And fade within the primal hours,
And in the wondrous First unite.

We lose with her the right to scorn
The voices scornful of her truth :
With her a deeper love was born
For those who filled her days with ruth.

'To her they were not sordid things :
In them sometimes—her wisdom said—
The Bird of Paradise had wings ;
It only dreams, it is not dead,

We cannot for forgetfulness
Forego the reverence due to them,
Who wear at times they do not guess
The sceptre and the diadem,

With wisdom of the olden time
She made the hearts of dust to flame ;
And fired us with the hope sublime
Our ancient heritage to claim ;

That turning from the visible,
By vastness unappalled nor stayed,
Our wills might rule beside that Will
By which the tribal stars are swayed ;

And entering the heroic strife,
Tread in the way their feet have trod
Who move within a vaster life,
Sparks in the Fire—Gods amid God.

R.

LOTUS CIRCLE,

HALF-HOURS WITH THE CHILDREN.

"WHERE IS GOD?"

MAUD had been sitting very still for some time studying the crown of her hat. She had lifted the lining and looked beneath at the neatly-joined straw, then replaced the silken covering with her deft little fingers. A baffled look was on the sweet, serious face, and a deep sigh escaped between the red childish lips. Presently a happy thought seemed to strike the little maiden, and she went quickly across the sunny lawn, in at the open hall door, and up to the hat stand. Here a difficulty presented itself. A gentleman's silk hat, of the kind commonly called a "chimney-pot," hung on the top peg—but, alas! far out of reach of the little lady. A large oaken seat stood near, and suggested the possibility of climbing. Maud was not easily thwarted when she had taken any work in hand, and by putting forth all her strength she succeeded at last in dragging and pushing the chair into the desired position. But when she had mounted, and stretched her arms as far as they would go, she was still some inches from the object of her desire. Fortunately for the little girl, a walking-stick stood in the stand; carefully with the aid of this she managed to dislodge the hat, which in another instant would have rolled upon the floor, when a long arm, reaching over Maudie's head, saved the "chimney-pot" from destruction, and a gentle grasp round the little waist kept the startled child from falling.

"Why, darling, what were you going to do with Uncle Charlie's hat?"

"Oh, mother dear, I want it so, just a minute. I will not hurt it; do let me look inside."

"You would have hurt it very much, you puss, if I had not seen you just in time. But you may look into it, since you have taken so much trouble about it. There it is. Now, what do you see?"

"Nothing," said the disappointed mite after a careful and silent inspection, and she heaved a long drawn sigh.

"But, Maudie, what did you expect to find?" asked Mrs. Mason, as she walked back in the garden, and down to her shady seat by the river, accompanied by her little girl.

"I was looking for God mother," said the child, in a low and solemn voice. Mrs. Mason stood still with astonishment for a minute, looking into the earnest up-turned face. The large grey eyes of her daughter were watching her anxiously; and her nature was far too reverent to treat lightly the troubles of an awakening soul. But it was with difficulty she repressed a smile as an explanation of the foregoing scene dawned upon her mind. That morning, at her own urgent request, Maud, though eight years old, had paid her first visit to the village church. Uncle Charlie had been her only companion, and doubtless she had noticed, with her watchful eyes, the opening ceremony of words of prayer, apparently whispered into the crown of a hat.

"Come with me, dearest, and we will sit under the chesnut tree upon the bank, and if you will tell me what you have been thinking about God, perhaps I may be able to help you find Him."

Maud was a silent and thoughtful child, to whom words did not come

easily, so that it was some time before she was able to follow her mother's suggestion. Then in a slow hesitating manner, as though she had to fetch her thoughts from a long way, she began:—"When nurse was dressing me this morning, I asked her why she went away on Sunday to church, and left me to play with Jane. I like nurse best, she is quiet. Jane always wants to look at books, or play the Scripture puzzle, or amuse me. I do not like to be amused. I want to think about lots of things. Nurse understands that I am busy, and does not interrupt me."

"Say 'interrupt,' Maud?"

"Yes, dear."

"But about church. What did nurse tell you?"

"Oh, she said people went to church to pray to God. Then, I asked her what 'to pray' meant? She said it was just talking and asking for what you want. But I do not think she liked to be questioned, because when I said I supposed God lived in the church, because you know, mother, nurse called it 'God's House,' she said I was a funny little thing, she could not talk to me; I had better ask you about it. But I did not want to interrupt you, mother, so I asked Uncle Charlie to take me to church. I thought I could see for myself. But I did not see God. And I did not hear anybody asking him for anything, or talking to him, as nurse said. We got there last, I think, and there were lots of people, the farmers and their wives, and our workmen and their wives and children; and they had all put on their best clothes, as they do when we have a flower show here. But they did not seem nice to-day. When I smiled and nodded at them they only *half* smiled back. So I thought, perhaps, they were not in a good temper, so I took no more notice. Then we went and sat in a little room shut off, and Uncle Charlie, who held his hat in his hand, looked into the crown. And I wondered whether he was as disappointed as I was, that he did not see God, and was looking for him. But, of course, that was silly. Directly we sat down, Uncle William came out of a little door, with a white combing-jacket over his coat, and began talking very quickly and very loud. Not a bit as he talks when he comes here. And then sometimes the people stood up and shouted, and sometimes they sat down and Uncle William shouted. It was horrible. I never, never want to go to church again. I do not wonder God does not stay at home on Sunday, if people talk to him like that. But, mother, it is not very polite, is it, to go out when people come a long way to see you, even if they are not very nice in their way? Uncle William was not nice to-day. But he was not in a bad temper, for he looked very, very pleased, and I thought a little surprised, too, when he saw Uncle Charlie and me." "And you were disappointed, Maud, with your first visit to church? But you were wrong in supposing that the Master of that house of prayer was not at home."

"Was he there, mother, and I never saw him?" asked the child with quick, anxious gaze.

"I think you must have seen, but you did not understand for what to look. God is everywhere. There is nothing in the world but the manifestation of God. You looked for a man or woman, did you not?"

"For a man, I think, mother, because nurse calls him 'he.'"

"But God is not a person at all. The Divine Power, which men call 'God,' is a spirit. It is without form, because it is everywhere. It is love. It is truth. It is light. You know that I love you?"

"Yes, mother, I *feel* it. And I *love* you. I feel that, too."

"That love is something real. But we cannot see it. It has no form.

No shape. No limit. It is a spark from the Divine Power. You can see from this that something can *be*, yet have no form."

"But where was this love in church this morning, mother?"

"Tell me what was in the church and we will find the Power without form that fills everything."

There were people, and seats, and little rooms like the one we sat in; and a reading desk, and a big brown box with steps leading to it, and a large red cushion with tassels on the top."

"Is that all?"

"Windows and doors, of course."

"Did you not breathe while you were in church?"

"Oh, you mean there was air."

"But you cannot see the air?"

"No."

