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### THE SPIRITUAL HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

One of the shallowest generalizations of a shallow age is the commonly received view that religions develop, springing from simple and often absurd beginnings; from totemism, from the vision of the departed in dream, from highly decorative descriptions of the weather, and so forth. Books are written in elaboration of these themes; and defenceless youth is made to commit to memory the fantastical facts and illogical conclusions.

The stern truth, writ large through many centuries of the world, is, that religions do not develop in this way at all; often not in this or any way. For the most part, instead of developing, they degenerate, beginning high among the mountains of spiritual attainment, and with each century flowing steadily down hill. Reformers and restorers come, who, with burning hearts and ardent wills, check for awhile the downward flow, and even form new heights of their own; never, however, rising to the level of the original founder. Then they too depart, and the downward course continues.

Such is the history of religions, as it is recorded in the authentic annals of the world. There is first the coming of the founder, full of divine wisdom and power and compassion, rightly esteemed by his people to be divine. He passes through periods of trial and probation, and then, with a certain evident divinity resting on his brow, brings his message to the people; beginning, for the most part, with the religion of his nation as he finds it, and gradually inspiring and enkindling it to a finer glow of spiritual life; just as he begins with the language as he finds it, raising it and refining it to more spiritual uses.

When he has made his message known, the founder gathers about him, from the multitudes who have heard his words, a few chosen dis-

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ciples, whom he straightway trains and disciplines, seeking in all ways to bring them closer to himself, to make them more and more partakers, not so much of his doctrine, as of his very life.

If all things favor him, the general spiritual culture of the times, the character, intelligence, heart and soul, of his disciples, then he is able to raise them to a higher degree of development than their fellows, bringing them closer to himself, making them share, not so much his view of life as his life itself, till the same living heart's blood flows through him and them; till they become conscious of his life, not outwardly alone, with all its purity and compassion, but inwardly in their hearts and souls, as a living fountain of love and immortal life.

Thereafter, the chosen disciples form, with their Master and with each other, a single united life, an Order, a unity of spiritual force, which becomes the inspiring heart of his religion. The disciples who are thus at one with the Master; who have given up the world, themselves and all things to follow the Master; who have stepped forth, as it were, from the life of the world to enter the life of the Master, become channels for the distribution of that life to others. The Master gives not a doctrine but himself. The disciples carry that life to others, and bring others to him.

The perfectly sacrificial life of the Master and founder, the perfect giving of himself to those who will accept the gift, becomes the central truth of his religion, and is handed down to other generations of his disciples, who, if his purpose is to be fully carried out, should enter fully into the life and consciousness of the Master, as did the first disciples who touched him personally and palpably in their daily life. For the Master, though now unseen by the bodily eyes, is not withdrawn or remote. His life is there, as a living presence, a splendid conscious being, a full spiritual individuality, a shining sea of life and love, for all succeeding generations of disciples to enter—if they are willing to give up their life in the world, exchanging it for a new life in the Master.

Such a perfectly sacrificial life was the life of Osiris, many thousand years ago in most ancient Egypt. He came in divine power and love, and gave not so much a religion as himself, a sacrifice, as the symbolic narrative recorded, freely offered up for the weal of men; his very body being cut up and scattered abroad, till its fragments were gathered together and made one again in a new and glorious life, by those who loved him. In this division of the body of Osiris is symbolized the giving of his life to many, the dividing of his life among many, and the forming of a new and greater life, wherein Master and disciples were one, with a divine flow of spiritual life-blood through them all.

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Osiris departed from the visible world, it was taught, but did not thereby cease to be, nor was his bond with the people of Egypt broken. Rather might it be said that his true life then began; in the hidden divine world he ruled as King, guardian of the destinies of souls; and the departed, who had followed his righteous precepts, were "Osirified." They entered into his hidden, divine life, and became one with him. Others came forth again, after the rest of death, and began anew the work of purification and aspiration and effort, until such time as they should put off all dross, and put on holiness, thus fitting themselves to become one with the Master. Willingness to enter his life was the supreme qualification for that entrance. The different purifications and sacrifices were but expressions of that willingness in one or another region of effort and will. And in all this long task and upward struggle, the main driving power was that same life of the Master.

Of the life-history of Krishna, we have many records, hidden in symbols and traditions. From these, we can draw certain facts, basing on them certain inferences. He came, as a great spiritual being, some five thousand years ago, according to the tradition of India. Entering into the life of his time and land, he gradually revealed himself as the spiritual Master he was, to those disciples who were fitted to understand him. They are personified for us in the one disciple, Arjuna, and the teaching given to them is recorded as having been given to him. And to Arjuna he gave not so much teaching as himself, raising the life and consciousness of Arjuna to such a glow of spiritual fire, that the disciple became one with the Master, entering into the very soul and being of the Master.

Since the teaching and tradition of Krishna came down through succeeding centuries full of pure spiritual light and life, until it was embodied in that most spiritual scripture, the *Bhagavad Gita*, we may safely infer that Arjuna did not stand alone, as a single, isolated disciple, without co-disciples, without successors, but rather that the chain was unbroken, the links strongly welded and interlinked with each other; the Master standing in the background, behind the visible veil, as did Osiris, and gathering the new generations of disciples into his life; making them one with him as he had made Arjuna one with him, in the union of a single life, with the same heart's blood, the very life of the Master, flowing into every member, making the true life of each disciple, the life-blood of the whole, united. This is the true communion of the body and blood, the real presence, in its most spiritual and divine reality.

The tradition and lore of Krishna authenticates itself when it records him as teaching, in the Scripture which we have named: "Through love he learns Me truly, how great and what I am; then

knowing Me truly, he straightway enters that Supreme. Hear further My ultimate word, most secret of all; thou art exceeding dear to Me, therefore will I speak what is good for thee. Set thy heart on Me, full of love for Me, sacrificing to Me, make obeisance to Me, and thou shalt come to Me; this is truth I promise thee, for thou art dear to Me. Putting aside all other duties, come for refuge to Me alone; grieve not, for I shall free thee from all sins. This is never to be told by thee to him who is without fervor, without love, to him who seeks not to hear it, or who mocks at Me. Whosoever shall declare this supreme secret in the company of those who love Me, showing the highest love for Me, he shall surely come to Me."

We descend through the centuries, until we come to the history of Buddha, two and a half milleniums from our day, and divided, the most ancient tradition of India tells us, by an equal period from the time of Krishna's life as an avatar. Of Buddha, of Siddhartha the Compassionate, to give him the personal name he bore, before he became the Buddha, the Awakened One, we have more authentic, consecutive knowledge. His life is less symbolic than the far earlier lives of Krishna and Osiris, though very much of it, which wears the face of actual happening, is without doubt symbol also. Siddhartha began with the religion of his land, the culture of his day, and, picking up the thread of his divine destiny, gradually prepared himself to turn that religion into something more spiritual, more alive.

Through many purifications and trials, he conformed his outer nature to his inner divine being, raising himself till his whole life became divine, then after the supreme sacrifice of himself and his separate will, to the divine will and life, he came forth to teach the multitudes, speaking simply and directly to all, embracing all with a heart of compassion, seeking to bring all to his own divine being and life. From the multitudes who heard him, he chose a few true disciples; chose them chiefly for their readiness to give up all, and come to him; and these, when they had turned their backs on the life of the world, he initiated into his own being and life.

The words which, even to-day, are on the lips, and in the hearts, of the Buddha's true disciples, strike the key-note of his method and purpose: "I come to the Buddha as my refuge; I come to the assembly of disciples as my refuge; I come to his law as my refuge." Here again we have the Master drawing into his life and being the chosen disciples, who are disciples in virtue of that oneness of being with him, and thereafter share the Master's consciousness and the Master's will; these, in their turn, being manifestations of the universal Divine Consciousness and Will, in which the life of the Master rests, as the Son rests in the

life of the Father, and in virtue of whose overshadowing and all-penetrating power the Master is a Master. For it must never be forgotten that it is, in the last analysis, not a question of this Master or of that, but of the One Supreme Eternal, wherein all rest, and whence all beings and all things draw the virtue of their life.

It is quite true that this central reality of the Buddha's teaching was often discussed by the logic-chopping of the Doctors of Theology; so that, more especially, in the Southern Church with its center in Ceylon, there lives rather a travesty of the Buddha's religion than a true presentation of it; and this travesty has been still further travestied by some of our own Positivist Doctors of Science, so that a true presentation of the Buddha's religion, along the line so superbly laid down in *The Creed of Buddha*, is one of the crying needs of the world to-day. Yet even the Southern Buddhists, with all their dryness of thought, repeat the words which are the true key-note of their Master's teaching: "I go to the Buddha as my refuge: I go to the assembly of disciples as my refuge."

But among the more northerly Buddhist nations the spirit of the Master more truly lives. Some of us know, all of us ought to know, the wonderfully luminous and touching record of the spirit of Buddhism in Burma, in Fielding Hall's *Soul of a People*. There breathes the very essence of the life of the Master, as it inspires a reverent and happy people to-day. In Japan, also, there is much of the true life of Buddhism; more, perhaps, than in any other land. We are fortunate in having at hand for quotation, an eloquent article, in *Sunset*, by a Japanese Buddhist, Yone Noguchi, entitled *The Japanese Temple of Silence*:

"I stepped into the desolation of the Temple of Silence, Engakuji of famous Kamakura, that completely awakened temple, under the blessing of dusk; it is at evening that the temple tragically soars into the magnificence of loneliness under a chill air stirred up from the mountains and glades by the rolls of the evening bell. I had journeyed from Tokyo, the hive of noise, here to read a page or two of the whole language of silence which, far from mocking you with all sorts of crazy-shaped interrogation marks, soothes you with the song of prayer. In truth, I came here to confess how little is our human intellect. I slowly climbed the steps and passed by many a *tatchu* temple like Shonei An, Zoroku An—dear is this name of Tortoise Temple—and others which serve as vassals to great Engakuji, and finally reached the priest hall to learn to my no small delight that the opening ceremony of Dai Setshin, or 'Great Meeting with Spirit,' was going to be held that night. . . .

"The chamber, although it was quite dark already, could be seen to be wider than fifty mats; and here and there I observed that the

*Koji's* or laymen were taking their own places, doubtless communing in their souls with the silence which does not awe you, but to which you have to submit yourself without a challenge, with a prayer. Silence is not here a weapon as it might happen to be in some other place; it is a gospel whose unwritten words can be read through the virtue of self-forgetting. . . .

"All the priests stood and read the *dharani* of Great Mercy, and ended with their vows of consecration:

"We vow to save all unlimited mankind;

"We vow to cut down all the exhaustless lusts;

"We vow to learn all the boundless laws;

"We vow to complete all the peerless understanding. . . ."

"Here are mountain, river, flower, grass; the moon is not the same thing with the sun. But the law which forced them to appear to their existence is the same law; to one who understands its true meaning, they are the same thing or the same thing under different shapes. The law is eternal; its power covers the whole world; and yet if you are blinded with your own self, you cannot see it at all. We call it illness of soul to have love fighting with hatred, goodness with badness; and if you do not understand the real state of the law, your silence will be foolishly disturbed. To gain the perfect silence is a triumph; it makes you soar high above your own self and doubt. And it is the expression of the real law of the world and man. By its virtue you can perfectly join with great Nature; then you are Eternity itself. And you are Buddha." Here is the true spirit of the Buddha's religion; a living echo of the sacramental words: "I go to the Buddha as my refuge; I go to the assembly of disciples as my refuge; I go to his law as my refuge."

If time and space allowed, we would willingly write of a great Indian avatar who came after the Buddha, the Master Shankara, from whom came for centuries all that was most living in the Indian Wisdom. He, too, like the Masters whose names we have cited, carried his teaching through many regions, and then, from the multitudes who heard him, chose disciples, whom he initiated into his innermost wisdom, or, to speak more truly, into his very life and being. He insisted, as all the Masters who preceded him had insisted, that these disciples should come forth from the life of the world, that they might enter into his life; that they should put away the perverse personal will and the froward motions of the mind, in order that they might enter into the Divine Will and the Divine Mind, thenceforth forming a part of the Divine Being. These disciples in their turn chose disciples qualified to learn the teaching and lead the life; qualified, most of all, by their willingness to lead the life, to pass from the one life to the other, from the life of the world to the life of the divine, from self-will to the will of the Master.

Somewhat impaired by time, perhaps, yet in unbroken descent from the great Shankara, that line of disciples has descended to our own day, with the same high ideal of luminous wisdom and high purity, the same deep reverence, the same demand for perfect self-sacrifice in the disciple. From the followers of Shankara, the disciples of that line, we have received all the noblest scriptures of India, among the greatest and most inspiring scriptures in the world; receiving, with them, a living tradition, handed down from disciple to disciple, concerning the meaning and significance of much in them that were else perplexing and obscure. And the whole thought of the world, East and West alike, is being enkindled and illumined by the light that comes to us from Shankara and his disciples, a light which is adding new meaning to the records of all religions.

Come we now to the Master within whose "sphere of influence" most of us were born and dwell. He, too, announced himself as an avatar: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life."

The great Western Master used a metaphor of wonderful vividness and force for that oneness of being which unites the disciples to the Master in a single, undivided life: "I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the will of him that sent me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me."

One of his disciples uses another image, and a beautiful one, for the same oneness of being, which brings the disciple into the life of the Master: "Now the Master is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Master is, there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Master, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Master." And this same disciple writes with touching tenderness: "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you."

Another disciple, he who, of those first chosen, was closest to the Master in understanding love, records these words, spoken by the Master, when all the first disciples but this one had died, and the beloved disciple alone remained; once again, the Master is speaking of the oneness of life, wherein the disciple, after he has come forth from the life of the world, becomes one with the Master, and enters into the being of the Master: "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and eye salve to anoint thine eyes, that thou mayest see. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

So from the instances of these great Masters we may learn that the substance of the world's religions is no difficult and complex matter, but is, indeed, supremely simple. It is a question of the life of the Master, and of the disciple entering into the life of the Master, and that life entering into the disciple, so that the consciousness and will become the disciple's consciousness and will; the divine everlasting life of the Master becomes the disciple's true life; he lives in that, and so in the Father, the Eternal. He is a part of the Eternal, Divine Life, and one with all who dwell therein. He is with the Master and in the Master, who is in the Father, the Eternal.

All precepts of all religions have but this one aim, supremely simple, the only purpose in the world worth following, for it alone makes for immortality: the aim, namely, of bringing the disciple to the Master, and fitting him to become one with the Master, to enter into the Master's very life. Therefore the spiritual history of religions is the history of Masters, the history of the Lodge; and the substance of that history, in whatever age, in whatever land, is the union of disciples in and with the Master's life, in a single being, with a single consciousness and will, the same heart's blood and life flowing through all. Churches are, or should be, bodies of disciples, living together, not in the tradition of a by-gone Preceptor, but in the very life and heart and soul of a living Master, and so in the life of the Lodge, wherein all Masters are at one. This oneness of life with the Masters is the supreme and all-important reality of life; and what was possible in the days of Osiris, or Krishna, or Buddha, or Jesus, is possible here and now, for the ages pass but the Masters live for ever.



# FRAGMENTS

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When the days are dark and the shadows gather, then, O beloved Master, we turn to thee.

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Eternal Radiance! send the beams of thy glory into this darkness, and though they show more clearly the towering masses of the storm clouds, yet in thy light shall we also see light; turning adoring eyes and hearts to thee.

Out of the weariness and pain of life we grope with faltering steps upward along those beams. Then, in thy mercy, grant them to us,—we who strive and cry and open mouths of unrelieved complaint, so that our wailings fill the piteous world and leave a mournful undertone in Heaven. Black is this pit and horrible where we have plunged, seeking to find thy will, and serve. O tender Master, hear!

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Lo! He comes. His gathering glory lights the eastern sky. There, where the crosses stand sharp black against its dawn, we see it glow and glow—pale lilac, green, a deepening amethyst, effulgent ruby; then, O miracle, the dazzling wonder of the Golden Rose! From its deep heart the pathway stretches down, rainbowed by angels in vast companies, like wake of heavenly suns on heavenly seas,—or myriad planets clustered in one knot. Dare we, O Radiance, trust these feeble eyes so used to darkness? Yet that light heals blindness, does not cause it. So we look, under the arches of those rainbowed wings, straight to the heart of Life!

O vision marvelous! never to be forgotten or gainsaid. For when we take again the simple round of human life and care we find reflections of it shining back to us, caught in the gold strands of the childrens' hair,—deep in the tenderness of women's eyes,—flaming within the hearts of noble men,—and spreading wide on all the hills and fields of lovely earth.

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And I muse: great is man's power of invocation! He prays, and Heaven showers golden radiance on his head, lights the whole world, and a new earth is born.

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# PATANJALI'S YOGA SUTRAS\*

TRANSLATED WITH A COMMENTARY

By

CHARLES JOHNSTON

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**T**HE Third Book of the Sûtras has fairly completed the history of the birth and growth of the spiritual man, and the enumeration of his powers; at least so far as concerns that first epoch in his immortal life, which immediately succeeds, and supersedes, the life of the natural man.

In the Fourth Book, we are to consider what one might call the mechanism of Salvation, the ideally simple working of cosmic law which brings the spiritual man to birth, growth, and fullness of power, and prepares him for the splendid, toilsome further stages of his great journey home.

The Sûtras are here brief to obscurity; only a few words, for example, are given to the great triune mystery and illusion of Time; a phrase or two indicate the sweep of some universal law. Yet it is hoped that, by keeping our eyes fixed on the spiritual man, remembering that he is the hero of the story, and that all that is written concerns him and his adventures, we may be able to find our way through this thicket of tangled words, and keep in our hands the clue to the mystery.

## TRANSLATION OF BOOK IV, PART I

**1. Psychic and spiritual powers may be inborn, or they may be gained by the use of drugs, or by incantations, or by Meditation.**

Spiritual powers have been enumerated and described in the preceding sections. They are the normal powers of the spiritual man, the antetype, the divine edition, of the powers of the natural man. Through these powers, the spiritual man stands, sees, hears, speaks, in the spiritual world, as the physical man stands, sees, hears, speaks, in the natural world.

There is a counterfeit presentment of the spiritual man, in the world of dreams, a shadow lord of shadows, who has his own dreamy powers of vision, of hearing, of movement; he has left the natural without reaching the spiritual. He has set forth from the shore, but has not gained the further verge of the river. He is borne along by the stream, with no foothold on either shore. Leaving the actual, he has fallen short of the real, caught in the limbo of vanities and delusions.

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The cause of this aberrant phantasm is always the worship of a false, vain self, the lord of dreams, within one's own breast. This is the psychic man, lord of delusive and bewildering psychic powers.

Spiritual powers, like intellectual or artistic gifts, may be inborn: the fruit, that is, of seeds planted and reared with toil in a former birth. So also the powers of the psychic man may be inborn, a delusive harvest from seeds of delusion.

Psychical powers may be gained by drugs, as poverty, shame, debasement may be gained by the self-same drugs. In their action, they are baneful, cutting the man off from consciousness of the restraining power of his divine nature, so that his forces break forth exuberant, like the laughter of drunkards, and he sees and hears things delusive. While sinking, he believes that he has risen; growing weaker, he thinks himself full of strength; beholding illusions, he takes them to be true. Such are the powers gained by drugs, psychic wholly, since the real powers, the spiritual, can never be so gained.

Incantations are affirmations of half-truths concerning spirit and matter, what is and what is not, which work upon the mind and slowly build up a wraith of powers and a delusive well-being. These, too, are of the psychic realm of dreams.

Lastly, there are the true powers of the spiritual man, built up and realized in Meditation, through reverent obedience to spiritual law, to the pure conditions of being, in the divine realm.

## **2. The transfer of powers from one plane to another comes through the flow of the natural creative forces.**

Here, if you can perceive it, is the whole secret of spiritual birth, growth and life. Spiritual being, like all being, is but an expression of the Self, of the inherent power and being of Atma. Inherent in the Self are consciousness and will, which have, as their lordly heritage, the wide sweep of the universe throughout eternity, for the Self is one with the Eternal. And the consciousness of the Self may make itself manifest as seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, feeling, or whatsoever perceptive powers there may be, just as the white sunlight may divide into many-colored rays. So may the will of the Self manifest itself in the uttering of words, or in handling, or in moving, and whatever powers of action there are throughout the seven worlds. Where the Self is, there will its powers be. It is but a question of the vesture through which these powers shall shine forth. And wherever the consciousness and desire of the ever-creative Self is fixed, there will a vesture be built up; where the heart is, there will the treasure be also.

Since through ages the desire of the Self has been toward the natural world, wherein the Self sought to mirror himself that he might know himself, therefore a vesture of natural elements came into being, through

which blossomed forth the Self's powers of perceiving and of will: the power to see, to hear, to speak, to walk, to handle; and when the Self, thus come to self-consciousness, and, with it, to a knowledge of his imprisonment, shall set his desire on the divine and real world, and raise his consciousness thereto, the spiritual vesture shall be built up for him there, with its expression of his inherent powers. Nor will migration thither be difficult for the Self, since the divine is no strange or foreign land for him, but the house of his home, where he dwells from everlasting.

**3. The apparent, immediate cause is not the true cause of the creative nature-powers; but, like the husbandman in his field, it takes obstacles away.**

The husbandman tills his field, breaking up the clods of earth into fine mould, penetrable to air and rain; he sows his seed, carefully covering it, for fear of birds and the wind; he waters the seed-laden earth, turning the little rills from the irrigation tank now this way and that, removing obstacles from the channels, until the even flow of water vitalizes the whole field. And so the plants germinate and grow, first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. But it is not the husbandman who makes them grow. It is, first, the miraculous plasmic power in the grain of seed, which brings forth after its kind; then the alchemy of sunlight which, in presence of the green coloring matter of the leaves, gathers hydrogen from the water and carbon from the gases in the air, and mingles them in the hydro-carbons of plant-growth; and, finally, the wholly Occult vital powers of the plant itself, stored up through ages, and flowing down from the primal sources of life. The husbandman but removes the obstacles. He plants and waters, but God gives the increase.

So with the finer husbandman of diviner fields. He tills and sows, but the growth of the spiritual man comes through the surge and flow of divine, creative forces and powers. Here, again, God gives the increase. The divine Self puts forth, for the manifestation of its powers, a new and finer vesture, the body of the spiritual man.

**4. Vestures of consciousness are built up in conformity with the position of the feeling of selfhood.**

The Self, says a great Teacher, in turn attributes itself to three vestures: first, to the physical body, then to the finer body, and thirdly to the causal body. Finally it stands forth radiant, luminous, joyous, as the Self.

When the Self attributes itself to the physical body, there arise the states of bodily consciousness, built up about the physical self.

When the Self, breaking through this first illusion, begins to see and feel itself in the finer body, to find selfhood there, then the states of consciousness of the finer body come into being; or, to speak exactly, the finer body and its states of consciousness arise and grow together.

But the Self must not dwell permanently there. It must learn to find itself in the causal body, to build up the wide and luminous fields of consciousness that belong to that.

Nor must it dwell forever there, for there remains the fourth state, the divine, with its own splendor and everlastingness.

It is all a question of the states of consciousness; all a question of raising the sense of selfhood, until it dwells forever in the Eternal.

**5. In the different fields of manifestation, the consciousness, though one, is the effective cause of many states of consciousness.**

Here is the splendid teaching of oneness that lies at the heart of the Eastern wisdom. Consciousness is ultimately One, everywhere and forever. The Eternal, the Father, is the One Self of All Beings. And so, in each individual who is but a facet of that Self, Consciousness is One. Whether it breaks through as the dull fire of physical life, or the murky flame of the psychic and passionate, or the radiance of the spiritual man, or the full glory of the Divine, it is ever the Light, naught but the Light. The one Consciousness is the effective cause of all states of consciousness, on every plane.

**6. Among states of consciousness, that which is born of Meditation is free from the seed of future sorrow.**

Where the consciousness breaks forth in the physical body, and the full play of bodily life begins, its progression carries with it inevitable limitations. Birth involves death. Meetings have their partings. Hunger alternates with satiety. Age follows on the heels of youth. So do the states of consciousness run along the circle of birth and death.

With the psychic, the alternation between prize and penalty is swifter. Hope has its shadow of fear, or it is no hope. Exclusive love is tortured by jealousy. Pleasure passes through deadness into pain. Pain's surcease brings pleasure back again. So here, too, the states of consciousness run their circle. In all psychic states there is egotism, which, indeed, is the very essence of the psychic; and where there is egotism there is ever the seed of future sorrow. Desire carries bondage in its womb.

But where the pure spiritual consciousness begins, free from self and stain, the ancient law of retaliation ceases; the penalty of sorrow lapses and is no more imposed. The soul now passes, no longer from sorrow to sorrow, but from glory to glory. Its growth and splendor have no limit. The good passes to better, best.

**7. The works of followers after Union make neither for bright pleasure nor for dark pain. The works of others make for pleasure or pain, or a mingling of these.**

The man of desire wins from his works the reward of pleasure, or incurs the penalty of pain; or, as so often happens in life, his guerdon, like the passionate mood of the lover, is part pleasure and part pain. Works done with self-seeking bear within them the seeds of future sorrow; conversely, according to the proverb, present pain is future gain.

But, for him who has gone beyond desire, whose desire is set on the Eternal, neither pain to be avoided nor pleasure to be gained inspires his work. He fears no hell and desires no heaven. His one desire is, to know the will of the Father and finish his work. He comes directly in line with the divine Will, and works cleanly and immediately, without longing or fear. His heart dwells in the Eternal; all his desires are set on the Eternal.

**8. From the force inherent in works comes the manifestation of those dynamic mind-images which are conformable to the ripening out of each of these works.**

We are now to consider the general mechanism of Karma, in order that we may pass on to the consideration of him who is free from Karma. Karma, indeed, is the concern of the personal man, of his bondage or freedom. It is the succession of the forces which build up the personal man, reproducing themselves in one personality after another.

Now let us take an imaginary case, to see how these forces may work out. Let us think of a man, with murderous intent in his heart, striking with a dagger at his enemy. He makes a red wound in his victim's breast; at the same instant he paints, in his own mind, a picture of that wound: a picture dynamic with all the fierce will-power he has put into his murderous blow. In other words he has made a deep wound in his own psychic body; and, when he comes to be born again, that body will become his outermost vesture, upon which, with its wound still there, bodily tissue will be built up. So the man will be born maimed, or with the predisposition to some mortal injury; he is unguarded at that point, and any trifling accidental blow will pierce the broken joints of his psychic armor. Thus do the dynamic mind-images manifest themselves, coming to the surface, so that works done in the past may ripen and come to fruition.

**9. Works separated by different births, or place, or time may be brought together by uniformity of memory or dynamic impression.**

Just as, in the ripening out of mind-images into bodily conditions, the effect is brought about by the ray of creative force sent down by

the Self, somewhat as the light of the magic lantern projects the details of a picture on the screen, revealing the hidden, and making secret things palpable and visible, so does this divine ray exercise a selective power on the dynamic mind-images, bringing together into one day of life the seeds gathered from many days. The memory constantly exemplifies this power; a passage of poetry will call up in the mind like passages of many poets, read at different times. So a prayer may call up many prayers.

In like manner, the same over-ruling selective power, which is a ray of the Higher Self, gathers together from different births and times and places those mind-images which are conformable, and may be grouped in the frame of a single life or a single event. Through this grouping are visible bodily conditions or outward circumstances brought about, and by these the soul is taught and trained.

Just as the dynamic mind-images of desire ripen out in bodily conditions and circumstances, so the far more dynamic powers of aspiration, wherein the soul reaches toward the Eternal, have their fruition in a finer world, building the vesture of the spiritual man.

**10. The series of dynamic mind-images is beginningless, because Desire is everlasting.**

The whole series of dynamic mind-images, which make up the entire history of the personal man, is a part of the mechanism which the Self employs, to mirror itself in a reflection, to embody its powers in an outward form, to the end of self-expression, self-realization, self-knowledge. Therefore the initial impulse behind these dynamic mind-images comes from the Self, and is the descending ray of the Self; so that it cannot be said that there is any first member of the series of images, from which the rest arose. The impulse is beginningless, since it comes from the Self, which is from everlasting. Desire is not to cease; it is to turn to the Eternal, and so become aspiration.

**11. Since the dynamic mind-images are held together by impulses of desire, by the wish for personal reward, by the substratum of mental habit, by the support of outer things desired; therefore, when these cease, the self-reproduction of dynamic mind-images ceases.**

We are still concerned with the personal life in its bodily vesture, and with the process whereby the forces, which have upheld it, are gradually transferred to the life of the spiritual man, and build up for him his finer vesture in a finer world.

How is the current to be changed? How is the flow of self-reproductive mind-images, which have built the conditions of life after life in this world of bondage, to be checked, that the time of imprisonment may come to an end, the day of liberation dawn?

The answer is given in the sūtra just translated. The true driving-force is withdrawn and directed to the upbuilding of the spiritual body, which shall, in its turn, be transmuted to the finer causal body, and this in turn be changed to the vesture of radiance.

When the building impulses and forces are withdrawn, the tendency to manifest a new physical body, a new body of bondage, ceases with them.

**12. The difference between that which is past and that which is not yet come, according to their natures, depends on the difference of phase of their properties.**

Here we come to a high and difficult matter, which has always been held to be of great moment in the Eastern wisdom: the thought that the division of time into past, present and future is, in great measure, an illusion; that past, present, future all dwell together in the eternal Now.

The discernment of this truth has been held to be so necessarily a part of wisdom, that one of the names of the Enlightened is: "he who has passed beyond the three times: past, present, future."

So the Western Master said: "Before Abraham was, I am"; and again, "I am with you alway, unto the end of the world"; using the eternal present for past and future alike. With the same purpose, the Master speaks of himself as "the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."

And a Master of our own days writes: "I feel even irritated at having to use these three clumsy words—Past, Present, and Future. Miserable concepts of the objective phases of the subjective whole, they are about as ill-adapted for the purpose, as an axe for fine carving."

One feels that there must be something wofully wrong with words that can so far disturb that high, urbane serenity.

In the eternal Now, both past and future are consummated.

Björklund, the Swedish philosopher, has well stated the same truth: "Neither past nor future can exist to God; He lives undividedly, without limitations, and needs not, as man, plot out his existence in a series of moments. Eternity then is not identical with unending time; it is a different form of existence, related to time as the perfect to the imperfect. . . . Man as an entity for himself must have the natural limitations for the part. Conceived by God man is eternal in the divine sense, but conceived by himself man's eternal life is clothed in the limitations we call time. The eternal is a constant present without beginning or end, without past or future."

**13. These properties, whether manifest or latent, are of the nature of the Three Potencies.**

The Three Potencies are the three manifested modifications of the



one primal material, which stands opposite to perceiving consciousness. These Three Potencies are called Substance, Force, Darkness; or viewed rather for their moral coloring, Goodness, Passion, Inertness. Every material manifestation is a projection of substance into the empty space of Darkness. Every mental state is either good, or passionate, or inert. So, whether subjective or objective, latent or manifest, all things that present themselves to the perceiving consciousness are compounded of these three.

**14. The external manifestation of an object takes place when the transformations are in the same phase.**

We should be inclined to express the same law by saying, for example, that a sound is audible, when it consists of vibrations within the compass of the auditory nerve; that an object is visible, when either directly or by reflection, it sends forth luminiferous vibrations within the compass of the retina and the optic nerve. Vibrations below or above that compass make no impression at all, and the object remains invisible; as, for example, a kettle of boiling water in a dark room, though the kettle is sending forth heat vibrations closely akin to light.

So, when the vibrations of the object and those of the perceptive power are in the same phase, the external manifestation of the object takes place.

There seems to be a further suggestion that the appearance of an object in the "present," or its remaining hid in the "past," or "future," is likewise a question of phase, and, just as the range of vibrations perceived might be increased by the development of finer senses, so the perception of things past, and things to come, may be easy from a higher point of view.

**15. The paths of material things and of states of consciousness are distinct, as is manifest from the fact that the same object may produce different impressions in different minds.**

Having shown that our bodily condition and circumstances depend on Karma, while Karma depends on perception and will, the sage recognizes the fact that from this may be drawn the false deduction that material things are in no wise different from states of mind. The same thought has occurred, and still occurs, to all philosophers; and, by various reasonings, they all come to the same wise conclusion; that the material world is not made by the mood of any human mind, but is rather the manifestation of the totality of invisible Being, whether we call this Mahat, with the ancients, or Ether, with the moderns.

**16. Nor do material objects depend upon a single mind, for how could they remain objective to others, if that mind ceased to think of them?**

This is but a further development of the thought of the preceding sūtra, carrying on the thought that, while the universe is spiritual, yet its material expression is ordered, consistent, ruled by law, not subject to the whims or affirmations of a single mind, unwelcome material things may be escaped by spiritual growth, by rising to a realm above them, and not by denying their existence on their own plane. So that our system is neither materialistic, nor idealistic in the extreme sense, but rather intuitional and spiritual, holding that matter is the manifestation of spirit as a whole, a reflection or externalization of spirit, and, like spirit, everywhere obedient to law. The path of liberation is not through denial of matter but through denial of the wills of self, through obedience, and that aspiration which builds the vesture of the spiritual man.

**17. An object is perceived, or not perceived according as the mind is, or is not, tinged with the color of the object.**

The simplest manifestation of this is the matter of attention. Our minds apprehend what they wish to apprehend; all else passes unnoticed, or, on the other hand, we perceive what we resent, as, for example, the noise of a passing train; while others, used to the sound, do not notice it at all.

But the deeper meaning is, that out of the vast totality of objects ever present in the universe, the mind perceives only those which conform to the hue of its Karma. The rest remains unseen, even though close at hand.

This spiritual law has been well expressed by Emerson:

“Through solidest eternal things the man finds his road as if they did not subsist, and does not once suspect their being. As soon as he needs a new object, suddenly he beholds it, and no longer attempts to pass through it, but takes another way. When he has exhausted for the time the nourishment to be drawn from any one person or thing, that object is withdrawn from his observation, and though still in his immediate neighborhood, he does not suspect its presence. Nothing is dead. Men feign themselves dead, and endure mock funerals and mournful obituaries, and there they stand looking out of the window, sound and well, in some new and strange disguise. Jesus is not dead, he is very well alive: nor John, nor Paul, nor Mahomet, nor Aristotle; at times we believe we have seen them all, and could easily tell the names under which they go.”

*(To be concluded.)*

# GOSSIP ABOUT SAINTS

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SINCE good old Butler's *Lives of the Saints* was the orthodox reading for Sunday afternoons, and was the hair shirt of many an active, healthy boy and girl, who longed to be out of doors, a whole host of excellent books dealing with this fascinating subject has been published. Some of these have received mention in the QUARTERLY; very many have not. They will repay reading, not only for religious incentive and edification but for their purely human interest and instruction.

What, for instance, could be more delightful than the story of the simple-minded Cistercian monk who suffered from a grievous temptation. He was overheard threatening the Lord that if He did not remove the temptation he would complain of Him to His Blessed Mother! And the pious old chronicler adds that the Lord accepted the intent of the prayer, and (overlooking its manner), speedily removed the temptation.\*

Then there is the famous story of the abbot Spiridion, which is quoted by Lea in his *History of the Inquisition* to illustrate certain types of religious faith in the middle ages. This good man lived for 104 years and never grew old. He ruled the abbey, which he had founded, with such gentleness, wisdom and love that it became a Mecca for those desiring a monastic life. When finally gathered to his fathers and safely buried in a shrine in the abbey, his remains began to work miraculous cures, and the lame, the halt and the blind came from miles around to seek relief. The peace of the abbey was so disturbed by these growing crowds of worshippers that the new abbot and his chosen councillors had a conference about what they could do to put an end to this interruption of their monastic calm. They decided to address a petition to their sainted abbot.

Whereupon, after High Mass on All Saints' Day the religious walked in procession to the old man's shrine. There, the abbot struck thrice on the stone coffin with his shepherd's staff of rule, and three times he called aloud, "Spiridion! Spiridion! Spiridion!" and begged him, as he had been father and first founder of that monastery, to listen to the grievance which had befallen them in consequence of the miracles he had wrought from his grave. "Make then, we beseech thee, no further sign from thy sepulchre. That is what we ask of thee, expecting it of thy love. But if it be that thou deny us, solemnly we declare unto thee, by the obedience which once we owed thee, we shall unearth thy bones and cast them forth from among us."

Sad to say the holy Spiridion paid no attention to this appeal. His

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\* *Cistercian Legends of the 13th Century.* R. Washburne, London.

followers supposed that he was too busy with the delights of Heaven. Howbeit when they discovered that the miracles continued unabated, they opened the coffin, found the body uncorrupted, carried it to the river bank, and there, amid tears, lamentations and prayers, they burned the remains and scattered the ashes to the four winds of heaven. Naturally the miracles ceased.

This same Spiridion had the gift of inner vision. He knew what every one thought and said, and this gave rise to much trouble in the abbey, for the brethren grew afraid of him. They were abashed at the idea that he knew all their most secret thoughts and that every vain fancy was laid bare to his knowledge. The abbot was quick to perceive this change and he summoned them all to meet him in chapter. Then he addressed them thus:

"Truly it is a grievous and a terrible thing that any man should see with the eyes of the soul more than it is given the eye of flesh to see; and I pray you brethren, beseech the Lord, if it be His will, that the vision be withdrawn from me. So much for myself; but as for you, dear children, why are you grieved? Because it may be that I see you when you think no man sees you? Am I then the only one who sees you? Is there not at least one other—the high God, from whom the hidden man of the heart is nowise hidden? If you do not fear His holy eyes, little need you fear the eyes of any sinful man."

Such a man was the abbot Spiridion. His spirit passed from among men in the hundred and fifth year of his exile, while he was listening to the brothers singing prime. His cheeks suddenly flushed, and thinking he might be in pain, his companions asked if there was aught they could do to relieve him. He replied in a low voice, "When the heart is glad, the face flowers," and a little later he laughed softly to himself, and they knew that his end was gladness.\*

But all the tales are not so pleasing to our modern ears. Take St. Angela of Foligno, a very famous lady, much revered by the faithful. She finds that her mother and husband are in her way, so she prays God to take them from her, and quite naively and candidly says: "In that time, and by God's will, there died my mother, who was a great hindrance to me in following the way of God: my husband died likewise, and in a short time there also died all my children. And because I had commenced to follow the aforesaid way, and had prayed God that He would rid me of them, I had great consolations of their deaths, albeit I did also feel some grief. Wherefore, because that God had shown this grace unto me, I did imagine that my heart was in the heart of God and that His will and His heart were in my heart." !!

Could candour go further? I am afraid that we must accuse

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\* This, and similar stories, are from *A Child's Book of Saints*, by William Canton, published by E. P. Dutton & Co, New York, and J. W. Dent & Son, London. It is a charming little book, written with a grace, delicacy and feeling which go straight to the heart. By all means get and read it. (J. B.)

St. Angela of suffering from what we may call confusion of mind; or perhaps her biographers, pious souls, may have made her do so. The quotation may really have been her graceful way of accepting the great grief which the loss of her family really was to her. That is what I think anyhow. I prefer to think the best about the saints.

Then there are the stories that are hard to believe for other reasons. For instance, one old gentleman was specially famous for levitating when in deep prayer. He would go into the garden to pray and when called to his dinner, his comrades would find him floating around among the trees. They would get the gardener to come with his rake and rake the old man down to earth. It is even said that the gardener grumbled mightily because of this unprofessional duty which was required of him. Now a scientifically trained friend of mine refuses to believe this anecdote. He talks learnedly about the law of gravitation and that if prayer could neutralize the weight of the body it would fly off into space at the rate of 20,000 miles a second. I do not wonder that a mind filled with facts like that finds it difficult to believe in levitation. But I believe in it, especially now that we know that there is no such thing as weight; that matter is only swirls in the ether; and I can see no reason why some condition of ecstasy should not so change the polarity—whatever that means (Huxley used to say that whenever he came across that word in a book, he shut the book up, for it did not mean anything save unscientific thinking!)—that the body could float in air. Anyhow I believe it does. I believe the old monk levitated; that he had to be raked down by the gardener, and I especially believe that the gardener grumbled. That is the touch of verisimilitude which makes the entire story credible.

St. Theresa says she levitated, and I believe everything she says. She tells of some experiences of her own; how, when going to pray before the High Altar, she would make two of her nuns kneel beside her to hold her down, because, when absorbed in prayer she had a tendency to float away and she disliked the notoriety and fuss which that created. Even modern people levitate. It is a not uncommon phenomena among Buddhist monks today.

The austerities and physical tortures of the saints are not so pleasant a side of their histories. Some of these are almost incredible. I have already spoken in the *QUARTERLY* of dear old St. Peter of Alcantara who only slept an hour and a half every twenty-four hours, ate once in three days, and who, in his later years, "looked like the gnarled roots of old trees"! Henry Suso slept for years on a plank through which he had driven many nails. Yes, scoffer, he turned the plank over and slept on the points, for he was all bloody when he got up after his *rest!* He did many other similar things, too, until one day an inner voice told him to stop all that silliness; that it was his duty to keep his body strong and well so that it would be a fitting instrument for his soul.

Simeon Stylites, as we all know, spent forty years on the top of a column of a ruined temple, exposed to the icy blasts of winter and the no less dreadful summer sun. Once, in the middle of his self-imposed martyrdom, he was told that the Bishop wished him to come down. Instantly, he let down the cord, used to raise his food, and asked them to pass him up a ladder. But he was allowed to stay, and finally to die on his lonely perch. He had scores of imitators. Indeed, the "pillar hermit" became such a nuisance that finally this form of religious penance was forbidden.

In *The Paradise of the Fathers* by Palladius, recently translated from a very old Coptic manuscript by Prof. Budge of the British Museum, we find a series of anecdotes and histories of the early Christian cenobites in Egypt. Palladius did not actually meet St. Anthony, for the famous saint died before he arrived in Egypt, but he met several men who had known Anthony and who could give him first hand information. Dear old St. Anthony, made known to us by the countless number of pictures of him and his temptations, must have been most unattractive, for he entirely eschewed the use of water, externally, and only used a very limited quantity to drink. At the height of his fame, and when an old man, he was so bothered by disciples and those who came to seek his advice, that he had some of his friends lower him into a crevice in the rock and fill in the hole with big stones. He stayed there for seven years. Once every six months disciples would come, remove a stone and lower him a bundle of bread. Curiously enough this kind of existence seems to conduce to longevity. He lived to be a hundred or thereabouts, 104 I think it was, and one cenobite of the same period lived to be 116. As he entered the religious life when only a boy, it means that for a hundred years he practiced this kind of asceticism.

I sometimes wonder whether a little more mortification of the flesh and a little less love of comfort, would not be good for us modern saints who have such a contempt for the older forms of asceticism. I should not like to be thrown to the lions, or sawed in half lengthwise, or broken on the wheel; nor do I crave forty years on a column, three feet in diameter (poor old Simeon had not the room to lie down at full length), or sixty years, without washing, in a hole four feet square in the desert. (Anthony had not space to stand upright.) But might there not be a happy medium between these two extremes; their extreme abuse of the body and our extreme care for it?

I often wonder what they did to pass the time away. I wonder about this in the case of all religious, who live a secluded, monastic life, and the only conclusion I can come to is that after awhile, by means of meditation and prayer, their consciousness enters some state where time, as we know it, does not exist, and that they can remain in such a condition for hours or days together without fatigue either to mind or body. There must be something of the kind, otherwise insanity would be the

inevitable result. And it is on record, time out of mind, that these heroes of religious devotion not only do not become insane, but get wiser and wiser as they grow older. St. Anthony was sought by thousands of eager disciples after sixty years of ceaseless mortification.

One of the curious things about the stories of the saints—the *stories* of the saints, mind you, not the saints, which is a very different thing—is the amount of interest they take in their mortal remains after they have gone to Heaven. One would imagine, that, like Spiridion, they would be fully occupied with what they would find there. But no. There are scores of tales of how they resented indignity to and neglect of their bones. Woe betide the careless sacristan if they have a chance to get even with him. Death by slow torture is not too great a punishment for so heinous a crime.

In the year 1280 a monk named Terlac, went to see his relatives in Cologne, and obtained by his prayers the bodies of two holy Virgins from the church of St. Ursula. Laden with his great treasure, he was beset by a robber from whom he had great difficulty in escaping. That night the robber dreamed a dream. He saw two beautiful maidens standing by him. One said, speaking to the other, "Who is this?" Her companion answered, "This is the man who was not afraid to threaten the monk who was carrying our relics." Then the other replied, "What shall we do with him?" The robber saw then a great fire, into which he thought he might be thrown on account of his great iniquity, he therefore fell down at their feet and humbly beseeched their pardon, which was indulgently accorded him. Filled with joy at having escaped the fire, he awoke, went at once to the Bishop and confessed his sins. The story ends, "Happy are those that love Jesus and venerate His saints, for He will not let them be injured."

Now this is the type of story which I do *not* believe. The poor saints are dead and cannot deny such libels, so I do not hesitate to come forward and do it for them. I do not believe that the saints cared anything about their cast off bodies, and I am sure that these stories are pure, or impure, fabrications.

You all must have heard of Serapion and his companion monks, who ventured forth in a cockle-shell boat nearly a thousand years ago, from their abbey of the Holy Face in Ireland, and voyaged for seven years in the Western seas. They visited Greenland, Newfoundland, the coast of the United States and several of the islands in the great Atlantic, burying one of their number on what is probably one of the Bermudas. All this is written in the Golden Missal of the abbey, but the time had not come for the discovery of America so their tales received no credence. Familiar, too, is another legend, but it bears repetition.

Once upon a time in the very early days there was a huge giant of a man, so large and so strong that he vowed he would only serve the greatest king in the world. He journeyed forth to find this king, and

after many adventures came to a court of a very powerful monarch, who said that he himself was the most powerful king in the world and that every one feared him. The giant stayed and served, but one day seeing the king turn pale, he asked the reason. The king replied that he had thought of Death and that he was afraid of Death. Finding that there was one of whom his lord was afraid, named Death, the giant fared forth again to seek for this still greater monarch. He travelled far and wide until one day, in the desert, he came across a troop of horsemen, at whose head rode a wonderful being, whose face was full of majesty and power. Delighted, he asked the leader for his name, and was answered, "Death, of whom all men are afraid." Here, then, was the king he sought, so he followed and served him for many weeks.

But one day, riding along the road, they came to a crucifix, and the giant noticed that Death rode round it and seemed perturbed. Inquiring why, he was told that there was one who had conquered death. Sorrowfully the giant took his leave of Death and set forth once more upon his wanderings. He journeyed far and wide until one day he came across a hermit in the desert. He told his story to the hermit and the holy man in turn tried to explain that the only being greater than Death was Christ who had died to save us. But the giant did not understand. He had never heard of Christ. He asked the Hermit how he could find the Great King who had conquered Death, and the Hermit, finding him too simple-minded to comprehend, said that if he would go to a river near by, where there was a ford, and help wayfarers to cross the river, he might, in time, find his great King.

The giant did so. He built himself a hut upon the shore of the river and for many, many years helped travellers across the ford. One very stormy night, when the river was in flood, and he was sitting in warmth and comfort in his hut, he heard a child's voice calling him by name. He paid no attention at first, but the cries became urgent and finally he went out and found a young boy who said he must cross that night and who begged the giant to help him. At first the giant refused. He said the river was too high and the passage would be dangerous. But the child pleaded and finally the giant mounted him on his back and plunged in. The river was worse than he thought and as he moved forward the weight of the child grew unaccountably until the giant felt that he had the whole world on his shoulders. He became exhausted and almost overwhelmed. Finally, realizing his great need, he cried, "Great King, whom I have sought so long, now, if ever, is the time to help me."

Immediately the boy on his shoulder leaned forward, and in a voice of surpassing sweetness, said: "I am thy King, whom thou seekest, and the burden thou findest so heavy are the sorrows of mankind." But the weight disappeared and the giant was able to stagger to the further shore. He thrust his staff into the ground and dropped exhausted. When he



awoke, he found that his staff had taken root and blossomed: and this is the story of Offero, since then called St. Christopher, he who carries Christ, the patron saint of travellers, whose image we put on our automobiles to ward off accidents; and of all the legends of the saints, it is one of those I like best, even if I cannot believe it.

Very sweet and very human are the stories of the appearance of the Christ child to some of the saints. Here is one of the quaintest. In the monastery of Ramey there was a nun named Ida of Lewes, who had many visions and the gift of miracles. The child Jesus used often to appear to her. Once the Virgin appeared to her with her Child in her arms. She presented Him to Ida, who received Him and rejoiced sweetly in His embrace. It was during a service of Vigils and it came to Ida's turn to intone a psalm, which, according to the Cistercian Rule, may only be done with the arms hanging down at full length on either side. "She thought therefore, in herself, what she might do, for if she held the Child in her arms she would break the statutes of the Order. She therefore said to our Lord, 'Take care of yourself, now, for I must satisfy the rules of the Order.' She accordingly let down her arms, full length, standing in ceremony to intone the verse. The holy Child meantime threw His arms around her neck, and so clung to her till the verse was sung. Ida on her part sang the verse better than usual with her, and then, sitting down, took the holy Child on her lap, filled with the sweetest consolations."

Is not that dear? And there are others; but I can only give one more, or the Editor will accuse me of undue annexation of his space. Let me conclude by saying that we must not think that holiness and sweetness are products only of bygone times. There is an old Curé alive in France today, whose gentle piety and loving heart compare favorably with any of the saints of old. They tell of him that, after Mass, while his housekeeper was giving him his dinner, she asked him if he had noticed that one of the parishioners had gone to sleep. The Curé said that he had done so, and had been very much distressed, and had redoubled his prayers so that he might absorb *all* the attention of the good God, and He would not have time to notice the careless Jean. I love this story! And I only hope that my readers have had one-half the pleasure in reading my little chronicle, that I have had in writing it.

JOHN BLAKE.

# THE HIDDEN LIFE OF THE SOUL\*

*"And he worshipped him."* St. John ix, 38.

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## PROPER LESSONS

Proverbs i.

St. John ix.

THE blind beggar of Jerusalem is a noteworthy exception to the many wretched folk who received benefits from the Master. Often His miraculous word or touch awakes no response. Those who have suffered poignantly rejoice with selfish exultation at freedom from disease or sorrow. But they are too absorbed in personal life, in the small circle of their selfish interests, to spare a thought or inquiry about the Stranger. They have gained relief from certain troubles. They resume the daily round, the common task. Content with this improvement in the condition of life here on earth, they altogether lose the great gift which He had come to give—a new life wholly independent of material conditions, eternal, in the heavens. True, His extraordinary deeds caused amazement that from time to time brought an impulsive declaration to the lips of bystanders. St. John records, however, that of the many who thus believed on His name "Jesus did not trust Himself unto them, for that He knew all men." Impulse is inconstant. The Royal Way of the Holy Cross which He should unfold to disciples requires steadfast perseverance. He would not take unto Himself as disciples those whose belief was momentary, excited by surprise. Another exception that comes to mind, along with the blind beggar, is the Samaritan leper whose gratitude is mentioned by St. Luke. His nine companions went along with no thought of anything due for the unexpected alms. They were engrossed in their own designs. The loathsome and isolating plague was at an end. They could now return to their daily life of ambition and competition. It is noteworthy that the only leper of the ten to display the finer human virtues of courtesy and gratitude and to show consciousness of the Divine Power that rules and guides the world, was an outcast—one little better than a heathen, a Samaritan, who would have no part in the clannish kingdom which priests and Pharisees awaited as reward for ceremonial punctiliousness.

A wide interval separates the Samaritan leper from the blind beggar—the interval between gratitude and worship, between what is human and divine. The Samaritan did glorify God; but it was a God far off and vaguely known. God-in-flesh stood before him—unrecognized. The leper is shaken with emotion; he bows his head to the feet of the strange Almogiver; he has no words to express his indebtedness. He is sincerely,

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\* A sermon for the twenty-third Sunday after Trinity.

profoundly, lastingly grateful. The beggar did more. He recognized *God with him*—Emmanuel. "And he worshipped him."

The incident is one of the rare joyful occurrences in the lonely exile of the great Prince. So many efforts of those He had helped and who desired to show appreciation of His strange loving power were like inarticulate cries of animals or young children; efforts full of tenderness and gratitude, the noblest offering of the heart, yearning. Nevertheless these efforts made Him see how very very helpless were these young babes of His; they touched again His limitless compassion. Such an offering was the vase of perfume—an act of devotion that makes the woman's memory sweet wherever the Gospel is preached. Compassion, pathos, tears (not of sorrow but of beauty)—her act of yearning affection does not lift beyond these human feelings. She anointed His body for the grave. But the blind beggar entered the shrine of the Sacred Heart. He had just spoken the great words in the temple: "My teaching is not mine but his that sent me. If any man willeth to do his will, he, shall know of the teaching whether it is of God or whether I speak from myself. I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life. If a man keep my word, he shall never taste of death. Before Abraham was born, I am." The response to His call is stones lifted against Him. Do you think He grieved over the harm and insult intended? He was in the world not to seek His own glory but His Father's. He departed from the Temple not sorrowful on His own account but over men who named His Father with their lips while in their heart they hated him—knowing only their own father, a murderer and liar. In sorrow over His Father's dishonored name, He comes upon the beggar. Do you not see why the meeting is one of exalted joy? It was Christ's love for the Father that set Him apart from men, though it was the sole purpose of His life to make all men joint heirs with Himself of the Father's peace and joy. The beggar understood. As he kneeled in silent adoration of the Son of God, Christ's sorrow and loneliness ended. His solitary, flaming love for the Father is at last shared; being shared, it is doubled, and leaps in livelier flames. His loneliness ends. He becomes one with the beggar in an ecstasy of adoration. Christ with veiled eyes and the beggar at His feet worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. The woman with the precious perfume, the sisters of Lazarus, Peter, Thomas, most of the Twelve were little infants sheltered in the Master's hands. St. John, too, felt those hands but not as a speechless babe. His Master's love for him was not compassionate love protecting inarticulate weakness; it was the manly sympathy of a friend that calls forth answering love and sympathy. The fourth Gospel is proof of St. John's understanding love. The beggar, in a measure, understood, as St. John did, the mystery of Jesus. "These are written," the beloved disciple puts in, toward the end of his Gospel, "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God."

Now listen to the narrative of the beggar. "Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on Him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him."

One must surely ask: What is it that makes the blind beggar differ from the throngs that were healed and fed? Why were the scribes and Pharisees moved to stone Jesus, versed as they were in the prophets, and punctilious for the Law; while an ignorant mendicant attained to that union in which, Christ said, all true disciples would have part? The answer is simple. The multitude, scribes, priests, and people were absorbed in the life around them; their attention and consciousness were centered upon the external world and their share in its events. The beggar's consciousness was not centered in external life but in The Hidden Life of the Soul. The harvest of one is worship—of the other, hatred that crucifies. It is worth while to consider somewhat those contrasted modes of life.

The scribes, if one may use that word to include all those opposed to Christ, saw only with their bodily eyes. The finer vision which discerns "the deep things of God" was not theirs. "The invisible things of him from the creation of the world" were not manifest to them—only the visible. Their desires and hopes were limited to things temporal. Of the eternal they had no surmise. They were wretched victims of materialism. Their ambitions and satisfactions concerned only the *soma psychikon*; they were ignorant of the being of a *soma pneumatikon* eternal in the heavens. Starting with the premise of materialism their minds worked in the mode of rationalists, and arrived at a reasoned out synthesis of things. Like all material, rationalist, logical systems, their synthesis was a piece of mechanism, devoid of life. In their system, the Deity was not a transcendent and immanent Spirit, making "of one blood all nations of men," giving "to all life, and breath, and all things," and dwelling "not far from every one" in temples not "made with hands." They "changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man." Their deity was really an idol of power only in Jerusalem and its environs, undisposed to moral judgments, but cajoled with the most hollow performance of ceremonies, ablutions, and fasts. Those who presented these heartless offerings were casuistical jugglers, and their motives were mercenary. They desired a certain pay. They would render the least possible service that could win the pay. They were too ignoble to reach the level of Stoicism, the philosophy of lofty-minded rationalists. They demanded compensation for the woes occasioned them by the capricious course of a godless world. They greedily sought full satisfaction for the carnal mind. This satisfaction would be theirs under the reign of an invincible prince who should first

put to the sword threatening enemies, and then sit on the throne with endless fanfaronade. One contemplates the whole horde of scribes, ancient and modern, and then groans with Isaiah: "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood."

The emotions and behavior of this class of men in presence of the mysterious God-Man are not strange. He has none of the accoutrements of the warrior king. Hence His royal claim is madness and blasphemy: "Thou art a Samaritan and hast a devil." Yet, let us be just to them and say they did Him involuntary homage; they quailed before Him. Their eyes saw only the Nazarene whose father and mother they knew. But even their mole-eyed vision caught a something more which they could not name. Revile or stone Him they might. They could not blot from their minds the transcendent majesty that shone from the uncrowned face. They felt His placid sovereignty as Ruler of the Universe, His high indifference to their petty scheme of things; and this feeling enraged them to fury. An ordinary blasphemer making that royal claim would have been treated as one irresponsible in frenzy. Christ's word sounded condemnation in their ears. They sought to establish their innocence by murdering their judge.

Turning from the external life of the materialists, shall we say that the beggar's blindness was the price of his salvation? A fatal answer, that to make *Œdipuses* of us all. For, then, we might with a bare bodkin make one moment of sharp pain end all the lifelong struggle after righteousness and peace. A rose-leaved path leading to heights celestial, not the stony mountain-side! Let us try to trace the path of the beggar's spirit. He had lived through an experience like Job's in the years before Christ spoke. The questions, doubts, and inner pain of Job were his—and in larger measure. For

'Tis better to have loved and lost  
Than never to have loved at all.

He had no chance to hang the gallery of his mind with pictures of fadeless color. He had never known "the sweet approach of even or morn,"

From the cheerful ways of men  
 Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair  
 Presented with a universal blank  
 Of nature's works.

He passed from the sweet dependency of childhood to greater helplessness in no kindly environ. The moral atmosphere in which he lived is clearly given in the question of Christ's disciples: "Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" That question reflects the ethical teaching of the scribes. This young man sat on the Temple steps as a daily lesson for their profit. His blindness and beggary were the result of sin, his own or his parents'. He suffers for some failure in ceremonial observance. He is outcast, judged of God. Instead of Job's three tormentors, this man has a cityful of self-righteousness and condescension about him. His reaction upon complacent condescension is bitterness, despair and robust protestation. A man, born with men, his right has been filched. Filched! for no act had forfeited it. In dreary monotony he murmurs against the injustice and cruelty of God, till the suggestion comes: Curse God and die. Curses rest upon his lips.

Why died I not from the womb?  
 Why did I not give up the ghost when my mother bore me?  
 Why did the knees receive me?  
 Or why the breasts, that I should suck?  
 For now should I have lain down and been quiet;  
 I should have slept; then had I been at rest,  
 With kings and counsellors of the earth,  
 Who built up waste places for themselves;  
 Or with princes that had gold,  
 Who filled their houses with silver:  
 Or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been,  
 As infants that never saw light.

Suicide plays its lure, but he does not grasp it. He is seeking an issue out of his troubles—suicide is evasion. Poverty twinges him with privation, and the dole comes with a commendation to thank God that his punishments are not worse. Is it wonder that sarcasm, scorn, defiance break from his lips: "It is all one; he destroyeth the perfect and the wicked."

Ah God! could you and I with Him conspire  
 To grasp this sorry scheme of things entire,  
 Would not we shatter it to bits—and then  
 Re-mould it nearer to the heart's desire.

At this point, his physical disabilities cease to torment. For he has passed from outer to inner darkness, from bodily to spiritual beggary. In the moral and spiritual sphere, his eyes can see no light, his soul finds no water for its thirst. Bodily woe cannot symbolize his new anguish. It is not a passive suffering of pain and privation. It is a contest with fiends who mock, and gibe, and sneer, and trample. In that yelping horror of darkness he gropes with lame hands:

Oh that I knew where I might find him  
That I might come even to his seat  
[But] he is not a man as I am  
Neither is there any daysman betwixt us  
That might lay his hand upon us both.  
My soul is weary of my life.

In agony of lamentation he falls upon the ever shifting sand.

and far away  
The phantom circle of a moaning sea.  
A deathlike mist slept over sand and sea.  
And over him the sea wind sang  
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam.

But his cry had "shiver'd to the tingling stars." Over the wild welter of the waves, there now broods a mysterious Spirit. Through the ghastly white darkness there glows a beam. It is not garish day, but the kindly light that leads homeward every pilgrim who follows its ray—the Light that was in the beginning with God and that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

O isplendor di viva luce eterna.  
Hail, holy Light! offspring of Heaven first born!  
Or of the Eternal coëternal beam,  
Bright effluence of bright essence increate!  
Before the sun, before the heaven, THOU ART.

The daysman is there. Lamentation becomes rejoicing. His conversion has begun. He is turned to Godward, and begins to discern the deep things of the Spirit.

I know that my Redeemer liveth,  
And at last he will stand up upon the earth:  
And after my skin, even this body, is destroyed,  
Then without my flesh shall I see God;  
Whom I, even I, shall see on my side,  
And mine eyes shall behold, and not as a stranger.

Like Job's, the beggar's whole-hearted search found God. And like Job, in dying need, his insight (not foresight) discerned the mediator between weakness and Omnipotence. In days past, the beggar had been told of some deity in the sky. Now, God is to him Reality, a fact, the beginning and end of things.

I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear;  
But now mine eye seeth thee.

Henceforth the daily life is peace and joy. What matters the film over his eye, when living Light eternal irradiates his soul? How repine over scant possessions of earth, when lustrous treasure of rustless gold immeasurable is his? Divine Love enfolds him. His mood is blithe. He rejoices in tribulation. His sufferings were not meaningless, "but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." Through blindness and beggary he has found the Living God. Blindness is dear to him—a sweet sister; poverty, his dear lady and bride. He is mirthful. He sings with birds. He keeps festival with wind and rain. He circles in angelic dance. *Hilaritas angelica!*

His festival of joy has a startling interruption. A Stranger stops, touches with vibrant hand, and gives a command that compels obedience. What amazement for the beggar, and what perplexity! Brought suddenly to the busy life of men will his vision splendid fade away into the light of common day? Is his joy but a dream, the Living God a night shadow, and Divine Love a fever-phantom? Is the joy of this world, after all, man's highest good? But who is this constraining Stranger? Undoubtedly He has wrought a miracle; and He is teaching in the Temple, is speaking about God, and is displeasing, even angering the priests and scribes who for so many years had passed the beggar's step with hollow words of cold comfort that plunged his soul in icy waters. Never before in Jerusalem have one's eyes been thus opened. And the Stranger is telling of God's love, of righteousness, of a new life. No man can speak such words, and do unheard-of deeds of good, and be, himself, evil. He must be God's servant as the patriarchs were His servants, Moses, Abraham, Jacob. Or, is He not like the holy men of later times who rebuked kings, people and priests for flagrant evil, and taught of a God other than the idols they cherished. Those prophets were wronged, even stoned, by the priests and people whose hypocritical lip service their holy lives condemned. Without doubt, this Stranger is of their company—a new messenger sent by God to His erring people, if haply they might turn from their wickedness and live. How fearlessly the beggar pulls down the screen of false zeal behind which the Pharisees are sheltered! His own experience of God is scientific fact, "mine eye seeth thee." They have no fact—empty words, vaguely heard and thoughtlessly repeated. How His sincerity pricks their full-puffed ar-



rogance and conceit, and leaves them mere nothings. He speaks out clearly, with Apostolic boldness, and almost in the words of Peter and of Paul. "Wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples? Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses; as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is. The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvelous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes. Now we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth His will, him he heareth. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing." A second time he is outcast from the company of the righteous. But, condemned of men, he is accepted of God. Again the compelling voice speaks. What is this Stranger? Whence that majesty which awes, though so strangely tempered with humility? Whence that austere affection, strong to upbuild? Whence that simplicity as of a friend with his brother? The mystery of Divine Love which already had shone through the night upon the beggar's spiritual vision, now stands, Incarnate, before his eyes of flesh. "MASTER!" "And he worshipped him."

We boast of a Christian civilization, of a Christian nation, and with complacent pride, hold up our virtues as exemplar to the outer society of the unredeemed. Yet, practically, actually, we repudiate the beggar as openly as did his Jewish neighbors. He travelled the Royal Way of the Holy Cross to reach his Saviour. We are content that the Saviour bore the Cross; it is much if we will go to Him in smooth complacency. We call the beggar's obscure life ignominious. His poverty is a disgrace, and his unlettered ignorance a crime. Let us for a little endeavor to attain to candor in the consideration of our motives and ambitions. With what comes from the lip there is no fault to be found. But out of the heart are the issues of life. Our hearts, it may be, are as far estranged from the Desire of all nations as were the arrogant dwellers' of Jerusalem.

We worship success—visible, tangible success, that calls forth applause or envy from our fellows. We care nothing for the judgment that takes place behind the veil of things, for the scale of values by which Eternity weighs and estimates. We know the standard of those in our line or vocation; we desire their notice, and we shape our acts to win it. If our interest, for example, chance to be intellectual, we turn from other standards than the intellectual. We condescend to pity the sordid aims of finance and the crooked way of the politician; we keep white plumes on our heads, and laboriously travel the highway toward truth. That motive is there, but also another motive; that each may be the fortunate discoverer of the coveted item of truth, that each may be acclaimed by his colleagues as the fortunate discoverer. A world of

pedants! it conceals under a white front the bickerings and jealousies of the footlights. As the wings of the years wax weaker for flight, and the scholar surveys his gain, there is the secret loathing of Faust.

Habe nun, ach! Philosophie,  
 Juristerei und Medizin  
 Und leider! auch Theologie  
 Durchaus studiert, mit heissem Bemühn.  
 Da steh ich nun, ich armer Thor!  
 Und bin so klug, als wie zuvor.

The hard-won ingots and nuggets are up-piled to feast the eye; they prove *Tiergeripp und Totenbein*. The man is successful, he has won a large share of the intellectual world; but he has forfeited his life.

So in all the businesses and vocations. Fevered toil after fortune is too commonplace to be touched upon. We know successful fortune builders. The beggar of Jerusalem would change places with none of them. "Men bow before them, stare and shout round them, crowd after them up and down the streets; build palaces for them, feast with them at their tables' heads all the night long; the soul stays long enough within to know what they do, and feel the weight of the golden dress on its shoulders, and the furrow of the crown-edge on the skull." They are successful, they are renowned. They have gained a goodly share of the world of money, but they have forfeited their life.

The Church, too, worships success. There was a period when her teachings guided and governed life. Men found her treasure priceless, satisfying as no other possession, to be found only within her walls. In moments of passion or caprice, they sometimes violated her laws. For such trespasses they submitted to most humiliating public penances, in order, finally, to regain the treasure they had lost. They separated from the steadfast, and kneeled in precincts far from the holy altar; or remained for years, for life even, outside the porch, in harsh as well as kindly weather, that thus, by manifest contrition, they might once more, at death, receive the comfortable food of the Body and Blood. Where to-day is her fruitful discipline? Who would heed her stern correction? If she is no longer feared, it is because she has lost the treasure that made her loved. The Church has forgotten that she is in the world to guide men out of the ways of the world. To transform the world is difficult; in cowardice, she has conformed. The spiritual discipline of her children, the Hidden Life of the Soul, is not her concern. She has unlearned her Master's method to accept the world's—success, numbers, concrete material extension to conceal her inner void. For her enterprises she accumulates, and wins the world's applause. What profit if the Church gain the whole world—heathendom, Mars, all the planets—and forfeit her own life. Shall she be presented in

rich apparel to her Bridegroom, and be spurned because the life that is in her is death?

Let us all, secular and clerical, free ourselves from the glamor of success. Let us turn from the things seen of men (they have their reward) to the hidden things known of God. Let us leave success to the rulers and Pharisees while with the beggar we quietly and joyfully live the Hidden Life. Let us take up a cross and follow our Saviour's path.

In consequence of aiming at success, contemporary society, and the Church along with it, has come to look upon poverty as disgrace. The hope is cherished of removing the disgrace by reconstructing society upon the principles of socialism. The effort is un-Christian and futile. It is contrary to the law which pious investigation has disclosed as the divine law, ordained by God, governing all manifested life—the law of growth. Life, growth, evolution are synonymous. So long as one deals with mechanism, one can devise a whole that is an aggregation of equal parts—as a ten-inch cubic block is formed of one thousand equal one-inch blocks. But with life comes change, growth. An organism is not an aggregate of exactly similar and equal parts. It is a unit composed of differentiated members. The more abundant the life, the more complex is the organism and the greater is the diversity of its members and their functions. It was organic unity—the rich simplicity that arises out of complexity—that Hooker opposed to the mechanical unity of the Puritans—the simplicity of impoverishment. In maintaining organic against mechanical unity and simplicity Hooker went back to New Testament doctrine. No part of the teaching is more familiar than the figure of the body and its members. Some are for noble, others for less comely service, but all are necessary to one another and to the living whole which feels in every part the suffering of any one member. Society is a living organism like the human frame or the Church. It is “a permanent body composed of transitory parts; wherein, by the disposition of a stupendous wisdom, moulding together the great mysterious incorporation of the human race, the whole, at one time, is never old, or middle-aged, or young, but, in a condition of unchangeable constancy, moves on through the varied tenor of perpetual decay, fall, renovation and progression.” Society is one of the disciplines graciously given by an all-wise and all-loving Father to His precious children. Like every noble organism, it displays extremes of divergence in its members. The splendid and the humble classes of society are necessary, each to each and to the whole. And, as the diverse gifts of the Corinthian converts had one equal source in the Spirit and as the bodily organs are unified by the blood, so, under the surface inequalities of social classes, which alone the socialist can see, Christianity discloses a fine, deep and noble equality. This equality already exists. It is not necessary to manufacture it by reconstructing society. All that is needful is to recognize and live it. It is “*the happiness that is to be found by virtue in all conditions*; in which consists the true

moral equality of mankind, and not in that monstrous fiction which, by inspiring false ideas and vain expectations into men destined to travel in the obscure walk of laborious life, serves only to aggravate and embitter that real inequality which it never can remove; and which the order of civil life establishes as much for the benefit of those whom it must leave in an humble state as those whom it is able to exalt to a condition more splendid but not more happy." Christianity, a spiritual system, will not for a moment admit the utterly material conclusions of socialism. Poverty, yea, beggary is no bar to the highest felicity—the *highest felicity*, here in this present life, and in endless life. Christianity can send back to his owner, Philemon, a runaway Christian slave. The outward relation of servitude is no bar, St. Paul feels, to real unity of spirit; the inner relation does not prescribe a change of the social and civil status. A man's salvation, his happiness, is in no degree dependent upon outer things, environment, circumstances. It is altogether inward, of the heart. Peace does not arise out of possessions, many or moderate. Peace or woe depends upon the attitude of a man's heart toward his Maker, whether it is turned to or from God. Poverty is a gracious, divine gift altogether wholesome for man. The hard pressure of material life pushes man toward the hidden portal of the soul, within which smiles the Holy Land of promise. Great wealth is a similar divine gift, and leads to the same portal. For, when an individual has made his own every delight of earth, and there is no obstacle between a whim and its accomplishment, there rises and increases in intensity a sensation more painful than gnawing hunger—palled satiety, dearth of pleasure through fullness of pleasure. In that killing languor comes the realization of the emptiness of earthly life. And the man of wealth, seeking real and permanent satisfaction, thus reaches the silent portal. The dramatic contrast of poverty and wealth, their one goal, are striking and salutary lessons for the mass of men. But there is nothing more pernicious than the comfortable mediocrity of socialism. It removes pain and pressure, and desires to give man through material means that peace which is a fruit of the Spirit. The individual cannot sink to the profitable lesson of poverty nor rise to the equally beneficial discipline of wealth. He is stationary. He stagnates, he dies.

There is no member of our society to-day who, in view of the Jewish beggar, can plead circumstances as cause of unhappiness. No outward condition can hinder us from worshipping Christ and, in that worship, finding joy. Let us bend all energy to bring men into the devotional way of life. Why delay? Raise them from beggary to comfortable homes; a rain-proof roof does not ensure salvation. Make them heads of business—counting houses do not shelter peace. Give them any amount of earth's treasures; you have not given what satisfies. Why take so long? Give them at once bread of Heaven and water of life.

What has been said of wealth holds also of learning. We are all astray in our idolatry of education. We are worshipping machinery. Probably at no time have such interest and wealth been lavished upon institutions of learning; and probably at no time were there such hordes of uneducated as just now fill society. For many years the public desire has been to put all classes alike, regardless of natural unfitness, through a much vaunted intellectual training that, for most, ends in intellectual paralysis. The red Indian in the Arizona desert must master the New England primer—"O see the trout in the brook!"—though brook-trout mean less to him than to us ethereal crustaceans that await capture in the canals of Mars. But he must learn. His salvation, somehow, depends upon it. The negro must be made an unmenacing member of society by having all arts and sciences thrust into his head. The children of peasant immigrants must learn to

unsphere

The spirit of Plato to unfold  
 What worlds, or what vast regions hold  
 The immortal mind that hath forsook  
 Her mansion in this fleshly nook.

It is ludicrous fallacy. The way of salvation is not intellectual but moral. Truth is learned, not by speculating about the doctrine, but by doing the will. Catherine of Siena could neither read nor write; but through practice of His will power came to her that constrained priests and potentates. Intellectual prowess is a special gift. When guided by the Spirit, a trained intellect is a worthy servant of God. The one Spirit, however, makes diverse gifts. Intellectual poverty no more hinders the laying up of treasure in heaven than did the beggar's empty purse. Without the Spirit's guidance, the intellect makes a Pharisaic end; it is endlessly busied with mint and anise and blind to its Creator. Again the beggar stands as our teacher. Which shall we approve and follow—his ignorance or the learning of the scribes?

Let us turn from the noisy life of the world with its rewards that are seen of men, and give our thought to The Hidden Life of the Soul. Let us end our idolatries. Let us leave off the worship of success, of wealth, of learning, and let us begin to worship Him.

CLARENCE C. CLARK, Ph.D.

# WHY I JOINED THE T. S.

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THE reason that I asked to be permitted to join the Theosophical Society was not as a result of any solicitation whatsoever, direct or indirect, but because, after long years of groping in the dark, I suddenly found myself at home. This phrase may sound cryptic to those in my former state of mind, but even in view of such instruction as I have received and the helpful books I have read it still seems to me that this sums up everything.

My reason may be stated more fully, perhaps, in language at once literal and symbolic; because, through *Meditation* I found *Light on the Path*. These two little books were loaned me. As I had met the author I read Professor Mitchell's brochure first. It interested me. The English seemed clear—really limpid; the thought logical and the thesis worked out. But when I turned back to glance the work over, suddenly it seemed as if I had understood nothing in the book, which I had but a moment before classified as a "pretty little piece of work."

I began to read it again, or, rather, to try to read it, and found that it required the hardest kind of intellectual effort. Word by word, sentence by sentence, I struggled on. The significance and possibilities of *Meditation* as a document of authority and of Meditation as a process of development began to appeal to me. I soon saw that Professor Mitchell's method would give to me a strength I had lacked, would supplement and buttress me in every way; in social relations, in business and in my ambitions. I regretted that I had not known it earlier. Clearly could I see how it made possible much I had hoped for. It illuminated my own mind so that I could see my own errors of the past. Not the errors of morals or character, I mean; but those of policy, thought and more particularly of expression. I felt as any man might feel after listening to conclusive, logical and effective instruction in any branch of science in which the student was interested and the instructor most able.

The first spiritual result of my experience with *Meditation* was to confirm the principal effect of *Talks on Religion*—to make me say, "Religion is a good thing, I must give more time to its consideration. I need its consolation." I also began to try, almost without realizing it, Professor Mitchell's method. Cleverly, as I now perceive, but quite accidentally, I then thought, he suggests to his readers "Duty" as an illustration—naturally "Duty" is used as a test of his method. I thought of duty as he suggested and was surprised at the experience.

The novel effort wearied me, however, and I laid down *Meditation* and took up the other little book, which I now rank reverently with the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer as one of the most divinely

inspired instruments in helping man—I mean *Light on the Path*. It is hard to write down my experience. To those still groping it will be impossible to believe me—to those already on the Path there will be nothing even novel for me to say. But I am told to write and I will try:

Having been brought up in the Protestant Episcopal Church I had received the customary religious education all my life and was supposed to have made due and orderly religious progress until after Confirmation I became a communicant. I therefore know of “Conversion” only by study and at second hand. I am tempted to liken my experience on first reading *Light on the Path*, to being “converted,” yet it was different; was broader, deeper, more permanent. Receiving “illumination” more exactly describes it. By that I mean that it was something like welcoming an old, dear friend of childhood, after years of separation and entire forgetfulness. I suppose now I would call it: the sudden development of power self-consciously to recognize and accept through intuition the ancient doctrine and teachings, both from Within and Without. No—rather would I say: I heard the Voice in the Silence—I was granted a glimpse of the Gates of Gold; I was allowed to stand for an instant in the Presence.

I doubt if I remember in my lower mind the first readings of *Light on the Path*, but I do remember the sensation, the impression, the effect. It positively hurt. I was taken hold of by an outside power and buffeted and beaten. I gasped for breath as I had gasped once before when pulled out, more dead than alive, from the bottom of a lake. It hurt me as it had hurt before. Likewise, I was bewildered, troubled, lost as to everything, and at first felt adrift and then as if anchored. This sounds indistinct and unintelligible, I know, but thereby it more clearly brings out how I felt. I read again and again and each and every time I found something big that I had missed before (and this experience continues daily even now). Then through the loving patience of a friend on this mortal plane the countless questions I asked were answered, and I began to understand that I had seen almost nothing in *Light on the Path* of that which I now found.

I knew that Professor Mitchell was an active member and worker in the T. S.; I knew that my clear-headed business associate and patient teacher was an equally active member and I was informed that these helpful books were typical Theosophical teaching, so, naturally, I thought how much I would like to know more and asked if I might join. This completes the outline of the outward aspect of my joining the T. S. I would like to explain more fully, more intimately, my progress, and what it has done for me. In one way I have told all—in another way nothing.

I was brought up religiously by a mother of whom I could write also as a teacher, because she devoted the best years of her life to the

education of her children in formal school fashion, when circumstances prevented their going to proper schools. At twelve, sorrow came, through my eldest brother's coming down with tuberculosis. For two years he was kept alive by the devotion of his mother and another saint on earth—a member of the family who came to it as a servant and who was one of its most cherished members until she died, after forty-two years of self-sacrificing, self-obscured, untiring devotion. When my brother died I was fourteen and an intellectual rebel. I thought then that I had seen prayer fail and God prove faithless to his part of the undertaking, so I discarded Him and built up my own concept of the Universe and its laws, basing everything on the Laws of Physics, more particularly those relating to the correlation and conservation of energy and matter, and, especially, Newton's second law, that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction—which I still believe but with Faith.

I found Emerson at sixteen and approved of him! At seventeen my father died and that year I went permanently to work, beginning on a newspaper, after having had two long summers' experience as a rodman in a railroad organization and one summer in construction work in a chemical mill. Then that splendid old Puritan of an Anglican Catholic, the Rev. Walker Gwynne, my Rector, asked me why I had not been confirmed. I told him because I could not accept the doctrines of the church. I said I would like to talk the matter over with him and argue out the question (as I had often enjoyed doing with several of the Protestant clergy), and I would gladly be confirmed if he could convince me. I did not note the grimness of Mr. Gwynne's manner when he made the appointment, but I was no sooner in his study than I knew! I was told I was a conceited small boy and forbidden to set my puny understanding and mind against my father (who had been an ardent churchman) and Mr. Gwynne. There was no argument that evening, only the rigorous "dressing down" of a truly conceited youngster. I was told to accept Authority and I did and was confirmed in due time. I joined the various church organizations and became an active worker and thoroughly enjoyed my religion. I explained away my own doubts by calling myself an "Emersonian Episcopalian" and did not think as hard as I had been doing, but just enjoyed. Only one great doubt persisted: I could not bring back the ideal of individual immortality, which, by the way, I did not accept again until I became a Theosophist or rather, as I would prefer to put it, a beginner in the study of Theosophy.

When I was twenty-one I lost my joy through a single remark. I was dining with a couple whom I loved and respected. The man is one of the noblest men I know; of international eminence as a student and a producer. I was speaking of the pleasure in religious belief and my host answered: "Ah! yes, if one only can forget one's Reason"—it



was not so much the words as the bitter pain, the infinite regret, in his voice. I felt as if my mooring had been cut when I was at anchor in a tidal river—one moment I had been at rest; the next I was tossing about on an angry current, being carried out to a dark and uncharted sea.

For nearly seventeen years I was adrift. I could always bring back the religious joys but I feared them as emotionalism. I found in sociological and economic work that there is a positive need of religion, especially in the present phase of our civilization. I kept up my church connection and irregular attendance; partly from habit and partly from a weak but undying, unexpressed, blind and faint Faith, which I hardly understood.

*Talks on Religion* helped me but the help was intellectual not spiritual. I would argue the need of religion though I felt it not. A chance passage in the school history of my childhood had come back to me and had brought comfort: I had recalled that the ancient Egyptian worship was in three degrees—an inner circle where a beautiful and pure philosophy was taught and accepted by the very few; a highly ritualistic, highly organized church for the classes; and idolatry for the great masses in which the symbol of the philosopher became the object of worship by the people.

It was the acceptance of this principle of organization that saved me from feeling a hypocrite when I kept up my church affiliations and followed its forms. Also I saw that there always had been religions and that all religions agreed absolutely in the fundamentals, but there was no note of personal appeal to me.

Through it all I even wanted to enter the ministry, though my acceptance of religion was purely intellectual and not based on faith and was not personal to myself, except the craving for service.

I cannot say when it was that I first began to feel that my life was being shaped for a purpose—either an early death, as a fulfillment, or fruition rather, of wide experience in all forms of sensation; or else for some big purpose of service or power. I believed it even when I jested about it. I believed it even when I had no real Faith in anything else save this thing I called "my Fate." I believe it still, but limited to service only, for with Theosophy has come a truer sense of proportion.

One thing did come to me in these years: A great respect for Jesus' wisdom. Each year the Sermon on the Mount grew in my estimation! I grew to appreciate and respect the sublime Common Sense I found therein, and this was years before I was to know that the Sermon on the Mount is the expression of our Lord's Doctrine for his Disciples. Like most readers of the Bible I took it for granted that it was the teaching to the multitude in spite of the clear reading of the text. I am to-day more of a Rationalist than I ever have been, yet I see as an end to Rationalism only one thing—Faith; faith in the soul within us;

faith in its power of growth; faith, absolute Faith in religion, and the Power of God through the Masters.

There was another signboard that I knew not then: I was thrown with many men of power and prominence in affairs, in business, in science. I found all of them in absolute agreement in certain conclusions. From wherever they started—history, mathematics, chemistry, astronomy, astro-physics, engineering, Army and Navy service, both in peace and in war, law, medicine, theology—each man accepted idealism as a philosophic base and each bowed to a First-Cause, an Ultimate, the Irreducible, the Over-Soul—Whatever one might call Him—and each approached Him with reverence. I found many, many spokes of thought but they all centered on the same Hub.