"And yet it is everywhere, round everything, and in everything, and without it nothing can live, and it is The Breath of Life."

(To be continued.)

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GLEANINGS FROM THEOSOPHICAL LITERATURE.

* * All who have time and opportunity are invited to send selections on the subject chosen for each month. These will be arranged and appear under this heading.

Subject for September—"The Potency of Sound" (continued).

THE POTENCY OF SOUND.

EVERY metre in the *Brahmanas* corresponds to a number, and as shown by Haug, as it stands in the sacred volumes, is a prototype of some visible form on earth, and its effects are either good or evil. The "sacred speech" can save, but it can kill as well; its many meanings and faculties are well known but to the *Dikshita* (the adept), who has been initiated into many mysteries, and whose "spiritual birth" is completely achieved: the Vach of the *mantra* is a spoken power, which awakens another corresponding and still more occult power, each allegorically personified by some god in the world of spirits, and, according as it is used, responded to either by the gods or the *Rakshasas* (bad spirits). In the Brahmanical and Buddhist ideas, a curse, a blessing, a vow, a desire, an idle thought, can each assume a visible shape, and so manifest itself *objectively* to the eyes of its author, or to him that it concerns. There are words which have a distinctive quality in their very syllables, as though objective things; for every sound awakens a corresponding one in the invisible world of spirit, and the repercussion produces either a good or bad effect. Harmonious rhythm, a melody vibrating softly in the atmosphere, creates a beneficent and sweet influence around, and acts most powerfully on the psychological as well as physical natures of every living thing on earth; it reacts even on inanimate objects, for matter is still spirit in its essence,

Invisible as it may seem to our grosser senses.—H.P.B. *Isis Unveiled*. Vol. ii., 410.

Many are the fakirs, who, though pure and honest and self-devoted, have yet never seen the astral form of a purely *human pitar* (an ancestor or father) otherwise than at the solemn moment of their first and last initiation. It is in the presence of his instructor, the guru, that he is suddenly placed face to face with the unknown PRESENCE. He sees it and falls prostrate at the feet of the evanescent form, but is not entrusted with the great secret of its evocation; for it is the suprememystery of the holy syllable. The AUM contains the evocation of Vedic triad, the Trimurti Brahma Vishnu, Sivā, say the Orientalists; it contains the evocation of *something more real and objective than this triune abstraction*—we say, respectfully contradicting the eminent scientists. It is the trinity of man himself, on his way to become immortal through the solemn union of his inner triune SELF—the exterior, gross body, the husk not even being taken in consideration in this human trinity.—*Ibid.* Vol. ii., 114.

Akasa is the highest substratum of this universe, or what has formed the universe by its own power or the motion or breath inherent in it. This motion is generally called sound, because it correlates most closely with that power in man to produce a motion called speech. Sound, then, is the property of Akasa, and the only property, because any motion of Akasa direct is only sound. When we say that Akasa is the basis of sound, it must not be supposed that it is a kind of physical essence, having its particles in a state of inter-molecular motion. Such a conception would be quite wrong. It must be conceived only as a kind of divine light, having within itself a material essence capable of vibration. This material essence is called SOMA in Sanskrit.—A.N.S. *Branch Paper xiii. Indian Section.*

A mantra is simply a series of sounds framed with a special reference to all subtle powers and their relations to sound. Take a seed, understand and spiritually realise what it is, know the song that nature will have to sing before that seed sprouts up into a tree, and sing it yourself, mesmerically connecting your speech and the tree. The tree grows, though miraculously, in a truly scientific and natural way. He is then a magician who knows and talks accordingly. Let us then, Theosophists, realize that sound is a power, and that he is a Yogi who will talk little, and talk to express his inner nature, for good and not for evil.—*Ibid.*

(To be Continued.)

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DUBLIN LODGE,

3 UPPER ELY PLACE.

The opening meetings will be resumed on Wednesday, 5th September, at 8.15 p.m. The first two discussions are to be as follows:—

5th Sept "Some Difficulties in Theosophy Considered," D. N. Dunlop.
12th " " " " "Sub-conscious Mind." " " F. J. Dick.

FRED. J. DICK,
Hon. Sec.

THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST

No. 12.

DUBLIN, SEPTEMBER 15TH, 1894.

VOL. II.

NOTICE.

The Theosophical Society is in no way responsible for any opinions, in signed or unsigned articles, that appear in this Magazine.

All Literary contributions should be addressed to the EDITOR, and Business communications to the PUBLISHER, 71 Drumcondra Road, Dublin.

Yearly Subscription, 3s. 6d. post free. Next number begins Vol. III.

Donations for the Publishing Fund will be gratefully received.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

THIS number completes our Second Volume. We thank subscribers for their past support, and hope they will not only renew their own subscriptions, but help us in obtaining new ones. For our part, we shall endeavour to go on improving each number; and repeat what we have said on former occasions, that we are always open to receive our readers' suggestions, consider them carefully, and, where practicable, carry them into effect. Some important changes will be made early in the new volume. A subscription form accompanies present number.

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Discoveries proceed. Forces, hitherto denied by the ardent votaries of materialism, but recognised and understood from time immemorial by occult science, are now being brought to light. A series of very wonderful experiments, which just have been concluded by Dr. Luys, whose observations and discoveries in connection with magnetism and electricity in relation to hypnotism, made a profound impression upon the scientific world some time ago, have led to a remarkable result. The latest discovery establishes the fact that cerebral activity can be transferred to a crown of magnetised iron in which the activity can be retained, and subsequently passed on to a second person. Incredible as this may seem, Dr. Luys has proved its possibility by the experiments just referred to. He placed the crown, which in reality is only a circular band of magnetised iron, on the head of a female patient suffering from melancholia, with a mania for self-destruction, and with such success was the experiment attended that within a fortnight the patient could be allowed to go free without danger, the crown having absorbed all her marked tendencies. About two weeks afterwards he put the same crown, which meanwhile had been carefully kept free from contact with anything else, on the head of a male patient suffering from hysteria complicated by frequent recurrent periods of lethargy. The patient was then hypnotised, and immediately comported himself after the manner of the woman who had previously worn the crown. Indeed he practically assumed her personality, and spoke of himself as a woman, and uttered exactly the same complaints as she had done. Similar phenomena had, it is reported, been observed in the case of every patient experimented upon. Another experiment showed that the crown retained the impression acquired until it was made red hot.

Mr. Gladstone has written a remarkable article in the *Nineteenth Century*, chiefly directed against Mrs. Besant's view of the Atonement as expressed in the book published by Mr. Fisher Unwin, entitled "Annie Besant: An Autobiography." Having only short newspaper reports before us at present, we cannot enter very fully into a consideration of the attitude adopted by Mr. Gladstone. The main point in support of his position seems to be that the Atonement "only repeats a phenomenon with which we are perfectly familiar in the natural and social order of the world, where the good, at the expense of pain endured by them, procure benefits for the unworthy." The following quotation points out, in our opinion, the weakness of the position: "If pardon be, even for a moment, severed from a moral process of renovation, if these two are not made to stand in organic and vital connection with one another, that door is opened through which mischief will rush in, and thus pardon may be made to hold an illegitimate place in the Christian system." It is because "the essence and root of this matter lies in the idea of good, vicariously conveyed," that the sense of "pardon" is too frequently unaccompanied by any "moral renovation" whatever, and that the door has been opened through which mischief has rushed in, and almost overwhelmed the Church at large. We hope Mrs. Besant will find time to reply to this article. If so, we are inclined to feel sympathy for Mr. Gladstone.

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Socialists and other Reformers who have faith that good at last will come to all mankind, are frequently accused of "day dreaming." As will be seen from the following, they are by no means alone in this respect. A remarkable speech by M. Berthelot at the banquet of the Syndical Chamber of Chemical Product Manufacturers is summarised by a Paris correspondent, who says that M. Berthelot's subject was: "The world in the year 2,000." After saying that he looked to chemistry for deliverance from present-day social evils and for the possibility of realising the Socialists' dreams, that is if a spiritual chemistry could be discovered to change human nature as deeply as chemical science could modify the globe, he continued: "This change will be greatly due to chemistry utilising the heat of the sun and the central heat of the globe. The latter can be obtained by shafts 3,000 or 4,000 metres in depth. Modern engineers are equal to the task of sinking. Then the water down so deep would be hot, and able to keep all possible machinery going. By natural distillation it would furnish fluid free from microbes, and would be an unlimited source of chemical and electrical energy. This could be everywhere developed, and thousands of years might pass without any noticeable diminution. With such a source of heat all chemical transformation will be easy. The production of alimentary matters will be a consequence. This production is in principle resolved, and has been for forty years, by the syntheses of grease and oils. That of hydrates of carbon is going on, and that of nitrogenous substances is not far off. When energy can be cheaply obtained, food can be made from carbon taken from carbonic acid, hydrogen taken from water, and nitrogen taken from the air. What work the vegetables have so far done science will soon be able to do better, and with far greater profusion, and independently of seasons or evil microbes or insects. There will be then no passion to own land, beasts need not be bred for slaughter, man will be milder and more moral, and barren regions may be preferable to fertile as habitable places, because they will not be pestiferous from ages of manuring. The reign of chemistry will beautify the planet. There will, under it, be no need to disfigure it with the geometrical works of the agriculturist, or with the grime of factories and chimneys. It will recover its verdure and flora. The earth will be a vast pleasure garden, and the

human race will live in peace and plenty. But it will not be idle, for idleness is not happiness, and work is the source of all virtue. In the earth, renewed by chemistry, people will work more than ever, but according to their special tastes and faculties, and from high and noble motives. The great object will be then to develop more and more the æsthetic and the intellectual faculties."

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HOW THEOSOPHY AFFECTS ONE'S VIEW OF LIFE.

A PAPER READ BEFORE THE DUBLIN LODGE.

IN asking you to consider with me the influence of the system of thought called Theosophy upon one's view of all the things which are included in the term Life, I have to preface my remarks by the confession that I have not extracted my ideas from portly volumes, or indeed, engaged in any great research; and I have further to ask you to believe that what you will hear is the most unbiassed statement, as far as possible, on the subjects which will necessarily come under notice.

The outlook of any individual mind is not a constant quantity; it is to some extent determined by education, environment, and innate tendencies; but it is always subject to alteration; it is constantly feeling the influence of subtle forces and circumstances, and it changes with every fresh experience and every new sensation. Still these influences seldom evince their presence by a great reversal of the mental attitude, and we are best able to sense them by seeing how the actions of the individual, which are very largely the voluntary or involuntary expression of his standpoint, represent at different times changes in that standpoint. Indeed, one's own experience will supply plenty of material to work upon; for, I daresay no one will insist that his present attitude towards the rest of the universe is identical with that of ten or five years ago, or even one year. A little examination will show that the mental processes which precede some definite action are altered in some important manner from those of $\pi\delta\varsigma\theta$. The question which is of importance is to find out how the change has come about, and whether one is to allow extraneous events to master his mental conclusions, or one is to become, through wisdom acquired by effort, the conscious master of his destiny.

Theosophy has for its leading tenet the absolute unity in essence and correlation of all life, whether visible, invisible, material, intellectual, spiritual, and this affords at once a clue to the consideration of the present subject; for, according to the view which the individual thinker takes of the powers and relations of the mind itself will be his view of the duties and responsibilities which these powers and relations involve; in other words, Ethics or moral philosophy must be based upon metaphysics. Now, I wish to be as brief as possible in pointing out the Theosophic view of the mind and soul, and their powers and relations; and were it not that it is necessary for the unity of my remarks, I would take refuge in referring to the numerous able, intellectual, and forcible expositions of this matter which you have heard in this room.

Theosophy, to put it as concisely as possible, accepts the universe as "the unfolding of a Divine life, functioning in every form of living and non-living things." Man is viewed as a compound being, a spark of this Divine universal spirit being clothed with the body. The immortal indestructible part of man consists of this spark of universal spirit, its vehicle the human spirit, and the mind or intellectual faculties. It uses as a dwelling the body, with its animal life, its passions and appetites, to which mankind is so prone to attach tremendous importance. The connecting link is the mind, which, being full of agitation, strong, and obstinate, senses all the material existence, is moved by

the hopes and fears, and the storm of existence. The lesson, ever insisted on as having to be learnt, is that the lower part of man, the body, and its attachments, have to be conquered and purified; and the only way to teach it its true functions is by suffering; and when this is done, we shall have got somewhere nearer the goal, when we shall identify our consciousness with our true self, not with the illusion. The powers of the mind to sense all existence, and its relations towards the rest of our being as the connecting link, bearing the contact with external things towards the soul, and at times being the vehicle of the Wisdom which is one of the attributes of that which has no attribute: I say, then, these powers and relations of the mind, which one finds everywhere treated of in Theosophical literature, are the determining factors in the formation of our Ethics. And since, from Socrates down, we are taught that self-knowledge is necessary for guidance of one's conduct, the knowledge of the mind and its capacities is at once shadowed forth as of immense value. It has at least three elementary powers—viz., the power of knowing, the power of feeling, and the power of acting. These powers, though distinguishable, are not separable; but rather when we distinguish knowledge, feeling, and action, what we call by these names will be found, when accurately examined, to be combinations of the three elements, differing only in respect to the element which preponderates. Locke would have us suppose that when I say "I know," it means that an object is inserted into my consciousness as into a bag. But no bag could produce the phenomenon of knowledge. To produce it requires the putting forth of an active power, which we call intelligence. The knowledge of an object always produces in the mind some emotion with regard to it: this emotion is normally pleasure. Sometimes the difficulties which beset the acquisition of knowledge are so great and cause such dissatisfaction and pain that the mind is tempted to banish them, together with the object which excites them, from its consciousness. Knowledge and the emotions to which it gives rise induce those actions which are the result of the inherent activity of the mind stimulated by them. Thus we see that the antecedents of all action include intelligence as an active power: and Ethics, more particularly Theosophical Ethics, are seen to have a practical value, and not merely a speculative interest.