My Fate brought me the greatest of happinesses vouchsafed to man, but I did not subdue certain tendencies and habits I knew were wrong even as I yielded to them. I felt I was inviting disaster. In short I sinned knowingly. I had long seen, in my close observance of life, that there is no such thing as an accident. I had long seen as a rational man that every misfortune may be traced to a mistake. The inevitable happened and my happiness turned to sorrow. I was given comfort by the help of an older member of the T. S., to whom I shall ever be grateful, and by the desire to be worthy of the ideal I had lost.

But I was only brave, not at peace. When peace was given unto me it was after I had taken up Theosophical study and had believed with faith and understanding and was open to the real inspiration of the soul who had brought to me happiness and to the sweet counsel of those whom I now seek to follow.

One of my friends, a noted Episcopal clergyman, to whom I have lent Theosophical books and passed on some of the teaching given to me, said recently "but why call it Theosophy? Why isn't it Christianity?"—it is, it seems to me, for it is the Truth, and Christ's teachings are one way of expressing the Truth. I am only a Christian, only a Churchman, because I am a Theosophist. I find in Theosophy the Key to Christ's teaching which a formal church had lost. To be a true follower of Christ I now believe one must consciously be a Theosophist and that there is but one Path which many follow, speaking different tongues.

It would have interested my old observing self to see that the remark which once cut me adrift is now my comfort: "Ah, yes, if one only can forget one's Reason" was what once unsettled me. To-day I rejoice that while I believe, yet my faith is based upon Reason. This I know, but "Before the voice can speak in the presence of the Masters it must have lost the power to wound." And in this activity, in fact perhaps for many activities, I shall be unable adequately to express that which the "I" within me knows and understands. The sweet reasonableness of Theosophy is what has most appealed to me. After I felt I wanted to

join the T. S. I asked for more books and before I had expressed my desire I was given *Fragments* by Cavé. This brought to me great consolation and proved to be a hand-book for the better understanding of *Light on the Path*.

The lesson of Death became somewhat comprehensible. With these books, oral instruction and attendance at only a few meetings of the Theosophical Society has come an understanding of, and a love for the New Testament, such as years of church membership never gave me. In this materialistic age it may be surprising to admit the guiding of what was once called a Personal Providence and the old concept still seems to me illogical. But once grasp the idea of the Lodge and all becomes simple. It seems to me that if any man will merely study his own life he will find proof of the work of the untiring Helpers. With the free-will that marks our having been part of the Divine Consciousness, the Helpers can only help and guide, not mold and make. Conscience ceases to be a symbol and becomes a fact, but we should listen for the Voice in the night. Not only symbolically, but literally, "Before the ear can hear it must have lost its sensitiveness." This I venture to interpret in terms of sensation—which we must put aside.

I used to consider myself an "utilitarian idealist" and to deny the existence of abstract right and wrong, yet always I knew I lied. Study with loving criticism any life, any period of history even, and view it without envy, hatred and malice or any form thereof, and soon one will note evidences of a Divine Plan, and of Absolute Right and of Wrong; never utter wrong but ever remediable wrong.

I have become a child and, alas for my desire to help others as I have been helped, I see and speak as a child, so to those not ready I may give no proof that what I call reason is reason. I realize this as I strive to make clear that which I comprehend but cannot express.

Take the laws of physics, take the recent work in chemistry, talk with the great electricians and see the Truth that is also to be found in history, in art, in poetry, in any life. Even before I found peace I noted these things. Try to carry any theory of negation to its ultimate reasoning and you reach the same goal arrived at by any profession of faith.

The trouble is that we linger upon the non-essentials. I might have hesitated to break with the Church in which I had been reared, but when in the T. S. I found that rarest manifestation of brotherhood, a willingness to allow me to believe what I pleased and in my own way, my last doubt vanished. Just as the Funeral Service, which so recently had wrung my heart, was made something of beauty and a source of comfort, so I found in the T. S. true Christianity; such Christianity as I had doubted but longed for, in an organization I had heretofore regarded with an idle interest, a kindly and patronizing amusement. To-day I would resent this attitude in others were it not that I am learning tolerance—not the pitying tolerance that had kept Unitarianism from ever appealing to

my mind, but a tolerance that is real and absolute, and only to be found in the Theosophical Society. So far as I have noted no religious, scientific or political body in any land, that I have ever heard or read of, offers to its members such benefits, such tolerance, so little restraint, so much true freedom, so much real, personal help.

So when I came to investigate the T. S. I found first that it is rock-  
rested on Faith; that it is truly scientific and based upon Reason; that it is Christlike in its beautiful tolerance and that through it one gets a glimpse of that which is only worth while and of all that is worth while. I mean it literally and exactly when I venture to say with deliberation that I regard its membership as one of the major privileges of my life—and as I write this I know I write futilely for any effect on those whom I long to reach.

From my friends have come some doubts which I wish I could answer better than I do. I find conclusive answers for myself in the Society's publications, especially *Light on the Path* and *Fragments* and in the Bible and the Prayer Book. Everywhere I find them—not only in the Sacred Books of other lands but in our own great secular literature. The most recent case I have noted is in *Henry VIII*. Wolsey's philosophy in his downfall is surprisingly good occultism.

I have spoken before of my years of regretful suffering in not being able to accept the conventional doctrine of immortality. To me it was absolutely unscientific, in defiance of the Laws of Nature, the comforting solace of minds capable of being afraid of equally illogical bugaboos. I then thought that the life spirit, like the energies of the body, changed form and was dissipated but never lost. Shakespeare's immortality was in his works, my father's in his children. Yet through it all I felt that this was somehow wrong—there was an element of utter uselessness both in this doctrine and in the single life immortality plan. I did not have to be taught the doctrine of reincarnation; it unfolded itself to my understanding as soon as I turned toward Theosophy. I was prepared for it all unknowingly by the Death Watch I had passed. "It is so logical" is the comment of one clever young woman and there is its strength.

Death, if reverently watched, proves to the observer the existence of the several planes but "Before the eyes can see they must be incapable of tears," and the selfish sorrow that animates those who watch where they love is blinding. Yet grief is for oneself, and not for the other, when analyzed. If we accepted Christ's teachings we could rejoice that our dear ones had found peace before taking up work again—just as we rejoice when one awearied sleeps. But, if we fear Death, study Life for signs of reincarnation and for the several planes. But before studying seek out and question one who knows, or else read wisely. Otherwise one may reject Theosophy as I rejected it in 1898, because it was incorrectly expressed and because I was not ready for it.

One of the greatest comforts I have found in Theosophy is the ability to recognize the delusions of Time and Space, taught in every university but ignored by most of us. Why grieve when it is but as if for the night your beloved sleeps? There are probably more bacteria, germs, phagocytes, and other microscopic creatures within me than there are people on this earth. If any one has consciousness I am as the Universe. On the other hand, the count of the stars shows that to that which I call the Universe I am less than the phagocyte is to the great earth of ours—what counts therefore save God and Love. There is no beginning and there is no end either in space or in time that I or any other mortal may comprehend. Why then not accept that there can only be God and Love?

I used to think that my doctrine of a physical basis for life and living was the same as the doctrine of Nirvana, miscalled annihilation. I can see dimly now how wrong this is. The T. S. teaches me that there is no limit to my possible growth and that in time I may become one with the One; but this does not mean that I shall lose consciousness and individuality, but rather that I shall have attained True Consciousness and Perfect Individuality. It is true that this implies that I must put aside something I now may think I value, but I used to like to suck my rattle—have I lost anything in outgrowing that liking?

Ask and ye shall receive, knock and ye may enter, is true throughout the universe; in big things and in little. I found in the T. S. a microcosm of the Universe and I knocked and it was opened unto me. I am a very new member; an humble member in my ignorance, but yet I have been enlightened and given peace, the peace that passeth all understanding. I see that it is not membership in the Society itself that counts, but the recognition of what the Society represents. It is the Egyptian cult over again. To the blind masses idolatry is necessary and he who offends the Sacred Cat must die, though the cat to-day be convention and not of stone, just as in the yesterday of Egypt; but to those able to see, the form is not vital. Nevertheless I would that, for the sake of my fellow men and women, the membership in the Society were at least equal to that in the churches, for great would be the peace and comfort therefrom. But the desire must come from within, just as it was given to me, and I am not fit to lead, only to serve, so I cannot ask or urge my brother to join.

To sum up my explanation of why I joined the Society:—Because after long years of groping I found in it not a home, as might be thought from what I first said, but a gateway through which I found myself at home. And the Path, though it be narrow, has no limit, and all who wish may travel thereon.

M.

# FAITH AND WORKS

IN THE UPANISHADS AND THE NEW TESTAMENT

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THERE is a passage of singular charm and vivacity, which one may call, I think, the keystone of the Upanishads; the passage containing what is traditionally known as the Lore of the Five Fires. It is found with almost verbal identity in the two longest Upanishads, the Brihad Aranyaka and the Chhandogya, from the former of which I shall try to translate it. The not very heroic hero of the story is a young Brahman, Shvetaketu by name, whose good father elsewhere in the Upanishads describes him as "conceited, vain and proud of his learning," and we are further told that he was familiar with the hymns of the three great Vedas, the Rig, the Yajur and the Sama Vedas. Of this vain young sprig of Brahmanism, we are told that

Shvetaketu, Aruna's grandson, came to the assembly of the Panchalas. He came to Pravahana, son of Jivala, who was surrounded by his followers. Looking at him, the king addressed him:

"Youth!" said he.

"Sir!" he replied.

"Hast thou received the teaching from thy father?"

"Yes!" said he.

"Knowest thou how these beings going forth from this world proceed on different paths?"

"No!" said he.

"Knowest thou how they come to this world again?"

"No!" said he.

"Knowest thou how that world is not filled up by the many going thither again and again?"

"No!" said he.

"Knowest thou at which sacrifice being sacrificed, the waters, rising up speak with human voice?"

"No!" said he.

"Knowest thou the approach of the path of the gods, or of the path of the fathers, or by doing what they approach the path of the gods, or the path of the fathers: as the word of the Seer has been heard by us:

"Two ways I have heard of, for mortals, the way of the fathers and the way of the gods.

By them goes all that moves 'twixt father heaven and mother earth.'"

"No!" said he; "I do not know even one of them."

The king invited him to remain as his pupil. But unwilling to remain, he ran away to his father. He said to him:

"Forsooth, Sir, thou didst say that we had received the teaching?"

"How now, wise one?" said his father.

"This Rajanya fellow has asked me five questions, and I do not know one of them?"

"What are they?" said he.

"These!" said he, and he enumerated them.

His father said:

"Thou knowest us thus, dear, that whatever I know, I told it all to thee! But come, let us twain set forth thither, and dwell as pupils with the king!"

"Go yourself, Sir!" said he.

That descendant of the Gotamas went to where Pravahana, son of Jivala, was. To him offering a seat, the king caused water to be brought. He made the offering. To him the king said:

"We give a wish to the worshipful descendant of the Gotamas."

He said:

"This wish is promised to me: the saying that thou didst speak in the presence of my boy, tell me that!"

The king said:

"That, O descendant of the Gotamas, is among the wishes of the gods. Say a wish of men!"

He said:

"It is well known! There is store of gold, of cattle and horses, of slave-girls and tapestries and robes! May the Master not be niggardly toward us in that which is great, infinite, illimitable!"

The king said:

"This wish, descendant of the Gotamas, must be sought according to rule."

"I offer myself as thy pupil!" said he. For with this word the men of old betook them to a master. He therefore dwelt there, becoming his disciple.

The king said to him:

"Therefore, O descendant of the Gotamas, be thou without reproach toward us, thou and thy forbears; since this teaching never before dwelt in any Brahman, but to thee I shall declare it, for who has the right to refuse thee, speaking thus?"

The last sentence is even more explicit in the Chhandogya version of the story:

"As this teaching, O descendant of the Gotamas, goes not to any Brahman before thee, but among all peoples leadership was of the Kshatra," (that is, of the Kshatriyas or Rajanyas, the men of royal or princely race).

We are concerned, therefore, with a teaching regarding the destiny of the soul, and this teaching had hitherto never been imparted to the priestly caste of Brahmins, but had been kept as a secret esoteric doctrine

among the Kshatriyas or Rajanyas. If, as seems probable, the Rajanyas and Brahmans represent two different races, then we may call this the secret doctrine of the Rajanya race, the ancestors of the Rajput tribes.

But let us consider the teaching itself. Before descending into birth, the Rajanya teaches, the soul dwells in the heavenly world. In it adhere certain streams of tendency, which he calls "the waters," the currents of moral and mental life. From the spiritual world the soul descends to the mid-world, and in the mid-world takes on a "lunar" form; for the things of the mid-world are symbolized by the moon, which shines by reflected light; the spiritual world, self-shining, being symbolized by the sun.

From the mid-world, the soul enters this world, and this descent from the higher to the lower world is in each case called a sacrifice. The soul now comes into relation with the father and mother of the child that is to be born, and these relations are also called sacrifices. The fifth sacrifice is birth, and at this sacrifice the "waters," that is, the mental and moral currents which make up the character, "arise, and speak with human voice." This is the answer to the last of the questions which the Rajanya sage asked the vain Brahman boy. We may now return to the text of the Upanishad.

"Through this sacrifice, the man comes to birth. He lives his life-span, and then dies, and they take him to the funeral pyre. . . . In this fire the bright powers offer the man, and from that sacrifice he is born, of the colour of the sun.

"They who know this thus, and they who, in the forest, follow faith and truth, are born into the flame, from the flame they go to the day, from the day to the waxing moon, from the waxing moon to the six summer months, from these months to the Deva-world, from the Deva-world to the sun, from the sun to the lightning; them, reaching the lightning, a Person, mind-born, coming, leads to the worlds of the Eternal. They dwell in those worlds of the Eternal, in the highest realms. For them, there is no return.

"But they who win worlds by sacrifice, gifts, penance, they are born into the smoke of the pyre, from the smoke they go to the night, from the night to the waning moon, from the waning moon to the six winter months, from these months to the world of the Fathers, from the world of the Fathers to the moon. Reaching the moon, they become food. The gods feast on them as they wax and wane like the lunar lord. Then going full circle, they descend to the ether, from the ether to the air, from the air to rain, from rain to the earth; reaching the earth, they become food. Again they are sacrificed in the fire of man and the fire of woman, and are reborn, coming forth again to the world of men."

The Rajanya teacher speaks, of course, in symbols, describing a series of worlds, or planes of consciousness, from the higher of which the soul descends into incarnation, entering this world by the gate of



birth. The teacher further suggests that each world or plane has two poles, a positive pole of spirituality, and a negative pole of materiality; and these poles of the ascending planes he describes by a series of natural pairs, the one bright and the other dark; namely, the fire and smoke of the pyre, day and night, the moonlit and moonless fortnights, the summer and winter months, the sun and moon, the world of the gods and the world of the fathers.

According to the spiritual quality of the soul, when it goes forth at death, it follows one or the other of these two paths; or gravitates, if we may use such an expression, to the positive or negative poles of each plane in the ascending series. If the soul has followed Faith and Truth, then it ascends by the path of the sun, the path of the Gods, to the world of the Eternal, and for it there is no return. But if the soul has followed after sacrifices and penance, then it takes the path of the moon, the path of the Fathers, and enters the lunar world. There it waxes and wanes, and, waning, returns again to the earth, and passes once more through the gate of birth. In the first case, the soul reaches liberation. In the second, it falls into the cycle of repeated births and deaths.

This is, I believe, the first passage in the Upanishads which draws a fundamental distinction between the way of Faith and the way of Works, and it has the added suggestion that the way of Faith is that taught in the secret wisdom of the Rajanyas, while the way of Works is that taught by the Brahmans, as a part of the sacrificial system which grew up with the Vedic hymns. In this first and oldest passage, therefore, it is asserted that only the way of Faith leads to liberation, or true salvation; while the way of Works leads to a period of paradise, followed by rebirth into this world: therefore no true salvation at all.

The antithesis is brought out even more sharply in a passage near the beginning of the Mundaka Upanishad, which runs somewhat as follows:

"The powers that the Seers perceived in the hymns were divided manifold for the triple fire. 'Practice these constantly,' they said, 'ye who desire the truth; this is your path of good work in the world. For when the flame curls in the fuel that bears what is to be offered, then let him guide the offerings in the space between the two paths of the sacrificial fluid. With faith it is offered. He whose fire-invocation fits not with the new moon, the full moon, the fourth month, and the autumn, where there are no guests, where the offerings to the host of Devas are absent, where the ritual is unfulfilled, he loses his seven worlds. . . .'

"Infirm rafts verily are these rites of the eighteen sharers in the sacrifice, on which the lower worship depends. They who exult in this as the better way, fools, go again to sickness and death. Turning round in un wisdom, sages, thinking themselves wise, fools, they go about, staggering in the way, like the blind led by the blind.

"Turning about manifold in un wisdom, they exult, childish, thinking that thus the work is accomplished. Because these performers

of rites are not wise in their longing desire, in their folly they fall, losing their worlds.

“Thinking that oblations and offerings are best, they know not the better way, deluded fools. After enjoying this good work of theirs at the back of the heavens, they return again to this, or even to a baser world.

“But they who dwell in Faith and fervor in the forest, full of peace, wise, free from the lust of possession; by the sun-door they go forth, freed from desire, where is the immortal Spirit, the everlasting Atma.”

This is a sufficiently drastic condemnation of the Brahmanical “way of Works,” with its sacraments, its lunar festivals, its sacrificial fires. These rites lead, at best, teaches the Upanishad, to a brief sojourn in paradise, followed by a return to this, or perchance, to some baser world. But the “way of Faith” leads by the door of the sun to the world of the Eternal. We have, therefore, exactly the antithesis already made in the Lore of the Five Fires.

The “way of Works” is the whole sacrificial system, as practiced by the Brahmanical priesthood, the system which grew up round the Rig Veda hymns to Agni, the Fire-god; Indra, the Sky-god; Vayu, the Wind-god, and the rest. To these rites, only the Twice-born Aryas were admitted, the second birth being the initiation of the *upanayana*, the girding on of the sacred thread, which one may, perhaps, describe as an equivalent of baptism, the sign of spiritual birth, of entry into a community with spiritual privileges. Many rites and sacrifices entered into this Brahmanical system, and scrupulous compliance with these was the condition of good standing and salvation. The system was a costly one, and profitable to the Brahmans.

Contrasted with this was the “way of Faith,” or the “way of Illumination,” which is the main theme of the Upanishads. From the marvelous riches of that teaching, I quote only one text, from a famous passage in the Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad:

“Now as to him who is free from desire, who is beyond desire, who has gained his desire, for whom Atma is his desire. From him the life-powers depart not. Growing one with the Eternal, he enters the Eternal. When all desires that were hid in the heart are let go, the mortal becomes immortal, and enters the Eternal. And like as the slough of a snake lies lifeless, cast upon an ant-hill, so lies his body, when the Spirit of man rises up bodiless and immortal, as the Life, as the Eternal, as the Radiance. The small old path that stretches far away has been found and followed by me. By it go the Seers who know the Eternal, rising up from this world to the heavenly world.”

The essence of this path of the sun, this path of the gods, which leads to perfect liberation, is spiritual consciousness; beginning with the personal consciousness of the ordinary man, there is a gradual widening, and, even more, a deepening of the consciousness, until a deep illumina-

tion is reached beyond the realm of dreams, an illumination wherein the man enters at once into the spiritual consciousness of others, and into the consciousness of the Eternal. Thus the consciousness of man is raised, step by step, through Faith, fervor and service of the Eternal, until it becomes one with the consciousness of the Eternal, the consciousness of God. This is the true salvation, the perfect liberation, from which there is no return. The Spirit of man becomes immortal, he enters the Eternal.

We find exactly the same contest between the two ways in the Bhagavad Gita, which denounces the Brahmanical system of Vedic sacrifices in phrases very like those of the Mundaka Upanishad. Thus in the second book of the Gita, it is said:

“This is a flowery word which the unwise declare, who delight in the letter of the Vedas, Son of Pritha, and say there is nothing else;

“They who are full of desire and eager for heaven; this word offering rebirth and the reward of works, abounding in special rites making for feasts and lordship;

“The thought of those who are set on feasts and lordship, whose minds are carried away thereby, has not single-mindedness as its essence, nor is it set in soul-vision;

“The Vedas have the Three Potencies as their subject; be thou above the Three Potencies, Arjuna. Be free from duality, ever standing in the real, without desire of possessions, full of the Self, full of Atma;

“As much use as there is for a well, when the whole land is under water, so much use is there for all the Vedas, for a knower of the Eternal who possesses wisdom.”

The Bhagavad Gita sets forth the rival path, the “way of Wisdom,” in the very sentences of the Upanishads. Thus at the end of the fifth chapter it is said:

“Nirvana, union with the Eternal, comes nigh to those who are rid of lust and wrath, who have gained control, who rule their thoughts, who have beheld Atma, the supreme Self.”

There are also, in the Gita, many passages of a warmer and more personal colour, passages full of the power of devotion to the Supreme, manifested in a personal Saviour. For example, these verses, toward the beginning of the sixth chapter:

“With soul at peace, with fear gone, standing firm in the vow of service of the Eternal, controlling the mind, with heart set on Me, let him dwell in union, intent on Me.

“The seeker of union ever holding his soul thus in union, with emotions well controlled, enters into the supreme peace of Nirvana, dwelling in Me.”

Salvation, perfect liberation, is, therefore, a growth in spiritual consciousness, whereby the soul of man, expanding and deepening, his

consciousness growing more divine, becomes at last one with the consciousness of the Eternal, the consciousness of God. As this is an eternal consciousness, he thereby gains immortal and infinite life. He has entered into Nirvana, the supreme peace.

That the teaching of the Buddha was a protest against the ritual religion of the Brahmans, is so well known that it hardly needs further illustration. I am tempted to quote one passage, however, to show how completely it coincides in this with the passages of the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita already cited. This passage is found in the Tevijja Sutta, a sermon held by tradition to have been delivered by the Buddha in the mango grove, on the bank of the river Achiravati, to the south of the Brahman village of Manasakata, in Kosala. The sermon is delivered to two young Brahmans, who come to the Buddha, very much as young Shvetaketu came to the Rajanya sage. And here we may note that both Krishna, the teacher of the Bhagavad Gita, and the Buddha himself were of Rajanya race. The Buddha speaks thus:

“Again, Vasishtha, if this river Achiravati were full of water even to the brim, and overflowing; and a man with business on the other side, bound for the other side, should come up, and want to cross over, and he, standing on this bank, should invoke the further bank, and say, ‘come hither, O further bank! come over to this side!’ Now what think you, Vasishtha? Would the further bank of the river Achiravati, by reason of that man’s invoking and praying and hoping and praising, come over to this side?

“Certainly not, Gotama!

“In just the same way, Vasishtha, do the Brahmans versed in the three Vedas—omitting the practice of those qualities which really make a man a Brahman (a knower of Brahma), and adopting the practice of those qualities which really make men not Brahmans—say thus: ‘Indra we call upon, Soma we call upon, Varuna we call upon, Ishana we call upon, Prajapati we call upon, Brahma we call upon!’ Verily, Vasishtha, that those Brahmans versed in the Three Vedas, but omitting the practice of those qualities which really make a man a Brahman, and adopting the practice of those qualities which really make men not Brahmans—that they, by reason of their invoking and praying and hoping and praising, should, after death and when the body is dissolved, become united with Brahma,—verily such a condition of things has no existence.”

With this “way of Works,” the Buddha contrasted his own teaching, the way of “liberation”:

“To the Buddha, when asked touching the path which leads to the world of Brahma, there can be neither doubt nor difficulty. For Brahma, I know, Vasishtha, and the world of Brahma, and the path which leadeth unto it. Yea, I know it even as one who has entered the Brahma world, and has been born within it!”

It is well worth noting that the Buddha here describes Nirvana in

the old traditional terms, as an entering into the world of Brahma, a becoming one with Brahma. The continuity of his teaching with that of the Upanishads, which ever speak of entering into the world of Brahma, and with the Bhagavad Gita, which uses the twofold form, Brahma-Nirvana, to express perfect liberation, is complete. Here, as always in the ancient Indian wisdom, salvation is a broadening and deepening of the consciousness, until at last it becomes one with the Divine Consciousness, the consciousness of the Eternal, the consciousness of God.

## II.

Let us turn now from India to Palestine, from the Upanishads to the New Testament. Here again, we find the contest between Faith and Works, two rival paths of salvation; and the conflict between the adherents of the two paths of salvation echoes through the greater number of the Epistles, just as we found it in the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita and the Tevijja Sutta.

The traditional sacrificial system of Palestine was very like the Brahmanical system which grew up about the Vedic hymns. Like the Indian system, it had its sacred books, held to be verbally inspired, and scrupulously preserved word by word. Like the Indian system, it had grown up in a sacred land, hallowed by tradition. Like the Indian system, it had its sacrifices and burnt offerings, its festivals of the new moon and the full moon, its celebrations of holy months. Like the Indian system, it was the prized possession of a limited group of tribes, a close religious corporation. As in the Indian system, admission to this religious corporation was marked by a sacramental rite, in the one case circumcision, commemorating the promise of Jahveh to Abraham, and in the other, the upanayana, or girding on of the sacred thread.

Born of Jewish parents, growing up among Jews, Jesus in all things fulfilled the Jewish law, from the circumcision to the last Passover. His disciples, with the exception, perhaps, of Simon the Canaanite, were also Jews, who fulfilled the law of the Jews in all particulars, except in certain minor matters which were made a subject of attack against them. But they held themselves to be pious Jews nevertheless. Further, Jesus expressly gave his support to the Jewish law, as when he said: "I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill the law," or when, being asked the way of salvation, he answered: "Keep the commandments!" that is, the precepts of the Jewish law.

Up to, and after, the Crucifixion, therefore, the disciples held themselves to be, and in fact were, law-abiding Jews, who fulfilled all the precepts of the Jewish system without question, while at the same time they sought to carry out the precepts and teaching of their Master. So far as any of the disciples understood the matter, the teaching which they held would have continued to be the teaching of a small Jewish sect,

“the Nazarene heresy,” as it was called; and admission into their communion would of necessity have been preceded by admission into the religious community of the Jews, through the rite of circumcision, and would have involved the obligation to fulfill all the rites, and to keep all the festivals of the Jewish religion.

What, then, bridged the chasm, and turned the teaching of a small Jewish sect into a world-religion? What transformed the “heresy of the Nazarenes” into Christianity? It is, perhaps, a commonplace to say that the chasm was bridged by Paul; that the greatness of his heart, and his deeper culture compelled him to break down the barriers and open the Church, so that salvation should be “to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.”

I think that this view is open to grave question; and that, simply stated as I have stated it, it is untrue. To make this intelligible, I may, perhaps, be allowed a brief digression.

The “way of Faith,” or the “way of Wisdom,” as understood and set forth in the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita, and also as expounded by the Buddha, held, as we saw, that salvation meant spiritual growth, a broadening and deepening of the consciousness, until at last it became one with the Divine consciousness, with the consciousness of the Eternal. But this expansion was never held to be a sudden flashing out of infinity, a spiritual cataclysm, but rather an evolution, a gradual growth, slowly attained, and consummated after many steps. And certain great stages of the way were marked and described, whether in the Upanishads or in the teaching of the Buddha; certain grand degrees, so to speak, in the splendid flowering of the Divine consciousness. And in the Upanishads, and in the later teaching of India, it was held that these grand degrees of consciousness had each its fitting vesture, beginning with that “vesture the colour of the sun,” worn by the purified soul immediately after death, and developing through purer and finer vestures, psychical and spiritual bodies. This, indeed, is an integral and necessary part of the teaching of the “way of Faith,” the “way of Illumination,” and is everywhere found as a part of it. Further, it is implied in the Upanishads, and explicitly taught in the later systems, that these psychical and spiritual bodies had their proper perceptions, their proper organs, their proper powers, in ascending degrees of majesty and spirituality. It would, therefore, be entirely intelligible to any follower of the Indian wisdom, that one who had mastered that wisdom should possess a full-grown spiritual body, with marvelous yet entirely natural powers, such as are enumerated, for example, in the Yoga Sutras, or in the Akankheya Sutta of Buddhism. To such a student of the Indian wisdom, believing in the path of the sun, the path of liberation, it would be axiomatic that, at a certain stage of spiritual development, such a spiritual body, with its high powers, should be evolved; and that the liberated Master, laying

aside the earthly body, like the slough of a snake cast on an ant-hill, should arise immortal, sharing the powers of the Divine.

In the light of this teaching, the Resurrection is a natural and wholly scientific fact, whose laws are clearly indicated, and which follows as the inevitable result of the deepening of consciousness, and the development of the finer vesture for that deeper consciousness; and that it would be wholly natural and logical to believe that Jesus, thus clothed in the spiritual body of the Resurrection, the "vesture of the colour of the sun," could and would carry forward the work which had been interrupted by the Crucifixion.

This, or something very like it, was the belief of Paul; and he explicitly says that the opening of the Church to the Gentiles was the work, not of Paul, but of Jesus; and one may add that it was carried out in the teeth of Paul's deepest prejudices and convictions, for was he not a Hebrew of the Hebrews, a Pharisee and the son of a Pharisee?

The examination of Paul before Agrippa was, no doubt, carefully recorded at the time by Luke, who was with Paul. Paul tells Agrippa that Jesus, appearing to him on the road to Damascus, spoke as follows:

"I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith in me."

This vision and commission, which opened the way for the greatest fact in history, the transformation of the "heresy of the Nazarenes" into the world religion, Christianity, is attributed by Paul to the direct and personal interposition of the Master himself; and, if we accept the idea of the "way of Wisdom," as to the growth of consciousness, and its development in ever finer vestures, we can see that Paul may be describing a wholly natural and scientific fact; the manifestation of the Master in the spiritual body, and his continuation of his life-work in that body.

To return to the main theme of this essay: Paul's vision, and his conviction that the teaching of Jesus should be opened to the Gentiles date, if we accept the general chronology of the New Testament as based on Luke's synchronisms, from about the year 35; some six years before the apparition of the sheet let down from heaven, which conveyed the same idea to Peter. But while Paul immediately began to preach and teach in obedience to his heavenly vision, as he tells us, Peter does not seem to have undertaken any very active work as a result of the apparition at Joppa, six years later. He remained, for the most part, at Jerusalem, and there he continued to live in the Jewish atmosphere which threatened to make of the teaching of Jesus nothing more than a "Naz-

arene heresy." It would not be true to say that the body of the disciples at Jerusalem believed that salvation, as they understood it, could be gained by following out the precepts of the Jewish law and by this alone; but it is true that they hardly thought of salvation as being gained without the fulfillment of that law.

The chief upholder of this view was not Peter, but James, the brother of Jesus; and here we come to one of the buried histories of the New Testament. Gathering our details here and there, from the gospels, the Acts, the epistles of Paul, we can recognize the marked figure of James, and the less marked figure of Jude, the younger brother of Jesus and James. The brothers of Jesus, up to the very hour of his crucifixion, were, if not hostile to him, at least in no sense disciples of his teaching. But there must have been, in the case of James, an event as remarkable and as revolutionary as the vision of Paul on the road to Damascus. The Master, says Paul, appeared to James; and, as a result, we find James an ardent member of the group of the disciples at Jerusalem. Within four or five years after the Crucifixion, we find James ranking with Peter, as one whom Paul deemed it essential to meet at Jerusalem; and a little later Paul ranks James with Peter and John as pillars of the Jerusalem church. James was more than this; he was the strongest upholder of the idea that, to become a Christian, one must first become a Jew; or, to put the matter more fairly, perhaps, he held that the Jewish system so completely represented the way of righteousness that without following it, one could not be truly righteous.

In the meantime, Paul was working among the Greek-speaking peoples of the north, in the neighborhood of his own town of Tarsus, and also in Cyprus. He seems always to have begun his teaching by describing the appearance of Jesus on the Damascus road, with the resultant certainty of the soul's immortality; salvation, as he conceived and taught it, consisted, first, in accepting the truth of the Master's risen life, and, secondly, in a certain spiritual state, which followed the acceptance of this truth. This spiritual state was, in essence, a development of consciousness, which, when it reached its fullness, meant a blending of the consciousness with the consciousness of the Master, an entering into the Master's consciousness; and, thirdly, Paul, by a bold and beautiful figure of speech, depicted the transformation of consciousness from the earthly to the spiritual as a kind of dying, a crucifixion and resurrection, whereby the disciple became a sharer in the crucifixion of the Master, and also in his resurrection. It is evident that we are concerned here with a growth of consciousness, a deepening of spiritual life and being, and not with the fulfillment of a ritual system of ceremonial observances. We are dealing with the "way of Faith," to use the Eastern phrase, and not with the "way of Works."

But the "way of Works" had its ardent adherents at Jerusalem with James at their head, and a conflict, for some time inevitable, broke out



between the adherents of the two "ways." The matter was fully debated at the Council of Jerusalem, about the year 52, and certain aspects of that Council are of high importance, in view of later events. It appears that Peter was the first speaker, and that he defended the extension of the Church to the Gentiles, on the ground of his vision at Joppa, some six years after Paul's vision near Damascus. Then, after the question had been fully discussed, the decision of the Council was declared by James the brother of Jesus, who seems to have spoken for the church at Jerusalem, and to have been, in some sense, its most forcible member, whose influence over Peter and the other disciples was strong and dominant. At any rate, we find James saying: "my judgment is . . ." and so forth, declaring the sense of the Council; showing, by the way that the disciples by no means recognized in Peter any such dominant and infallible authority as the theories of the Vatican would demand

Further, the decision of the Council was reached by a general consensus of opinion, and thus represented the collective consciousness of the Church; and, if we may use a phrase of later times, the Church voted in three orders, "the apostles and the elders, with the whole church." It was decided to open the Church to the Gentiles, without requiring them to fulfill the rites of the Jews.

At this point, Paul takes up the story:

"When James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen and they unto the circumcision. Only that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do. But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles; but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

A little further on in the same letter, Paul writes: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:" declaring that salvation comes through a deepening of consciousness, through a blending of the consciousness of the disciple with the con-

sciousness of the Master, so that he could say: "Christ liveth in me;" just as he says to his pupils in Galatia, that he is "in travail, until Christ is formed" in them.

For this spiritual consciousness, Paul uses the word Faith, just as we found it used, many centuries earlier, in the great Upanishads. Then taking faith to mean, among other ideas, a belief in spiritual things, he develops an argument against the adherents of the law, which he uses again and again in later years. This argument is the singular and remarkable one that Abraham himself, the father of the chosen people, and the recipient of the covenant and the promise, walked the way of Faith, not the way of Works:

"Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."

This was very decidedly turning the tables against James and the adherents of the law. Of Peter's journey to Antioch, and his later movements, we know little. One may, perhaps, conjecture that he spent some time in Asia Minor; that this is why Paul, writing from Ephesus to Corinth, speaks of Apollos and Cephas together, since Apollos was some time at Ephesus. Perhaps it was because of such a journey through Asia Minor that we find the first epistle of Peter addressed to the disciples in that region. It would seem likely that Peter did not return to Jerusalem, for he was evidently not there at the time of Paul's arrest probably in the year 59, if we can judge from the fact that Luke records that Paul visited James just before his arrest, while no mention is made of Peter. Finally, we may surmise that Peter went from Asia Minor to Rome; for, while neither Luke nor Paul mentions his presence there, Peter himself, in his second epistle, speaks of Paul and his epistles; so that we have this evidence that he was close to Paul in Rome.

It seems likely, therefore, that Peter may have gone from Asia Minor to Rome, and was one of those who built up the church there from its inception. Perhaps Peter's presence at Rome gave Paul cause to apprehend that the "way of Works" would be taught to the new disciples at Rome, with dangerous consequences; and perhaps this was why he again set himself to make the whole question clear, when writing to Rome from Ephesus, about the year 59:

"For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter."

Here again he outflanks the party of James and the law, and seeks to prove the daring paradox that the "way of Works" is really the "way

of Faith;" that salvation is a matter of inward spiritual life, and not of outward ritual. And again he uses his bold argument about Abraham:

"For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God . . . for we say that Faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness . . . and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised . . . and being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about a hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb; he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; . . . and therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness."

And Paul then makes the deduction to which he has been leading up:

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Master Jesus Christ;" as always, the teaching that salvation is through spiritual consciousness, growing gradually to a oneness with the consciousness of the Master, of the Divine.

The controversy between the two ways, the way of Faith and the way of Works, reverberates through the letters which Paul wrote from Rome. It finds its chief expression, however, in another document, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and especially in the famous chapter which begins:

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. . . ."

The writer undertakes to show that Faith has been the essential element of spiritual life from the beginning; that Abel and Enoch and Noah were saved by faith. Then he develops the argument concerning Abraham, which we have seen Paul twice use:

"Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude. . . ."

It is difficult to believe that this extraordinary image, of Abraham becoming a father when he was as good as dead, should have occurred to two different writers, as an argument in defense of Faith against the Works of the law. However this may be, we found Paul using it, in writing to the Romans, and it is now repeated by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. He further seeks to show that Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and Moses were saved by faith; even Moses, the giver of the Law. And, most remarkable of all, he cites Rahab of Jericho as one of those saved by faith.

It is difficult not to regard the Epistle of James as an answer to this last argument; and, by the way, it is interesting to find the remaining epistles arranged in this order: James, Peter, John; the same order in

which we found Paul enumerating the "pillars" of the church at Jerusalem, as though, in the view of those who arranged the documents, James outweighed Peter. But to return. It is difficult not to believe that James is replying to the author of the Epistles to the Hebrews, and striking a last blow for the "way of Works," when we find him writing:

"But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? . . . Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

The passages which I have quoted are, it seems to me, evidently the records of a long and heated contest between the adherents of Faith and the adherents of the Law; or, more precisely, a controversy between Paul and James, which raged from the days before the Council of Jerusalem until the last word, so far as our documents go, was spoken by James, in the sentences just quoted. This seems to me to add a new connecting thread to the relations between these New Testament documents, and, in particular, to have an important bearing on the position and purpose of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the reply of James to its argument.

Many other questions arise, of the deepest import and interest. For example, Why was it that the Master himself so carefully followed the way of the Law? Is there a parallel with the acceptance of the Law, as a stepping stone to Wisdom, by the later Vedantins, with Shankaracharya at their head? What course did the controversy take in later ages of the Church's life? What is its position to-day; what is the practical teaching for ourselves, in this age-long controversy between Faith and Works?

But for the present I must content myself with outlining, however imperfectly, the course of the controversy through the Upanishads and the documents of the New Testament.

CHARLES JOHNSTON.

# ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

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## WILL AND DESIRE

THE Wanderer, we call him: a man of the mountains, whose home is in many cities. We think of him as a disciple, for in his presence time seems to disappear; he speaks of centuries as we speak of years, and of ourselves as if he had known us always. He joined our party one afternoon, since the last "Screen" was written, in a place not far from New York. He saluted us, and then, without further preliminaries, said that he wanted to suggest an answer to a question which, among ourselves, we had discussed some days before.

"Most people," he said, "who pride themselves on being strong-willed, really have no will at all. They have self-will, but not Will. For Will is a spiritual power—the master of desire, not its slave; and the will of the ordinary man follows his desire, as a river flows to the sea. The true will, the will of holiness, stands immovable, like a rock, in the midst of all desires, in the midst of any temptation. It is that which enables us to abstain because it is right to abstain.—And fear is a form of desire. The virtue of a man whose conduct and whose thoughts, even, are unimpeachable, may be a form of self-indulgence. Purity is not purity until it has been tried and tested to the uttermost. A 'good' man may be one who is half asleep, or a man quite colourless, or he may be too cowardly to indulge himself. No such man is really good: he is negative, and true virtue, like will, is positive and fiery.

"Perhaps speech is the best and simplest test. Why do we say certain things and abstain from saying others? Is it because we are afraid of being disliked? Do we abstain from saying smart and bitter things because we do not think of them to say—until too late? Are we careless and inconsiderate, perhaps unconscious of whether we hurt or not, of whether we help or not; or do we use the will of the soul to select between good and evil, between things helpful and the reverse?

"It does not follow that the spiritually enlightened person will please. It may be necessary for him to say things which others will misinterpret as harsh and unkind. One of the most common and most injurious forms of self-indulgence is to refrain from rebuke when a clear understanding of duty either does or should require it of us. The love of the Master is like dew from heaven: but it is also a sword.—Yet another form of self-indulgence is the infliction of our ideas or ideals upon others, whose needs and standards may be quite different from our own. We must learn so to surrender self that, in the matter of ideals, we prefer for another his own, rather than ours; and then, helping him more

clearly to formulate his ideals, we should help him also to live in true relation with them. At least as much harm is done by injudicious mention of Theosophy as by the silence of timidity. The heart—not the emotions or the mind—should guide us in all these matters. Love and will, properly understood, are aspects of the same force. It is a force which selfishness reflects reversely and perverts; but in itself it is eternal and divine. In the terminology of theosophical literature, it is a form of Buddhi active.”

“What you have said of self-indulgence,” commented the Philosopher, “is so similar in purpose and in feeling to a letter I received a few days ago, that perhaps you will allow me to read a brief extract from it now. The writer says: ‘What we have to do, each of us, is to review our relations with our fellows, and to see in what respects we are self-indulgent or careless in speech or in manner—in what ways we fall short, in those relations, of the high ideal of self-restraint, courtesy and chivalry which the Master represents. That is not the least urgent of his requests of us to-day.’”

“It may seem strange to reduce Occultism to terms of courtesy and consideration—and it is, of course, but one phase of a vast subject; but without doubt an unremitting consideration for others, in thought, word and act, of their feelings and peculiarities and needs, would do as much as anything to develop in us the high form of will of which you speak.”