Having digressed thus far from my subject, the point to which I proceed to address myself is, the working out on the individual of the system of which I have tried to shadow forth the greater truths. The first class I will deal with are the *indifferent*. To them, Theosophy presents the widest possible field of, and reasons for, activity that can be desired. It shows that no action is without its direct permanent result, and that consequently the position of the indifferent is absolutely untenable. No one who has studied Theosophical literature can ever find there a justification for mere *laissez-faire*. It points out the enormous value of what we call trifles, and the comparatively trifling value of what the indifferent would take most note. Theosophy always insists on action in some direction, preferably conscious, well-directed action, with a pure motive.

The *Agnostic* is, as it were, Theosophy's special care—It shows him at once the directions in which further, fuller, and greater knowledge of every branch of science or philosophy can be gained. It says to him "pursue your previous method of enquiry, and remember, taking nothing for granted, do not accept others' authority. Seek for knowledge: we can only point the way we have ourselves gone. Investigate every nook and corner of your mind, and learn how to control it and your sense perceptions. Then you will no longer mistrust your results as possibly imperfect, but you will have attained to some closer contact with Truth." To both the Agnostic and the indifferent, the study of

Theosophy will bring a consciousness of the responsibility towards others, which is the basis of our universal brotherhood. It will tend to remove the personal element which has hitherto done so much to cloud and obscure one's investigations; and it will gradually lead to the elimination of the anxiety as to results, which will bring us (by the removal of remorse or approval) to calmness of mind, in which condition great work can be achieved.

The appeal of Theosophy to the *scientific investigator* is practically identical with the last. It will show him what so many of his confreres are more or less tacitly recognising, that the hopeless and soul-deadening belief of the Materialist (that all the growth of the race, the struggling towards a higher life, the aspirations towards virtue shall absolutely vanish, and leave no trace), is a crushing mental burden which leads to absolute negation; it will show the spiritual nature of man in perfect consistence with the true theories, and as dependent on fundamental laws and causes.

Coming from the region of unbelief to belief, to use these words in their narrowest sense, let us consider what way Theosophy will affect a believer in doctrines of some system of religious thought. To take the ordinary Protestant first; Theosophy is apparently likely to fail on account of its taking away the personality of the Deity, and the habit of prayer: for to both of these doctrines the earnest churchman is attached. But if it does do so, what does it substitute? It puts forward an atonement, not an atonement of 1,861 years ago, but a daily atonement to be carried out in each one's life, and having as great an influence on one's fellows; it suggests the possibility of realising even on earth what is an absolute reality in spirit, the brotherhood of man; and it views Christ, not as an ultra-cosmic being condescending to become human, but as a great teacher, whose counterpart and possibilities are within each one of us, if we but seek the true path. Also, and this is a small point, it removes the horrible canker of church government, which ministers so powerfully to the idea of separateness and personality: and lastly, it offers, in place of mouthing prayers to a God whom one is taught to fear ten times to the once that love is insisted on, a union with that higher self which, if pursued, brings peace, wisdom, an infinite compassion, and an infinite love.

What has Theosophy to offer to the Roman Catholic? All that it offers to the Protestant; with this addition, that not merely one woman is exalted, but all womankind as being of the same essence and spirit of all nature. It shows that there is no superiority, but that by effort, by training, by aspiration, everyone, both man and woman, shall be found worthy of being taken into heaven, and joined again to the one source of life and being. It shows the whole doctrine of saintliness and blessedness to have a source in Truth, though overlaid and altered.

And what of the other sheep? What of that soul which, feeling compelled by its intuitions to recognise the essential divinity of man, yet find no expression in the churches which will fit into its emotional nature? What of him whom, for want of a better word, I shall call a Symbolist, who is always striving to express in some form of art or thought, that divine energy which is wisdom, consciousness, and energy all in one? Does not Theosophy afford the very best outlet for his soul force? Are not its ideas on a level with, if not higher than, what his most sublime moments of feeling can bring before him? Surely if anyone can find peace in its bosom, the Symbolist, ever struggling to express his sense of the True, the Beautiful, which are, after all, but a second reflection of the Higher mind, with its knowledge of the essence of all life, can therein do his noblest work for Humanity in company with those who, having previously done all they could for the race through a sense of duty arising from

intuitions they declined to recognise, have found in the doctrines of Theosophy the broadest possible field for such work, and the purest motive.

And now, changing from particular types, how do we look upon Theosophy as a power in Ethics? We find the elimination of the selfish instinct insisted upon as necessary for the progress of the Ego through its material envelope to a full and complete knowledge of its higher self: we find the doctrine of Brotherhood put forward in its noblest aspects: we find as a necessary corollary that responsibility is increased and widened with an accompanying sense of power to accept and carry on that responsibility; with the growth of higher feeling within us comes a sense of added strength; we learn gradually to work without consideration or anxiety for results; we grow more tolerant of our neighbour's shortcomings, and less so of our own; we find that by disengaging ourselves from the objects of the senses, we become indifferent to small troubles, and more free to assist our neighbour when they press on him; with the knowledge of the causes of present conditions lying in past action, and our present actions going to be the causes of future conditions, we place ourselves in a position to work to the full extent of our powers to set in motion such causes as will bring about the happiest results for Humanity as a whole; we learn to look upon death, not as the opening of the spiritual life, but as a release from a weight which keeps under the spiritual life, which is always with us, now as well as before birth and after death; we learn to sense the methods by which the universe works out its destiny; we find every day growing stronger that sense of immortality, of absolute union with the universal soul, which at first merely manifested itself in strange feelings and emotions; we find the clues to the control of our physical and mental faculties, and are not surprised to discover the ten-thousand-fold increase in value these faculties then bear; we put ourselves more and more in harmony with what we feel to be the source of all Truth; we find ourselves gradually able to give expression to those dumb feelings which we could not find words for, of its grandeur and greatness; until finally we come, after many incarnations, after suffering, after despair sometimes, to a knowledge which transcends all human knowledge, to a bliss which is above our present ideas, to a peace which the world cannot give, which surpasseth all understanding, and are then ready to give up that bliss and peace, and to use that knowledge for the divine compassion towards our fellows who are following.

But how are we to hope for this progress? What are we to do to realise these ideas? Is it by wishing for it that this state will come about? Is there no everyday way of getting forward? These are some of the questions which will rise naturally to the lips of any here who are not thoroughly acquainted with Theosophical ideas: and what have we to say in reply? Are we to confess Theosophy is a doctrine only for the learned, the cultured, the wealthy? Are we to acknowledge that Christianity or Agnosticism is more practical, easier for the men in the street to grasp? Are we to say that Theosophy is not a gospel for to-day? No: a thousand times no! If there is one result of a study of Theosophy, it is the gaining of Hope, a sure and certain Hope, which soon becomes Trust, and later, knowledge. I affirm most strongly that there is no one to whom Theosophy in some of its myriad aspects does not appeal, and appeal strongly enough to cause it to be the ruling passion of his existence; but I do also affirm as strongly, that in Theosophy, as in all other things, what are necessary are, pure motive and perseverance. It costs no one anything to spend an hour a day in meditation on some aspect of life; in thinking of our eternal nature and striving to place ourselves *en rapport* with our highest ideals of purity, nobility, Truth. Then cannot we get the idea of

universal brotherhood firmly fixed in our consciousness as an actual reality to be attained, and always act upon that basis. To me, the thought of the absolute unity of all life, affords as high an ideal for putting into practical shape as my deficient development allows me. Cannot we get this ideal or some other ideal so essential a part of our thought that it colours all our feelings, emotions and actions? We will then be doing our part in the struggle. We will not be of the Laodiceans, who were neither hot nor cold. Let us try this: let us see whether it will have such an effect, and if we, by our personal experience, have convinced ourselves of the reality of this, let us progress further, and by a further trial find out the greater truths beyond. Re-incarnation and Karma are essentially doctrines for the poor and needy; they will grasp them, and they will be in very truth, salvation—both moral, mental and physical. Intellectual subtleties are not needed in Theosophy: it is spiritual perception, and who will dare say to the poor that they have less of this than their fellows?

The only region where the "exclusiveness" argument can have even a momentary hold is with regard to Occultism. There is in most people's mind a distrust of anything secret. But remember, believe only in what your own test has shown you to be true: and learn not to condemn those who have found some irresistible impulse urging them forward to seek further. Besides, anyone who is not clear in his motive in studying Occultism had better pause before he pledges himself to anything, or undertakes that the result of which he does not know even dimly.

And before passing from this digression, let me insist strongly once again on the fact that true progress will come only to those who seek to attain it.

They who would be something more
Than those who feast and laugh and die, will hear
The voice of duty, as the note of war,
Nerving their spirit to great enterprise,
And knitting every sinew for the charge.

Again, get rid of indolence, or its synonym, indifference. The real hereditary sin of human nature is indolence. Conquer that, and you will conquer the rest. We cannot afford to rest with what we have done; we must keep moving on. In this, indeed, to stand still is to go back—worse still, to keep others back.

In conclusion I may, perhaps, be permitted to give you a few remarks as to the influence Theosophy has had upon myself. It has furnished me with satisfactory reasons for living and working; it has infused an earnestness in that work which I prize as one of the valuable things of my life's experience. It has ministered to that inmost sense of worship and aspiration which all of us possess: it has shown me that by expanding one's consciousness in that of the universe, one gains more knowledge and opportunity for helping on humanity; and it has pointed out where the materials for a scientific basis of ethics can be found, and also what will be the outlines of the future building; and finally it has shown that if the objects of our desires be changed, and many things we held dear are no longer prized, it is owing simply to the acquirement of larger and fuller interests.

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A DOOMED CITY.

LIGHTS flew about me: images sparkled in the imperishable Akāsa. Oh, such ancient, ancient places and peoples! Such forms of primitive grandeur and antique simplicity! I was thrilled through with strangeness, and anon quickened with a familiar sense as when one returns to the scenes of childhood and the places of long ago. Then the visions faded away, and I

became folded up in blackness; out of the stillness came forth again the light of the elder day; the blackness grew thick with stars; I saw burning skies fading into dawn; over distant hills danced up the star of day; it brought others with it to pale soon in the grey light; from the roof of a high building I watched it shadowed by a multitude of magical spires and turrets which rose up darkly from a great city erected on the plain. I looked down through the gloom into the square below; already there was a stir; I could see black forms moving about; they plied at ponderous engines. I could hear cries of wrath from these giants; then a stony despair came over me, for I knew the Golden Age had passed away, and the earth was crowded with these pitiless and inhuman races, the masters of all magical arts. Proud, exultant, tireless heroes of old Atlantis, this was your day of glory! What sin of all your sins did I witness? I watched from above, without comprehending it, the stir and rage; then suddenly impelled, I raised my eyes once more to the holy light. There I saw a new wonder borne high on the luminous air. His starry front proclaimed him straight one of the Children of the Wise—one of divine race. The brilliant moon-coloured lord—a vast phantom—floated erect with outstretched arms over the city; his shadowy hair drifted about him like a grey mist seen against the dawn. He glanced hither and thither beneath, and his hands swayed rhythmically as if he were weaving some enchantment; the rainbow fires danced about him; they flew here and there; I watched those radiant messengers; where they fell below, the toilers stopped suddenly as if stricken by light, looking vaguely about and above, seeing nothing; I knew then that the Lord was unknown to them. One after another I saw the toilers so touched steal away from labour, and far beyond I could see the road over the hills darkened here and there with moving forms passing hurriedly from the city. I looked up again; the Wise One was nigh the parapet I leaned on; I trembled being so near. I had but to stretch out my hands to touch greatness. I looked at the wonderful eyes; they were lightless as if the power were turned within; but they flashed anon, the fire in them seeming suddenly to run out from sphere deep-hidden in sphere; they were upon me.

I looked up. "Lord, why or whither should I fly as all these do?"

His thought answered me: "Your eyes are not yet sealed. See for thyself."

Forthwith the eye of old memory opened, and the earth in its fairy-first beginning returned to me. I wandered—a luminous shadow; without eyes I saw the glory of life; without ears I heard its marvellous song; without nostrils I knew its sweet odours. I, the seer, lived in and shared the imagination of the Mighty. I knew the old earth once more, clear, transparent, shining, whose glory was self-begotten, flung up from its own heart, kindling the air with the reflection of its multitudinous fires. The fires ran in and out of the heart, in tides of crimson and torrents of gold, through veins of lilac, azure, and deepest blue. A million creatures ran free with indescribably flashing movement within them—the lustrous populace of the elements. Then the vision of the earth moved onwards and darkened, and the fiery heart was shadowed slowly from the eye of man who fell from dream and vision into deed and thought; for his deeds he needed power, and for his thoughts messengers; he took the creatures of the elements; they became his servants to do his will, and his will was darkness; he moulded them into shapes of passion and hatred. As he sank deeper he knew them no longer from himself, though what he willed was accomplished by them. As he moved from place to place they followed in hordes, and the fiery tides—their habitation—rolled along with them beneath the earth. When cities were builded these terrible armies were thronged thick

around, within, and under; in air, in fire, in earth, and in the hidden waters. Then I saw below me where the fires were gathering, surging, pressing, ready to leap forth and devour; there passed upwards from them, continually, strange beings, shadowy creatures of the underworld called forth by the will of the giants who meditated the destruction of another city; they entered into these giants who sent them forth again. Full of terror I cried out—

“The fires will follow! Oh, look, look, how ruddy and red they glow! They live, and they send forth living creatures!”