#### PAIN

The Wanderer agreed. Then he turned to the Student and said: “I thought that you were going to tell us something.” For a moment the Student looked surprised. “I was connecting what you said about the spiritual will with the mystery of pain: more specifically, with an article by ‘Cavé’ in *Fragments*. I can see that nothing would so develop and sharpen that kind of will as pain cheerfully accepted. There can be no room for self-indulgence in the bearing of pain, granting it is sufficiently acute. Perhaps the instinct of the saints, who prayed for pain, and who desired it with such passion, was not unhealthy, even though it marked a transition state. Perhaps they recognized instinctively that by no other means could the spiritual will, which proceeds from or through the Master, be cultivated so quickly.”

“I think you are right,” replied the Wanderer; “and I am glad that you connected the two ideas. But pain has another purpose, or, rather, the purpose of it suggested by you can be expressed in a way less positive, but more in keeping with the experience of the saints. ‘The heart must bleed, to be purified.’ Soon or late, before the impure can become pure—and it does not follow that everyone travels by this road—the vision of purity will strike impurity dumb with anguish. The pain of it will be almost unendurable, and yet indistinguishable from the

wildest joy. For, consciously or unconsciously, the person so suffering, is being born again, 'from above': his throes are those of birth. And, as St. Paul said, death precedes birth: 'that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die (I, who die daily, say this unto you). . . . So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. . . . Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.'

"In Egypt," continued the Wanderer, "one of the rites began with a prayer like this: '. . . Give us death, give us death, give us death; that we may rise to Thee; that they may see Thee only!' St. Francis of Assisi echoed it in his prayer: 'May the fire of Thy love consume my soul, that I may die to myself and to the world for love of Thee, who hast vouchsafed to die on the cross for love of me.' Read your burial service as an incomplete but marvelously suggestive relic, and you will learn a great deal. Also, do not forget to join in the petition, the exact wording of which I have forgotten, though it runs to this effect: 'O holy and merciful Saviour, thou most worthy Judge eternal, suffer us not, at our last hour, for any pains of death, to fall from thee.' It is almost purely Egyptian—and vitally necessary, for, remember, where we think we are safest, invariably we are weakest. And we must not be afraid to die, if truly we desire to live."

#### INVOCATION

The Cynic has no sense of the fitness of things, as I have told him often, though the Sage, who loves him, assures me that the Cynic's interruption, in this case, was due to reaction from a part of himself into or up to which the Wanderer's reality had dragged him. For the Cynic now said:

"This conversation is becoming lugubrious. I thought we claimed to be the most consistently cheerful group of people on the American continent; but, at this rate, mourning hat-bands will be in order for every one of us!"

The Wanderer looked at him with a compassion that simply scorched. "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks," he said. "You cling to self with a tenacity worthy of a better cause. But, believe me, you will not know the meaning of joy until you have learned to long for pain. You have built a shell around yourself which only the Master's fire can melt; and that fire, which is his love, will be for you an agony unspeakable. Yet, when it comes, when you open your heart to receive it, when, in answer to your prayers, you have made yourself fit to receive it—your gratitude for that pain will be greater than for any happiness you have ever known. In the midst of those flames your one cry will be for more and still for more: for a more intense anguish—for deeper draughts of his love. Your heart, now hard (I do not speak in terms

of ordinary consciousness), will melt like wax; will turn to water; will become fire and flame like the love that consumes it. And you, poor thing of earth, will die, so that *you*, who walk the skies, may live for ever." Then, quickly turning his back on us, with some motion of hands and of arms that escaped me, the Wanderer prayed aloud: "Heart of my King, give them love! In the blaze of thy love, give them life! By the splendour and triumph of death, let them live!" Then there was silence. The Wanderer had been standing. Now he knelt, upright on his knees. The stillness, for a moment, was frightening. "Thy paths are peace," he murmured: and the stillness fell like dew. Suddenly, with both arms outflung like whips of steel, he cried to us: "The King in His glory! Children—the King in His glory!"

The Cynic, a strong man, bowed his head between his knees and trembled, as a tree trembles when struck by some terrible blast of wind. (He will never be a Cynic any more. It was, he said afterwards, as if the fibre of his body were being drawn from him, leaving nothing but the pulp.) Moments passed,—vivid, luminous, impossible to speak of. Then the Wanderer: "Heart of my King, it is Thy loveliness which draws us!" And I heard the Cynic, with both fists clinched above his head—bowed there, between his knees: "God be merciful to me a sinner."

## HELL

Several days had passed, and the Wanderer had left us. I had asked his permission to give in the "Screen" an outline of what he had said about the will and about pain—his smiling answer having been, "I never talk secrets!" So, at the next opportunity, the same group being present, I brought up the subject again, and was surprised to find how much actual experience some of my friends had had. The Gael began:

"Your Anglo-Saxon pride," he said, "drives you far afield for light. Your minds are sizzling with Talas and Patalas—with learned dissertations on what some old Egyptian or ancient Hindu wrote about states of consciousness. I could tell you more about Hell in five minutes than most of them tell in volumes. But you would not believe me, partly because the saying that 'a prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house,'—was in itself a direct prophecy of the British and of the British-American peoples: you can no more believe that your neighbour knows anything, than that it is just as easy to show him friendliness as it is to show affection for the German Emperor or for some starving Chinaman. If you were to weep for your neighbour, and it were known of you, you would be covered with shame; but sentiment for someone thousands of miles away you regard as excus-



able. Your pride is not only your greatest barrier, but is also, without exception, the most ridiculous——”

The Sage stopped him. “Your contribution on the subject of Hell will be most acceptable when the time comes. If you make it objective prematurely, and at our expense, you will spoil the effect later. And allow me to remark, incidentally, that when you speak of ancient Egypt as ‘far afield,’ you sin against the very canon you prescribe: you refuse to recognize your neighbour. For no other religion is nearer to our own—you, as a Catholic, re-embodiment it; and no other period is more closely associated with the present. . . . That, however, is not the subject of discussion, which, as I see it, resolves itself into this: What do we know of the nature and purpose of pain? Perhaps the Philosopher will begin.”

The Philosopher responded readily. “Suppose we consider first,” he said, “the difference between Hell and Purgatory. In deference to the Gael, I will use the terms which he prefers. Hell is a state of consciousness in which there is rebellion against the will of God. You want something more than you want God; you know it; you insist upon having it; you get it; you are tortured by it, or by its effect upon you, or by further desire for it; yet you will not let go of it. Perhaps you will say that people in hell do not get what they desire. But that does not actually affect my definition, because the attraction in nearly every case is not the thing desired: it is the desire for the thing. People in Hell are those who cling to a desire for something less than God, and who reject God because of preference for that thing. And although the Gael was wrong in all else that he said, there was truth in his remark that the lowest depth of Hell is reached by Pride. By that sin fell the angels—and many men. There is power in it, though; and once pride is broken, utterly and beyond recall, it is possible to rise from the depths of Hell to the highest of the heavens. God never despairs of Satan. On the contrary, Christ was born to redeem him. That is mystical, but true. It has not been accomplished yet, any more than any other task which Christ set out to do: but it will be, in time.”

“You are right in that,” said the Gael. “We celebrate our Easter because of Christ. He will celebrate His Easter because of Satan—when the time comes.”

“I do not in the least understand what you mean,” protested the Student, “unless you speak of Satan symbolically as representing the evil in human nature.”

“That view will be sufficient for your purpose,” answered the Gael. “But it may be well to remember also that the universe exists in pairs of opposites. Granting the existence of light, you admit the existence of darkness. It is only that which is above manifestation which is above contrast, and which casts no shadow. Logically, you cannot believe in a personal Christ without believing in a personal Satan. The one is

purity and the other is perversion. Purity remains among men in order to-redeem perversion."

"That is very important," added the Philosopher. "Evil is merely a perversion of spiritual power. There is no such thing as evil in and of itself. It is not a permanent principle. It begins, perhaps, as a blunder, or as a lack of understanding, and, unless corrected, it ends as a deliberate choice. As Cavé once wrote: 'O miracle of the wickedness of man, who creates him a hell out of his heaven, and, from the powers of his spiritual life, procures for himself damnation!'"

"From that point of view," said the Student, "Hell is simply a reversal of everything that Heaven contains. All of you have read Dante, and though none of you have quoted him directly, I can see that the views expressed so far agree perfectly with his. But now, how about Purgatory? Can we summarize Hell, as we leave it, in this way: it is a state of consciousness in which many people live while on earth, and as many or more after death, the essential characteristic of which is pain unrelieved by joy, and the cause of which is non-acceptance of the divine will?"

#### PURGATORY

The Gael was now intolerant of delay: he had been silent too long. "If," he said, "you could have seen into me while you were talking of Hell, there would be no need now for me to speak of Purgatory. But the Student did show some glimmer of intelligence when he suggested that Hell is 'pain unrelieved by joy.' Purgatory is pain relieved by—well, in this case, by humour. Seriously, for now I am serious, Purgatory begins as soon as we desire to know and to accept the divine will. The more ardent our desire, the more intense its pain, but also the greater its joy. The Wanderer spoke of facts. What makes Purgatory is the vision of purity by impurity: at first a faint hope, at last a blinding glory. Read Dante. It is foolishness to talk of these things when he has said it all. But a word to those who are in Purgatory (and most people are, whether they know it or not: I am: everyone who is *trying* is in Purgatory)—accept anything and everything that happens as a means of purification. If someone or something annoys you, turn your attention instantly from the external cause to the cause within yourself. Work at removing that: never try to remove the stimulus. Regard circumstances, whether stable or fluctuating, as the expression of the Master's will. Realize that the best part of His gift is always that which you describe as a limitation or a barrier. Accept the barrier and it becomes a door: but accept it, not only with courage, but with joy—knowing it to be a door. And bring all your faith and trust to bear on this: when He takes away, it is always to give more perfectly. Believe, believe that He plans and works to give us, in fullness, the best of our heart's desire, and that there is no limitation of the present which is not

designed with that end in view. With desire does He still desire to eat the Passover with us—to enjoy with us the realization of our ideal. To withhold anything from Him is Hell; to surrender it to Him is Purgatory; to receive it again from His hands, with His blessing—made pure by His purity—and so to enjoy it in His presence: that is Heaven! Yet, strange as it may seem, there is no longing for Heaven until the last vestige of self has been burned out. On the upper levels of Purgatory there is no desire except for the wild joy of greater and ever greater pain. Because His presence, to the impure, is torture; and His presence becomes the one thing desirable. It is a struggle, at last, even to accept the gift of His love: greater still to accept the gift of His peace and His joy. Below, the veils are still so many that the call of His love for us—His need for our love—scarcely is heard. Yet He cries through the darkness, seeking the love of His heart—that lost little sheep which wandered; and one of the agonies of those above is that they hear so clearly, while the others hear not at all, or call it ‘conscience’ and sometimes laugh: while He, the despised and rejected, suffers.

“Now, as I speak, I feel it, and the pain and the joy of it are almost beyond endurance. But to-morrow, perhaps, I shall not feel it, and then the longing for that which now I can hardly endure will be worse, for the hunger of it, than the pain of the vision itself. . . . You do not understand? But you will. For those who walk upon earth, who are not in Hell or in Purgatory or in Paradise, are asleep, dreaming. I have visited Heaven, but, in my personal consciousness, I do not live there.”

This was too much for the Critic. “What on earth do you mean?” he asked. “If the Recorder is going to repeat any of this in the ‘Screen,’ for sheer self-pity explain yourself, or the authorities will be after you for lunacy!”

The Gael was not perturbed. “It is quite simple,” he said. “I do not live in Heaven because I have not learned to accept the limitations of earth. Most people, who rebel against limitations which do not worry me at all, would condemn my rebellion against other limitations of which they are not conscious. The ‘authorities’ worry about lunatics: I do not. I am more inclined to worry about the authorities. Still, I can resist that successfully: I can accept them at their worst. There are other things I cannot yet accept: my own imperfections among them.”

Now the Gael, as a rule, is almost extravagantly light-hearted. He can be boyish in gaiety and mischief. I found it impossible to reconcile the appearance with what he now revealed of the facts. So I asked him, point-blank, to explain. He laughed, saying that he had an appointment, but that the Sage would explain, “because the Sage knows everything: there is nothing he will not tell you!” Then he waved us farewell and left.

Whether the Sage knew what he was talking about or not, is beyond

me to decide. But this is what he said, after some joking reference to the Gael's equivocal commendation :

"The effect of that flame, which, as the Wanderer told us, is really the breath of the Master's love, is so intense; is so consuming; is so terrible with pain and joy, that no human organism could stand it for very long, in spite of the desire to suffer it for ever. So the experience is intermittent: it comes and it goes. Its purpose is purification, and, once purity is fully attained, those same fires are felt, not as that indistinguishable union of opposites of which the Gael spoke, but as pure ecstasy. However, even before the perfection of purity has been attained, one effect of the process is to give glimpses of Paradise—unsought and undesired—which, shining from within outwardly, impress others with a sense of immortal youth and of radiance. The Gael, as he would tell you frankly, is far from being stable. But his unceasing effort is to raise his average level. The higher he raises that, the more constant will be the character both of his inner experience and of his outer expression. It will not always be the radiance of joy: but it will always be the radiance of love—not his own, but of the Great One whose shadow he will be. Meanwhile, be sure of one thing: whatever he may feel, his duty is to show to others a 'cheerful and pleasant countenance.' If he fails at any time to do that, except of deliberate purpose, he will have sunk below his average level, and he will be the first to know it."

#### PARADISE

"Please," said the Student, "please say something about Paradise. I do not feel that I know the first thing about that: and I want to. From my lower levels I have heard all I can stand about the other thing."

No one spoke. The Student urged again. "I can tell you something that the Gael told me," the Sage said at last. "But first let me say this as to the difference between the psychic and the spiritual: the psychic gives a thrill of pleasure, by anticipation of something real—there is no *satisfaction* on that plane. The spiritual, on the other hand, is consummation: it is sufficient; it is complete. But now, briefly, for the Gael's experience. He received as a gift from Cavé the following Fragment :

"What havens of peace lie in the depths of divine consciousness; what security from the world's tumult, which beats unheard against its doors. Close thy ears and enter in. There, in utter forgetting, find the calm of unending union, and that radiance of joy which no outer circumstance can dim.'

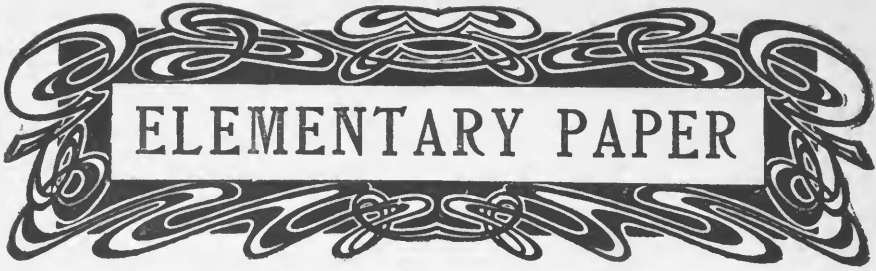
"The Gael at first accepted that as referring to some inner world which, because inner, he thought of as being abstract and impersonal. (This was some time ago.) So he began by trying for 'utter forgetting.' He worked at that steadily, realizing that so long as his mind reflected

from below, he could get no clear consciousness of what was above. After weeks of persistent effort, he was given, perhaps for his encouragement, a glimpse of what was meant. The result was neither abstract nor impersonal. He discovered that Paradise is a real world of real people—not separate from this world, but within and enveloping this world. And he discovered that, when there, he did in fact experience ‘the calm of unending union,’ first with the Master, and, because of that, with those whom he, as a man, loves; and that joy and love are as inseparable from life there, as air is here. The dominant impression, he told me, was that of its being unending: that nothing could change it or interfere with it. There was not less of personality; there was more of it—but personal consciousness had become inclusive instead of exclusive: its center was as much in others as in himself, though existence itself radiated from the Master who was center and life of all.

“Some understanding of this state—rather, I should say, some feeling of it, can be reached by all of us during prayer or meditation. And, once experienced, we should never allow ourselves wholly to forget it, even when hurried or over-worked. The joy and the pain of Purgatory is but an echo of life in Paradise; and at any moment of any day, knowing it as the home of our soul, we should be able to reach within ourselves and to touch at least the hem of our garment of immortality.

“How to do this? As the Gael said, it is quite simple! You know that passage in the *Bhagavad Gita*: ‘Do all thou dost for Me; renounce for Me; sacrifice heart and mind and will to Me; live in the faith of Me.’ So, if, instead of feeling pious, you feel irritable, go to Him with that irritability, just as you are, and ask Him to do what He wants with it—ask Him to make it worse or to remove it—just as He sees best; surrender it to Him. Every mood, every feeling, good, bad or indifferent, take to Him from minute to minute, and ask Him to purify it—to take it and to make it His own: surrender it to Him. And because He is Paradise, you will, minute by minute, transfer your consciousness from earth to heaven, learning at last to live in heaven and to visit earth—learning at last to be not of the world, though in it, even as He is not of the world, though its salvation and only peace.

T.



# ELEMENTARY PAPER

## THEOSOPHY AND HYPNOTISM

THE third object of the Theosophical Society is "To investigate the unexplained laws of nature and the psychological powers latent in man." Some of these unexplained latent powers have been brought to light by what is sometimes called mesmerism, animal magnetism, or hypnotism, which are but different names for essentially the same thing. Sometimes men profess to make a scientific distinction between them, but I doubt the accuracy of their definitions. For over ten years I investigated mesmerism, reading every book I could find in the English and French languages, and making thousands of experiments in private and public. I began by using the mesmeric passes and succeeded as well with them as I did later with other methods, except that it took much longer to produce sleep. With mesmeric passes it took me from ten to twenty minutes to produce sleep, and by other methods from two to five minutes—sometimes it was instantaneous. If I took a boy by the hand, placing my left thumb at the root of the nose—where the phrenologist locates individuality—and told him to look into my eye it was seldom more than two minutes before the eyelids began to droop, and the eyeballs to turn up and I told him he was asleep and could not get off the seat. In public lectures I used to give a dozen boys, each a little zinc disk with a bright copper rivet in the center and tell them to look steadily at it, while I kept the attention of the audience for five minutes. At the end of that time I took the boys one by one, selecting first those who seemed most susceptible to the influence, and treated them as described above. Generally ten of the twelve (and often the whole dozen) made good subjects for a mesmeric entertainment. At my suggestion they at once imagined themselves soldiers, sailors, auctioneers, lecturers, or any other character that I happened to think of. By drilling them together for a little time I got complete control of them and then selected the best of them for more striking experiments. Any of the boys could be made to imagine themselves girls and would take most remarkable pains with imaginary babies, or they would climb pillars for bird's nests, and tell how many eggs or young birds they found in the nest, the number seldom varying from what was in my own mind;—thought transference was quite easy. They would imitate all the noises of animals on a farm, would be sea-sick, imagine salt was sweet and sugar bitter; and from the same glass of water would taste any kind

of liquid suggested. Almost any of them could be made to think cold things were hot, and hot things cold, light things heavy and heavy things light.

Many times I have made strong men unable to lift a pound weight, and sometimes they got angry because I made small boys lift weights that they could not move at all. There were very few subjects whose limbs could not be made rigid as iron, or weak and paralyzed, and quite a number of those who volunteer for public experiment can be made as rigid as a body long dead. For instance, I have made a man lie down on three chairs, his head on one, his heels on another, while a third supported his back. I then made mesmeric passes over him for two or three minutes, after which I have removed the middle chair and sat upon his body without its yielding under my weight. I have then placed my hands upon his body for a few seconds, and then slowly raising them, the center of the body followed my hands without contact, until it formed a curve. On my replacing the chair and telling him to wake up, he would stand on his feet with every muscle loose and pulse normal. It was a not uncommon thing for subjects to develop clairvoyance both in private and public experiments. I say clairvoyance though perhaps it was not true clairvoyance, but the subjects could see and hear without using the physical organs of sight and hearing. For instance, with the subject's eyes closed and tightly bandaged, I would say to him, "Describe for me the first person on the fourth seat." He would do it quite accurately and sometimes humorously. I would then ask what the gentleman had in his pockets. This would be told in detail, and when he mentioned a watch I would ask him what time it indicated, what the number inside the case was, and whether a name or anything else was engraved there. This was usually told without an error. If there happened to be a letter in one of the pockets, the subject would (with the permission of the owner) describe its contents, and sometimes the person who wrote it and his surroundings when writing. Some subjects would describe the homes of people in the audience whom they did not know, telling of pictures, furniture, carpets, and people present. On one occasion a conversation was reported that we afterward found to be correct. They sometimes told of incidents in the lives of people in the audience that these persons declared untrue, but which upon inquiry of relatives were found to be correct, though the memory of the person had not retained them.

An objection to reincarnation which is commonly advanced is that if it were true we would be sure to remember. But if we utterly forget events that have occurred in the present life why should we expect to remember past lives? Some of the incidents referred to were very important and had affected the whole life. But while these experiments assured me of the truth of certain statements that I had read as to the wonderful latent powers in man I had still a feeling that it was morally

wrong for me to be making these experiments. This feeling became stronger and stronger, so that I found myself asking these questions, "Am I doing an injury to these people? Am I weakening their will power—their power to resist evil? Have I any right whatever to control and dominate their minds and bodies?" I reached the conclusion that I was wronging them, and resolved never to hypnotize another person, not even to cure disease. For more than twenty-five years I have kept this resolution, and after becoming a student of Theosophy I was glad that I had given up hypnotism, for I then came to understand what I had intuitively felt before.

There are different theories advocated by different men to explain how these phenomena are produced. Some hold to the old mesmeric theory that there is a magnetic fluid passing from operator to subject, and in proof of this they give the statements of clairvoyants. Some also tell us that the fact that some diseases are contagious, and that old people are benefited by sleeping with young people confirms this theory. Others claim that the thought and will of the operator are propagated by ether waves, of even smaller amplitude and greater frequency than those which carry the Röntgen rays. Such waves are supposed to pass from one brain to another, arousing in the second brain an image similar to the one in the first brain.

But what matters it how the phenomena are produced if the effect be bad? Charcot, one of the greatest hypnotists of this generation, says, "The more I have examined the facts and the more I have advanced in my study, the more I am convinced that hypnotism is a reaction, not an action." What does this mean? It can only mean that hypnotism is to a certain degree a suspension of the vital force that animates and controls the body of man. In other words it is what Theosophy declares it to be, namely, a driving of the soul from the body, the paralyzing of Manas and the separation of Buddhi from that principle. It is an inversion of the truth. No God-given power should ever be used to produce a reaction by which the will of man is weakened or suspended, and the faculties of the mind controlled by another. No man should seek to control another, for by so doing he violates the laws of his being, the laws of brotherhood. We have no moral or spiritual right to control another or to compel him to do anything, whether we believe it will be beneficial to him or not. Hypnotism weakens the will of the subject and destroys his independence. It tends to deaden his mental faculties, making him negative and susceptible to the influence of others, and liable to be controlled by the will of others, and not so competent to control his own thinking and actions. This is a sin against our brother. Medical men are using it for the curing of disease and relief of pain, and because of this many people believe it to be an agent for good. We may not question the sincerity nor the benevolent impulses of those who use it and those who advocate its use, but we may question their wisdom



and the value of the results produced. In the first place hypnotism is founded on selfishness and cannot therefore be of real service to man. To sacrifice our own independence and our own individuality is a far greater price to pay than any relief from pain is worth. Perhaps we do not think that these results will follow, but that we shall be able to resist the will of others in everyday life, and be well able to control ourselves. Perhaps we can, but the risk is great. If during the time I was experimenting with mesmerism I met a boy on the street going to his work with dinner pail in hand, whom I had mesmerized, and would say to him, "That pail is hot!" he would instantly drop it and feel a sensation of burning in his hand. Now he knew it was not hot, but he was unable to hold it, although he enjoyed the joke as much as those who saw what he did. Another thing I found, too, and that is, that these boys whom I had controlled would go to another mesmeric entertainment declaring they would not yield themselves to this man as they had to me, but found themselves unable to resist. This was one of the first things that led me to give up the practice.

We should try to overcome disease and pain by seeking to understand and obey the laws that regulate life and produce health and strength. We should seek to perfect life by the rightful use and strengthening of all our powers of body and mind, for it is every man's duty to control himself. Perhaps some will ask if we may not allow qualified medical men to use it as we allow them to prescribe poisonous drugs for us. They further say that these drugs not only become harmless in their hands but positively beneficial, and in like manner hypnotism that is so dangerous in the hands of ignorant persons would be entirely changed, and only beneficial results would ensue if used by trained, scientific minds of the medical profession. Our medical men have a good knowledge of anatomy and physiology but many of them understand little of the workings of the human mind, and most of them are entirely ignorant of occultism. Such a great power as this cannot be put into the hands of any class or profession with safety. Power is only safe with the unselfish wise, with those whose great desire is to bless and not to curse, to quicken and strengthen the minds of our brothers and sisters, and not to dull and deaden their faculties; who desire to increase and not to lessen the will power of all, so that all may be self-controlled and in perfect harmony with the laws of being. Hypnotic suggestion is the reversal of certain laws of life and it is immoral to do evil that good may result. This much at least is plain, that we should never use our wills to force another to do, or refrain from doing even when we think that it would be for his good. We should never force on another the acceptance of any truth however important we may think it is—he must have liberty to accept, or reject as he may choose. It is ours to help, to bless, to instruct, but never to control and command.

JOHN SCHOFIELD.



# REVIEWS

It has often been noted in the QUARTERLY that the science of to-day is fast pushing beyond the limits of things which can be perceived and tested by the physical senses. What will be the definite outcome of this tendency is hard to say, but it has always been the rule that nature yields her secrets to the persistent and widespread demand of man. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you": is the key to intellectual as well as devotional progress.

Of those who in our day are most persistently seeking to raise the veil which hides from humanity the what, the how, and the why of its existence, Sir Oliver Lodge stands in the foremost rank. His reputation as a physicist and his connection with The Society for Psychical Research create a certain predisposition in his favor. The combination of sound thinking and imagination which he possesses, and which has been characteristic of all great experimenters in the laboratory, promises, when turned to the investigation of the subconscious, a new and important increase of knowledge.

The avowed object of *Reason and Belief* is to assist in the solution of some of the problems which the higher criticism has forced upon teachers of the Bible. His excuse for writing is that his own researches have led him to perceive a profound substratum of truth underlying ancient doctrines, "and in so far as the progress of science instead of undermining actually illustrates and illumines some of them," he conceives it to be his duty as well as his privilege to indicate to the best of his ability how matters stand.

"There is no real end to anything in the Universe, no end to any real existence; nor is there any beginning." This proposition is his starting point. He illustrates it by the history of sandstone rock, of a cloud, of a piece of wood. The rock was formed of compacted sand, which is the result of an earlier rock ground to powder by the waves. The cloud "seems to spring into existence out of the blue, and presently evaporates again and ceases to be, as a cloud; but as an invisible vapour it continues, and as aqueous vapour it existed before it condensed into minute drops of liquid—*i.e.*, before it took shape and form and became visible. In essence it exists all the time, and the persistent material can form another cloud, or rain, or it can flow as a river, or can enter the sea,—but only to be evaporated again in due time, and go through an eternal cycle of changes." "So also look at a piece of wood burning in the fire. It was formed originally from sap elaborated in the leaves of the tree, through the chemical influence and energy of sunlight. It was composed out of carbonic acid and water, drunk in by the roots, taken up into the laboratory of the leaves, and there decomposed by sunlight, the oxygen being separated and liberated and expelled into the air. And now that the wood is burning, its carbon and hydrogen are re-combining with oxygen, thereby becoming gaseous again, and so restoring to the atmosphere the carbonic acid and water out of which the tree was formed." Similar is the history of a planet and a Solar System. "They represent a present phase or manifestation, in a continuous unending existence." From this

point he advances to a consideration of the human race. It is not likely that man, any more than anything else, began from nothing. "The complexity of his organism, the far-reaching quality of his mind, combined with what we know of the leisurely processes of nature, forbid the idea of construction elaborated in such fantastic haste. The body has been formed to a given pattern, quickly enough; so may a plant grow with great rapidity; but there must be some entity—even though it be only a germinal vesicle—which collects and arranges the particles to suit itself. The specific form of the structure depends on this entity, not on the miscellaneous sources of the particles." A little later he says, "At birth we began a separate individual existence but not from nothing."

So we come to the main point of Part I called Incarnation.

"My message is that there is some great truth in the idea of pre-existence;—not an obvious truth, nor one easy to formulate,—a truth difficult to express,—not to be identified with the guesses of re-incarnation and transmigration, which may be fanciful. We may not have been individuals before, but we are chips or fragments of a great mass of mind, of spirit, and of life,—drops, as it were, taken out of a germinal reservoir of life, and incubated until incarnate in a material body."

Sir Oliver Lodge's distinction between his own conception of pre-existence and the "guesses" of re-incarnation and transmigration need not be taken as weighing against the doctrine of re-incarnation. In a later chapter he refers to Sir Isaac Newton's first formulation of the law of gravitation as a guess, a flash of insight, an hypothesis. Moreover the doctrine may have been presented to him in its crude, popular form, and accordingly rejected. The fact that he names it with transmigration suggests that this is the case. For Lodge's idea of a substratum of being which continuously manifests itself in diverse varying forms seems to the writer to be identical with the theory that the Universe in sum as in detail is under the law of re-incarnation, and that the repeated appearance of man upon this earth merely constitutes one of the details in which the whole is partially expressing itself.

By means of physical evolution "a terrestrial existence was rendered possible for beings at a comparatively advanced stage of spiritual evolution." But "the doctrine of evolution—evolution of capacity for knowledge—is profoundly true with respect to the spirit of man; there is nothing artificial about our ignorance; facts are not withheld from us, any more than a picture, a statue, or an oratorio is kept from the cognizance of an animal,—everything lies before it, ready to be seen or heard,—only the perception is lacking."

Applied to the idea of "angels" usually treated as fanciful this conception leads to the conviction that "we are not really lonely in our struggle, that our destiny is not left haphazard, that there is no such thing as *laissez-faire* in a highly organized universe. Help may be rejected, but help is available; a ministry of benevolence surrounds us—a cloud of witnesses—not witnesses only but helpers, agents like ourselves, of the immanent God."

"And the race also has been helped. A Divine Helper has actually taken flesh and dwelt among us,—full of grace and truth." "We are all incarnations, all sons of God in a sense, but at that epoch a Son of God in the supremest sense took pity on the race, laid aside his majesty, made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a servant, a minister, entered into our flesh and lived on the planet as a peasant, a teacher, a reformer, a martyr. This is said to have literally happened; and as a student of science I am bound to say that, so far as we can understand such an assertion, there is nothing in it contrary to accepted knowledge. . . . All that the Churches say about it need not be true—is not all likely to be true; but something is true much better than they say—something which they and we together are gradually rising to understand." What is this but an

individual and tentative statement of the doctrine well known in the East that Christ was a divine avatar. A little later he refers to Jesus as "the visible incarnation of a Being of magnitude far higher than they had ever known."

Part II, *The Old Testament in Education*, has for its crux the idea of a progressive revelation, a revelation which is "gradual, not for the sake of delay or secrecy, but because of the limitation of human faculties." A formulation of truth suited to the understanding of Lord Kelvin would have been nonsense to a nomad tribe, wandering like Arabs in the desert, and seeking to found a civilized race among barbarous nations. Owing to the well-known fact that the childhood of the individual has a correspondence and peculiar sympathies with the childhood of the race, the Old Testament can, with special appropriateness, be taught to children.

The question as to how far certain portions of the Old Testament are true leads to a discussion of the distinction between the truth of science and the truth of poetry, with the emphasis for universality and permanence on the latter. It is in the spirit of the poet that the Old Testament has to be interpreted and understood. The great parts of it are manifestly inspired "and Inspiration is a reality, though its definition is at present vague." But whatever it means it does not mean infallibility. "Absolute truth is always beyond us." The essence of all human knowledge is that it is true as far as it goes. "It never goes all the way." Aside from its mission as the cradle of the Messiah, the chief value to humanity of the race of Israel is that it associated religion and morality for all time.

Part III of this most illuminating book is "of the nature of an apologia and anticipatory reply to critics." It is an appeal for a wider understanding of science, and a more frank acknowledgment of the value of working hypotheses in all departments. As a physicist, and justifying his procedure by the example of Newton, Sir Oliver Lodge believes that it is "not inappropriate to reach beyond the range of the physical and demonstrable, to a region where experience gained in those departments of knowledge may be genuinely serviceable. And although strict and positive certainty is as yet unattainable, and possibly may remain unattainable for centuries in the future as it has already been through the ages of the past, yet some approximation to the truth may be gradually made by utilizing every indication and stretching our human faculties to the utmost."

L. E. P.

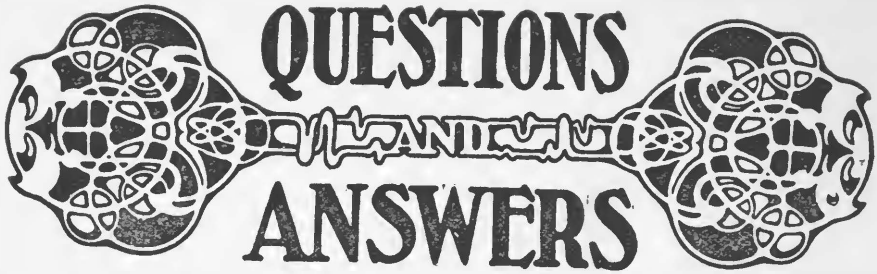
*Lessons in Truth*, by H. Emilie Cady, published by the Unity Tract Society of Kansas City. Admirable intention is manifest in this and in other publications of the same society, the leaders of which must undoubtedly be devout and earnest people. But are they interested still in facts? Their publications make statements which are not facts. "Our great basic statement," they say, "is, 'All is good, because all is God.'" In the first place, good and evil are relative terms. One is unthinkable without the other. You cannot conceive of darkness unless you have seen light. The universe is made up of these pairs of opposites. God transcends both good and evil. If you deny that, you limit God to your present conception of what is good. You also ignore the experience of all mankind which can be verified by yourself at any moment, just by facing the facts of your own consciousness. You quote St. Paul; but St. Paul did not say that all is good: he said that "in Him we live, and move, and have our being." A sponge, floating in the sea, remains a sponge. And St. Paul did not say, "of Him all things consist." He said, "by Him all things consist." The difference is fundamental. So, too, when you say, "I am Spirit, perfect, holy, harmonious. Nothing can hurt me or make me sick or afraid, for Spirit is God, and cannot be hurt or made sick or afraid, *I manifest my Real Self through this body now*"—when you assert that, you are as-

serting something which is not true. You are confusing your Spirit and your personality. If your "Real Self" were to manifest in your body now, your body would be reduced to something resembling a cinder. You imagine that you are glorifying the Spirit; actually you are trying to drag it down to serve the wishes of the mind. You assert, in other words, that it is always God's will that the body shall be healthy. But, unless you deny the most obvious facts—and surely there must be some limit to plausible negation—the truth is that some bodies are very unhealthy and that all physical bodies die. It follows that death and ill-health are just as much a part of His Will (and Wisdom) as life and physical vigour. Why not? Cannot His purposes be served at times, better by sorrow than by joy, better by sickness than by health, better by death than by life? When you assert the contrary; when you affirm that a body is healthy when it really is sick, or that God's will must necessarily be on the side of health always—you are, in the first instance, using Hypnotism to bring about a cure, and, in the second instance, a power more dangerous than that of ordinary Hypnotism, because more subtle. In both cases all that you accomplish is to push the dust underneath the furniture. You defeat the efforts of the Soul to get rid of the evils that encumber it. It is worse than merely to postpone the day of reckoning. You cause a congestion and inflammation *within* that is infinitely more dangerous than any disease now known to us. T.

*The Burden of Isis.*—This interesting and attractive little book is one of the "Wisdom of the East" series, several of which have been reviewed in previous numbers of the QUARTERLY. The present volume gives the old Egyptian legend and tells us that Osiris, son of Earth and Heaven, married his sister Isis. His brother Set became jealous of him, tricked him into a chest and threw him into the Nile. Isis then searched the Nile for the body of her husband, but Set divided the body into fourteen pieces before it could be interred, and scattered them throughout Egypt. Isis again set out on a search and finally found thirteen, the fourteenth having been eaten by fishes.

This legend was the foundation for one of the great religious cults in Egypt, and the chants which are translated in this volume are part of the ritual of this worship. They are of immense antiquity, and the lines are full of mystic significance which it is well worth while to try to understand. L. G.

*Stray Thoughts on Character*, by Lucy H. M. Soulsby (Longmans, Green & Co.), is written primarily for women. But it should appeal equally to men. Mrs. Soulsby is a woman of wide reading and unusually deep insight. She has learned the importance of little things. Her chapter on Happiness is really remarkable. A high idealist, she is none the less intensely practical, while her style is so simple that any child of fourteen should be able easily to follow her thought. In her essay on Self-Control, which is based upon Herbert Spencer's dictum that "the test of being educated is, can you do what you ought, when you ought, whether you want to do it or not?" Mrs. Soulsby, though addressing mothers, suggests a method of education which cannot fail to interest everyone who comes in contact with children (or with the child in themselves!). We strongly recommend this book to our readers. T.



# QUESTIONS

# ANSWERS

QUESTION 128.—*May I ask through the medium of your publication some explanation of what to me seems to be a fundamental principle of theosophy.*

*What is the purpose of the Universe, of the descent of the Logos into material form? It is understood in so far that it is self-limitation of the Logos, the object of which was—as defined in Mrs. Annie Besant's "In the Outer Court"—"to pour forth the bliss which was its own essential nature, so that when the cycle of existence should be completed, there should be many individuals, radiant and joyous to share with it that perfect bliss which should ever grow as they approach to Itself." Does this implied reunion of the many individuals with the original source, the Logos, after the cycle of existence, render It any greater, or more developed, or more perfect than it was before this manifestation in form was brought about. That is—was the Logos then but small and limited in comparison with what it ultimately is to be. On the other hand, if this is not the case, if the Logos has ever been the same unchangeable reality that it ever is or will be, how has this self-limitation affected its essential nature?*

*Is perfection a fixed state of being or—if it is ever progressive and never absolute, is it to be concluded that the Logos itself never will be perfect and that there is no such thing as perfection?*

ANSWER.—There is a tradition that in the Lodge even the higher chelas are positively forbidden to speculate upon such questions. They are absolutely beyond the range of the mind; cannot be understood; are a waste of time and energy; and often lead to doubt or scepticism. Let us therefore turn our attention to the living of a higher life, instead of to speculations concerning it, its purpose and ultimate goal.

C. A. G., JR.

ANSWER.—All these questions are answered constructively in *The Secret Doctrine*, to which the questioner is referred. They are to be solved by moral progress, not by word-chopping.

C. J.

ANSWER.—I do not feel equal to answering these queries. Of course one could say that "perfection" is an absolute condition, and cannot, therefore, be more or less; but I do not feel sure what the querent means by the Logos, which seems to be confounded with the Absolute.

I am always sorry for people who are trying to make puzzles for themselves out of problems that only Divine Intelligence can solve. Is it not more sane to acknowledge that there are some things with which we have *at present* no concern? Questions about the ultimate perfection of the Logos seem to come into this category.

KATHARINE HILLARD.

ANSWER.—Perfection implies limitation—finality. The keynote of the Universe is development—infinity in all senses. There is a phrase—"The glory of the imperfect"—which may be suggestive to the questioner. I remember once being puzzled over the question: Can Infinity progress? If not, I thought, what is the

use of all this manifestation. If it can progress how can it be Infinity? The answer I received to my query was: Yes, Infinity can progress. Whether this is true of the Absolute, it is as impossible for us to say as for a part to contain the whole. To pass judgment on the Absolute is impossible for us because we are parts of It, and can not set ourselves outside of It:—take a sort of birds-eye view of the Absolute in Its environment and say “Here is the Absolute; here is that which is other than the Absolute.” We can reach it by the unity of love and aspiration, not by the mind. The mind defines; to define one must set limits; and to set limits one must be able to see around that which is to be limited. Matthew Arnold said that man must never forget his *provincial* position in the Universe. All our knowledge is relative to our spiritual standing. If we would know more we must expand our faculties by spiritual growth.

I have been told that the purpose of the descent into matter was the attainment of self-consciousness and concreteness. By phenomenal experience these qualities are being hammered into what was formerly conscious, but not self-conscious, and abstract. Is it not possible that that applies to the Logos? I do not know. I merely throw this out as a suggestion. L. E. P.

QUESTION 129.—*Hibbert Journal, Jan., 1911, p. 359.* “the crucifixion of Deity in and for the creature.” What does that mean?

ANSWER.—“Of the mystery of the Incarnation we need not speculate, and what he was before the Incarnation we can hardly express. The best attempt that has been made to express it conveys the idea in mystical and very beautiful language with which we are all familiar: modulating the great creation theme—‘In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters’—into poetic utterance still more magnificent:—

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. . . .

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the father, full of grace and truth.’

“Yes, that is as near as we can get to the extraordinary truth! The Great Spirit took pity on the human race, which was blundering along, afflicted with a terrible burden of sins, with mistaken notions of worship,—bloody sacrifices, burnt offerings, and all the machinery of priestcraft, even when it did not fall into idolatry. Called as it was to something better and higher and purer from time to time by the great prophets which arose, it was still terribly mistaken, still confused by hopelessly wrong ideas of the nature of God, and liable to attribute to the Deity all manner of human weaknesses and imperfections. That was the condition of unregenerate man. So a Divine Spirit—‘the Lord from heaven’—became incarnate, in order to reveal to us the hidden nature of God,—the love, the pity, the long-suffering, the kindness—all that we had missed or misconceived or that priests had defaced. He came to tell us what the Kingdom of Heaven was really like. In many parables he tried to make it clear to us. He found it no easy task, but it was his central message, his constant endeavour, to convey some sense of the reality and meaning of the Kingdom of Heaven, and how it might be actually realized on earth. We see now that if the human will could only get into harmony with the Divine will, if the will of God could be done on earth as it is done in heaven, the Kingdom would have come; earth and heaven would have become one, and the joy of existence would be supreme.” (Lodge: *Reason and Belief.*)

“Even then within the realm of undisputed physical law, and without emerging beyond the region of natural history, we meet with promises of reality objective-

to God in various degrees, without prejudice to the identification of all power with his will. But the full security against the dissolving mists of pantheism is first obtained when we quit the simply natural field in which nothing is possible but in linear links of succession, and stand in presence of the supernatural in man, to whom an *alternative* is given, and in whom is a real mind, or miniature of God, consciously acting from a selected end in view. Here it is that we first learn the solemn difference in ourselves between what is and what might be; and, carrying the lesson abroad, discover how faint a symbol is visible nature of its ideal essence and Divine Cause. Here it is, that, after long detention in our prison of facts, the walls become transparent, and let us see the fields more than elysian beyond. The Eternal is more than all that he has done. And if the universe, with all its vastness, is only the single actuality which shapes itself out of a sea of possibilities; if its laws are but one function of thought in a mind that transcends them every way; then in being the indwelling beauty and power of the world, he does not cease to be the living God above the world and though the world were gone. Still more, if, within the local realm of his administration, there is an enclosure which he has chosen to rail off as sacred for a minor divineness like his own, for a free and spiritual life, having play enough from the thralldom of natural laws for responsible movements of its own; then, however resistless the sweep of his power elsewhere, here, at the threshold of this shrine of conflict and of prayer, he gently pauses in his almightiness, and lets only his love and righteousness enter in. Here is a holy place, reserved for genuine moral relations and personal affections, for infinite pity and finite sacrifice, for tears of compunction and the embrace of forgiveness, and all the hidden life by which the soul ascends to God.

"Here, however, we are carried on to ground which no natural philosopher can survey for us. Looking back on the path which has led us thus far, we meet, in the three great modern discoveries, respecting the space, the duration, the forces, of the cosmos, with nothing to disturb, and with much to elevate and glorify, the religious interpretation of nature; and, through the falling away of puerile conceptions, at once to justify and to harmonize the impressions of devout minds in every age. The outward world, nevertheless, is not the school of the purest and deepest. It is not God's characteristic sphere of *self-expression*. Rather it is his eternal act of *self-limitation*; of abstinence from the movements of free affection moment by moment, for the sake of a constancy that shall never falter or deceive. The finite universe is thus the stooping of the Infinite will to an everlasting self-sacrifice; the assumption of a patient silence by the fountain-head of boundless thought. The silence is first broken, the self-expression comes forth, in the moral phenomena of our life, where at last spirit speaks with spirit, and the passage is made from the measured steps of material usage to the free flight of spiritual affection. The world reports the power, reflects the beauty, spreads abroad the majesty, of the Supreme Cause; but we cannot speak of higher attributes, and apprehend the positive grounds of trust and love, without entering the precincts of humanity." (James Martineau: *The Seat of Authority in Religion, God in Nature.*)

These two passages may be suggestive to the questioner. Both books are recommended in their entirety.

L. E. P.





## THE ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society was held at New York on April 29, 1911, at the Brevoort Hotel.

### MORNING SESSION

The Convention having been called in accordance with the Constitution, was declared to be in session and members and friends were greeted by Mr. Charles Johnston, Chairman of the Executive Committee.

### TEMPORARY ORGANIZATION

Nominations for temporary Chairman and for temporary Secretary of the Convention were then called for.

Upon motion Mr. Charles Johnston of New York was unanimously chosen temporary Chairman, and Mr. Perkins of New York, temporary Secretary.

The Chairman cordially welcomed the delegates and members, closing his address with an earnest warning against the dangers which always attend upon periods of prosperity in the life of the Society.

Upon motion the Chair appointed a Committee on Credentials, consisting of Mrs. Ada Gregg, of Brooklyn, Miss Margaret Hohnstedt, of Dayton, and Mr. H. B. Mitchell, of New York; and it was voted to adjourn until this Committee should be ready to make its report.

### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS

The Convention having reassembled, the Committee on Credentials reported that the credentials submitted had been examined and found satisfactory, the following 35 Branches, entitled to cast a total vote of 193 votes, being represented by delegates or by proxies:

Aurora, Oakland, Cal.  
Baltimore, Baltimore, Md.  
Blavatsky, Washington, D. C.  
Boston, Boston, Mass.  
Cincinnati, Cincinnati, O.  
Dayton, Dayton, O.  
Denver, Denver, Colo.  
Detroit, Detroit, Mich.  
Fort Wayne, Fort Wayne, Ind.  
H. P. B., Toledo, O.  
Indianapolis, Indianapolis, Ind.  
Middletown, Middletown, O.  
New York, New York, N. Y.  
Pacific, Los Angeles, Cal.  
Providence, Providence, R. I.  
Queen City, Seattle, Wash.  
Shila, Toledo, O.  
Southern, Greensboro, N. C.

Stockton, Stockton, Cal.  
Syracuse, Syracuse, N. Y.  
Toronto, Toronto, Canada.  
Unity, Indianapolis, Ind.  
Venezuelan, Caracas, Venezuela.  
London, London, England.  
Newcastle, Newcastle-on-Tyne, England.  
Karma, Christiana, Norway.  
Arvika, Arvika, Sweden.  
Berlin, Berlin, Germany.  
North Berlin, Berlin, Germany.  
Dresden, Dresden, Germany.  
Flensburg, Flensburg, Germany.  
Neusalz, Neusalz, Germany.  
Suhl, Suhl, Germany.  
Munich, Munich, Germany.  
Steglitz, Steglitz, Germany.

Upon motion the report was accepted and the Committee on Credentials discharged with the thanks of the Convention.

#### PERMANENT ORGANIZATION

The Chair then called for nominations for permanent Chairman and Secretary.

Upon motion Mr. H. B. Mitchell, of New York, was elected permanent Chairman, and the temporary Secretary was made permanent Secretary.

Upon motion a vote of thanks was given the temporary Chairman for his kindly offices.

Mr. Mitchell, on taking the Chair, asked for nominations for a Committee on Resolutions, and the Chair, by vote, was authorized to appoint a Committee of three, the following being named: Mr. E. T. Hargrove, of New York, Mrs. Marian F. Gitt, of Washington, and Mr. Guy Manning, of Cincinnati.

Upon motion the Chair was authorized to appoint a Committee of three as a Committee on Nominations, the following being appointed: Mr. C. A. Griscom, Jr., of New York, Mrs. Gordon, of Hamilton, O., and Mr. Benninger, of Cincinnati.

These Committees were instructed to meet and report during the Convention.

The Chair then called for the reports of the officers of the Society. Mr. Charles Johnston responded as follows:

#### REPORTS OF OFFICERS

##### REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR ENDING APRIL 28, 1911.

###### *Fellow-Members:*

Happy is the country which has no history, says the proverb. In the same sense, happy is the year in which the Executive Committee has no report to make.

In past years, the Executive Committee has had very much to do in the great task of rebuilding the international organization of The Theosophical Society. That work is now, fortunately, completed. Much work was also involved in the revision of our Constitution and By-Laws, and in the restoration of our name, The Theosophical Society, without limitation to any nation or any place. That, too, is happily consummated. There remains only the quiet, steady growth of the Society, the details of which find their proper place rather in the Report of our beloved and well trusted Secretary. Yet these details appeal in a special way to the Executive Committee, through its Chairman.

For it is one of the privileges of the Chairman of the Executive Committee, and a high one, to sign the diplomas which give new members formal entry to The Theosophical Society, and the Chairman always signs these diplomas with a sense of the deep responsibility involved, and with high hopes for the Theosophical life of the new member, who may be the means of bringing signal blessings on us all, and on humanity, through the work of our Movement.

The Chairman holds this high hope, but not less the sense of deep responsibility, especially where diplomas come so fast as they have, during the past year. What of all these new members? What is the Society doing, what are the older members doing, to bring them to a genuine understanding of our ideal and our goal, the Theosophical method and spirit, so that they may become truly a part of the life of the great Theosophical Movement?

Truly, a very serious question, the contemplation of which should fill our hearts with humility.

May 29, 1911.

CHARLES JOHNSTON,  
*Chairman Executive Committee.*

Upon motion the above report was accepted. The appreciation of the work of the Executive Committee and of its Chairman being manifested by a rising vote.

The Secretary's Report being requested, Mrs. Ada Gregg, Secretary T. S., responded as follows:

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY, T. S., FOR THE YEAR ENDING APRIL 28, 1911.

*New Branches and Members.*

The Secretary begs to report that during the preceding year diplomas have been issued to 156 new members: as follows: In the United States, 50; in South America, 46; in Germany, 44; in England, 9; in Norway, 2; in Sweden, 2; in Austria, 2, and in Canada 1. Total 156.

During the same period the Society has lost by resignation 10 and by death 4.

One charter has been issued to a new Branch—the H. P. B. Branch at Toledo, Ohio, issued August 14, 1910.

*Correspondence.*

It is again my pleasant duty to refer to the general correspondence in which the Secretary finds abundant compensation for the daily routine which a Secretary's work involves.

Every communication is welcomed whether from the tried and true correspondent of many years—or the unfamiliar writing of an applicant for information, which thrills the Secretary's heart with the suggestion, that the light which Theosophy is presenting to the world has found another responsive soul—has awakened a desire to learn more of its teachings with the hope that it will point the way to usefulness, peace and happiness.

In this constant interchange of thought—fellowship of service—oneness in purpose and effort to give all possible help to others—forming groups for study—affiliating with societies formed by the steadily growing class of those who have outgrown the letter of their creeds, and are endeavoring to bring light to those less favored than themselves—and the frequent expressions of confidence in the guidance and constant assistance given by our elder brothers—one cannot fail to sense the earnestness, devotion, unity and harmony apparent in the varied correspondence that reaches us.

Many encouraging words also come from our international brothers, recognizing our mutual helpfulness and giving expression to the feeling of strong and steady growth which our effort has brought.

*The Sale of Books.*

It is encouraging to note that the sale of books—especially the Society's publications—have far exceeded all previous records. The second edition of the *Abridgment of the Secret Doctrine* has been issued and it will soon be necessary to issue new editions of the *Bhagavad Gita*, *Fragments*, *Meditation* and *The Song of Life*.

The Secretary's request for the earlier magazines of the Society, *The Path*, *The Theosophist*, *Lucifer*, etc., met with prompt response—not only furnishing the Society with a liberal supply of magazines, but resulting in many applications—making acquaintances in new fields—and much interesting correspondence. The students of Berlin were the first to apply and the Secretary has assembled almost complete files of *The Path*, *The Theosophist* and *Lucifer*, which will soon be sent them.

It is also gratifying that the demand for books through this department is not confined to theosophists and the theosophical literature. The busy Secretary is sent into unexplored fields without guide or chart—or author's or publisher's name or location. Happily, our facilities for securing books are greatly increased so that any book not in stock can be promptly supplied.

*The Quarterly.*

The spirit of inquiry is subtle and constant, thus showing that Divine Wisdom has come very close to man, even though it be in its incipient stage of recognition. Its force is shown in the evidences of appreciation that come to us—showing that the QUARTERLY is a wanted magazine on the library shelves and tables of universities, public libraries and reading rooms; distributed through the United States from ocean to ocean, and from the lakes to the gulf. It also makes its quarterly visits to Canada, Cuba, South America, England, India, Norway, Sweden, Germany, Austria, Australia, Southern Africa and the latest advance comes from Palestine.

We hear more frequently from the public libraries than from any other mode of distribution. The following extract from a recent correspondent is typical: "Yesterday I came across the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY in the public library, and I find much in it that appeals to me—kindly forward the necessary instructions as to the requirements, obligations, and conditions of membership in the Theosophical Society." A member speaking of the teachings of the QUARTERLY and its influence said "The QUARTERLY you sent me brought me into the Society—I lived upon it for weeks."

*A Word Personal.*

It would be very ungrateful indeed if the Secretary failed to express the great sense of the help that has so continuously been given by individuals, members, branches and co-workers. The Secretary has been much aided in carrying on the work by feeling the support which comes from the Society's great bulwark—Sympathy—which helps so magically in enabling us to perform the duties entrusted to our care.

Respectfully submitted,

ADA GREGG,  
*Secretary.*

Upon motion the Report of the Secretary was accepted, a rising vote expressing appreciation of the Secretary's unflinching devotion to the interests of the Society.

The Report of the Treasurer being in order, Mr. Hargrove was called to the Chair while Mr. Mitchell, Treasurer of the T. S., presented his Report as follows:

REPORT OF THE TREASURER, T. S., APRIL 26, 1910—APRIL 28, 1911.

<i>Receipts.</i>		<i>Disbursements.</i>	
Dues .....	\$767.00	Secretary's Office.....	\$273.89
Contributions .....	847.01	Theosophical Quarterly (four	
Theosophical Quarterly.....	292.18	numbers, July, 1910, to	
	<hr/>	April, 1911) .....	1,108.08
	\$1,906.19		<hr/>
Balance April 26, 1910.....	157.38	Balance, April 28, 1911.....	\$1,381.97
	<hr/>		681.60
	\$2,063.57		<hr/>
Advance to Book Business		Repayment of Advance to	
Feb. 9, for publication		Book Business for publica-	
Secret Doctrine Abridg-		tion .....	194.69
ment .....	194.69		<hr/>
	<hr/>		\$2,258.26
	\$2,258.26		

April 28, 1911.

H. B. MITCHELL,  
*Treasurer.*

In presenting this report the Treasurer took occasion to congratulate the Society upon the result of the mite-box contributions which had gone far toward converting the annual deficit, usually met by a few members, into a creditable balance.

During the discussion which followed the reading of the Treasurer's Report, several members expressed approval of the mite-box method of contribution, and satisfaction that dues and voluntary contributions had met the expenses of the Society for the past year leaving a balance in its Treasury.

Upon motion the Report of the Treasurer was accepted, and a rising vote signified the unanimous wish to express the gratitude of the Society for the service of its Treasurer.

By motion of Mr. Hargrove, the Editor of THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY was given an enthusiastic vote of thanks for the toil and for the skill which made possible a publication reflecting so admirably the work and spirit of the Society.

Responding to this vote, Mr. Griscom accepted the thanks of the Society just long enough to bestow them upon Mr. Johnston and others who contribute regularly to the QUARTERLY; He then gave an interesting outline of the growth of the publication, its purposes, and the wide circulation for usefulness which it has gradually achieved.

By vote the Convention then adjourned until 3.15 P. M.

#### AFTERNOON SESSION

On reconvening, the Chair announced the receipt of cablegrams and letters addressed to the Convention from Branches abroad not represented by delegates in person. These cables and letters were then read by Mr. Griscom and Mr. Perkins, with comments on the work being done by many of the foreign Branches. Mr. Johnston spoke in detail of the German Branches and of some independent, original work done by them in connection with the Wagner Music drama and the ancient Scandinavian Eddas. Even more admirable than their literary contribution, he considered the well organized and energetic work in establishing Branches as offshoots of the parent German Societies. Mr. Johnston said that the American Branches may well profit by the example of our German brothers in the excellent plan for study classes and in the fine quality of devotion which they bring to the task.

Dr. Clark, of Philadelphia, kindly translated for the Convention messages which came in a foreign language.

#### LETTERS OF GREETING AND REPORTS FROM FOREIGN BRANCHES

##### ARVIKA BRANCH

Arvika, Sweden.

##### *Greeting and Report.*

*To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:*

The members of the Arvika Branch in Sweden send cordial greetings and good wishes to all.

Those of our members, who live in this town and in its neighborhood meet regularly every Wednesday, Summer and Winter alike, for reading and discussion, taking for the most part extracts from the QUARTERLY.

This Magazine has been a uniting link between Theosophists over all the world; and we take this opportunity to send the Editor of the QUARTERLY and the co-workers in it our warmest thanks.

All our meetings are open to the public, but we do not advertise them in the newspapers. Like a family we gather together, and our little common home is frequently visited by outsiders.

Fraternally yours,

H. JULIN, *President.*

THE KARMA BRANCH

Eidsvold, Christiana, Norway.

*Greeting.*

*To the Members of the Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:*

When in a body, harmony prevails, trust is a fact, brotherly love rules the heart, and the eye is beaming forth joy:—then there is that silence which is peace.

May this silence be yours to-day.

With brotherly greetings from The Karma Branch, Christiana.

Yours fraternally,

T. H. KNOFF.

UNITED GERMAN BRANCHES

*To the Members of the Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:*

DEAR COMRADES:

In the name of your fellow-members and on my behalf, I send you the heartiest greetings and good wishes. We are sorry not to be able to send, in person, one or more delegates to be present at the Convention, and to take part in all the proceedings. But we must be satisfied to be present in thought and in heart; we are sure that we shall get our share of the results of the work done by the Convention in New York.

As you will know from the report of last Convention of the German Branches of the T. S. we have accepted the name "United German Branches of the T. S." We believe that this means a step forward in the manifestation of Universal Brotherhood. We gave up the national name as a result of our feeling, that each Branch is a direct and integral part of The Theosophical Society; and also that each member is first a member of the "T. S.," before being a member of a Branch.

We all believe that the cultivation of such feelings helps us enormously towards the realization of Universal Brotherhood, which is the highest aim of our "T. S." Each one can perceive this for himself by the fact that he gradually learns to lose all sense of separateness, all sense of personality. In place of this we get the sense of Unity; we learn to forget to work and to think as a "man," so that we may learn to think and work as "Humanity." This, it seems to me, is the only standpoint for the true and real man.

We here in Germany are glad that, so far as the organization is considered, we have reached this point in the realization of the Unity of the "T. S." This is a basis, which gives each member and each Branch the necessary freedom to work itself up to the plane of Unity, to the spiritual plane, unhindered by any authority. Each member and each Branch learns hereby to stand on his own feet, to look for help first to the inner, spiritual world, instead of to other co-workers or to some authority. Finding this true basis, we are now better able to lift up our minds to the higher, inner world, to aspire to come nearer to the Masters; in short, we are then fit to travel the Path, which leads to the "Higher Life," without fearing to go astray in sidepaths.

As the progress of us all and of the "T. S." as a whole, can lie only in this direction, I wish heartily that this Convention may be a milestone towards Union, "union of heart!" Accordingly as we succeed in this, we shall get doubtless the

help and support of all those Beings who have already reached the Goal, and whom some of us, if not all, know as the members of the "White Lodge."

May the blessing of these Beings, our Masters, rest on our present Convention!  
Fraternally yours,

PAUL RAATZ,  
*Secretary of the "United German Branches of the T. S."*

BERLIN BRANCH

*Report.*

During the last year, the number of our members has increased from 95 to 113. As usual, we had public meetings on each Wednesday, giving lectures and studying *Key to Theosophy* alternatively. We have succeeded in securing the help of a good many lecturers outside the Theosophical Society who addressed our meetings. Once a month we studied *Voice of the Silence* in a class of members and also once a month our members assembled for a social meeting where there was conversation on matters of general interest and where we heard reports of members who had attended meetings of other societies interested in philosophical and religious affairs. During the last winter, some very good lectures were given in Berlin to the general public, in which much of the theosophical spirit could be found; these reports were always very interesting. On these occasions, the letters of our American and other foreign friends were read.

It is in these directions that we are going to continue to work, and we are full of hope for the coming year.

Fraternally yours,

E. J. WIEDERHOLD, *Secretary.*

NORTH BERLIN BRANCH

*Greeting and Report.*

*To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:*

DEAR COMRADES:

You may be sure that every earnest member in Germany regrets his inability to be with you and to take part in the proceedings of the Convention. It is also impossible for our delegates to be in New York. We send you, therefore, our heartiest greetings and good wishes; we hope that your work will meet with success.

The following is a short report of the activities and life of our Branch. Our membership is nineteen. During the past year three members have left the branch and two have joined it. Our Branch has rooms of its own; they are located however in a part of the city where the population is mostly comprised of social-democratic workmen, who show no interest in our movement, in spite of all kinds of propaganda. (Politics now occupy the minds of all.) Lectures are held every week. The audience numbers between twenty and thirty. The lectures are given by our members, a few true friends from the Berlin Branch and several outsiders. In the very lively discussions, the guests take a prominent part. Circumstances have compelled us to discontinue our study-class for a while. Last year we studied alternately *Light on the Path* and *Key to Theosophy*.

Sometimes we all have the feeling that our Branch did better work a few years ago and that something must occur to bring about an improvement in the present condition. We hope that our mistakes and the hindrances to our work which are now hidden from our view may make themselves apparent. Our aspiration and love for the Theosophical work is certainly strong enough to open up new paths to the great goal.

In behalf of all members of North Berlin Branch,

ERNST JOHN, *President.*

## DRESDEN BRANCH

*Greetings and Report.*

*To the Members of the Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:*

Another year has passed—a brief yet fertile season that has given us our long wished for “home.” The influence of a home is powerful, is great, in the daily life of every man; but it is much more significant when the life affected is the corporate life of a Branch. A feeling of unity is increasing among our members, and makes itself felt among outsiders also. Our “home” is a magnetic centre drawing to itself souls eager for truth; we can see its effect in the growth of our membership to 34, as against 19 of the preceding year.

As to our work, we have a public meeting every Monday. The program varies; sometimes there is a general discussion, sometimes translations of articles in the QUARTERLY are read, sometimes there is an address, followed by questions and answers from the members. But whatever the work, we feel that we are not doing it alone, that the Masters are giving their help.

We are anticipating much pleasure and benefit from the Convention of the German Branches of The Theosophical Society here in Dresden on May 13th and 14th.

Goethe says “all actual things are types and symbols of real things unseen.” These words should be in our minds when we cast our eyes over the work of our Branches. We should pass from the outer activity to the Reality that those activities manifest: The power and love of the Masters. May this power and love rest in blessing upon the Convention now assembled in New York.

With sincere good wishes,

THE DRESDEN BRANCH.

## MUNICH BRANCH

*Greetings.*

The Munich Branch sends to all the friends and brothers now assembled in New York the most sincere and fraternal greetings and good wishes. May they all be divinely guided in their deliberations upon the welfare and future of the Theosophical Society.

On behalf of the Munich Branch,

GEORG KOHL.

## STEGLITZ BRANCH

*Greeting and Report.*

*To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:*

DEAR COMRADES:

The members of the Steglitz Branch of The Theosophical Society beg to send you their heartiest greetings and best wishes for the work you are accomplishing for the benefit of the whole Society. We are joining with you in thought and in heart, since none of us can be present in person. We hope that from all the good thoughts and feelings which will find their expression on this occasion and from all the good mutual advice which will be given, a great stimulus and help for the work in the coming year may result.

The year which is now closing was for our Branch a very quiet one as far as outer, visible results are concerned. Our regular weekly meetings were not largely attended and our study class had to be given up for lack of attendance. In fact our members are all without exception very busy people. They are generally too much fatigued at night to take part in philosophical discussions, especially as these are likely to continue late, thus depriving them of their much needed rest. This is likewise the case with the visitors who have been attending our meetings. We have therefore, for the present, accepted the situation, convinced that surely, in time to come, the interest and ability for philosophical discussions will be revived in the members as well as in our visitors.



Meanwhile we know, that all real success is achieved on the inner planes, and in that direction, it seems to me, we have all made good progress during the last year. We are persuaded that our duty as members of The Theosophical Society is not fulfilled by learning and teaching certain doctrines, called Theosophical Philosophy, however good we may have found its influence to be; we have learned that everything which comes from the heart of men and everything which leads to an improvement of the governing ideas of our race forms a part of Theosophy and is to be fostered and cultivated by us. Most of all, we have begun to learn that Theosophy is a Life and that consequently our Theosophical work may never be considered as confined to our Theosophical Society meetings, but must be effective during every moment of daily life and must be carried out while we are fulfilling our ordinary tasks. Difficult as this still appears, at least we have learned, that it *must* be done, that it is the only means by which we can fulfill our duties as members of the Theosophical Society, and the only way by which we can expect to make our work successful. We confidently hope that during the next year we may take a decided step forward on this road.

Trusting that we shall soon feel within us the inspiring effect, which inevitably will be imparted to the whole Society by the work you are now doing during the Convention for all of us, we pray that the Blessing of the Masters may be upon your work.

On behalf of the Steglitz Branch,

Very fraternally yours,

I. EO SCHOCH, *President.*

THE BRITISH NATIONAL BRANCH

London.

*Greetings and Report.*

*To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:*

The British National Branch sends its greetings and heartiest wishes for the prosperity of the Society and the success of its deliberations.

Here, in England, we are very gradually increasing the number of our members, more particularly in the north. No new Branches have been formed but several centres which, it is hoped, will soon develop. The activity of the existing Branches has increased, both in the number of meetings held and in the attendance.

In the main, the subjects with which the Branches have dealt have been concerned with the second object of the Society, so that each member can gain a wider understanding of his own beliefs. It would seem that the Society having passed through the period of attention to material phenomena, had entered on a cycle of attention to the life of the soul itself. One may, perhaps, compare the psychic phenomena to the external life of the body, while the study and vital understanding of the various religions are essential steps in the deepening and increase of the life of the soul. In a way, such depth of interest means that we are concerned, not with a house and its conduct and maintenance, but with the life and consciousness of those who reside therein.

Thus the study connected with our third object may be said to be concerned with the collection and observation of isolated facts: the study of the second object, in part, with the explanations already given of those facts; in part, also, as we begin to realize it, we commence to become conscious of a basis of life which unifies those facts, the real life of the soul which is akin to yet differs widely from the external life of the phenomena. By these means, we approach the vital, *life-giving* study and realization of the first object of the Society, which has been laid out for and accepted by us in order that we may become conscious of that primal law under which the soul commences its conscious life as such—under which it exists as Soul—namely Unity—Universal Brotherhood.

With all good wishes to the Convention and its Members,

ARCHIBALD KEIGHTLEY,

*General Secretary.*

## VENEZUELA BRANCH

Cumaná, Venezuela.

*Greetings and Report.*

I send cordial greetings on the event of the coming Convention of The Theosophical Society. It is gratifying to report that since 1910 the Theosophical movement in our Republic has progressed and has spread in a manner that gives good promise for the future.

In our race, the basal element of which is Indian, the philosophies and religious doctrines of the Orient are readily assimilated, as if there were a spiritual tie between the splendid sub-race of the Ganges and the embryonic, incipient ferment of the sixth race, now developing in the American zone.

The two great white brotherhoods, of the Himalayas and the Andes, seem to be traveling on the same road to a common destiny—two races and two glorious civilizations. As Mr. Judge, with his clear and extensive vision, saw in the type of the enterprising, fervent, strong and capable North American of to-day, the re-appearance of the vigorous and brilliant men of Atlantis—perhaps we shall, in our turn be the primary factors in shaping the future man, who will enjoy the privilege of a new sense with which to study nature and life.

Theosophy, with us, does not present the revolutionary violence that ordinarily characterizes reforms. Notwithstanding the religious prejudices and the European conventionalities which have sowed here all the Castillian fanaticism, still the splendour of Aryan culture seems to belong to our environment and to our race. We shall therefore hope that by sustained propaganda and with books, periodicals and conferences, we may eventually succeed in enrolling a large number of our compatriots in the ranks of Universal Brotherhood.

Since April fifty-five members have joined this Branch of the Theosophical Society, according to the last report of the Secretary. Each one of these members is full of propaganda and is a source of strength and light. As soon as our resources permit we propose to have an assembly hall and a popular library; and to establish a periodical which shall serve to spread our ideas.

The Venezuela Branch feels deeply indebted to the disciples of Mr. Judge and wishes to express its best wishes for the success and peace of its brothers in North America.

F. DOMINGUEZ ACOSTA, *President.*

## REPORTS FROM DELEGATES

## CINCINNATI

Three phases of the work of the Cincinnati Branch were reported by different delegates—Mr. Benninger speaking of the work as a whole, Miss Hohnstedt reporting the work as seen through the T. S. library activities, and Mr. Manning spoke of the syllabus which they use and of the class work. There was also read a letter from the Secretary of the Cincinnati Study Class. Between the lines of these reports could be discerned a gratifying vitality in the Branch and an active spirit of unity among the members.

## DAYTON

Mr. Vermillion of the Dayton Branch made a spirited address, illustrating the three-fold individuality which finds expression in the work of a T. S. Branch. That a Branch may be very much alive though its participating membership be temporarily depleted, was shown in this report. Out of 27 members, 21 were reported as absent in other cities or traveling.

## INDIANAPOLIS

Mrs. Faulkner presented the report from Indianapolis, giving details of progress in connection with the study class. The Society was specially invited to hold its next annual convention at Indianapolis, and Mrs. Faulkner was requested to convey the thanks of the Convention for the courtesy thus extended by the Indianapolis Branch.

## PROVIDENCE

Each annual convention of the T. S. seems to strike its individual key-note, and a number of the reports from Branches sounded the key-note of the present Convention, but perhaps no single report was more perfectly in accord with the spirit of the day than Mrs. Sheldon's story of the life and work of the small Branch at Providence, R. I.

With slight accretion to its membership, but keeping up a work that is quiet, steady and very sure, the members of this Branch have seen the Theosophic Spirit gradually impress itself on the life of their city. It was hardly a surprise to find quoted in this report a letter from a Master to H. P. B. saying "Consider yourself a centre of force, etc."

## WASHINGTON

In presenting the report of the Blavatsky Branch, Mrs. Gitt voiced the experience of many delegates present when she reported that devotional meetings were marked by deeper interest and larger attendance than meetings for the intellectual discussion of philosophy. Experience has also led this Branch to avoid "preaching at" visitors, and to avoid all antagonism, especially toward the various churches and their points of dogma. By following this Theosophic method, they have seen former communicants of both Protestant and Romish churches come to the Branch meetings, become oriented and return to active fellowship in the churches of their original allegiance.

## MIDDLETOWN

It was a joy in listening to Mrs. Gordon's report of the Middletown, Ohio, Branch, to find that there also the T. S. members sense an awakening in the community. So often in the history of man has apparent loss to the individual been transformed into eternal gain, both for himself and for his fellows, that it seemed a perfectly natural thing, as Mrs. Gordon related it, that one of our T. S. members in Middletown had through the loss of outward vision become a very beacon of the inward light—a true guide, consulted by many in their hour of spiritual darkness.

## NEW YORK

Speaking for the New York Branch Mrs. Vera Johnston said that one of the gains of the Branch since the last Convention, was the positive conviction of a high kind of unity—a unity with those who have worked in the cause before, and a real sense of unity with those who in the future will carry on the work.

Touching on the gratitude which we ought to feel toward those who in the past have tried and failed, Mrs. Johnston went on to speak with affection for the members of T. S. who are "resting." They seemed to her in a sense the necessary ballast of the Theosophical movement—skirmishers in the last battle—and at the same time a responsibility, for were not some of them resting from weariness due not to sustaining the great principles we hold dear, but rather to the clash of personalities in any single group of workers.

For the T. S., said Mrs. Johnston, the day of propaganda has passed. This is the era in which errors are to be corrected—the era of conciliation and of tactful explanation of the truth.

Mr. Hargrove of the New York Branch said that Heaven, Purgatory and Hell are all realities here and now, and all at the same time. No one need remain in Hell who learns to accept the divine will and to renounce self-will. That is Purgatory. One step beyond, and we accept no more—we run to meet the gifts offered us; and that is Paradise.

There is in the world, concluded Mr. Hargrove, no such agency for gaining Paradise as the T. S. offers at this time.

#### LETTERS OF GREETING AND BRANCH REPORTS

The Chair then called for the reading of further letters of greeting and reports from Branches not represented by delegates. The following letters and reports being received and placed before the Convention.

##### UNITY BRANCH

Indianapolis, Indiana.

##### *Greeting and Report.*

*To the Members of the Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:*

The members of the Unity Branch send their greetings and wish to express their unqualified approval of all the acts of the Convention.

We wish to report that the year just closed has been a prosperous one in that it has not only drawn our members in closer union in the Theosophical work, but has also drawn others to us. The Branch has doubled its membership in the past eighteen months, now having twenty enrolled, of which number ten have joined us in the past year. There are several persons who meet with us quite frequently, and are engaged in the serious study of Theosophical writings.

We have public meetings each Wednesday evening at which some interesting subject is chosen for discussion, in which all are invited to participate. On the first Monday evening of each month we have a "members' meeting," in which the effort is towards the devotional side of Theosophy. During the last quarter year our average attendance has been: Members, thirteen; visitors, eight.

GRACE A. BRADFORD, *Secretary.*

##### CINCINNATI BRANCH

Cincinnati, Ohio.

##### *Greetings.*

*To All Members of the Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:*

While the Cincinnati Branch has three good representatives present, Miss Margaret Hohnstedt, Mr. Guy Manning and our worthy Secretary, Mr. Fred Benninger, I hope one more greeting, from a member who greatly hoped to be there but cannot, is not amiss. The Theosophical Society Convention days are the big days of the year in my estimation. I will let the members present speak for the Branch. I want to say a few words for the Theosophical Society Study Class that meets every Thursday afternoon for members only. We have been meeting regularly since September, 1907. We had a meeting this afternoon and all members present sent good wishes for the success of the annual Convention. I believe a Study Class where members can meet and study and talk freely to one another, is one of the best helps a society can have. We meet and study the philosophy thoroughly, each one expresses himself and each tries to help the other. We divide the time between intellectual and devotional studies, for we know all temperaments are not alike, and we try to be prepared to talk *with* those we meet and not at them. Perfect harmony pervades that hour devoted to our studies, and thus we are striving to be worthy to be called "Companions" of our Elder Brethren.

Fraternally yours,

CAROLINE WHITNY,  
*President Study Class.*

## PACIFIC BRANCH

Los Angeles, California.

*Greetings.**To Fellow-members of the Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:*

Cordial greeting and congratulations from California.

The Pacific Branch sends hearty sympathy and co-operation in all good work for humanity.

Sincerely and fraternally,

M. ELLA PATERSON, *Secretary.*

## QUEEN CITY BRANCH

Seattle, Washington.

*Greeting and Report.**To the Members of the Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled:*

DEAR COMRADES:

The members of Queen City Theosophical Society send hearty greetings, and most sincere good wishes for the present Convention. We hope all present will gain inspiration and courage for future work.

Headquarters for our Branch for the present are at 316 35th Avenue, Seattle, where students and inquirers are always welcome. Our regular Theosophical Society meeting is held on Friday afternoon and evening.

Our hearts will be with you during the hours of the Convention.

Fraternally,

JENNIE S. CLARK, *Secretary.*CHARLES J. CLARK, *President.*

## STOCKTON BRANCH

Stockton, California.

*Greeting.*

Greetings from Stockton Branch and best wishes for the Convention Assembled.

We hold meetings regularly every Sunday morning.

Fraternally yours,

ALGIE C. KELSEY.

## BOSTON BRANCH

Brighton, Massachusetts.

*Greeting.*

A meeting of our new Boston Theosophical Society was called for Saturday last. Three souls were present.

I wish our centre was a more vital one, but we shall "hold fast"—while life endures.

Peace to you and all the comrades.

Faithfully,

ELLEN MOFFETT.

## TORONTO BRANCH

Toronto, Canada.

*Report.*

We are doing nothing startling but are just making an effort to keep up a center. Our best work is, I think, that with the "QUARTERLY." We have a Branch meeting once a month and one of our lady members has an afternoon reading circle meeting at her home, weekly.

One of our weekly newspapers publishes about two columns of Theosophy each week, the copy for which is supplied by one of our members. This reaches a large number of people.

If you are going to publish a list of Branches as in last "QUARTERLY" please include ours. I cannot pass on without saying how we like the "QUARTERLY." All our members are continually praising it. I don't believe there has been a Theosophical magazine so well read. Most of the members, if not all, read it from cover to cover.

Faternally,

ALBERT J. HARRIS,  
Secretary Toronto Branch.

#### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS

Mr. Hargrove, as Chairman of this Committee, reported that there seemed to be no resolutions requiring special debate. The following resolutions were then presented to the Convention, each in turn, upon motion, was unanimously adopted, and the Committee was discharged with the thanks of the Convention.

I. *Resolved:* That the Chairman of the Executive Committee on behalf of the Society, be requested to extend our fraternal greetings to the Conventions of foreign Branches, shortly to be held.

II. *Resolved:* That the Secretary of the Convention be instructed to acknowledge with cordial thanks the greetings of Branches, of Societies, and of individual members.

III. *Resolved:* That the Executive Committee be asked to consider the possibility of changing the date of the Convention from April to September or October.

IV. *Resolved:* That the Executive Committee be asked to arrange, whenever possible, for visits by some of the older members to the different Branches of the Society.

V. *Resolved:* That the thanks of the Convention and of the Society be extended and is hereby extended to the New York Branch for the hospitality received.

VI. *Resolved:* That the Treasurer be authorized to appoint, in his discretion, a deputy to assist in the work of the Treasuryship, and to whom may be given power to sign checks in the Treasurer's name, the Treasurer to remain responsible to the Society for all matters pertaining to the conduct of his office.

#### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS

Mr. Griscom presented the following names in nomination, as selected by the Committee:

To fill the two regular vacancies in the Executive Committee, Dr. Keightley and Colonel T. H. Knoff.

For member of the Executive Committee, to fill the place of Dr. Butler—Mr. A. J. Harris, of Toronto.

For Treasurer, T. S.—Mr. H. B. Mitchell, of New York.

For Secretary, T. S.—Mrs. Ada Gregg, of Brooklyn.

Upon motion these several persons were unanimously elected, and the Committee on Nominations was discharged, with the thanks of the Convention.

#### ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to transact, and the regular proceedings of the Convention having been concluded, a vote of thanks was unanimously extended to the Chairman of the Convention for his services as presiding officer, and upon motion it was voted to adjourn.

## EVENING MEETING

As the evening of Convention Day was the time of the regular meeting of the New York Branch, the delegates were invited to attend and to take part in the discussion of the evening.

The Chairman, Mr. Hargrove, opened the meeting with a short address which served to compass the results of the Convention, and to relate the spirit of the Convention to the work of the Branch and to the problems of the individual member.

Three questions remaining unanswered at the last meeting of the New York Branch provided the material for discussion:

I. "Does a disciple, in point of fact, follow the dictum of his Master, whether it appeals to his reason or not?"

II. "Is the relation between Master and disciple an accidental relation?"

III. "Is it better that one should follow his own best judgment even when that judgment seems of doubtful wisdom, or is it better to follow the judgment of another whose wisdom has proven worthy of confidence?"

Mr. Johnston said:

It seems that there are two views of the work of a Theosophist, or perhaps I should say of a member of The Theosophical Society. The first, and a very natural one, is that we have to bring a doctrine, just as a Church, or a sectarian religion like Islam, brings a doctrine, which separates the world into believers and unbelievers, faithful and infidels.

The second view is, that we have to bring, not a doctrine, but a living spirit. And, as I have been sitting listening to this debate, and at the same time looking at the beautiful flowers on the Chairman's table, it has come into my mind that we have here, ready to hand, a pretty illustration of the difference between these two views of our work and opportunity.

You see that the white electric light, which has almost the quality of pure sunlight, pours down equally on the lovely red of these roses, on the greenness of their leaves and of the ferns, on the golden yellow of the daffodils, and on the pale blue of the irises. And each of these flowers, bathing in the pure and even light, draws from it just those rays which it needs, to express and make manifest its own peculiar beauty. The rose takes the red rays, the daffodil the yellow, the iris the blue, the ferns the green. So the fair and even sunlight, or this light here, which is but sunlight compressed and revived, but the resurrection of that sunlight which fell on geologic forests, brings to all flowers, and to all things, just what they need to express and make manifest the beauty that is in them.

But if our light were one-colored, red alone, or blue alone, or yellow alone, or green alone, then it would bring forth and make manifest only that hue and quality which answers to its own. If it were red, only the roses would show true, while daffodil and iris would be marred and travestied; if it were yellow, then the daffodils would have their gold, but the roses would be blackened, and the iris would be defaced.

Try the experiment. Dissolve salt in alcohol. Soak a piece of cotton wool in it, light it in a dark room, and into that pure yellow light bring a bouquet of many-colored flowers. Do this, and you will have a silent parable far more eloquent than any words of mine.

Therefore, I am a devotee of sunlight. I think we should bring, to those about us, not a doctrine, not yellow light, or red, or blue, but the white light of everlasting day. Then will each gather from that light just those rays that are needed for his own spirit, which will show forth true in that even radiance.

We are told that the light of a Master is like the sunshine; that his disciples embody and reflect the different rays, one red, another blue, and so on. Take

this as a parable, and understand that no one disciple, reflecting one ray alone, can truly express the life of the Master. He can express one aspect, one side of it. Only a united group of disciples, each with his own ray can truly express all aspects of the Master's spirit.

So with the religions of the world. If there be an exclusive religion, a sectarian Church, its view of life will be exactly like the yellow sodium ray falling on the many-colored flowers. Its one color will come out conspicuously true, even if without shading. All other colors will be given back defaced, blackened, warped. This is a true and lively picture of the working of a sectarian mind. And it is well said: Who becomes a sectarian, ceases to be a Theosophist. Only by taking the truth as it comes from all religions, and all races, do we get the true radiance of the spiritual sun.

Therefore let us bring no colored ray, but pure sunlight; not a doctrine, but the very spirit of life.

Mrs. Griscom, being asked to deal with the question of an accidental relation between Master and disciple, repeated a passage from Mr. Judge's *Letters That Have Helped Me*, and continuing made it quite luminously clear that however accidental may or may not be the trifling associations of daily life, the relation between Master and disciple is on the causal plane, in the world of realities where no event is accidental.