I looked up, but the Wise One had gone away, I knew not where. Then I arose hurriedly, went downward and out of the city. I fled, without stopping, across the mountain-path, until I left far behind the city and the doomed giants.

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CONVENTIONALITY.

EMERSON has said “I look upon the simple and childish virtues of veracity and honesty as the root of all that is sublime in character. Speak as you think, be what you are. . . . At the top or at the bottom of all illusions, I see the cheat which still leads us to work and live for appearances, in spite of our conviction in all sane hours, that it is what we really are that avails with friends, with strangers, and with fate or fortune.” This illusion, under the name of conventionality, is not among the lightest of the fetters which man has bound upon himself. We do many of our actions not because we think them necessary, or virtuous, or even useful, but because it is what “everybody does.” Let the particular custom be as foolish and ridiculous as it may, provided it is followed by the majority, nobody stays to think of its folly. Laziness, possibly, lies at the root of a good deal of this blind following the blind; we do not take the trouble to think for ourselves; it is much easier to follow someone else’s lead, and if we do, perchance, see our bondage, a good deal of moral courage is needed to shake ourselves free and take the guidance of our lives in our own hands. Ridicule is a very potent weapon and is usually very freely used by those who, lacking wit or courage to move out of the beaten track themselves, would have everyone cut on the same pattern. If we come to consider many of our social customs we shall find that selfishness in some form is their guiding principle—family selfishness, class selfishness, even religious (?) selfishness being just as potent factors in our conduct as personal selfishness. Under such conditions “Universal Brotherhood” sounds a meaningless phrase, as impossible in practise as the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount, and many another moral aphorism which we have been accustomed to hear from our youth up, but never considered as intended to be taken literally. Let us then, who call ourselves Theosophists, endeavour to infuse life into these dead words! We cannot, of course, expect all at once to leaven society and break down customs that appear to us foolish and unnecessary, but we need not conform to them ourselves; we can make some attempt to remove, by slow degrees, the mountain of conventionality that disguises selfishness under necessity, falsehood under politeness, and want of sympathy and aspiration under practical good sense and knowledge of the world. The barriers set up by false standards of right and wrong, of interest against worth, by position, by wealth, and even by outward show against merit, have all combined to shut out the truth and hide man from himself. And in the worship of idols and the pursuit of shadows, our common brotherhood has been forgotten. Our brother’s wants are not our wants, unless we happen to be brought in contact with him, when the sight of suffering, even among the most heartless and careless, brings a desire to relieve

that suffering, showing man's essential brotherhood—since pain to the one produces pain in the other; and when once this truth is realised the practical application of it will become possible, though it may be only by slow degrees. The mountain of separateness that man has built up between himself and his brother man cannot be removed all at once; it took many ages and many lives to raise it to the proportions it has now attained, and how great that is everyone must know who has tried to practise brotherhood and failed utterly, while the mental realization of it seems more hopeless still. The hard dry facts of life seem to deaden our sympathies, they are ever before us, and most of our thought and energy is taken up in facing them; but to those who have begun to realise, be it ever so dimly, the unreality of the seeming real, in the dawn of that which lies behind all illusion, all that now makes up the sum of life, as we know it, will become as dust in the balance, and we shall "work and live for appearances" no more!

T.E.T.

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THE MAN TO THE ANGEL.

I have wept a million tears;
 Pure and proud one, where are thine?
 What the gain of all your years
 That undimmed in beauty shine?
 All your beauty cannot win
 Truth we learn in pain and sighs;
 You can never enter in
 To the Circle of the Wise.
 They are but the slaves of light
 Who have never known the gloom,
 And between the dark and bright
 Willed in freedom their own doom.
 Think not in your pureness there
 That our pain but follows sin;
 There are fires for those who dare
 Seek the Throne of Might to win.
 Pure one, from your pride refrain;
 Dark and lost amid the strife,
 I am myriad years of pain
 Nearer to the fount of life.
 When defiance fierce is thrown
 At the God to whom you bow,
 Rest the lips of the Unknown
 Tenderest upon the brow.

G.W.R.

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SILENCE.

"Great is he who is the slayer of desire. Still greater he in whom the 'Self Divine' has slain the very knowledge of desire."

THE second stage leading to the perfect silence is the silence of desire. The deep, still peace of a heart at rest from self, calm as ocean depths unruffled by the surface waves of passion or longing; the steady flame of one pointed aspiration, the light of daring in the heart that is not darkened by doubt

or fear; these must be the priceless possessions and experience of those who would fain tread the path of devotion, that rough and rugged road, which winds through desolate places, but leads the traveller at last to heights which scaled, transcend human experience and description; the way which winds tortuously from self to selflessness.

Only through silencing desire can stable equilibrium be reached and retained, and a condition of soul experienced stronger than personal emotion; then, and then alone, the feet can be "planted firmly upon the place that is undefiled."

"Kill out desire," we read. This is no easy thing, since it must of necessity involve the death of the personal self. Not once, nor twice, must the task be attempted; to it, the pilgrim soul experiencing in matter, returns again, and again; life after life, until the victory is won, and that point of progress reached where desire dies; but the soul must have passed through bitter experience, through the waters of renunciation, the blankness and darkness of the night of sorrow when standing alone this truth is realised, that nothing that is out of the eternal *can* help or aid.

Great among men is he upon whose lips the seal of silence is set; strong indeed must he be who has strength to renounce all wordy weapons of offence, and defence; the voice that has lost the power to wound is heard "in the presence of the Masters"—but how much is included in those words?—Surely more than silence of speech alone; for alas, we know by bitter experience and self-analysis, that even when some degree of control has been learned, even when we are strong enough to guard the lips from expressing thought, the thought still remains; stronger, more subtle, more dangerous, perchance for being refused outward expression, eating duly like a canker into the soul.

How great the task seems, how well nigh hopeless; thoughts come we know not whence; unsought, unwished, seemingly; harboured for an instant they become forces for good or evil; thoughts of hatred or envy repented of as soon as recognised, to make harmless these creatures of our mind, to slay them as they would us is no easy matter.

And when thought is conquered, desire remains, lurking within in some form or other.

After long experience and lives in which the unsatisfactory, transitory nature of material things has been realised, many seekers after truth have reached a point in their evolution where it is comparatively easy not to desire many things which to the vast majority of men seem desirable; yet desire is by no means killed out, it has only clothed itself in more enticing guise, more alluring fashion, and become by some subtle alchemy transmuted into more intense forms of longing.