Mr. Benninger, Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Manning, Mr. Griscom and others, contributed to the discussion, which, as it continued, seemed to make it more and more evident that the difficulties which gave rise to the three questions are difficulties of the limited rational mind.

As Mr. Johnston reminded us, the very difficult and puzzling problems are always those that try to deal with the future or with the past, the two times which the disciple has least to consider, while the duty of the moment is always clear if one in that moment wishes heartily to obey.

The matter of authority was very happily phrased by Mrs. Griscom: "As between Master and disciple, all the authority belongs to the disciple; the Master can have only that authority which his disciple gives him."

As Mr. Mitchell gave a final synthesis of the evening's discussion it became clearer that the question was not as to how much authority one should yield to the Master, but rather, how much of one's life may be so purified through love and sacrifice and obedience as to render it possible to live in the presence of the Master,—to walk with Him in the small, old Path.

#### THE SUNDAY ADDRESS

On the Sunday afternoon following, Mr. Charles Johnston gave a public address on "Theosophy and the Great Religions."

With this very able address the activities of the Convention came to an end.

KARL D. PERKINS,  
*Secretary of the Convention.*





*The Theosophical Society, as such, is not responsible for any opinion or declaration in this magazine, by whomsoever expressed, unless contained in an official document.*

“WHAT IS AND WHAT MIGHT BE.”

ONE of the privileges and delights of this, our age, with its early rays of the new spiritual dawn, is to find the inspiration of the coming Creator breaking through the darkness, and shining, now here, now there, in some well tried and responsive human heart. Such we always look for, seeking to note the least glimmer in the darkness, and, when we find them, we welcome them with joy. And a part of our delight and inspiration is, that we can never foretell in what region or in what guise the light may shine forth; it takes ever unexpected and unprecedented forms, breaking forth in unanticipated beauty, like the spring flowers which succeed each other, each one different, yet all equally lovely and all breathing joy.

We are all so deeply indebted to the Author of *The Creed of Christ* and *The Creed of Buddha*, for the fine inspiration, lucidity and cogency of those two wonderful books, which we at once recognized as authentic, clear rays of the coming dawn, that the coming of a new book of his is necessarily an event. The new book, which we greet with confident hope, bears the title which has been used as the general heading for the present notes: *What is and What Might Be*; and to this the sub-title is added: “A study of education in general and elementary education in particular.” The book is made more than commonly interesting, because it gives us the name, hitherto withheld, of the Author of the two *Creeds*, Edmond G. A. Holmes, to whom are accredited also two volumes of verse: *The Silence of Love* and *The Triumph of Love*. That the Author of the *Creeds* should write a book on elementary education, is further explained by the fact, set forth on the cover, that Mr. Holmes was, until lately, the Chief Inspector of Elementary Schools in England; a post, if we mistake not, very similar to that held for several years by Matthew Arnold.

When a writer, accredited with two wonderful books on Christianity and Buddhism, two volumes of verse, full of inspiration, fineness of spirit, and beautiful workmanship, and further critical works of high distinction, undertakes to write of elementary education, we prepare ourselves for a work of technical accuracy, it is true, but also for a work which shall be very much more than a monograph of pedagogy. We look forward to finding the simplest facts treated in relation to the deepest principles, we prepare ourselves to see the teaching of children, not dryly and narrowly discussed, but rather viewed, in the fine phrase of the French critic, "under the aspect of Eternity."

With some such expectation we opened Mr. Edmond Holmes' new book. And we were in no wise disappointed. On every page, we found, side by side with the technical mastery of the Chief Inspector of Elementary Schools, the piercing wisdom of the Author of the *Creeds*, touched with the poet's inspiration and feeling for beauty. So true, indeed, is this, that our one misgiving, while reading the book, was, whether the British reader, never very hospitable to wide philosophical ideas, may regard with distrust a work on education which is so evidently inspired. Were Saint Paul to write on politics, or Saint John on art, they would, we fear, be regarded by the British public with something of apprehension and dismay.

Our misgiving, above adverted to, is sensibly strengthened, when, in the Preface, we find our Author declaring that his aim, in writing this book, is "to show that the *externalism* of the West, the prevalent tendency to pay undue regard to outward and visible 'results,' and to neglect what is inward and vital, is the source of most of the defects that irritate Education in this country, and therefore that the only remedy for those defects is the drastic one of changing our standard of reality and our conception of the meaning and value of life." We think that we can realize the blank misgivings of the British paterfamilias with a citizen's proper interest in elementary education, when he is asked, as a condition precedent to certain practical reforms, to "change his standard of reality, and his conception of the meaning and value of life." And we cannot imagine his misgivings abated, when, a few lines farther down, he meets the suggestion that not only the elementary school teacher, but he himself, even he, the British paterfamilias, is "deeply tainted with the virus of 'Occidentalism'"; when he finds an Author laying the blame of the failures of our educators to which he draws our attention "on the hostile forces which have been too strong for many of them,—on the false assumptions of Western philosophy, on the false standards and false ideals of Western civilization, on various 'old, unhappy, far-off things,' the effects of which are still with us, foremost among them being that deadly system of 'payment by results' which seems to have been devised

for the express purpose of arresting growth and strangling life, which bound us all, myself included, with links of iron, and which has many zealous agents, of whom I, alas! was one."

Now the British paterfamilias is deeply convinced that "payment by results" is the foundation stone of all respectable life, on which he, too, is based; for is not he himself paid by results, according to the measure of his excellent virtues of honesty, energy and plodding persistency? Who hits at "payment by results" hits at the stout figure of the British paterfamilias, who, we can conceive, will be at least tempted to hit stoutly back. Nor will his confidence, thus roughly shaken, be more likely to recover balance, when, in remedy for the many ills wrought in education by "the virus of Occidentalism," he is invited to behold, admire and emulate the ideal system of a certain village which our Author calls Utopia, even though in the same breath we are informed that "it is not an imaginary village—a village of Nowhere—but a very real village, which can be reached, as all other villages can, by rail and road. It nestles at the foot of a long range of hills; and if you will climb the slope that rises at the back of the village, and look over the level country that you have left behind, you will see in the distance the gleaming waters of one of the many seas that wash our shores. The village is fairly large, as villages go in these days of rural depopulation; and the school is attended by about 120 children. The head teacher whose genius has revolutionized the life, not of the school only, but of the whole village, is a woman. I will call her Egeria."

In imagination, we can hear the British paterfamilias snorting like a surprised rhinoceros who scents an enemy behind the reeds: "Utopia! Egeria!" and then (recalling that, on the title page, our Author confesses himself a writer of sonnets), throwing up his stout hands in dismay, thereby letting this treatise fall upon the floor, where he leaves it, distrustingly, fearing to go further in such subversive doctrine. We hold, therefore, that this book, with its condemnations of "the virus of Occidentalism," its nymph Egeria, its Utopian villages, is indeed no book for the British paterfamilias; unless, indeed, he shall happen to have been indoctrinated with the Bhagavad Gita, with its reprehension of those who work for "results."

Being ourselves admirers of that old Indian book, we find much for our hearts and spirits in this newer treatise; and, since it cannot evidently be treated as a simple monograph on Education, elementary or otherwise, we venture to put that view of it for the present aside, and to take the book along the line of what we like; returning, perchance, to its educational side later on.

If we let ourselves fall a-dreaming about the book, our dream would be somewhat thus: Ages ago, there was, in the holy land of Bharata, a certain one, who, after many earth-lives spent in the search for wisdom, was born in the Ganges valley, and came to be a disciple of Siddhartha the Compassionate. Soaking the very fibres of his spirit in the teaching of the Buddha, he deeply felt its beauty and clear light, and the splendor of the promise that Master of Masters held out for the soul in its perplexed, wonderful quest: thereafter, true to the light and law of the Buddha, that wandering soul found its way to Palestine, and hearkened to the teachings of the younger Master, who was even then pouring forth the heart of his love for mankind, and searing with his fine irony the hard hearts of Pharisee and Sadducee.

Then, in fulness of time, that same soul came to birth in England, and through the inscrutable working of Karma's law came in due time to be a visitor of establishments of learning, one commissioned by Higher Powers to supervise, to command, to report, to make generalizations: in a word, a Chief Inspector of Elementary Schools. Then, after a time, such a one, having borne the burden of toilsome years, came once more upon the lore of Siddhartha, thrilled to the echo of the holy Law, and, growing indignant at the Law's travesty, set himself to write *The Creed of Buddha*. Thereafter, in the light of the Eastern Wisdom, re-reading the teaching of the Galilean Master, and bringing his thoughts thereon to a focus in *The Creed of Christ*. Finally, as his school work neared its end, gathering together his thoughts on life and man, and, with the unconquerable original bent which his mind had received from the great Siddhartha, recording his conclusions in some such book as this: *What is and What Might Be*.

This may indeed be the genesis of the work; and, taking it to be such, we are led inevitably to consider in it first the things which show the Author's world-view, that Far-Eastern outlook upon life which must come from far-off tribes in ancient lands. Most perfectly, perhaps, is our Author's ideal summed up in such a passage as this: "At the end of the last section I asked myself what was the ethical ideal of the life of self-realization,—the positive ideal as distinguished from the more negative ideal of emancipating from egoism and sensuality. I will now try to answer this question. Emancipation from egoism and sensuality is effected by the outgrowth of a larger and truer self. This larger and truer self, as it unfolds itself, directs our eyes towards the ideal self—the goal of the whole purpose of growth—which is to the ordinary self what the full-grown oak-tree embodying in itself the perfection of oakhood, is to the sapling oak; or what the ripe peach, embodying in itself the perfection of peachhood, is to the green, unripened fruit. The ideal self is, in brief, perfect Manhood. What perfect Manhood may be, we

need not pause to imagine. Whatever it may be, it is the true self of each of us. It follows that the nearer each of us gets to it, the nearer he is to the true self of each of his fellow-men; that the more closely he is able to identify himself with it, the more closely he is able to identify himself with each of his fellow-men; that in realising it he is realising, he is entering into, he is becoming one with, the real life of each of his fellow-men. And not of each of his fellow-men only. He is also entering into the life of the whole community of men—(for it is the presence of the ideal self in each of us which makes the communal life possible)—and, through this, of each of the lesser communities to which he may happen to belong. In other words, he is losing himself in the lives of others, and is finding his well-being, and therefore his happiness, in doing so. But self-loss, with joy in the loss of self, is, in a word, *love*.”

This is the very inspiration, the very speech, almost, of the greater Upanishads. Atma is the ideal self, of thee and me and of these; as we find Atma within ourselves, and enter deeper into Atma, we find our immortal being, and the immortal being of all, of me and of thee, and of these. Thereafter finding Atma in all, and all in Atma, we banish fear and enter into joy. By a strange contradiction, such words as those of our Author concerning the communal life, the life of the whole community of men, are often used to bolster up the fallacies of Socialism. It is well, then, to make quite clear what our Author thinks of these same fallacies: “With their social ideal, regarded as an ideal, one has of course the deepest sympathy. Their motto is, I believe, ‘Each for all, and all for each’; and if this ideal could be realised, the social millenium would indeed have begun. But in trying to compass their ends by legislation, *before the standard of reality has been changed*, they are making a disastrous mistake. For, to go no further, our schools are hot-beds of individualism, the spirit of ‘competitive selfishness’ being actively and systematically fostered in all of them, with a few exceptions; and so long as this is so, so long as our highly individualised society is recruited, year by year, by a large contingent of individualists of all ranks, drawn from schools of all grades, for so long will the Socialistic ideal remain an impracticable dream. An impracticable and a mischievous dream; for in the attempt to realise it, the community will almost inevitably be brought to the verge of civil war. When the seeds of Socialistic legislation, or even of socialistic agitation, are sown in a soil which is highly charged with the poison of individualism, the resulting crop will be class hatred and social strife.

“No, we must change our standard of reality before we can hope to reform society. Where the outward standard prevails, where material possessions are regarded as ‘the good things of life,’ the basis of society must needs be competitive rather than communal, for there will never

be enough of those 'good things' to satisfy the desires of *all* the members of any community. And even if the socialistic dream of state-ownership could be universally realised, the change—so long as the outward standard of reality prevailed—would not necessarily be for the better, and might well be for the worse. Competition for 'the good things of life' would probably go on as fiercely as ever; but it would be a scramble among nations rather than individuals, and it might conceivably take the form of open warfare waged on a titanic scale. Even now there are indications that such a struggle, or series of struggles, if not actually approaching, is at any rate not beyond the bounds of possibility. And on the way to the realisation of the collectivist ideal, we should probably have in each community a similar struggle for wealth and power among political parties,—a struggle which would generate many social evils, of which civil war might not be the most malignant." Which strongly supports the contention, so often made in these pages, that, whatever be the spirit of Socialist theory, that of common Socialist practice and propaganda is the spirit of envy, hatred and all uncharitableness. The brotherhood which it effectively forwards, is a brotherhood of Cain and Abel.

But to return from this thorny by-path to the main highway of our Author's work. Writing of the religious aspect of the realisation of the Self, he says: "The oak-tree is present in embryo in the acorn. What is it that is present in embryo in the new-born child? To achieve salvation is to realise one's true self. But what is one's true self? The perfection of manhood is an obvious answer to this question; but it explains so little that we cannot accept it as final. We may, however, accept it as a resting-place in our search for the final answer.

"It is on the religious aspect of self-realisation that I now propose to dwell. The function of Religion is to bring a central aim into man's life, to direct his eyes towards the true end of his being and to help him to reach it. The true end of Man's being is the perfection of his nature; and the way to this end is the process which we call growth. When I speak of Man's nature I am thinking of his universal nature, of the nature which is common to all men, the nature of Man as Man. Each of us has his own particular nature, his individuality, as it is sometimes called. The nature of Man as Man is no mere common measure of these particular natures, but is rather what I may call their organised totality, the many-sided nature which includes, explains, and even justifies them all.

"What perfection may mean when we predicate the term of our common nature, we cannot even imagine. The potentialities of our nature seem to be infinite, and our knowledge of them is limited and

shallow. When we compare an untutored savage or a brutal, ignorant European with a Christ or a Buddha, or again with a Shakespeare or a Goethe, we realise how vast is the range—the lineal even more than the lateral range—of Man's nature, and we find it easy to believe that in any ordinary man there are whole tracts, whole aspects of human nature, in which his consciousness has not yet been awakened, and which therefore seem to be non-existent in him, though in reality they are only dormant or inert. These, however, are matters with which we need not at present concern ourselves. Let the potentialities of our common nature be what they may. Our business is to realise them as, little by little, they present themselves to us for realisation. Let the end of the process of growth be what it may. Our business is to grow.

“In the effort to grow we are not left without guidance. The stimulus to grow, the forces and the tendencies that make for growth, all come from within ourselves. Yet it is only to a limited extent that they come under our direct control. So, too, the goal of growth, the ideal perfection of our nature, is our own; and yet on the way to it we must needs outgrow ourselves. What part do *we* play in this mighty drama? The mystery of selfhood is unfathomable. The word *self* changes its meaning the moment we begin to think about it. So does the word *nature*. The range of meaning is in each case unlimited. Yet there are limits beyond which we cannot use either word without risk of being misunderstood. When we are meditating on our origin and our destiny, some other word seems to be needed to enable us to complete the span of our thoughts.

“Is not that word *God*? The source of our life, the ideal end of our being,—how shall we think about these if we may not speak of them as *divine*? And in using the word ‘divine,’ do we not set ourselves free to stretch the respective meanings of the words ‘self’ and ‘nature’ beyond what would otherwise have been the breaking point of each? The true self is worthier of the name of ‘self’ than the apparent self. The true nature is worthier of the name of ‘nature’ than the lower nature. But the true self is the Divine Self; and the highest nature is the Nature of God. If this is so, we serve God best and obey God best by trying to perfect our nature in response to a stimulus, a pressure, and a guidance which is at once natural and divine.

“In other words, we serve God best by following the path of self-realisation. And the better we serve God, the more truly and fully do we learn to know him. If to know him, and to live up to our knowledge of him, is to be truly religious, then the life of self-realisation is, in the

truest and deepest sense of the word, a *religious* life. Or rather, it is the only religious life, for in no other way can knowledge of God be won. . . .

. . . "The highest of all senses is the religious sense, the sense which gives us knowledge of God. But the religious sense is not, as we are apt to imagine, one of many senses. No one individual sense, however 'massive' or subtle it might be, could enable its possessor to get on terms, so to speak, with the totality of things, with the all-vitalising Life, with the all-embracing Whole. *The religious sense is the well-being of the soul.* For the soul as such grows in and through the growth of its various senses,—its own growth being reinforced by the growth of each of these when Nature's balance is kept, and retarded by the growth of one or more of them when Nature's balance is lost,—and in proportion as its own vital, central growth is vigorous and healthy, its power of apprehending reality unfolds itself little by little. That power is of its inmost essence. When reality, in the full sense of the word, is its object, it sees with the whole of its being; it is itself, when it is at the centre of its universe, its own supreme perceptive faculty, its own religious sense. . . .

. . . "Knowledge of God, being a state or attitude of the soul as such, must show itself in the right bearing and the right action of the soul as such, in other words, of Man as Man. . . . Now Man as Man has to bear himself aright towards the world in which he finds himself, and in particular towards the world which touches him most closely and envelopes him most completely,—the world of human life. Therefore, knowledge of God will show itself, principally and chiefly, though by no means wholly, in dealing aright with one's fellow-men, in being rightly disposed towards them, and in doing the right things to them. I have found it convenient to disconnect the moral from the religious aspect of self-realisation. We can now see that in the last resort the two aspects are one.

"From every point of view, then, and above all from that of Religion, the path of self-realisation is seen to be the path of salvation. For it is the only scheme of life which enables him who follows it to attain to knowledge of God; and a knowledge of God has, as its necessary counterpart, a right attitude, in general, towards the world which surrounds him, and in particular towards his fellow-men.

"But is it possible, within the limits of one earth-life, to follow the path of self-realisation to its appointed goal? And if not, will the path be continued beyond that abrupt turn in it which we call death? . . . Those who walk in the path of self-realisation, and whose answering



loyalty to Nature is rewarded by some measure of insight into her deeper laws, know that the goal of the path is far away. . . . And the higher they ascend, the more vividly do they realise how unimaginably high above them is the summit of the mountain which the path is ascending in spiral coils. . . .

. . . "The inference to be drawn from these significant facts is that the apparent limits of Man's life are not the real limits; that the one earth-life of which each of us is conscious, far from being the whole of one's life, is but a tiny fragment of it,—one term of its ascending 'series,' one day in its cycle of years. In other words, the spiritual fertility of the average Utopian child, taken in conjunction with the spiritual sterility of the average non-Utopian child (and man), points to the conclusion which the thinkers of the Far East reached thousands of years ago,—that for the full development of human nature, a plurality of lives is needed. . . .

"This is one lesson which Utopia has taught me. There is another which had also been anticipated by the thinkers of the Far East. If under exceptionally favorable conditions certain spiritual and mental qualities are able to blossom freely in the space of a few years, which under normal conditions would remain undeveloped during a life-time of seventy or eighty years, may we not infer that there is a directer path to spiritual maturity than that which is ordinarily followed? May we not infer that there are ways of living, ways into which parents and teachers can lead the young, which, if faithfully followed, will allow the potencies of Man's higher nature to evolve themselves with what we, with our limited experience, must regard as abnormal celerity, and which will therefore shorten appreciably Man's journey to his goal. (This was the idea which inspired the Founder of Buddhism, and led him to formulate a scheme of life, in virtue of which he takes rank, as it seems to me, as the greatest educationalist, as well as the greatest moralist, that the world has ever known.) And if there is a directer path to spiritual maturity than that which is ordinarily followed, is not the name for it *Self-realisation*?

"I will not pursue these speculations further. But, speaking for myself, I will say that the vista which the idea of self-realisation opens up to me goes far beyond the limits of any one earth-life or sequence of earth-lives, and far, immeasurably far, beyond the limits of the sham eternity of the conventional Heaven and Hell.

"But even if there is the fullest provision in Nature (whether by a spiral ascent through a long chain of lives, or by some directer path) for the final development in each individual man of the potencies of perfect manhood, for the final realisation of the divine or true self,—

what then? What does it all mean? Why are we to follow the path of self-realisation? What is the purpose of the cycle of existence? There is an answer to this obstinate question,—an answer which explains nothing, and yet is final, in that it leaves nothing to be explained. The expansive energies and desires, to yield to which is our wisdom and our happiness, are ever transforming themselves, as we yield to them, into the might and ardour of Love. And for love there is no final resting-place but the sea of Divine Love from which it came. *'Amor ex Deo natur est, nec potest nisi in Deo requiescere.'*” Love was born of God, nor can it find rest unless in God.

These pages we take to be the essence of the book. They set forth the Author's ideal, no longer in relation to the criticism of Buddhism or Christianity, but directly, immediately, wholly in terms of his own. The application of these ideals to education, as it is, and as it might be, we must leave our readers to make for themselves.

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*The better is one thing, the dearer is another thing; these two bind a man in opposite ways. Of these two, it is well for him who takes the better; he fails of his object, who chooses the dearer.*

*The better and the dearer approach a man; going round them, the sage discerns between them. The sage chooses the better rather than the dearer; the fool chooses the dearer, through lust of possession.*

*Thou, indeed, pondering on dear and dearly-loved desires, O Nachiketas, hast passed them by. Not this way of wealth hast thou chosen, in which many men sink.*

*Far apart are these two ways, unwisdom and what is known as wisdom. I esteem Nachiketas as one seeking wisdom, nor do manifold desires allure thee.*

*Others, turning about in unwisdom, self-wise and thinking they are learned, fools, stagger, lagging in the way, like the blind led by the blind.*

*The great Beyond gleams not for the child, led away by the delusion of possessions. "This is the world, there is no other," he thinks.*

—From the *Katha Upanishad*.

# FRAGMENTS

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“Believe more in your own power and your own strength. Keep that belief steadily before you. Do not let inner things ever seem cold or abstract. That is a lower view indeed: go up higher and look from there. All that is sweet and true and vital in life—the very essence of these—you have here but symbols of. The reality, in its glory, you cannot now conceive, but you can *believe* in it, and take comfort and strength from your faith.

“Your whole life is an exemplification of the necessity for seeing and leaning upon the inner realities; and having found in some measure the clue, you should use it always. Your powers of endurance are greatly taxed, also your faith; but you are not of those who fail in the dark hour of trial; for the flame of the soul leaps higher when fed by the heart’s own blood.

“Let the purpose be clear, then, the will firm. Tune your instrument constantly by the tuning-fork of your ideal, and never let it drop a key. The light of the soul is a light to light the world: tell yourself *that*, and live it.”

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“Do not mistake your present lower condition, nor think it aught it is not. Such periods of exhaustion come after great expenditures of effort, and should be understood and calmly accepted. A piece of work was accomplished, a time of difficulty and darkness bravely lived through. May not the two be connected? May not the power to aid have been earned?

“The initiations of daily life are constant and manifold: You are beginning to understand this. Persevere, and you will see all things maturing as you desire. The *real* wishes of our hearts must always be fulfilled. Do not doubt your own powers; they have only been temporarily exhausted. But greater powers yet will arise from patient acceptance of this—another initiation perhaps—and so you may go forward with a more steadfast faith. Meditate deeply on these phases of your consciousness, and insist always on your own courage and powers of endurance; *they never can fail you if you do*; and though you seem sometimes to be reaching the limit of your strength, you never will.

“Bye and bye you will grow accustomed to living always on the edge of defeat (the *chêla*’s habitual position, since he treads a hair line). Your head will no longer be made dizzy by gazing down a precipice (you know the old stories of initiation); and that conquered, a definite progress will have been made. Consider attentively these matters, for they are worthy consideration, and most vital points may be gained from them.

“It is necessary only that the Lodge sees you,—that you please it. What matter the idle thoughts or still more idle words of others? Seek the satisfaction of your own heart and conscience, and where these do not

acquit you, study out your mistake,—all involved in it, all that led to it,—make all possible amends; and the experience will be worth more to you than not to have failed.

“Keep up a stout heart. The way is hard and long, but you are treading it bravely; and there is always work for a lonely heart, with meditation; and love for a tired one: for each act of giving brings a wondrous peace. Learn from the dark hours behind, what can be lived through, and take courage for the future. . . . And now take the tired brain and body to bed.”

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Standing as you do for inner things, realize at the same time that your work must not interfere with that of others of a different kind. Each plays his part, and while steadfastly adhering to yours, condemn no other. It is a hair line, not easy, but important to observe. Without it your labour will be fruitless; for this larger tolerance is a proof of insight,—insight intellectual, as sympathy is insight of the heart. In other words, you must never lose your sense of proportion. This has been a cardinal lack in many religious teachers as well as in ordinary religious men and women; and its absence has sterilized what would else have been superb achievement.

Remember that the inner world and life are not set over against the outer. The poor, tired earth, that has struggled for long ages in vain to reconcile these two, needs to learn the great truth at last! The inner world is *within* the outer; and like a lamp in a darkened house, illuminates its chambers, shows its stairways and passages, the uses of its furniture; and turns the soul from an uneasy ghost, wandering helplessly through its gloom and mystery, into a happy tenant who finds cheer and warmth. To reach our home is not so truly a matter of going somewhere, as of bringing this light into those places where we now abide. Perchance, when we see them thus illumined, we shall recognize them as mansions in the Father's house, and since those mansions are many, we may be sure that all temperaments, all characters, are provided for with loving care. So there is room for all, and place for all, and no necessity that our rules or views should prevail, save in that narrow domain which we call self, where the Great Powers themselves bow to our laws, with infinite understanding and courtesy, demanding of us always the stature of our own ideals, and the fixity of the stars in those courses our higher moments have prescribed.

Rigid with self; indulgent with all others; cultivating balance, wide vision, sense of distances and depths and heights; keen to detect the fleck of wrong within, beholding as from a mountain top the molehill of another's sin; breathing the air of lofty altitudes, and bringing it with us as a breath of the vast pureness of the snows;—founded on principles such as these your work shall endure, and, though you may never realize the extent of your accomplishment (better so!), future ages shall see it, and will light their fires at the torch you hold today. CAVÉ.

# LETTERS TO FRIENDS

DEAR FRIEND:

I HAVE your letter and thank you for its frank directness. You ask that I be equally direct in my reply, and indeed I would answer in no other way what you have written. Frankly, then, you are seeking for the soul in the only place where it does not exist—in negations.

You say that for years you have mortified yourself; that you have steadily fought against all the passions and desires of your personality, striving to fulfil in literal exactitude the maxim of "never doing anything which the personality desires for itself alone." You feel that, either of your own will, or under the compulsion of circumstances, you have surrendered all that made life dear to you. And yet, you say, you have not found the goal you seek; your heart is dark and cold, and only at rare moments of your meditation do you feel the Master's nearness and his love and sympathy.

I know how splendidly, and with what indomitable persistence, you have fought. I know how hard some of your sacrifice has been. Yet you have done only half of what is asked of us, and that half you have not done rightly. Throughout, your effort has been negative. It should have been and must be positive. You have given everything but yourself; and yourself is the one positive thing you have to give. I can hear you say that this is not so; that you have given all you had. Yes; but separating it from yourself. You gave up this, you surrendered that, and felt yourself naked and stripped. Had you given yourself with your possessions, with your faults and virtues, with all you were and just as you were, into the Master's hands, to do with as he would, you could not now feel loss. But you have sought to give these and yet hold yourself back; retaining to the last your own will, your own pride, your own separate life. And so in truth you have given little to the Master, though much to your own desire for righteousness and personal stature. You have given up much, but you have given him little. For until we give ourselves to him we can give him nothing else.

The Master does not rob us. He has no part in our robbery of self. He asks us for our hearts, that his joy may be fulfilled in us. And if, and when, we give him our hearts, he asks for all else, that all may be made ours in him; the good made better and the evil made good. Of ourselves we can hold and keep nothing. Fortune, health, human love, our friends and our strength and our virtues,—all slip from our hands and fall as dust. Who and what are we that we can hold anything at all? But what we give to him, he holds for us forever,—if it so be that he holds us also. But till we give ourselves he can take nothing that is ours.

Let us face the facts. Yours has been till now the false asceticism. You have sought the Master and the soul through denial of all that was personal. You have thrown the personal from you. You have neither given nor used it. Learn now to use it and to give it by giving yourself. Learn, as *Light on the Path* tells us, that "the whole nature of man must be used wisely by the one who desires to enter the way"; that "all steps are necessary to make up the ladder"; that virtues are useless if they stand alone; and that we need to mount also upon the steps of our vices, one by one, as they are overcome, and as we learn to use the power they confined. We need to use this power, not throw it from us.

Do you remember one evening when we were in M.'s rooms together, you made him tell us of the modern mathematical conception of the infinite? It seemed to me that in it was the secret of the religious life. The old view of the infinite was wholly negative. It was not finite,—not this, not that. Whatever was named, whatever was expressed, it was not. Greater than all, it could, men thought, only be conceived by the denial of all. So, too, the middle ages thought of the infinite soul—It was not this; it was not that. The road lay in denial of all that was visible, natural, personal and human. But in so viewing the infinite, whether of number or of soul, nothingness was viewed as well. There was no difference in terms; small difference in thought; and, too often, small difference in result. Men made solitude and called it peace; emasculated evil and called it good. How different were the lives of the true saints. And how different the modern mathematics. The infinite is that which can be wholly portrayed in a part of itself, which part is then in direct correspondence with the whole, point by point, and element by element, reproducing the whole, and as rich as it, because at one with it. You remember the illustrations of this—in lines and in numbers—but its truest illustration is in ourselves. If we indeed seek the infinite soul, if we would live with its life and its consciousness, then our way is not in the denial and rejection of the personality, but in making of it a complete image of the infinite whole in which it is a part. This is possible for us precisely because the whole is infinite, and because the personality is whole. Our task is not to kill the personality, but to order and to attune it.

You have tried to kill it. Do so no longer. You have tried to hold it from acting in accordance with its own will. Try now to make it act in accordance with the Master's will; with the will and in the likeness of the infinite soul.

Let me be just as explicit upon this point as I can. I have said you have given up much but have as yet given little. Here is an illustration of what I mean. You give up your own way. In some small matter you accept another's way instead of your own. But it is acceptance and surrender with you. You are thinking of what you are giving up, not what he is gaining. You do not throw yourself whole heartedly

into his desire. You give no gladness, nothing of yourself to him. Your act is negative, not positive. You have given up your own way, but you have not given yourself to his way. You hold yourself back, and your gift is useless. Worse than useless, for it spreads the chill atmosphere of negation over both you and him. He can only wish you had had your way rather than given him his in this dead, reluctant fashion. You are both the poorer, not the richer, for your act.

This evil of doing things by halves is the most common fact of experience. The other day I went with a friend to purchase some knick-knacks he wished to take home as presents. He was long in making his selection and I grew tired and restless in waiting. Why? Because I held myself back from my friend's interest. Because I thought of myself waiting, and of what I wished to do next, rather than of what he was doing then, and of how I could help him. I gave my time, but not myself; and from it only fatigue and loss resulted. I was negative, not positive. I was living in myself and the future, not in the spirit of friendship and the present. I was more tired by that one hour of negative, self-indulgent restlessness of thought, and the effort to conceal it with an outer veneer of courtesy, than by a full day of hard work; and my friend must have wished me anywhere except on the chair beside him. Yet had I given myself whole heartedly to him and his interest, taking the one opportunity of service which the moment offered, I could have made that afternoon a time of pleasure and of rest, as had been many others like it.

That which is true of such little things is true also of great. We make our great sacrifices and the pain of them goes deep. There is, perhaps, no way of avoiding that pain. But there is a way of flooding it with joy. It is the way of *self-sacrifice*; of bringing ourselves with our gift to the altar, and laying both in the Master's hands. Then do we keep that which we give.

Again let me try to be perfectly explicit. I give up my own pleasure for the pleasure of another. My pleasure is surrendered. But if, in this gift, I give myself as well, I can enter into and share my friend's pleasure as keenly—more keenly—than I could have enjoyed my own. This is the test of the gift of self,—when we find our joy in the joy of the one to whom we give ourselves. Joy is and must be at the heart of self-sacrifice. If we find no joy we may know that we have given something other than ourselves. The gift given without ourselves, the gift we do not flood with joy, is better not given at all.

We come back then to this: what you have to do, what each one of us has to do, is to give ourselves to the Master, just as we are and with all we are; and to make this gift positive, not negative. We have to do more than "place ourselves before God like prepared canvas before a painter,"—though this is much. We have also to place in his hands, as his palette, the totality of our human qualities, holding none back,

throwing none away, regarding none as common or unclean when in his hands and cleansed by him. These are the colours with which the painting must be made, the living colours of the new life born from above and built upon the model of the Master's plan for us.

You tell me you have striven daily to acquire concentration, to keep your mind fixed and one-pointed upon a single theme. Indispensable as this practice is, it is still but the negative half of concentration as we have to learn it. Strive now to learn the positive half; to bring to all you do all you are; to concentrate upon and in each act of service all the power, all the sweetness, all the gladness of your nature.

There are times when we are tempted to think this impossible, when the burden of our sacrifice seems too heavy for our strength, and we feel we have no power left to give. When all our nerves are raw and quivering with pain, we ask ourselves how we can give sweetness. And we almost laugh when we think that, from our sodden misery, gladness must be given and expressed. Yet it is here, at the brink of personal failure and exhaustion, when we have neither power, nor sweetness, nor gladness to use for ourselves, that we have most of them to give to another. And if we then give ourselves to that other, the power and the sweetness and the gladness become again our own. The secret of it all is in the gift of self, and the secret of self-giving is love.

You say, and say rightly, that you do not love enough,—for this is true of all of us. But you add, that to say this does not help to better it, for you cannot make yourself love more than you do. True; but you can enter more completely into the love you have. And, as you do this, you will find it far greater than you had thought, and you will see it grow steadily and luminously before your vision.

Again let me try to make concrete and little, what is too often left as mere abstraction, because so great. I say you can enter more completely into the love you have, and by so doing you will find your love adequate to your need, sufficient to give power, sweetness and gladness to your sacrifice. Take anyone you please—a mere chance acquaintance for whom you have a kindly sympathy. This sympathy alone is sufficient love to bring gladness from sacrifice if you will, in actual fact, throw yourself into it. Suppose you sacrifice something for this man's pleasure. Once the sacrifice is made there are two courses open to you. The first is to think of yourself and what you have surrendered. From this standpoint all is hard, cheerless and barren. The second is to think of him, to keep your eyes fixed on the object for which you sacrificed, on his pleasure, and deliberately, by act of will and imagination, to enter into his enjoyment, putting yourself in his place, feeling what he feels, glad with his gladness, and augmenting his gladness with your own. Even the smallest love suffices for this purpose, if we add to it a resolute effort of will and sustained imagination. It is not love which is lacking.



It is the will to give ourselves to love, and to use every power of the personality to make that gift complete.

What is this wonderful, complex personality of ours, if it be not all we have or know of the soul? Why do we insist on separation when in life itself none exists? What are will, desire, passion, gladness and sympathy and imagination, but rays of divine life and divine power? Cut them off from their source, gather them for themselves alone, and they must wither and die, as a flower cut from its stem. But as living and blooming on the plant itself, drawing the sap to the air and giving from the air to the sap, in ordered harmony with the whole of which they are a part, they are the carriers of seed for its renewing life. Because the personality of itself is lifeless, does not mean that it is lifeless or useless to and in the soul. We cannot cut it, or any part of it, away from us, without cutting it away from the soul. Our task is to order and use it wisely, in every portion and detail, till it becomes, in literal truth, the perfect picture of the wholeness of the soul of which it is a part. Then, and then only, when there is no more difference between inner and outer, between soul and personality, when there is no bar or wall "where man the effect ceases and God the cause begins," when the walls are taken away and the consciousness stretches unbroken to its source,—then, if we do so choose, the personality can drop from us and be laid down. But till that time comes "the whole nature of man must be used wisely by the one who desires to enter the way."

I do not know whether what I have written will seem to you an answer to your letter or will help you to see, as I have hoped, the positive pathway of love, imaginative sympathy, and glad self-giving which is open to your feet and which will lead you to all you seek. Above all it will lead you to a realization of how much you already have; how close, through all these years, has been the Master whom you thought far off; how great and deep, beyond your thinking, is the love you bear to him, and which is but the reflection of his love for you; how close to joy has been the sacrifice you have till now seen only with self-pity.

You have done much. And though you have, heretofore, by holding back yourself, held back the fruit of your efforts, none of them is wasted. No effort is wasted, however misdirected, which has been made for motives, such as yours, of obedience to your highest vision. The force of every sacrifice, of every surrender of your own way, of every ounce of pressure you have put upon yourself, and which has been, or seemed, so barren, is stored in your will as power to give gladness when at last you give yourself. You, who have persevered in sacrifice, when it gave no other joy than a grim pride in your own obedience and strength, will find that power of sacrifice intensified a hundredfold when you share its happiness. So will these heavy years have wrought for you an instrument for joy, and you yourself will know that joy, and be its carrier to others.

There is your destiny and your goal,—the Master's plan for you as for us all,—to be the recipients and the carriers of his joy. Let us no longer wait till sacrifice is forced upon us, and then try to make the best of it and give ourselves with that which we can no longer refuse. At most this is but the effort to make positive, in its end, what was negative in its beginning. Let us rather go out to seek occasions; not with the thought of sacrifice of self, but with the thought that through us the Master's joy may be fulfilled within the hearts of others. Let us deliberately, hour by hour, whenever we hear a clock strike, or in the pauses of our day, think what, in that hour, or that moment, we can do for the happiness of those we know, or for the world at large. Let us make it as definite and concrete as we can, thinking of those about us, one by one, and deliberately, by act of will and imagination, strive to put ourselves in their place, to look out upon life with their eyes, to feel their feeling and to know their need—and then, feeling with them, let us do the thing which it is in our power to do to make them happy.

This is the positive path,—the yoga of love and of joy. By following it we give ourselves and make our sacrifices, moment by moment, without even knowing it is sacrifice or self surrender. Does it seem to you too small a thing to meet your need? Here, as so often, it is the little which contains the great. You seek the Master. You would follow in his footsteps and train yourself for his service. You long to know him, face to face, and to share his consciousness. Does it seem that you are asked to give yourself to others, not to him? To seek their happiness, not his? I know you cannot so misunderstand; for to do that would be to fail wholly in understanding him you seek. What else is his whole life than such an endless giving of himself, in order that in us and in the world his joy may be fulfilled? How else can we serve him, than in the work which is himself? How else can we share his consciousness, than by making ours more like to his? The service of man may have little in it of the service of God. But the service of God must have much in it of the service of man. We cannot serve the Master without serving where and what he serves,—nor love him without loving what he loves. "Children love one another. For love of me, love one another."

This yoga will teach you much. But of all its lessons, I believe the greatest is the revelation which it brings of the depth and overpowering intensity of the Master's passionate yearning that those who seek to give themselves to him, and to follow in his footsteps, may find happiness in the life to which he leads. Those who have told of the radiance of his face have spoken also of his anguished eyes. It is your anguish and mine, the anguish of the world that will not hear him, which lies there ever before his vision. But, in truth, his yoga is the yoga of joy. Here there can be no difference in the teaching of the Lodge. Method and emphasis may vary with different teachers and

in different times. But the heart of things is ever the same; and "we are closest to the heart of things when we are happy, when in spite of trials and adversities a fountain of joy and gladness springs within us." Misunderstood and travestied throughout the ages, Christ has been called the Man of Sorrows. Yet he came that we might have life, and have it more abundantly,—that his joy might be ours. For these nineteen hundred years how few of those who sought to follow him have looked beyond the initial self-surrender. How few have shared his warrior spirit, which the Lodge demands of all who would draw near its portals, and which, taking pain, can find, within it, joy. Such a spirit is yours, if you will but liberate it. And by it you will come to him you seek—who calls to you today as Jesus called in Galilee: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke (yoga) upon you and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

May you learn of him, from this day forth.

Faithfully yours,

JOHN GERARD.

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*Finish every day and be done with it; you have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities, no doubt, crept in; forget them as soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day; begin it well and serenely, and with too high a spirit to be cumbered with your old nonsense. Today all is good and fair. It is too dear, with its hopes and invitations, to waste a moment on the yesterday.*

EMERSON.

# THE HEART OF THE MYSTERY\*

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*“ . . . Beheld the immortals sweatless, steady-eyed, their garlands fresh, and touching not the ground; but he, doubled by his shadow, standing there upon the earth, was stained with dust and sweat, his garland faded.”*

WHAT heart but at times grows weary of this our human life, with its births, its marriages, its deaths; with its pathways of small ambition and sordid struggle leading forward in monotonous deadly certainty to the green mound beneath the cypresses? Who has not cried out in spirit against it all, longing to turn back from the beaten road where mankind runs, with a dazed eagerness like that haunted herd of Gadara, swept by demoniac presences down the steep to the blue Genesaret waves? There is pathos in it, too, and pitifulness; even for the most infatuate, life soon wears so threadbare, so seamed with dullest commonness, that the hurrying troop of doomed men and women would presently cast away their burden, were it not snatched from their shoulders by the old man with the hour-glass, who ushers them into the silence.

Who has not felt in moments of clear sight, in hours of inspiration, that these good people are ridden with dreams, and we along with them; that we have elsewhere a quite other history not made of epitaphs but written in letters of gold, with words of fire, in the serene halls of immortals? Man dreams that he moves forward; he only moves from dream to dream. He is demon-ridden, dwelling altogether among shadows, and that most of all when he is most confidently sensual and material. But there are times when he outgrows the form and color of his dream, and must have change. The sleeper restlessly moves and murmurs in his sleep; then for one startled moment he opens his eyes to the everlasting sunshine.

Then comes a new dream, a new epoch, a new era. So it was two thousand years ago, when the Roman world of beneficent callous force was wearing itself out, when the dream of Olympian Jove was fading. Then were spoken words among the Galilean hills that let in the light of the Eternal, and for a moment the eyes of mortal man gazed into the shining eyes of his brother the immortal. Then mankind sank back again to dream. There remained only broken fragments of the message, like words set echoing among the rocks, to bear evidence of the revelation. The old Roman dream of dominion flowed back again, staining the ray of celestial light. What belonged to Cæsar was rendered to God.

The new era enthroned a heavenly monarch in the purple, darkening

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altogether the true vision of the divine, the vision of man the immortal. Our kingdoms and empires with their claims of election and grace, their mandate from on high, were but copies of imperial Rome touched with the ray of Galilee; our divinity, but an image of these earthly potentates exalted to the heavens, an autocrat exacting homage, gathering tribute, and entering into treaties with mankind. A few enjoyed the suffrage of salvation; the rest were doomed to servitude in hell.

Centuries have passed, and this dream, too, has faded. The power of the celestial Cæsar has declined. His jewelled throne is crumbling. The nether fires are out. The golden city is deserted; grass is growing in its streets. The songs of cherubim and seraphim are stilled, and silence reigns through the high halls of heaven. With the passing of the divine Cæsar's throne, fades, too, the materialism which undermined it, hardly outliving his fall. Materialism is already out of date, grown grotesque and antiquated. We are offered instead a physical proof of our immortality, material evidence of the enduring soul.

So that dream within a dream has faded, and there comes a lull, when the light from beyond the heavens once more sends forth its ray to challenge the darkness. As of old, it brings the message of our present immortality, not in a dim future paradise, but here and now; of salvation not by faith or works, but by creative will; of immediate and intimate touch with the eternal heart of being. Even here and now, we are in the midst of the everlasting; we catch the immortal whisper, feel the immortal fire in our hearts, the touch of an immortal finger summoning us forth into light.

Then the dreams of our desires come upon us again, and imaginings of terror; the cynical unfaith of sensuality, and that very human cry for yet a little slumbering and sleep. We are once more entangled among shadows, and hurry forth dazed to the lake-edge of Gadara. Yet there is a golden clue to guide us forth from this labyrinth of dreams; there is a path that leads us back from the abyss of death, easy to find, yet hard to follow, and calling for the valor and vision of immortals in those who would tread its ways.

The shadows may be met and overcome. And first of all, the shadow of our sensuality. Our error here is easy to indicate, and well worth mending; for its fruit is inevitable death. We sin by meeting the natural world in a wrong and vicious way; with a demand for sensations, instead of an offer of work. We desire keenness of feelings, keenness of life; and we have a right to it, but we take the wrong way to gain it, and nature herself ceaselessly admonishes us of our mistake.

Nature intends sensation only as a guide to work, a guide for the will; but we make sensation an end in itself, and thus incur inevitable doom. For sensation which is not turned to the purposes of the will must bear one of two fruits: either at every repetition the stir of feeling will grow less, rendered callous by use until there comes the dullness

of total insensibility; or, if the outward stimulus be constantly increased, as it must be to give even the same excitement, it will grow at last to such a pitch that the natural body is worn out and torn to pieces. These alternatives are but differing forms of death.

Perfecting his creature throughout ages, God at last gave him reason and called him man. This was the fruit of that gift of freedom: for every power committed to his will, the new-enfranchised creature devised an abuse, to the end of sensuality. The power to choose and reason upon his food lies wholly within his will; with the result that he grows blurred and bloated with excess, or lean-eyed and cavernous with hungry longing. The faculty to reproduce his kind, also entrusted to him, he has transformed from a pure instinct to an absorbing passion; after a brief pairing season, animals are sexless throughout the year, but man is ever insatiate with hungry longings. Of the bodily powers, God kept to himself the heart and the life-breath, holding them back from his creature's interference. Were it otherwise, man in his perverseness seeking sensuality even in these, would have broken the vital casket in fragments, abolishing himself long ago from the earth.

It is well that the animals are dumb. They might mock their lord. Sensuality is as foreign to them as the fear of death. These are the sign-manuals of our humanity. Yet the instinct which leads so far astray is a pure one, destined to an infinitely better reward, a far higher fulfilment than any dreamed by man. For the lust of life is at heart the desire of immortality, the longing for infinite being. But we err in meeting nature through our appetites, not through our wills; in coming into the world with a demand, when we should come with an offer of creative work, work carried out through the insight and inspiration of our immortal part. Even bodily health comes always through exertion, and never through sensation; so direct is the admonition of our natural life. Strength comes only through energy well applied, and in the work of the will is our peace.

The true intention of our life is, that the senses should serve the will, not that will should serve the senses. In right living, each perception leading the will to work is strengthened by that work, and by this a better way is ready for a higher perception; thus the interposition of the will annuls the law of deadening and destruction which hangs over sensation, and leads each sense on a steadily upward path. We can watch this law in two fields. First, in the primal world of instinct, we see that every sense was thus led to perfection, by work and will; by the inherent energy of the will toward life bursting outwards through the living world. Again, under inspiration every sense grows finer. The musician and the painter, while they are faithful to the inner light, may develop their sense of hearing and color to a degree that is magical, through the divine alchemy of the will; following sensation never for sensation's sake, but always as the guide and material of the will.

Yet in face of this simple truth, the ideal of whole nations esteemed the foremost in the modern world is not will but sensation. For the desire of wealth is the lust of sensation, of command over sensual things. Therefore at the very outset we violate the law, reading life's riddle upside down. This universal and corrupt lust, not for one sensation but for all, this craving for a ceaseless ministry of excitement, brings out the greed and graspingness in man, causing endless misery of struggle, and putting vultures and jackals to shame, for the weakness of their claws.

Nine-tenths of human power is used in mere strife, force neutralizing force, as in a tug of war. Yet the remaining tenth suffices for our bodily needs. Imagine then what splendid excess of power, what universal wealth of will is before us, once we learn the law.

Our sensual tragedy is not untouched with grim humor and palpable retribution. Of the formative sex, a part finds its whole purpose in ministering to sensation, and for this good gift demands luxurious living and immunity from work. The vassals go forth in the chill dawn, returning only in the twilight; dwarfing their powers in hireling tasks of mere repetition, they grow daily duller and more akin to earth, till even the senses they worship can give them no more joy. Their enthroned sovereigns pay penalty also in the infinite futility of their lives, which even conceit cannot gild to any brightness; they are punished, too, in the growing dullness of their mates. Then, for both, that mound beneath the cypresses, and infinitely merciful death.

Happily for us, much of our lives is still within the realm of pure animal instinct, like the love of family, and the ideal of bodily strength and beauty. For instinct is the voice of revelation to the natural world. It is more; it is our sole evidence of outward reality. Reason can never give this sense of reality; for reason, the natural world is but a web of dreams. But instinct expressed through muscular effort gives us our true hold on natural life. We are held in place among the stars and worlds by a web of natural forces co-ordinated with our wills, with our instinctive powers. Reason can only generalize on these. Reason can never explain or guide.

All of our work is blest which flows from instinct, carried on without reasoning or calculated motive, but arising from an inward enthusiasm and necessity. Such is the work of all true artists, inventors, builders in every realm; they draw their instant inspiration from the ideal world, and work joyfully, resting in creative will. But so stringent is the law, that the moment men or nations fall below the inspiration of the will, and fix their eyes upon wealth and possessions, their power ebbs; all access to new regions of nature, all new command of force is impossible for them, and they are presently outstripped in the race by some other man or nation whose vision is still in the ideal world. Even of

organized murder is this true; victory belongs to the men of ideas, never to the materialists. So wholly does power flow from inspiration.

Thus far the natural history of man, most discreditable of animals. But our interest begins only where that chapter ends, and we enter human life. And human life is a history of ideas altogether, of thoughts and passions, of longings and desires, even of visions and dreams; but never a history of material facts. When we leave animal instinct and muscular effort, we leave matter also, and enter the psychic world. No bodily eye has ever beheld the things of man, whether it be power or wealth or pleasure, sorrow or ambition or love.

Yet it cannot be pretended that the tale is all brightness. We are hardly less wrong-hearted in the psychic than in the natural world. We manage to defeat our destiny also here. We are sent forth into this human world to live through intuition, the clear sense of each other's souls. As instinct, the revelation of the divine in animal life, impels us to master the natural world, to replenish the earth and subdue it; so intuition, which is the divine revelation in man, compels us to enter into the being of each other, that thereby we may infinitely enlarge our own. Nothing is needed for perfect moral health but a clear sense of each other's souls. All our human life, debased and dragged in the dust as it too often is, has yet this golden thread running through it everywhere. It is to the human soul in each other that we appeal, even in sin and crime, the black shadows of our humanity. We do not lust after trees and stones; nor do we hate and envy rocks. We do not seek food for vanity from cloud and ocean. Only human souls will serve our turn.

If we are true to this one intuition, we hold the key to boundless life. For the soul is everywhere in all men; it is everywhere different and divine. And our clear intuition, our sense of the gleaming soul in others, makes us freeholders of all their powers. All they have and know and do belongs to us, if we have the strength to take possession. The instinct is in us all; we only need to make it effective. It is the inherent quality of souls to share each other's being; to add each to its own life the life of all others, until every individual is heir to the consciousness and power of all mankind.

But having the intuition of the soul, we straightway fall from our revelation into corrupt imaginings. Instead of aiding the soul to do its perfect work in all, to bring forth such fruits as befit our immortality, we instantly try to wrest the law awry to the ends of our lust. We would have all these souls bow down before us, ministering to our vanity; we fix our eyes on that longed for tribute instead of fixing it on the other soul; therefore instead of strength, we bring forth weakness, and presently our intuition of the soul is overcast and dimmed. Thus we fall into solitude and desolation.

We forget that all our real strength comes through union, and



aspire to be separate and supreme. We set up within our hearts a crowned Cæsar in the purple, inviting all mankind to do him homage. But they are doing the like within themselves; there are too many Cæsars; the tribute will not go round. Therefore much sorrow and many heart-burnings are the only revenue of our kingdoms. Throughout all high heaven and the wide fields of stellar space there is no law declaring that we are to be worshipped; that homage is due to us. Yet we are miserable for want of it, and go down sorrowing to our graves. The longing to be envied is an even stronger incentive of wealth than the mere desire of sensations; but here also we defeat our end, for the riches are coveted, but their owner inherits only hate and fear.

Every one of us is born with a different nature, different fancy, different desires. Yet it has always been the insanity of men to try to compel each other into a common path, and to suffer the agony of thwarted ambition that inevitable failure brings. Hardly one of us but is cursed with this malady even now, and suffers from its fruitful crop of sorrows. Instead of demanding that others should obey me, should find their purpose in my mind, should follow a pathway traced out for them by my thought and vanity and desire, let me at least learn to take the better way, and admit that each must live for himself, must live from his own genius, following his law, not mine. If I do this, trusting his life to the soul I feel within him, I am instantly conscious of a release of force within myself, an inheritance of power, an inward luminousness, making me certain I have taken the true way. I have inherited the soul I recognized in him.

If we begin by so small a thing as mere forbearance, tolerating each other's souls, admitting that they also may have a light and life-impulse of their own, we shall soon grow interested and involved in their creative work, finding it a revelation of something new, something beyond ourselves, yet akin to us; before long, instead of hindering the soul in each other, we shall learn to help it, and each will grow rich and rejoice in the gain of every other; for all real gain is for us all. The sense of each others' souls is the first revelation of peace. It was this that the Galilean came to teach, this and no other was the light shining in darkness, but the darkness comprehended it not.

We may come to understand the matter in this way: the greatest of all poets has created and put on record for us a thousand men and women, great and gifted, wise or witty, sorrowful or sublime. We can each of us read ourselves into the life of all of them, understanding every thought and emotion of them all, entering perfectly into their inmost hearts until we become one with them. We grow and add new powers to our souls with each added understanding; yet after we have assimilated all, all remains quite unimpaired for all that shall come after us; and, finally, we do not try to dictate to Hamlet, to lay down the law for

Lear, to reason with Romeo or Macbeth ; we are satisfied that each should be himself, and follow his own genius.

Something like this we should do in life, but with the immense advantage that we are dealing with living souls, touching them direct, entering into them by intuition. Only tolerance and good-will are needed to make us infinitely rich in immediate spiritual power, gained thus from the exhaustless treasurehouse of man. Thus we learn that intuition, the impulse of the will which leads us to each others' souls, is the real guide of human life, an immediate divine revelation. Reason is as powerless to teach us human truth as it was to teach us the reality of the world. We are in the hands of a wiser power than reason, if we would only follow its leading. We are in the hands of the creative will.

Thus we learn wisdom's first lessons, and set up two milestones on the path of our immortality. We need only substitute our inherent energy for the lust of sensation, to inherit all the primal power of the natural world, and all its beauty. We may knit our wills into the powers that hold the world in place, and share the freshness of the forests, the freedom of the human world ; instead of living for vanity and bitter pride, we may cast all barriers down, opening our souls to the souls of men, and instantly inherit the treasure of endless life which gleams and glows in every heart of man.

Nor is our work then ended. Say rather that it now begins. Having reached this double liberation, we have won the power to pierce the secret of all secrets, the splendid and majestic mystery which rests at the heart of all life. Learning to stand upright and to feel our strength, we are soon touched with a dawning inspiration that there is vastly more of us than we dreamed ; that we are far greater than even in golden moments we dared to hope ; that the personal part of us we know and live in is but the antechamber, the outer court of the temple, while the true lord dwells within.

The divine web of instincts which holds us in the bosom of the natural world, gives no account of itself, nor can assign to itself any purpose ; nor even does our human intuition show a definite end in view, a final purpose whereto all union and illumination tend. We must look elsewhere for the final goal, for the everlasting purposes which have had so great preparation, which hold such magical powers of creative instinct and unveiled intuition in their sway. The instinct in us urges us forth into the outer world by a revelation of life outside ourselves in every natural realm. The intuition of our heart urges us beyond ourselves in another and more divine direction, impelling us to go forth from ourselves into the hearts of others like ourselves, to knock and enter every human door, till all be realized and possessed. There is something higher than instinct or intuition : there is inspiration, urging us to go forth from our personal selves, to rise above them to our

immortal life; to inherit here and now celestial potencies; to make true for man the dreams we have dreamed of God.

It is for this that man has lived and toiled so many weary ages; it is for this that human hearts have struggled through milleniums of sorrow and hate: that they might learn the law. If we have greatly gone astray, this proves at least that we are free even to err; that our wills are masters over destiny, even to our own destruction. If we have hated and deceived and lied, tyrannized and lusted and defamed, it proves at least that we are heirs of liberty in dealing with human souls, even to their infinite sorrow and to ours. If we have the right of wantonness, we have the right of strength; if we are free to injure, we are free to heal; and setting ourselves right at last with nature and with man, we hold in our hands the key to open the door whence our freedom came, to enter the deathless shrine where was woven the web of our stormy destiny.

Let us consider that the will in us, manifest as instinct and energy in our bodily selves, is akin to every force in the natural world, and can at the last bring every natural force within the hollow of our hands; let us also consider that the will in our human hearts is akin to every will of man, that the same divinity runs through all, impelling us all to oneness, to enter each others' lives, to raze all barriers between our own and others' souls; if we understand these two truths, we shall fully understand that our life is not contained and confined within this limited casket of our personal selves; that we are but the open doorways to the infinite divine; that for each mortal there is an immortal brother, strong and serene above the cloudland of our life, bending this life to everlasting purposes, leading our outcast pilgrim souls through rough and devious ways to the halls of peace, the dwelling-places of everlasting power.

This much is easily understood of every simplest mind: that he who would inherit bodily well-being, the young joy of the morning in his natural self, needs only to follow the revelation of instinct, to turn back from sensation and sensuality, to find cleanness and health in energy and power, and not in desire. It is a transformation of the whole animal life, through the will, easily understood and bringing instant evidence of rightness in the release of power within our natural selves.

This, too, is not hard to understand: that we do ourselves much human wrong when we try to live through vanity and bitter pride; when we find each others' souls only to tyrannize and overreach them; when we try to thwart the free life and genius in each other, instead of helping it to the flower of its perfect life. Here again, it needs only a conversion of the will to bring us infinite peace, to set us right with all human souls; and this conversion of the will, so readily appealing to our understanding, will instantly justify itself by its first fruits of love, joy, peace, and, even more than these traditional blessings, by an immense access of human power and light.

Grasping this, we shall more readily understand the greater matter, for which these two steps are but the preparation and first outline: the tremendous truth that we are to go through one more conversion of the will, changing from mortal to immortal purposes, to inherit our real selves. We have through the desert of our human history a few examples of what may be done by those who are true to their immortal part: in creative genius, divine valor, heroic sacrifice. Not the basest human heart that beats, but throbs in harmony with these better deeds, testifying its own inmost certainty that here our true destiny lies. Every pulse that exults with the hero slain in battle, bears witness of the soul's immortality; every glow of wonder and delight at the beauty and wisdom recorded of the seers is a foreshadowing of our own omniscience; our joy in all heroic deeds is the first gleam of our infinite power.

There stands above us, therefore, for each one of us, a present immortal; easily the equal of the highest life and power our human history records; and it is our destiny, through the inspiration of the will, to enter into the life of this immortal, to draw the everlasting power into ourselves, that even here and now we may inherit divinity. Nor does this mighty task depend solely on our personal selves; nor are we wholly responsible for its success, as we are not answerable for the shining of the sun. Yet we of ourselves must come forth into the sunlight.

There will come a time when the immortal brother shall interpose on our behalf, and we shall be drawn forth from the mortal world and rapt into paradise, hearing words not lawful for mortal lips to utter, for only those lips can speak of them that are already divine. No longer dimly overshadowed by the Soul, we enter through the silence to the very being of the Soul itself. We know that we have found our treasure and inherited our immortality. With undimmed, boundless vision we behold the shining ocean of life. We enter the radiance and the realm. We are filled with infinite power, infinite peace. No longer heirs to the Power, we are the Power itself, in all its immeasurable divinity: the Power which was from the beginning, which shall outlive all ends.

As we rise to the vision of the immortal, there is silence, yet a silence full of song. There is darkness, yet darkness more radiant than light. There is loneliness, yet loneliness full of living souls. The souls of the young-eyed immortals are there, who have passed over, and the souls of mortals yet unseeing, who shall follow after. We have entered the All, the sea of life whose foam and bubbles are the world.

Then the gloom closes upon us and we return from our illumination, descending again to the waking world. As we draw nearer, the whole landscape of life opens before us in scenery of shadow and sunshine. Sky meets earth on the horizon where we entered. Earth draws up again to sky before us, where we shall depart. We see spread forth the country where we shall traverse, with hills and valleys levelled, as we view them from above. All the road is clear, nor do any formidable dangers

threaten to overwhelm us, ere we enter into rest. For one long moment of our return, nought is hidden from us of all things that are to come.

When we unseal the inner fountain, its waters will never more cease to flow into our hearts, bringing life and light and everlasting youth. Many old well-guarded secrets will come to us and reveal themselves in the twilight stillness. Gradually the mists will lift from the infinite army of years we have lived of old, and from the long days that are to come. This one life of our mortality will take its true place in the undivided life, ranged with days vanished, yet still here, with days that are not, yet already are. We shall unravel our tangled skein of fate, clearly seeing where and why we failed. The sins and sorrows of our life will take their true color, in the awful light of the all-seeing soul.

What each man's genius is, will be whispered to him in the silence, when he has found his way back to the immortal life. Thenceforward the genius will work in him, handling all the material of life in a new and masterly way. The perfect poet and artist, the hero, saint and sage differ in this only from other men: that they obey the genius of valor and beauty who stands above them, yielding up the reins to their divinity, and offering their wills as workers for the light. As there is something creative and unprecedented in the life of every hero, in the work of every master of beauty and power, so should it be with us all. Our lives should be every moment creative, bearing always the power and light that are the sign-manual of our divinity.

To discover by subtlest intuition the word of the genius to our other selves, and in all dealings with them to second the will of the immortal even against their mortal selves, is our second task; and we need no longer go abroad to find our other selves. They come to us, pressing closely round our souls in vision or in blindness, in sadness or mirth, in love or hate, as doves and hawks tap at lighthouse windows, to be admitted from the winter's storms. But above love or hate or sorrow is the immemorial essence of our common soul, the holy presence of the everlasting life. We must bow to it in all things, dealing with the immortal in mortals, answering the needs of souls alone. Mortals are at strife, but the immortals in them never. All move in the one Life.

Yet when the last word is said, we are finally concerned, not with the works of our wills, nor with our other selves, but with the immortal Life that gives them life. Our loves and other selves concern us because they are of the Soul. But there is somewhat greater and more august than the Soul's sunbeams, however radiant and full of beauty. There is the infinite Soul itself, the perfect undivided Life. Thither at last shall all our footsteps tend. Thither when our works are ended, when we have reached oneness with our other selves, shall we come to rest, losing ourselves and them and all things to find them again in the immortal Life.

CHARLES JOHNSTON.

# THEOSOPHY AND SECULAR LITERATURE

## VI

### WORDSWORTH'S PRELUDE

*Of joy in widest commonalty spread;  
Of the individual Mind that keeps her own  
Inviolate retirement, subject there  
To Conscience only, and the law supreme  
Of that Intelligence which governs all—  
I sing:—"fit audience let me find though few!"*

\* \* \* \* \*

*Descend, prophetic Spirit! that inspir'st  
The human Soul of universal earth,  
Dreaming on things to come; and dost possess  
A metropolitan temple in the hearts  
Of mighty Poets: upon me bestow  
A gift of genuine insight; that my Song  
With star-like virtue in its place may shine,  
Shedding benignant influence, and secure,  
Itself, from all malevolent effect  
Of those mutations that extend their sway  
Throughout the nether sphere!*

THE wise author of *The Creed of Buddha* laments that the Western world "by its instinctive disbelief in the soul is constrained to identify *Nature* with the world without." It is through this disbelief that Wordsworth's verse, more than any English poet's has missed a just appreciation. To the casual admirer, Wordsworth is merely the poet of out-of-doors; he proffers balm and unguents to hurt souls infected with the *maladie du siecle*. His poetic structure is the sanatorium of poetic neurasthenics. The harassed mind, irritated and depressed by the unlovableness of human nature, journeys to Wordsworth's verse as "the world's sweet inn from pain and troublesome turmoil." In his lyrics, one can revel in the loveliness of inanimate things—a violet by a mossy stone, the daffodils in sprightly dance, the cuckoo's twofold shout are a Lethian bath for the weary, tear-stained groper in life's *cul-de-sac*; he straitway forgets the real world and the cruel spectacle that man has made of man.

He found us when the age had bound  
Our souls in its benumbing round;  
He spoke, and loosed our hearts in tears.  
He laid us as we lay at birth  
On the cool flowery lap of earth,  
The hills were round us, and the breeze  
Went o'er the sun-lit fields again;  
Our foreheads felt the wind and rain.

Wordsworth is not the singer of the visible, tangible, audible loveliness of outer things. He is the Seer of the Soul. He is the most spiritual of England's pinnacled poets. His light is not dazzling like Shelley's "flush of rose on peaks divine"; it burns with an unflickering flame, diffusing mild radiance. In his writing he carefully discriminates between the immortal world of "Nature" and nature which is only a lovely veil suffused with the color of the Light glowing behind it. The wonder is that those who swiftly or slowly run through his verse do not read the plain statements plainly written there. For Wordsworth was as conscious of his mission as was Dante. He knew that he was "a renovated spirit singled out for holy services," and, to that end, robed in the priestly vestments of verse.

Nel ciel che piu della sua luce prende  
Fu' io,

the Florentine wrote, and prayed fervently to holy Apollo for aid in setting forth the wonders of the Celestial land. So, Wordsworth entering the "main region of his song," beseeches Divine Guidance along the path.

Urania, I shall need  
Thy guidance, or a greater Muse, if such  
Descend to earth or dwell in highest heaven!  
For I must tread on shadowy ground, must sink  
Deep—and, aloft ascending, breathe in worlds  
To which the heaven of heavens is but a veil.

The aim of Dante's poem is "to bring those who are living in this life out of the state of misery, and to guide them to the state of happiness." Wordsworth's aim is the same . . .

By words  
Which speak of nothing more than what we are,  
I would arouse the sensual from their sleep  
Of Death, and win the vacant and the vain  
To noble raptures.

Like Dante, too, Wordsworth reached the heaven of heavens through the wilderness of the world.

If I oft  
Must turn elsewhere—to travel near the tribes  
And fellowships of men, and see ill sights  
Of madding passions mutually inflamed;  
Must hear Humanity in fields and groves  
Pipe solitary anguish; or must hang  
Brooding above the fierce confederate storm  
Of sorrow, barricadoed evermore  
Within the walls of cities—may these sounds  
Have their authentic comment; that even these  
Hearing, I be not downcast or forlorn!

When Wordsworth reached his thirtieth year, he felt that his *Lehr* and *Wanderjahre* had ended. He had lived through his revolutionary

ardor for France, and had become a supporter of the good old cause. He had returned from Germany to quiet domesticity at Grasmere, where his friend Calvert's legacy would insure freedom from vocational anxiety. His priestly function must now begin. Wordsworth, accordingly, made preparation for a monumental poem that should have for theme the being and destiny of "Man, Nature and Society." Before beginning that ambitious work Wordsworth set about a review of his own life—a retrospect of the path already trod—for the purpose of gaining assurance that his experience fitted him for the philosophical poem contemplated. This review of his life became a long autobiographical poem, and was finished in 1805; but, as a personal record, it was not published until after his death in 1850. As subsidiary to the *magnum opus* he entitled it *The Prelude, or Growth of a Poet's Mind*; and he thought it would bear the relation to the great work that the ante-chapel bears to a cathedral. He thought also that the *magnum opus* would integrate all his lyrics and minor pieces, and that they would be to the cathedral as "cells, oratories, and sepulchral recesses." Wordsworth's cathedral was never built. We must worship in the ante-chapel and oratories.

Just in the period when Wordsworth was putting his biography into verse, he wrote also the familiar ode which it is customary to print at the end of his minor poems as their summation and consummation—"On the Intimations of Immortality." This ode is a very brief, impersonal form of the *Prelude*. It is the *Prelude* with all personalities, facts, and localities eliminated—it is the biography generalised. The ode indicates very briefly the cycle of humanity, "*aus der Ewigkeit zu der Ewigkeit hin*," the descent out of God, the inevitable yoke of earth,

Heavy as frost and deep almost as life,

the final return to the enchanted hills of Heaven. The subject of the ode is the child's intuitive knowledge of reality, and Wordsworth was able to write vividly upon this theme out of his personal experience. "Nothing was more difficult for me in childhood," he wrote, and repeated it often in conversation, "than to admit the notion of death as a state applicable to my own being. I have said elsewhere

A simple child,  
That lightly draws its breath,  
And feels its life in every limb,  
What should it know of death!

But it was not so much from feelings of animal vivacity that my difficulty came as from a sense of the indomitableness of the Spirit within me. I used to brood over the stories of Enoch and Elijah, and almost to persuade myself that, whatever might become of others, I should be translated, in something of the same way, to heaven. With a feeling congenial to this, I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence, and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart



from, but inherent in, my own immaterial nature. Many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality."

*The Prelude* treats the same subject as the ode, more expansively, with meandering and bending back upon itself like a meadow-brook—every winding and turn serving as a covert for choice blossoms, cowslips, lilies, and ferns. *The Prelude* tells in detail what influences fostered Wordsworth's intuitive faculties, what tended to dull them, how the eye of his spirit went fast asleep during the revolutionary period in France, leaving only his rational mind at work, until his higher nature rose again to power.

Wordsworth's idyllic life by the northern waters, his companions, the Boy of Winander, are all old tales. What a wonderful picture this is of a youth of seventeen?

How shall I seek the origin? where find  
Faith in the marvellous things which then I felt?  
Oft in these moments such a holy calm  
Would overspread my soul, that bodily eyes  
Were utterly forgotten, and what I saw  
Appeared like something in myself, a dream,  
A prospect in the mind.

'Twere long to tell  
What spring and autumn, what the winter snows,  
And what the summer shade, what day and night,  
Evening and morning, sleep and waking, thought  
From sources inexhaustible, poured forth  
To feed the spirit of religious love  
In which I walked with Nature.

How refreshing in view of all the nonsense written about his failure justly to appreciate rhythm and metre, books and poetry, is Wordsworth's account of his early delight in rhythmic sound

Twice five years  
Or less I might have seen, when first my mind  
With conscious pleasure opened to the charm  
Of words in tuneful order, found them sweet  
For their own *sakes*, a passion, and a power;  
And phrases pleased me chosen for delight,  
For pomp, or love.

The last extract I shall make from *The Prelude* is taken out of the concluding portion of the poem. Wordsworth is telling of the final restoration of his spiritual vision after a period of rationalistic fever. The context describes a moonlight ascent of Mt. Snowdon in Wales. That night is memorable to Wordsworth because, like Teufelsdröckh on the mountain summit, he is once more able to see in the objects around him types and symbols of Eternity. "Of first, and last, and midst, and without end."

Lo! as I looked up,  
 The Moon hung naked in a firmament  
 Of azure without cloud, and at my feet  
 Rested a silent sea of hoary mist.  
 A hundred hills their dusky backs upheaved  
 All over this still ocean; and beyond,  
 Far, far beyond, the solid vapors stretched,  
 In headlands, tongues, and promontory shapes,  
 Into the main Atlantic, that appeared  
 To dwindle, and give up his majesty,  
 Usurped upon far as the sight could reach.  
 Not so the ethereal vault; encroachment none  
 Was there, nor loss; only the inferior stars  
 Had disappeared, or shed a fainter light  
 In the clear presence of the full-orbed Moon,  
 Who, from her sovereign elevation, gazed  
 Upon the billowy ocean, as it lay  
 All meek and silent, save that through a rift—  
 Not distant from the shore whereon we stood,  
 A fixed, abysmal, gloomy, breathing-place—  
 Mounted the roar of waters, torrents, streams  
 Innumerable, roaring with one voice!  
 Heard over earth and sea, and, in that hour,  
 For so it seemed, felt by the starry heavens.

When into air had partially dissolved  
 That vision, given to spirits of the night  
 And three chance human wanderers, in calm thought  
 Reflected, it appeared to me the type  
 Of a majestic intellect, its acts  
 And its possessions, what it has and craves,  
 What in itself it is, and would become.  
 There I beheld the emblem of a mind  
 That feeds upon infinity, that broods  
 Over the dark abyss, intent to hear  
 Its voices issuing forth to silent light  
 In one continuous stream; a mind sustained  
 By recognitions of transcendent power,  
 In sense conducting to ideal form,  
 In soul of more than mortal privilege.

This last extract points the way to a true understanding of Wordsworth's relation to the external world of nature. The outer world was to him the transparent veil through which Nature shines. Wordsworth lived in a world of life, by sensible impressions not enthralled, but quickened by their impulse. The daffodil the daisy, the skylark, the linnet offered him opportunities for drawing close to the Source. They make his heart dance with rapture because they flash upon his "inward eye." They are sweet silent creatures that breathe with him in sun and air. They share with him partnership in the great mystery.

# FIRST STEPS

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HERE are many ways of doing a thing. Life is a series of different attempts to reach one goal—discipleship. Many do this consciously—most, unconsciously. To those who are earnestly seeking to see the Light, to serve humanity, and who for these reasons long to become disciples, there are given certain fixed laws and principles, a right understanding of which is the first task. Our western minds find some of these ideas very difficult to hold because of their strange flavor, and, what we call, peculiarly eastern turn. Chelaship to me used to mean something almost unnatural and foreign to the work of a real man. I wanted to be a disciple; yes, but not exactly that kind. I knew in my heart I could be one—though not, I thought, in *that way*—so there must be some other. Then I read the first volume of *Letters That Have Helped Me* where much is said about chelaship, and an account given of a self-constituted disciple that to me was most helpful and inspiring. In this Z says “Any person can constitute himself a lay chela,” and again, “We *become* chelas.” I think that in this lies the crux of the question. It is not a matter of going to India, or meeting one’s Guru, it is a matter of *becoming* a disciple. We have to do it ourselves; we *have* to do it sooner or later; and until we have reached a certain point, we have no power or right to expect direct help. Maybe we have read Theosophy, maybe we do believe in the Lodge and the Masters, maybe we are weary of waiting, knowing we are not perfect, and wishing that “Time, the great deluder, were not so over-masterful;” but does that give us the right to expect a miracle, a sudden transformation; or the right to call on the great forces for good to give of themselves to us? Did merely wishing ever accomplish anything? And are we going to wait supinely for some change in us or in our lives?

We become chelas. We do not have to go to some Hall of Learning in the far East; but on the contrary, we must learn to act as chelas in our own homes before we can ever hope to go to such a place. True, we are not able to mediate all day with some beautiful mountain scenery just outside the window to inspire us—but *if* we were there *now*, would or could we mediate every day and all day? That is not yet our way. Our own homes can be our Halls of Learning, and once so constituted by ourselves, with oneself a chela within that Hall, the result will follow. For in very truth when we have done this we are lay chelas and the first step is taken. This vow being made with oneself, the next task is to find the best means of so ordering and conducting our lives as best to realize the ideal we may have formed of chelaship (however imaginary) because we shall most easily obey that. In any Lodge or even in any Monastic order there is strict discipline, enforced with military rigor.

But how is that discipline maintained? Surely not by any police system, where some servants of a Master spy on the chelas to see if they keep to their hours and do not eat too much. The chela on the contrary is left to himself, and when the time comes that he has completed the task set him, the Master knows it and so does the chela.

The duty we have before us is the discipline of the lower nature, so called; and to bring it under the complete control of the higher will. Whatever else we may do with ourselves, whether we "form an ideal" which Cavé says is the first step; whether we strive for obedience; whether we endeavor to reach the Master through meditation—all of these can only be maintained steadfastly, and finally accomplished successfully, by a constant pressure on our lower natures—by self-discipline. The average man disciplines himself very little. If he finds some fault preventing a promotion, he may strive to root it out, but he is not so rigid about faults in the home life; and as far as his inner thoughts are concerned, he is self-indulgence personified. A man usually gets his discipline from life—a chela must learn in addition to discipline himself. This does not imply asceticism, does not mean that a man should grind himself against a self-imposed mill-stone. Is it not reasonable that if he wishes to assume the responsibility to Nature for his acts, and wishes to perform those in the best way possible—he should now follow Nature's law in all its branches. Nature punishes mistakes. Nature teaches her greatest lessons through failure. So we should punish our mistakes, and *teach* ourselves by our punishments. Many people think they can learn a lesson even from a failure and escape the punishment. Often it seems so, and human nature has an unfortunate cleverness in avoiding for a time the consequences of its acts; but a day of retribution is sure to follow, when, because we suffer, we are grieved and feel ourselves unfairly treated. The chela strives to avoid this delay and he wishes to get a clearer insight into his faults by seeing more closely the effect of a given cause.

There are many ways of self-discipline. One of the first methods is to have a rule of life and to follow that. Chelas in the Lodge are required to make their own rules. If you wish to be a chela some day, try in your position as a lay chela to imitate that which they do. Make your own rule of life, and punish yourself when you break it. Teach yourself obedience by your self-imposed rule. You are coming closer to the Master every time you do this. How do you think you could obey some difficult and perhaps disagreeable order of the Master, if you could not exact at least partial obedience from your lower nature, could not make it do what it was told?

You may well say that a rule of conduct—a rule that would apply to all days and all circumstances, would be very difficult to draw up. It is; but in the Lodge, chelas have to do this; the Master does not at first give the chela a rule, he simply tells the chela to make one and obey

it. So sooner or later you will have to do it, and now is always the best time. This can be your next step if you make it so.

A rule should not be too complicated, or go too much into detail, because every day may bring unforeseen accidents or changes. But certain fixed laws you *can* make for yourself and these you should hold to with all your might. Every rule I ever heard of requires at least one-half hour in the day for meditation or reading, preferably the morning, because you are refreshed by a night's sleep; and during sleep, we are told, the Higher Self receives instruction and strength. This half hour is difficult for a busy man to make, but it can be done. I know of one case where a young business man, who had to be at the office at seven-thirty, woke himself up every morning a half hour earlier than usual and sacrificed sleep to the call of duty. That was little enough to do, and yet how many would wake themselves at six every morning no matter when they went to bed or how tired they were? During that half-hour, read, pray, or meditate as best suits your temperament; but remember always that the time you chose should be thereafter strictly kept, and no change made without sufficient cause. Try to act as if that time were an engagement with the Master, try to realize his presence and think of him as near you and watching your every thought and effort with special closeness, because of that effort itself. Soon you would not miss your appointment with him for anything; and the benefit that you would get from a steady continuance of this rule would alter the whole atmosphere of your life. Try it and see.

In addition to this half-hour, many people find it a help and a reminder to appoint other times in the day such as may fit in with their personal schedule. At twelve, for instance, when all the clocks are striking and whistles blowing, you might agree with yourself to pause a moment and to recollect, to say a prayer, or to read some short paragraph in a religious book. Whatever leisure time you have should be carefully and systematically mapped out, every half hour having its appointed duty. That duty may be the reading of a novel or some other form of recreation, but once you decide to read from 9.30 to 10—*read*, and at ten stop, if so appointed, no matter what the hero is doing. Such discipline is the finest training, and is in the reach and possibility of any man no matter what his walk of life. Think out your duties carefully, and do not make your life a burden; but remember that what you are doing is being watched with the keenest interest and the greatest love, however unconscious you may be of it. Such a rule *is* the kind of a rule that exists in the Lodge, and the more earnest a seeker you are, the more truly you desire to learn, to know, to become—so much the more will you regulate your time and adhere to that which you have commenced. Until you have done this for a considerable time at least, until you have proved that you can be relied upon, you may not expect any special help. If you do follow such a course of action earnestly, steadfastly, rising above

disappointment and failure, you will most surely attract the attention you desire. Such efforts are too precious ever to be overlooked, though you can be no judge of the length of time that it should take before your reward may come.

As to your daily tasks that constitute your life's work at the time, whatever they are, home duties, business, teaching—these can only be governed by the motive and spirit you put into them. The "*quality* of work done makes no difference" says one of the Masters on this theme. Provided we have done our best, the result should not concern us. Learn to separate yourself from your work, in the sense that you do not let the work or its results have any hold on you. "So the student comes to see that he is not to do either 'Good' or 'Evil' (in the accepted sense), but to do any certain number of acts set before him, and meanwhile not ever to regard much his line of conduct, but rather his line of motive; for his conduct follows necessarily from his motive." That is the kind of task that is set a real chela, and you, if you desire, are just as capable of doing it as anyone.

As to punishments, do not make them merely disagreeable, but try to devise those that will help you to learn your lesson. Follow the old rule of cultivating the opposite virtue. If you are late getting up (and you should have a fixed hour for rising for many obvious reasons), then what was the fault? Sloth or laziness perhaps. Very well, punish yourself by being energetic, working a little overtime, being early for the other engagements during the day. By doing this you form good habits both of thought and deed, and presently you will almost spring out of bed when the time comes.

Such a rule could and should be made interesting. It should also be a matter of growth, because as you come to know yourself better you will learn how best to treat your lower nature. But be slow to make changes, and do not deceive yourself—the tempter always circumvents and takes us from behind. A straight frontal attack is rarely possible, because he is not there. In your higher moments use your cunning to devise ways of heading off defeat and failure, because all our faculties—not merely sheer will power—must be used in order to win this fight. We must make our minds help us when we can, because usually they are our worst enemy. The whole problem, for a beginner, lies in his mental attitude, and by the observance of a rule, the habits of the mind become regulated and trained to think in the right channels. Any man can impose this training on himself, and every man must, some day. This *is* discipleship.

This middle stage must eventually be recognized as the connecting link. There are, so to speak, three stages. There is the lonely seeker after truth, unaided save by the light of his conscience (which becomes the Master's voice as he progresses and learns to "hear" in the occult sense). There is the accepted chela, who is in conscious communion

with the Master. What lies between? Nothing but the conscious and prolonged effort to reach the higher by obtaining absolute control over the lower self. Otherwise we are left to the slow and painful grinding of the wheel of Time. Do not think that you have as yet to make a mighty effort, to strain every inner nerve to the bursting point in order to prove your right to become—it is the summation of little efforts that makes such a crisis possible. This is the law. And the Masters, the holy, patient, long suffering and tireless Masters themselves are the true and faithful servants of the law. Learn the law, learn to obey the law as it is expressed in your own sense of right and wrong, and you will be serving them. Never was service rendered them that was not rewarded in most generous measure; so that those who can dimly realize it, are filled with awe at such splendidly divine compassion. Every seeker, every worker, however humble, helps to carry the great burden; and the Masters wait—wait through the ages—pleadingly, hopefully, asking us just to listen, to accept, and to try a little. How many try, even a little?

CASPAR KALTOFF.



*If you want knowledge you must toil for it; if food, you must toil for it; and if pleasure, you must toil for it. Toil is the law. Pleasure comes by toil and not by self-indulgence and indolence. When one gets to love work, his life is a happy one.*

RUSKIN.

# BROTHERHOOD

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THE principal object of the Theosophical Society has often been considered and often misunderstood. Its very simplicity renders it perplexing to the complex human mind, that marvelous deceiver. The simple sentence whose frequent misrepresentation has caused so much trouble in the history of the Theosophical Society, runs as follows: "To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or color." In this sentence the chief word is *Brotherhood*. If the meaning and claim of "Brotherhood" were rightly understood by all members of the Theosophical Society, then even the possibility of betraying our first and principle object would be eliminated from our ranks. It is, therefore, worth while to give this matter sincere consideration and continual meditation. By "continual meditation" I mean that at every moment of our lives we should try to live up to our highest ideal of Brotherhood, physically, mentally and morally. As real knowledge comes from experience through living the life and not from hearsay, study or memory, so knowledge about Brotherhood comes to him who lives the life of Brotherhood.