Money, fame, pleasure, fail to attract when the home-sickness of the soul comes upon us, and the God within in hours of insight refuses to be satisfied with ought of earth. Then the desire arises for spiritual good, for definite teaching, for individual purity, for nearness and likeness to those Great Ones who have reached the heights; for permission to be in some humble measure co-workers with Them for humanity; translated into plain language we *still* desire.

The knowledge we crave may be wished for unselfishly, to be gained but to be passed on, but still *we* would know; the power we seek would be freely given in the service of others, but the power must be ours; such desires, good in themselves, become evil when tinged with personality, and do but tend to strengthen and accentuate the personal self. Our desires may win for us what we wish; what a man thinks he in time undoubtedly becomes; what he wishes intensely he obtains; the goal towards which his face is unflinchingly set is within his reach, and the end is this—our desires win for us Devachan and bind

us in future lives; and surely the rest—surely even the well-earned joys of subjective existence should not tempt the soul who would tread the path of devotion; if immediate re-birth is possible “for those whose hearts are upon Master's business and free from self interests,” then it is not wise to create a Devachanic dream by our desires when the work-a-day world needs help. Not so surely shall we follow in the footsteps of Those who, through lives of self-forgetfulness, have earned the right to make the great renunciation. It matters little how far we are from that great moment when such choice shall be presented to us. Some steps, at least, upon renunciation's path can be taken now, in this present life; some desires killed out that might delay our return. Desire *cannot* be killed out or silenced; it can be transmuted and replaced by something higher. Have no desires, may be translated by have only this one desire—to be a selfless instrument, attuned to harmony; a channel through which blessings may flow to help the world. Then the words spoken, the act done, will be abandoned as soon as we have spoken or acted; no Karma will be ours, good or bad; freed from our personality the message, however badly passed on, however clumsily translated into terms of brain knowledge, may become luminous to those who hear.

“Great is he who is the slayer of desire,” yet, if we slay desire, from the dead it will arise again. “Greater he in whom the Self-Divine has slain the very knowledge of desire,” when we have entered into knowledge of and union with the Self-Divine, then, and then alone, the Perfect silence will be reached.

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LOTUS CIRCLE.

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HALF-HOURS WITH THE CHILDREN.

“WHERE IS GOD?”

“I SEE, I see; God, or Love, or the Divine Power is in the air. It was in church and went in and out of all the corners, in and out of all the people, and was in uncle Charlie's hat, after all, but I never saw it. Oh! I am so glad. But——” and the child fell into a brown study, and did not speak for a good half-hour. Presently the silence was broken by the question—uttered with half-frightened solicitude, as though the thought of doubting the mother's knowledge, or the good tidings she had given, was painful, but a pain that must be faced—“But, mother, how do you know?”

“There are two methods by which knowledge of these high truths can be obtained. Men, who by striving to do the will of the Father—that is by *obedience*—have grown wise, have written books for our instruction. These books are called scriptures. The word scripture, means simply that which is written. There are many of these eastern scriptures. Our Bible is a collection of some of them. The study of the scripture teaches us something about these great mysteries of which we have been talking. While you have been busy thinking I have looked out one or two passages that tell us something of the nature of the Divine Power that many men name ‘God.’ I will read them to you if you wish?”

“Please, Mother.”

“The ‘Singer of Israel,’ David, wrote these verses, in the hundred and

thirty-ninth Psalm. Like you, David longed to draw near to the 'unknown God.' He begins his song with the words 'O Lord,' and then goes on to say that all that he does is known to his Heavenly Father. He sings: 'Thou understandest my thoughts afar off . . . and art acquainted with all my ways.' . . . 'Such knowledge is too wonderful for me: it is high, I cannot attain to it. Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee.' You see, Maud, that in his poetical way, David teaches us that Divine Power is everywhere."

"And if we turn from those Scriptures which, for distinction's sake, we call the Old Testament, and to other writings given long after, and which we call the New Testament, we find that Saint Mark repeats the teaching of David, and tells us that Jesus, a great teacher, and one filled with divine wisdom and power, that is, with the breath of God, tells his pupils, or disciples, as they were called, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

"But besides the writings of good and learned men, who through obedience to the "divine voice" which we call conscience, have become "sons of God," "joint heirs with Christ," we have yet another means of learning Truth."

"You know we agreed that "God," or "the Breath of Life" or "Love," or whatever name you choose to give to the "absolute" deity: that is too great for us really to understand, and of which we can only get some faint idea: You remember that we agreed that this Power was around us and *in* us."

"Yes, God is everywhere, and everything, and all."

"Very well. Then if we 'harden not our hearts' we can hear his voice within us. He speaks to us. He tells us what is Truth. Because we are one substance with the Father, that is to say, we are his children, and he speaks in and through us, and so long as 'we harden not our hearts' we can 'hear his voice.' Saint Paul, another great teacher of men, writing to the Romans in his eighth letter, or 'Epistle,' as it is generally called, tells them what I have been telling you, in these words, 'The spirit itself beareth witness to our spirit, that we are children of God.'"

"And if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ? Do you think you understand?"

"We have God in us and around us, and we can hear His voice—which is our conscience—if 'we harden not our hearts.' That is what you said. I do not think I quite understand what it means to "harden our hearts.'"

"I think, dearie, we 'harden our hearts,' when we do not try to give willing obedience to the Laws of Love. You know that if we *will* not listen, we cannot hear what is said to us. For instance, if I want you to do something that you do not want to do, and if instead of instant, willing obedience, you fill your little head with thoughts of some course of action, some game, or some pleasure that you wish to carry out, *my* will is shut out by *your* will. You cannot understand for the time, what my love for you compels me to command. You have shut me out from your heart for a while, and filled my place with the thought of your own desire. We are no longer one, but two. This arises from not yielding ready obedience. This is 'hardening the heart.' Now, if we, as God's children, do not give willing and ready obedience to His commands we

cease to hear His voice. We lose sight of Him. He is Love. He commands us to love all creatures as his children and our brothers. When we are obedient we are filled with love and hear his voice. As soon as we are selfish, and care more for our own pleasure than for our fellow creatures, we have 'hardened our hearts,' and can no longer hear the voice of the Father. The longer we live in selfish disobedience, the deafer we get, till at last a terrible thing may happen to us. We may first forget that there is a voice of God in our hearts, and then we may come to believe that there is no God at all. Then to us the world is dark, and cruel and horrible. But you and I will not let disobedience, which is only another name for selfishness, 'harden our hearts,' but will try, with all our might, to do the will of the Father, that we may always hear his voice."

—K. E. M.

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GLEANINGS FROM THEOSOPHICAL LITERATURE.

*. * All who have time and opportunity are invited to send selections on the subject chosen for each month. These will be arranged and appear under this heading.

Subject for October—"The Potency of Sound" (continued).

THE POTENCY OF SOUND.

"IT seems to me," said Inglesant, "that the explanation of the power of music upon the mind is, that many things are elements which are not reckoned so, and that sound is one of them. As the air and fire are said to be peopled by fairy inhabitants, and as the spiritual man lives in the element of faith, so I believe that there are creatures which live in sound. Every lovely fancy, every moment of delight, every thought and thrill of pleasure which music calls forth . . . does not die. Such as these become fairy existences, spiritual creatures, shadowy but real, and of an inexpressibly delicate grace and beauty which live in melody."—"John Inglesant," by J. Henry Shorthouse.

All vibration being attended with sound (which may or may not escape the ear), we proceed to examine tones, and find them varying from the lowest of eight vibrations per second to the highest known to western science of 24,000 per second. Remember that the tones of anger, hatred, scorn are all deep notes; those of cheerfulness, love, hope are treble. Here we discover the apparently inexplicable effect of spoken words which raise or depress our vibrations to their own by means of the etheric medium. To resist the wildfire spread of passion or anger we have but to check the vibration by holding steadily to our own: this maintained, may raise that of others, precisely as the high musical note, constantly sounded, raises all lower ones at all related to its own pitch. . . . Imagine a tone at a high rate of vibration, to see it striking the hearer's brain at a certain focus, creating there a centre of energy, which, tending to crystalization, fixes the thought in the mind. . . . Moreover, we may see this tone raising his vibratory ratio, and glancing off at an angle of reflection equal to that of incidence, reacting upon the surrounding ether and upon all hearers. The magical success of Eastern mantras depends upon the exact intonation, which governs the vibratory result, and the proper intonation of the sacred books, learned from the priests, doubtless increased their effects. Turning to colours, we find them varying in vibration from violet ३८३०० inch to red १३००० inch, and the violet has greater actinism; so it

would seem to follow that the more extended the undulation the greater the chemical action and resultant odic force. Hence the tone of animals or man is not such a poor test of their nature as we might suppose, and a certain clue to character is given in a preferred colour. The higher sounds thus create greater Akâsic disturbances through increased undulation. Deleuze, in his work on "Magnetism," says:—"The word which indicates our will can often exert an action. . . . The very tones of the magnetizer, being produced by the vital energy, act upon the organs of the patients."—Jasper Niemand. *The Path*, March, 1887.

Everything in nature has its own specific rate of vibration; if we know and can reproduce and heighten it we can call the thing into existence, or pass ourselves within its consciousness. Hence the old saying, that numbers are the names of things. The "lost word" itself is, doubt it not, a sound of the highest possible vibration, represented by the Aum, or sound of the eternal outpour of light, the Logos of the Christians.—*Ibid*,

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"HANDS ACROSS THE SEA."

SOME of the English Lodges of the T.S. are already in correspondence with Lodges in other countries; and in order to promote an extension of this very praiseworthy idea, the undermentioned plan is submitted to the attention of Theosophists of all countries, as being one which will tend towards the solidarity of the T.S. It is proposed to open a register for the names of those Lodges that are wishful to enter into correspondence with Lodges in other countries, so that they may be placed in communication. It will be readily seen that many Lodges might be overwhelmed with applicants, while others, less widely known, but equally desirous of international communication, might be overlooked. By means of the register system, with all names recorded, this would be obviated. Will those who think the time is ripe for some such effort towards the realization of the first of our objects communicate with the undersigned, and will those Lodges that are already in communication with one or more Lodges in other countries please notify in order to avoid confusion?

The agency of the General Secretary of Sections is not used, as they are at present in a state of overwork. There will be no officialism about this scheme; the only duties of the Registrar being to place Lodges in communication with each other and record the fact, and his sole desire being to strengthen the "linked battalions of the T.S."

This notice will be sent to Theosophical papers in India, Europe, America, and Australia; where Lodges might appoint their own Registrars, thus facilitating matters still further.

O. FIRTH,
 (President, Bradford Lodge),
 Hawthorne House,
 Basildon, near Shipley,
 Yorks, England.

REVIEW.

I READ and re-read "Homeward Songs,"* with many a pause of wondering. Where had I heard something like them? They came to me not with the sound of any human voice, not as an echo of some other singer, but with the same haunting familiarity which clings about the memory of a recently accomplished action.

I had not read nor could I reach any review of the book; whence then? . . . Ah! these songs are a translaing into human language of Nature's wordless music. The wind faintly rustling the aspen leaves; the wind sighing in the fir woods; the ripples of tiny waterfalls; the rush of a rapid river; the endless weary sobbing of the sea; the glad promise of the shyly opening springtime; the glowing beauty of flowers which hovering a moment around the new seed lives, fall when their work is over; the sad gaiety of autumn; and the relentless deathful mercy of winter.

Something of the message of all these has the poet caught, and imprisoned in the language of humanity for our ears.

In the poem "Comfort" can you not feel the light touch of the breeze as it softly stirs the matted locks on some hot and weary brow?

Surely in "Forgiveness" there is true expression of how, to the pure and loving, sin is little more than a pain-giving name, the burning knowledge born of bitter experience is not yet for these.

"I touched with pain her purity;
Sin's darker sense I could not bring;"

Does one ever come before one's real self, covered with soil stains which that self can mourn over but not fully feel?

Were I to quote freely I should transcribe the whole book; I might catalogue the poems, but the index does this adequately; to try and interpret them were to expose my folly and insult my friend; to tell my favourites were to say the whole book of songs; therefore what more can I say? I showed the book to a friend who says, "It is essentially a product of this dying century; could not have been produced a decade earlier." "Is intensely subjective; requires years of introspective study in order that it may be comprehended."

I, however, venture to say, that to many a weary traveller it will bring hope, and a breath as of soft, refreshing winds, and flower-sweet perfumes. Bending over its pages the harsh sounds of a busy city will die awhile; and in their stead will be heard a resful, lifeful whisper from the great breaths of many voices.

C. A. H. B.

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DUBLIN LODGE,

3 UPPER ELY PLACE,

Members who have been purchasing the new edition of *The Secret Doctrine*, and other students, will be glad to know that the study of this valuable work has been resumed on Monday evenings, on the lines sketched for the S.D. Correspondence Class. Each member has a list of references to aid in preparing for the discussion. The few months of Monday evening study of Patanjali, under the guidance of Brother Russell, have been most interesting and successful.

The public meetings on Wednesdays at 8.15 p.m. during ensuing months are to discuss the following topics;—

19th Sept.	"Symbolism,"	J. J. Nolan.
26th Sept.	"Intuition,"	K. B. Lawrence.
3rd Oct.	"Brotherhood,"	J. Duncan.
10th Oct.	"The Occult Basis of Ethics."	G. W. Russell.

FRED. J. DICK,
Hon. Sec.

* Homeward Songs by the Way, by Æ. Dublin: Whaley, 46 Dawson Chambers. Price 1s. 6d.