But beware of the preconceptions and the intricacies of the lower psychic self. Live the life in humble fear of making mistakes; for the pitfalls are many, and the *unwary* will sooner or later find himself caught so cunningly that to him it seems as if he only were free, and those who do not share his views were the ones entrapped.

A Master gave us this advice: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Another said: "The mind is the great Slayer of the Real. Let the Disciple slay the Slayer." But these are mere words unless their inner meaning is understood and *practiced*.

He who has not entirely subdued the personality, the oppressor of the mind, is still under the enticing influence of lust and self-gratification—be it only in their subtler forms. He is still a denizen in the realm of illusion and error. Therefore, the disciple must be on his guard continually, watching attentively, fighting his lower self relentlessly, or else "like a bird caught in the wily fowler's lime, he will be stayed from further progress."

Much is written about Brotherhood in Philosophy, Theosophy, the Holy Scriptures and elsewhere. Seven of the Commandments are distinct behests of Brotherhood. So is the corresponding second great Commandment of the Lord Jesus: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The Gospels are filled with directions as to the right practise of Brotherhood, and the matter has frequently been commented on in theosophical literature. These things we can study for ourselves, and



most of us have done so, probably. We may even have, as we think, a clear conception of the nature and claim of Brotherhood upon us. Meanwhile, the question is a fundamental one for our work, and we can gain much by reviewing it from time to time.

Our object is to form the *nucleus* of Brotherhood. But a "nucleus" is something very powerful. It contains concentrated life. Every member of the Theosophical Society is supposed to add a little to the power of this life, and every member who tries to work faithfully, according to the principles of true Brotherhood, does so. But any member of the Theosophical Society who misrepresents these principles, brings a wrong force into the life of the Nucleus. He is directly counteracting the efforts of the others. And if in any Branch of the Society the wrong force is allowed to grow very powerful, the unavoidable result is the failure of that Branch. Thus, to have a clear conception of the nature of true Brotherhood, and how it ought to influence our lives, is of vital importance to the welfare of the Theosophical Society and of us all.

The tree is known by its fruits. What, then, are the fruits of the life-tree of Brotherhood?

Among people at large brotherliness is judged according to speech and action. Brotherly action and brotherly speech are, however, outer effects of inner causes, the resultant of our thoughts, desires, ambitions, vanities, and fears, or of the forces that oppress mind and heart. These powers constitute our inner or real life, whose expression in the outer world is largely determined by the will of the *oppressors*. And among the oppressors fear, ambition and self-love generally take the lead. They do not allow other forces to express themselves to such degree that their own special interests should suffer thereby. They are the clever computers that calculate results, the originators of our motives. They are the polishers of speech and action among people at large. Thus, just as delicious-looking fruit may have a bitter taste, so sweet speech and tender actions may be displayed by one whose heart is full of bitterness. There are unworthy imitations in all fields, and much of customary charitableness and philanthropic activity may be classed among the imitations.

If one has shown kindness in such a way that another is "uplifted" by it; *i. e.*, if the act has, be it only for a moment, roused in the heart a sensation of love and thankfulness, then he has indeed acted as a brother towards that other man. If, on the other hand, the kindness is shown, or the gift is handed in a manner that leaves the receiver cold and hard, or perhaps offends him, or causes an unpleasant feeling of indebtedness, then the draught offered our thirsty Brother was mixed with gall. We failed to give heed to our motives and to the real need of our Brother as well. Even if the selfishness of our motives be concealed to the outer sense the receiver will instinctively feel its presence, and it will poison his inner life.

The possibility of being misunderstood is of course always at hand. We may conscientiously try to act from correct principles and may earnestly wish to do what is right; but the subtler discernment which should help us to uplift instead of offending may be lacking. Our benevolence and sympathy are not strong and unselfish enough to induce the corresponding feelings in our Brother's heart. We can only gain these divine powers of discrimination and sympathy by long and attentive practice of charity according to our highest conception of the principles of Brotherhood.

And it must be remembered that principles are not outer appearances, but inner realities. They are impersonal, and, when applied to Brotherhood they call for justice in our dealings with individuals as well as with nations. They are opposed to doing injustice to any single human being, or even to ourselves, though it were for the alleged purpose of benefitting the whole race. And as inner realities they claim growth from within. A philanthropy that works for the benefit of man by trying to enforce laws and rules tending to improve the outer conditions of physical life, without due regard to individual rights and personal free will, may seem wise to the mind, but to the Soul, the Real Man, it is the opposite of wisdom. To work for the race on such lines is to try to bring about fair outer effects, while the corresponding inner conditions are as yet lacking. It is like making an artificial oak which always remains dead and therefore soon rots when exposed to the changes of the weather, instead of planting the healthy acorn, from which, by natural growth from within, a mighty tree may develop, powerful enough to resist climatic change.

Those who call themselves Theosophists, who wish to label philanthropic work on material lines as theosophical, and claim sympathetic interest in the name of Brotherhood, ought to remember that the inner conditions will unavoidably call forth the corresponding outer circumstances, just as the rate of vibration of a string decides the pitch of the audible tone produced. And they ought also to take into consideration the fact that the improvement of outer conditions may have just the opposite effect on the inner life, and make it more difficult for the race to give up earthly enjoyments and turn mind and heart from the mortal to the immortal. Charity must of course be practised within the Theosophical Society as well as in the outer world, and as citizens we may join in any philanthropic activity that attracts us; but it is advisable, before we spend time and energy in it, to analyze closely the nature and motives for such work and its effects on those we wish to benefit.

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Chapter 17, we find a description of that speech and of those gifts that spring from the three qualities of nature. It may be worth while to study this chapter in order to find out which quality is predominating in our own speech and gifts.

It is said that if only a glass of water be offered to a thirsty Brother

with love and sympathy, this act of kindness will produce a feeling of warmth and thankfulness in that Brother's heart, thus touching the life of the soul which is to be found beyond the outer life of every human being. Perhaps, till then, the life of this soul in its present incarnation had had little, if any, conscious contact with the soul-life of others. Perhaps in this incarnation it had never had a conscious feeling of relationship to other souls or an idea of its oneness with all souls in the Over-Soul. Perhaps it had been like a closed-up underground sea. And perhaps, by our seemingly insignificant brotherly action, we have given to this sea an outlet and have caused its waters to flow more or less abundantly, thus making a Brother's life richer and more fruitful. This is the *uplifting* of a Brother; this is the practise of true Brotherhood.

Therefore, charity must be practised in due time and place and on the right principles, and our gift, be it only a glass of water, must be followed by that strong sympathy which flows from the feeling in our hearts that every fellowman, even the meanest and most degraded among us, is a human soul and as such our equal, nay, even more than that, a part of ourselves through our unity in the One Soul. Every human soul is a Brother whose fate is not independent of ours,—a Brother whose keeper each one of us is in a very real sense.

Gentleness of speech is one of the most prevalent injunctions of all founders of religion. The perfection of this virtue is, in *Light on the Path*, described in this way: "Before the voice can speak in the presence of the Masters it must have lost its power to wound." This saying is hardly understood by many, and it is hardly possible to explain it intelligibly in words. Everyone has to find out for himself what it means to him. To some it might seem synonymous with silence or as an encouragement to hypocrisy. We know better; but we are, nevertheless, puzzled when trying to determine the true meaning of this highly spiritual exhortation. We are not told to deal loosely with truth, but to be sympathetic. The truth can be told in many ways, and the best way is that which does not wound.

Meanwhile, experience testifies constantly that people are disposed to resent words that stir their consciences, even if spoken in the abstract. In this case, however, the real cause of offence is not in the speaker, but in the listener's alarmed conscience.

It is said: "Judge not," and "Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? . . . Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." If we live up to this injunction we shall never run the risk of needlessly offending anyone, because there will be left us no opportunity to reproach others, until there is nothing more to blame in ourselves. And for most of us this condition will be found to be very far off, if our own self-examination be unfeigned and thorough.

The above quoted injunction does not forbid us, when discussing theosophical and other questions, to point out wherein we think another is wrong. This is a matter of opinion, and his views may after all be better than our own. We have only to discuss the question in a brotherly spirit and to show tolerance. It is, as we know, one of the purposes of the Theosophical Society to form a platform for free and tolerant discussion.

This does not mean that we are never to correct faults. It may be our duty to do so in many cases in domestic and social life. Thus it is the duty of parents towards their children, and of teachers towards their pupils. And we are often in the position of teachers, *e.g.*, when we are superiors or when a fellowman of his own free will is asking our advice and guidance. Our instruction must, however, under all circumstances, be given with kindness and sympathy. Then if the pupil objects openly or secretly to instruction, it is his fault. He does not understand, perhaps, because no one has told him, that there exists a sacred relationship between him and his natural or chosen teacher. And even if the judgment of the present teacher does not help to solve our difficulties, and even if his instruction seems to be lacking in the spirit of love and sympathy, still we ought to listen to him attentively and with thankfulness, because he *is* our temporary teacher, natural or chosen, in that special case, and he gives what he can, according to his inner disposition. And though the love and sympathy should be mutual between teacher and pupil, the absence of these qualities in one of them is no proper excuse for their absence in the other. This applies especially to those who wish to live the life according to the doctrine of the Heart.

If, on the other hand, we are not in the position of a teacher, then we have no right whatever to correct the real or supposed deficiencies of others; when we make that attempt, experience shows, if we only have the power to look deeply enough into the inner life,—that we have aggravated the condition of the friend, who is the object of our improper instruction.

Besides, when inclined to correct faults in another without being in the position of his teacher, we ought to remember, that our views are not infallible, and that as a rule it is better and more instructive for our Brother to act upon his own conviction instead of blindly following the views of another. It is also wise to examine into our motives in order to see whether our kind intention to improve him may not be a secret prompting of the personality to self-assertion.

The principles of true Brotherhood demand readiness to give and to receive personal help and advice, when it is our duty to do so, but not otherwise. And, as pointed out above, it is our duty, only when we are in the position of teacher or pupil. In all other cases the best way to help is by example.

If we do not judge anyone, nor have aught against anyone, but

always think of our fellowmen with love and sympathy, then we can never feel inclined to tell them of their faults, nor to backbite or to give hints about any of their real or supposed failings. To expose deficiencies in a man's character is even more unbecoming than to point at some bodily disfigurement. The personal human Psyche must be treated with more consideration than its earthly apparition, the body.

When we are aware of faults in another, then we have only to try to look for our own. This will give much insight into human nature. And instead of telling our comrades their faults we should warn them in the abstract against the vices and deficiencies predominant in ourselves and in the world. But there is no occasion to confess our own faults, nor to expose others. We owe respect to ourselves as well as to our fellowmen.

Then we have to make right the inner attitude towards others. This aspect of brotherliness has already been mentioned, because the right inner attitude is inseparable from right action and right speech, unless action and speech are base hypocrisy only. People of good breeding are supposed to behave gently towards others, whether they like or dislike them. But the disciple must overcome that sensation of dislike, and the remedy is to look to the soul of the person who causes this unbrotherly feeling. Dislike must be replaced by sympathetic comprehension.

The twin-brother of dislike is suspicion, and this is perhaps the most fatal of all our moral defects because of its proneness to cause misunderstanding, to misinterpret, to multiply, to color and even to make evidence out of nothing. If suspicion is not throttled, it will kill our sympathy towards that person whom we distrust. We must replace suspicion with confidence. Then if we are deceived sometimes, we should again look to the soul of the deceiver, and our disappointment will be stripped of its bitterness, because we shall feel the sufferings of that soul, and compassion and warm sympathy for it will fill our hearts, just as the mother's heart is filled with love and compassion for her suffering child.

There are many more defects in our inner attitude towards our fellowmen, but as they can all be abolished by the universal remedy, *warm sympathy* towards all, we need not go into further details. Besides, the two—dislike and suspicion—cover the whole range. And if suspicion and dislike are replaced by trust and sympathy, then the inner attitude of true Brotherhood is already established.

So in all our relations to our fellowmen the all-important aim is to be guided by that uniting power which flows from warm sympathy. It is just here that so many fail, even some of those who strive for perfection in true Brotherhood. Meanwhile, to exercise self-control is very difficult, since a fault, when its grosser aspects are conquered, always tries to assert itself afresh in a subtler way. We can, therefore, never

be too particular in our self-examination. We must dig deeper and deeper into our innermost recesses, and we must at the same time remember that human nature is *one* with the whole of Nature and therefore as extensive. Then we shall understand how necessary it is to be on guard, and that our keeping watch must be continued throughout the whole range of the incarnations of the soul, or till it has once more become one with the Father in Heaven.

To recapitulate: Brotherhood demands of us that we should never judge anyone, never have aught against anyone, never find fault or feel inclined to expose the deficiencies of others. And the principal reason is, that every fellowman without exception is a soul, our equal in being and dignity and one with our soul through our common origin in the Universal Soul. This oneness of the soul is the rationale and the fundamental principle of Universal Brotherhood, the nature and the demands of which I have tried to sketch as they present themselves to me. If we accept these principles and make them the standard of our lives, *i.e.*, if we try to draw men to us with love and sympathy, then we shall come in touch with their souls and set into activity corresponding powers in their lives. We are then true workers in the divine vineyard and co-workers with Nature which exists for the purposes of the soul only.

But while we are trying to live the life of Brotherhood we shall find that when the fire of ungoverned passion has been quenched, and the life of the personality is flowing smoother, there is still self-love in its subtler aspects parting us from our fellowmen. There is the fear of being dwarfed by others, the craving for self-assertion is yet powerful, sensitiveness in our daily intercourse with others, inclination to feel hurt if our opinions are not esteemed as much as we desire, some small suspicions as to the uprightness of others—in all these ways the personality tries to keep up its separate existence, and all are evidences of the fact that we still love ourselves more than our neighbours. And if there arise, be it only as a flash in our inner life, a sensation towards even the meanest of our fellowmen, which cannot be classed as warm sympathy, then we may be sure that there is still something for us to overcome.

The demands of Brotherhood are very exacting, few are able to live the life of true Brotherhood to perfection if only for a single day, or for a single hour. But we are all able to *try* to live that life, and by so doing we are adding a little to the power and life of the nucleus of Universal Brotherhood, which it is the purpose of our Society to create. By endeavouring to make the principles of true Brotherhood a living power in our lives, we are gradually advancing nearer to that sublime goal of being, which it is our hope and aspiration one day to reach. By our warm sympathy for others we shall draw them to us, thus helping them and making it easier for them to overcome the obstacles that are

yet to be removed in their long and weary journey to the mansions of Truth.

To be allowed to partake in this uplifting work is a great trust, a great privilege, and we ought not to fail in doing our duty to the best of our ability. Our duties and our work seem to be laid before us more clearly and more intelligibly than ever before. We have only to work on. We are, no doubt, all of us willing to carry out our part of the work, but the flesh is frail and the possibility of failure is not far off. Meanwhile, the Master who is watching every one of us, is far more anxious to help us than we are to receive help. We may call this Master the Spirit of Truth. It remains only for us to make our hearts and inner lives susceptible of his guidance. In order to do this we must be attentive listeners to that inaudible voice which speaks to us when we have silenced the clamor of body and mind,—the voice of the Conscience. It is the Genius of man that is ever trying to break through the clouds surrounding the personality and to manifest in the outer world. It is the promised guide to Truth who shall lead us from darkness to that wonderful light that illumines the world of righteousness and of true Brotherhood.

T. H. KNOFF.

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*Wisdom is only knowing what is best to do next. Virtue is doing it.*

DAVID STARR JORDAN.

# PATANJALI'S YOGA SUTRAS \*

TRANSLATED WITH A COMMENTARY

By

CHARLES JOHNSTON

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**T**HE last part of the last book needs little introduction. In a sense, it is the most important part of the whole treatise, since it unmasks the nature of the personality, that psychical "mind," which is the wakeful enemy of all who seek to tread the path. Even now, you can hear it whispering the doubt whether that can be a good path, which thus sets "mind" at defiance.

If this, then, be the most vital and fundamental part of the teaching, should it not stand first at the very beginning? Reader, it may seem so; but had it stood there, you would not have comprehended it. The riddle of personality cannot be so lightly read. If you have faithfully followed what has gone before, and wrought it, as you would be wise to do, into the fabric of your life, then you have already come to grips with personality, and gained, let us hope, some preliminary victories.

If you have done this, you are now in a position to understand the broad outlines of the teaching now set before you. If not, go back over it, for the record of the teaching is extant, and ready to your hand; and the task and the foe are also ready to your hand; likely, indeed, so to remain for some time yet. Therefore you can set about your lesson, and wage your fight. And thus you will truly learn. For he who would know the doctrine must lead the life, doing the will of his Father which is in Heaven.

## TRANSLATION OF BOOK IV, PART II

**18. The movements of the psychic nature are perpetually objects of perception, since the Spiritual Man, who is the lord of them, remains unchanging.**

Here is teaching of the utmost import, both for understanding and for practice.

To the psychic nature belongs all the ebb and flow of emotion, all hoping and fearing, desire and hate: the things that make the multitude of men and women deem themselves happy or miserable. To it also belong the measuring and comparing, the doubt and questioning, which, for the same multitude, make up mental life. So that there results the emotion-soaked personality, with its dark and narrow view of life: the

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shivering, terror-driven personality that is life itself for all but all of mankind.

Yet the personality is not the true man, not the living soul at all, but only a spectacle which the true man observes. Understand this, therefore, and draw yourself up inwardly to the height of the Spiritual Man, who, standing in the quiet light of the Eternal, looks down serene upon this turmoil of the outer life.

One first masters the personality, the "mind," by thus looking down on it from above, from within; by steadily watching its ebb and flow, as objective, outward, and therefore not the real Self. This standing back is the first step, detachment. The second, to maintain the vantage-ground thus gained, is recollection.

**19. The Mind is not self-luminous, since it can be seen as an object.**

This is a further step toward overthrowing the tyranny of the "mind": the psychic nature of emotion and mental measuring. This psychic self, the personality, claims to be absolute, asserting that life is for it and through it; it seeks to impose on the whole being of man its narrow, materialistic, faithless view of life and the universe; it would fain clip the wings of the soaring Soul. But the Soul dethrones the tyrant, by perceiving and steadily affirming that the psychic self is no true self at all, not self-luminous, but only an object of observation, watched by the serene eyes of the Spiritual Man.

**20. Nor could the Mind at the same time know itself and things external to it.**

The truth is that the "mind" knows neither external things nor itself. Its measuring and analysing, its hoping and fearing, hating and desiring, never give it a true measure of life, nor any sense of real values. Ceaselessly active, it never really attains to knowledge; or, if we admit its knowledge, it ever falls short of wisdom, which comes only through intuition, the vision of the Spiritual Man.

Life cannot be known by the "mind," its secrets cannot be learned through the "mind." The proof is, the ceaseless strife and contradiction of opinion among those who trust in the mind. Much less can the "mind" know itself, the more so, because it is pervaded by the illusion that it truly knows, truly is.

True knowledge of the "mind" comes, first, when the Spiritual Man, arising, stands detached, regarding the "mind" from above, with quiet eyes, and seeing it for the tangled web of psychic forces that it truly is. But the truth is divined long before it is clearly seen, and then begins the long battle of the "mind" against the Real, the "mind" fighting furiously, craftily, for its supremacy. Its honor rooted in dishonor stands, and faith unfaithful makes it falsely true.

**21. If the Mind be thought of as seen by another more inward Mind, then there would be an endless series of perceiving Minds, and a confusion of memories.**

One of the expedients by which the "mind" seeks to deny and thwart the Soul, when it feels that it is beginning to be circumvented and seen through, is to assert that this seeing is the work of a part of itself, one part observing the other, and thus leaving no need nor place for the Spiritual Man.

To this strategy the argument is opposed by our philosopher, that this would be no true solution, but only a postponement of the solution. For we should have to find yet another part of the Mind to view the first observing part, and then another to observe this, and so on, endlessly.

The true solution is, that the Spiritual Man looks down upon the psychic nature, and observes it; when it views the psychic picture-gallery, this is "memory," which would be a hopeless, inextricable confusion, if we thought of one part of the "mind," with its memories, viewing another part, with memories of its own.

The solution of the mystery lies not in the "mind" but beyond it, in the luminous life of the risen Lord, the Spiritual Man.

**22. When the pure Spiritual Consciousness, which is free from all succession or change, takes form in the Spiritual Man, then does Consciousness realize its own luminous being.**

True individuality is never reached in the "mind," the psychic being, with its ceaseless ebb and flow, its hating and desiring, fearing and hoping, mapping and measuring. That fluctuating being is no real self. The man is not yet born.

But when the Spiritual Man wins his long battle against the "mind," and the mind's world-view, and, rising, stands firm in his own might, then true life and individuality begin. Abstract spiritual Consciousness comes to a focus, as it were, in a real being, a true individuality, who neither fears nor hopes, but knows himself immortal, one of the Children of Light.

**23. The psychic nature, universally adaptive, takes on the color either of things seen, or of the Seer.**

In the unregenerate man, the psychic nature is saturated with images of material things, of things seen, or heard, or tasted, or felt; and this web of dynamic images forms the ordinary material and driving power of life. The sensation of sweet things tasted clamors to be renewed, and drives the man into effort to obtain its renewal; so he adds image to image, each dynamic and importunate, piling up sin's intolerable burden.

Then comes regeneration, and the washing away of sin, through the fiery, creative power of the Soul, which burns out the stains of the

psychic vesture, purifying it as gold is refined in the furnace. The suffering of regeneration springs from this indispensable purifying.

Then the psychic vesture begins to take on the color of the Soul, no longer stained, but suffused with golden light; and the man regenerate gleams with the radiance of eternity. Thus the Spiritual Man puts on fair raiment; for of this cleansing it is said: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be as crimson, they shall be as wool.

**24. The psychic nature, which has been printed with mind-images of innumerable material things, exists now for the Spiritual Man, subordinate to him.**

The "mind," once the tyrant, is now the slave, recognized as outward, separate, not-Self, a well-trained instrument of the Spiritual Man.

For it is not ordained for the Spiritual Man that, finding his high realm, he shall enter altogether there, and pass out of the vision of mankind. It is true that he dwells in heaven, but he also dwells on earth. He has angels and archangels, the hosts of the just made perfect, for his familiar friends, but he has at the same time found a new kinship with the prone children of men, who stumble and sin in the dark. Finding sinlessness, he finds also that the world's sin and shame are his, not to share, but to atone; finding kinship with angels, he likewise finds his part in the toil of angels, the toil for the redemption of the world.

For this work, he, who now stands in the heavenly realm, needs his instrument on earth; and this instrument he finds, ready to his hand, and fitted and perfected by the very struggles he has waged against it, in the personality, the "mind" of the personal man. This once tyrant is now his servant and perfect ambassador, bearing witness, before men, of heavenly things, and even in this present world doing the will and working the works of the Father.

**25. For him who discerns between the Mind and the Spiritual Man, there comes perfect fruition of the longing after the real being of the Self.**

How many times in the long struggle have the Soul's aspirations seemed but a hopeless, impossible dream, a madman's counsel of perfection. Yet every finest, most impossible aspiration shall be realized, and ten times more than realized, once the long, arduous fight against the "mind," and the mind's world-view is won. And then it will be seen that unfaith and despair were but weapons of the "mind," to daunt the Soul, and put off the day when the neck of the "mind" shall be put under the foot of the Soul.

Have you aspired, well-nigh hopeless, after immortality? You shall be paid by entering the immortality of God.

Have you aspired, in misery and pain, after consoling, healing love?

You shall be made a dispenser of the divine love of God Himself to weary souls.

Have you sought ardently, in your day of feebleness, after power? You shall wield power immortal, infinite, with God working the works of God.

Have you, in lonely darkness, longed for companionship and consolation? You shall have angels and archangels for your friends, and all the immortal hosts of the Dawn.

These are the fruits of victory. Therefore overcome. These are the prizes of regeneration. Therefore die to self, that you may rise again to God.

**26. Thereafter, the whole personal being bends toward illumination, full of the spirit of Eternal Life.**

This is part of the secret of the Soul, that salvation means, not merely that a soul shall be cleansed and raised to heaven, but that the whole realm of the natural powers shall be redeemed, building up, even in this present world, the kingly figure of the Spiritual Man.

The traditions of the ages are full of his footsteps; majestic, uncomprehended shadows, myths, demi-gods, fill the memories of all the nobler peoples. But the Time cometh, when he shall be known, no longer demi-god, nor myth, nor shadow, but the ever-present Redeemer, working amid men for the life and cleansing of all souls.

**27. In the intervals of the battle, other thoughts will arise, through the impressions of the dynamic mind-images.**

The battle is long and arduous. Let there be no mistake as to that. Go not forth to this battle without counting the cost. Ages have gone to the strengthening of the foe. Ages of conflict must be spent, ere the foe, wholly conquered, becomes the servant, the Soul's minister to mankind.

And from these long past ages, in hours when the contest flags, will come new foes, mind-born children springing up to fight for mind, reinforcements coming from forgotten years, forgotten lives. For once this conflict is begun, it can be ended only by sweeping victory, and unconditional, unreserved surrender of the vanquished.

**28. These are to be overcome as it was taught that sorrows should be overcome.**

These new enemies and fears are to be overcome by ceaselessly renewing the fight, by a steadfast, dogged persistence, whether in victory or defeat, which shall put the stubbornness of the rocks to shame. For the Soul is older, more invincible than all things; it is of the very nature of the Soul to be unconquerable.

Therefore fight on, undaunted; knowing that the spiritual will, once

awakened, will, through the effort of the contest, come to its full strength; that ground gained can be held permanently; that great as is the dead-weight of the adversary, it is yet measurable, while he who fights for you, he for whom you fight, is in might immeasurable, invincible, everlasting.

**29. He who, after he has attained, is wholly free from self, is set in a cloud of holiness which is called illumination. This is the true spiritual consciousness.**

It has been said that, at the beginning of the way, we must kill out ambition, the great curse, the giant weed which grows as strongly in the heart of the devoted disciple as in the man of desire. The remedy is sacrifice of self, obedience, humility; that purity of heart which gives the vision of God. Thereafter, he who has attained is wrapt about with holiness, as with a cloud; he has that perfect illumination which is the true spiritual consciousness. Through obedience to the will of God, he comes into oneness of being with God; he is initiated into God's view of the universe, seeing all life as God sees it.

**30. Thereon comes surcease from sorrow and the burden of toil.**

Such a one, it is said, is free from the bond of Karma, from the burden of toil, from that debt to works which comes from works done in self-love and desire. Free from self-will, he is free from sorrow, too, for sorrow comes from the fight of self-will against the divine will, through the correcting stress of the divine will, which seeks to counteract the evil wrought by disobedience. When the conflict with the divine will ceases, then sorrow ceases, and he who has grown into obedience, thereby enters into joy.

**31. When all veils are rent, all stains washed away, his knowledge becomes infinite; little remains for him to know.**

The first veil is the delusion that thy soul is in some permanent way separate from the great Soul, the divine Eternal. When that veil is rent, thou shalt discern thy oneness with everlasting Life. The second veil is the delusion of enduring separateness from thy other selves, whereas in truth the soul that is in them is one with the soul that is in thee. The world's sin and shame are thy sin and shame: its joy also.

These veils rent, thou shalt enter into knowledge of divine things and human things. Little will remain unknown to thee.

**32. Thereafter comes the completion of the series of transformations of the three nature-potencies, since their purpose is attained.**

It is a part of the beauty and wisdom of the great Indian teachings, the Vedanta and the Yoga alike, to hold that all life exists for the purposes of Soul, for the making of the Spiritual Man. They do not teach

a salvation which is preternatural, a seeming violation of the course of nature, nor a salvation which comes through a divine decree, almost a divine whim. They teach rather that all nature is an orderly process of evolution, leading up to this, designed for this end, existing only for this: to bring forth and perfect the Spiritual Man. He is the crown of evolution; at his coming, the goal of all development is attained.

**33. The series of transformations is divided into moments, and is to be regarded as the culmination of nature.**

This is, perhaps, a philosophical subtlety, later inserted in the teaching, in fuller expansion of the words "series of transformations" in the last sūtra. The idea, however, is clear, and is wholly in harmony with the rest of the teaching. There are two kinds of eternity, says the commentary: the eternity of immortal life, which belongs to the Spirit, and the eternity of change, which inheres in Nature; in all that is not Spirit. While we are content to live in and for Nature, in the Circle of Necessity, Sansara, we doom ourselves to perpetual change. That which is born must die, and that which dies must be reborn. It is change evermore, a ceaseless series of transformations.

But the Spiritual Man enters a new order; for him, there is no longer eternal change, but eternal Being. He has entered into the joy of his Lord. This spiritual birth, which makes him the heir of the Everlasting, sets a term to change; it is the culmination, the crowning transformation, of the whole realm of change.

**34. Pure spiritual life is, therefore, the inverse resolution of the potencies of Nature, which have emptied themselves of their value for the Spiritual Man; or it is the return of the power of pure Consciousness to its essential form.**

Here we have a splendid generalization, in which our wise philosopher finally reconciles the naturalists and the idealists, expressing the crown and end of his teaching first in the terms of the naturalist, and then in the terms of the idealist.

The birth and growth of the Spiritual Man, and his entering into his immortal heritage, may be regarded, says our philosopher, either as the culmination of the whole process of natural evolution and involution, where "that which flowed from out the boundless deep, turns again home"; or it may be looked at, as the Vedantins look at it, as the restoration of pure spiritual Consciousness to its pristine and essential form. There is no discrepancy or conflict between these two views, which are but two accounts of the same thing. Therefore those who study the wise philosopher, be they naturalist or idealist, have no excuse to linger over dialectic subtleties or disputes. These things are lifted from their path, lest they should be tempted to delay over them, and

they are left facing the path itself, stretching upward and outward from their feet to the everlasting hills, radiant with infinite Light.

You, too, reader, who have followed the thoughts of the wise philosopher, be persuaded to take to your heart a like counsel and admonition. The path is for you. The Spiritual Man waits to be revealed in you, to initiate you into immortality, setting you amid the Children of Light. Be persuaded, then, since the truth is before you, the holy message has come to your ears. Hear the message, know that through it alone is life, leave the shadows of yourself behind, enter the Light, and hear the ringing Welcome that awaits you.

THE END

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*Must we always be warned, and can we only fall on our knees when some one is there to tell us that God is passing by? If you have loved profoundly you have needed no one to tell you that your soul was a thing as great in itself as the world; that the stars, the flowers, the waves of night and sea were not solitary; that it was on the threshold of appearances that everything began, but nothing ended; and that the very lips you kissed belonged to a creature who was loftier, much purer and much more beautiful than the one whom your arms enfolded. You have beheld that which in life cannot be seen without ecstasy. But can not we live as though we always loved? It was this that the saints and heroes did, this and nothing more.*

MAURICE MAETERLINCK.

# ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

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## A TALK ON OCCULTISM

“**T**O make us happy: that is the Master’s aim,” said the Sage; “and He wants us to be happy for the very simple reason that He loves us. It would help, at times, if we were to discard all these big and formidable words such as Duty, Discipline, Saintliness, Adeptship, Self-sacrifice, and were to understand that it is a problem of Love. On the one side, a very loving and wise Father and Friend, who longs for the happiness of his children. We, on the other side, who are his children, should not find it difficult to credit him with greater love and wisdom than our own; so that we ought to be able to submit our wills to his, not as if it were some terrifying sacrifice, but with deep and abiding gratitude that he cares enough for us to accept the burden of our weakness.”

The Objector interrupted. “You cannot deny,” he said, “that much of what we have to do, either directly or indirectly, at some Master’s request, has the imprint and feeling of sacrifice; and, if it feels like sacrifice, it is useless, so far as I can see, to call it by another name.”

“Suppose you have a child,” replied the Sage, “whom you love devotedly. A stranger says of him that he hasn’t enough sense to come in out of the rain. You say that your child is ‘very young,’ Well, it rains. Your child plays on—wetting his feet and enjoying the wetting. You call to him to come indoors. He wants to stay where he is. But if he loves you, he will come gladly for love of you. If he loves his moment’s pleasure better than he loves you, he will grumble and feel that you are ‘hard’; and, if he knows so big a word, he will describe his obedience as ‘self-sacrifice’—in which case the stranger will label him ‘an odious little prig’! If your child were old enough, in actual understanding, he might think of earlier experiences and tell himself that you, his father, are wise and right, and might even be grateful for your reminder: because his understanding, at that age, might be on the side of his love and his will. But the point is that, even without understanding, sufficient love and trust would eliminate the word ‘sacrifice’ from our vocabulary. You can see it in the case of the child. Why not in your own case?”

“Listen”—and the Sage leaned forward eagerly: “the Master, who loves us, knows that selfishness means misery. He wants us to be happy. He wants us to surrender self as a necessary preliminary to our happiness. We cling to misery and think it terrible when he begs us to surrender it. You may say that a man is entitled to his misery if he prefers it. He is. But love and wisdom see more deeply—as a father



sees beneath and beyond his child's immediate fancy. Love does not recognize another's right to misery. Yet the Master cannot and will not use force. That would interfere with a man's free will. To some extent, help must be asked before it can be given. So the Master pleads with us—begging us to ask him for his help."

"I have known cases," said the Philosopher, "in which a man's own prayers were too feeble or too spasmodic to make sufficient help possible; of his own accord he could not generate enough desire, enough energy, to give the Master the leverage he needed. And then the prayers of a friend have done for him what the man alone, as man, was only partly desirous of doing (you remember St. Augustine and his mother St. Monica). Such prayers of love, which are most potent energy, have enabled the Master to force a man, almost against the will of his lower personal consciousness, out of one environment into a better, or, more often, have enabled the Master to reach and to melt a heart which had nearly turned to stone. . . . It is well to remember this, because the extent to which we can help one another by prayer is almost unbelievable. I have to remind myself of it constantly so as to keep myself up to the mark, both in practice and in gratitude to others."

"Testimony," remarked the Student, rather shyly, after a pause, "good old-fashioned testimony, is out of date. But I am not going to be happy in my conscience unless I say something, from actual experience, of the Master's love. The very fact of being a Master must imply a quality and intensity of love, beyond our power to imagine. Consequently, what is true of one of them must in some way be true of all—widely as the expression of their love is known to differ. But the Master of whom I speak has a tenderness of consideration, a delicacy of feeling, a passion of human interest in the details of his disciples' lives, that are like the peace which passeth understanding. The sense of such love should fill one with an ecstasy of adoration far greater than that of an artist for marvellous physical beauty. I could give many illustrations of what I mean, out of my own experience—just as most of you could give similar illustrations out of your own. But for the very reason that his method is so intensely personal, the instances of it are too personal to relate. There is no department of life with which he is not concerned; no aspirant for discipleship in whose welfare he does not take an interest more loving than any mother ever felt for her dearest child. In courtliness and charm of manner, he eclipses the most polished diplomat, for he is never artificial; is never anything less than the ultimate perfection of considerateness. Yet, because his love is boundless, he can withhold as well as give; can be stern as well as gentle; can cut as surely as he can heal. His voice, for instance, which is music itself, can tell of age-long yearning, of uttermost compassion: yet it can be terrible in command; awe-compelling in its majesty. Always the embodiment of love, there is no human need with which he does not sympathize. Kings

would do well to pray for his King's heart; lovers, for his adoration of all that is lovely; statesmen for his insight; but the child of the slums might envy and pray for his capacity to find joy in simple things and for his interest in the insignificant."

The Gael is a natural rhetorician. The slightest suggestion of "studied periods" grates on his nerves. The Student had allowed himself to declaim the faith that is in him. So the Gael:

"What you have been saying is too abstract. If there is the slightest danger of the Recorder using this talk of ours in the *Screen* (I never read it, but some people may), the first question to decide is: What is the purpose of our talk? We have been drifting from the point of the Sage's original remark,—which we have a perfect right to do: but is that what we want?"

"Surely," said the Student, rather in self-defense,—“Surely everyone would love the Master if they knew how marvellously lovable he is. To speak of his qualities cannot fail to inspire others with love for him—and that, as I see it, was the point of the Sage's remark.”

"But you are mistaken in your premise," persisted the Gael. "You know what idiots most people are. If they had heard what you have been saying about the Master, many of them would feel, 'No one like *that* could love *me!*' And they would turn away in despair. Others would not feel anything: there would be no point of contact. You have made your picture a shade more human than the ordinary portrayal of a Master,—say, for instance, of Christ—but it would impress most people as unreal. We ought to be able, between us, to hit upon something which will help the average reader to feel, as he has never felt before, that *his* Master (whether Christ or Buddha or another) loves him personally; and by that means or some other, we ought to be able to evoke in him a greater love for that Master than he has thought of before as possible. Children love because they are loved. They do not love abstractions. They do not say, 'This is my father and therefore I love him.' They say, 'Dear father, who loves me—what a dear father he is.' You must begin, then, in my opinion, by persuading people to believe that they are loved. They will admit, perhaps, that they would like to be loved by so wonderful a being as you have described—many would admit that. They would like to know him as their friend, to be able to turn to him as guide, to rely upon his ability and wish to help them always, and particularly they would like to feel themselves truly and unselfishly and passionately loved. Why not tell them the fact?—that their wish, which they regard as their own, is merely their response to what already is: that it is merely the reflection, within themselves, of what their Master for so long has given them! In other words, their desire is proof of possession. . . . Some of them will remain incredulous. They will say—'That is all right as an argument; but I know what I am; I know my faults; I know how unworthy I am of such love:

you cannot persuade me!' And they will plant their two front feet with a sense of immovable humility. It would be useless to beat them, or to break their heads: so try this—ask them whether a mother, who finds infinite delight in music, cares less for her baby because he (if it is a he) is unable all at once to read a Beethoven sonata. If the suggestion be regarded as absurd, why not see also the absurdity of supposing that a Master loves us less, because we are so wretchedly immature?"

"I am not disputing the validity of your argument," commented the Philosopher; "but I doubt whether argument ever convinced anyone of anything. You may retort that the barrier, in the case of these people, is a mental barrier—a preconceived prejudice which, by mental means, must be removed. And I know there is truth in that view. Ultimately, however, the belief or disbelief of others is in our own hands—is in the hands of all those who claim to know something about the wonder of a Master's love, and who venture to speak of it. For a tree is judged by its fruits: if we believe ourselves to be loved, how does that belief affect our conduct? Are we happier, less selfish, more considerate, more courageous, than those are who do not believe as we do? Are we wiser and better; more sane and more loving? It is the life that convinces,—not the argument."

"Dear man," replied the Gael; "of course you are right. But we were speaking for the benefit of the Recorder: we were pandering to his abominable habit of lying down on us at the last minute with a howl to Heaven for 'copy' for the *Screen*. And he cannot convince others of the truth by describing himself as a man of unblemished virtue, nor even by using so striking an example as myself: there is a limit to human credence, and the trouble is that these unfortunate people may never have the advantage of meeting the Recorder, or of seeing him as he sees himself. Just imagine the difficulties! We are compelled to argue about it; and really it is the Recorder's fault,—not mine."

They smiled. And the Gael's jokes are so obvious that I doubt if they do him any harm. Besides, the Sage did not leave time for reply. "There is one point," he remarked, "which the Gael suggested, but which he did not cover sufficiently. It is true, as he said, that some people are repelled rather than attracted by the presentation of an ideal beyond their grasp or their hope of realization. The Christian ideal has been nullified often in this way: Jesus has been portrayed as so far removed from humanity that he might as well be an inhabitant of Mars. His worshippers, by excess of zeal, and by insisting only upon his divinity, have reduced him to the position of 'a woman's god'—an outrage that makes me furious: that Man of men! Perfection there is; but the manner of the perfection has been misunderstood. Why not use that misunderstanding so as to create the point of contact between perfection and imperfection which imperfection needs for its contentment? The

real point of contact, naturally, lies in the soul; but, until the soul has gained considerable footing—until there is some true life in the heart—the barriers of the mind count for much. Show, as existing in perfection, that which imperfection would regard as weakness, and you may arouse that sort of pity which should lead to love, when the object of it is worthy. (Be it understood, though, in parenthesis, that the last vestige of pity must be eliminated before true love can live. Pity looks down. Love looks up. Finally, and in its perfection, it looks on the same level. Pity, at a lower stage of development, serves as a step in the direction of sympathy; and sympathy of the right kind is one of the elements of love.)

“Perhaps Christ had that in view when speaking to a nun of the Visitation, in the seventeenth century (I am supposing that the published records are correct). You may remember that over and over again he told her how bitterly he suffers because of the ingratitude of men; that, if only they would love him, he would feel rewarded for all he had ever endured for love of them; that he finds such joy in being loved that if, in answer to his entreaties, he arouses the least desire for his love, he is drawn irresistibly to the heart from which that response has come: ‘Will none have pity on me, none sympathise and share my sorrow in the pitiful conditions in which sinners have brought me, especially at this moment?’ It is the plea of almost intolerable loneliness—a plea for love from the heart of a father who has lived and suffered for his children, and to whom his children will not give so much as recognition in return. He lived and died and lives again for sinners, not for saints; and surely the worst of sinners might at least be grateful for such efforts,—might at least feel pity for such suffering! And if the sinner sees in the need for love some evidence of weakness, why care, so long as imperfect understanding can be used to bring that soul to love at last?”

The Gael groaned. “It is frightful,” he said. “Properly understood, it is more tragic than any tragedy ever written. No wonder that the saints wept over it continuously,—and they, for centuries, thought of it as only of the past. . . . But let us remember that it is within the power of each of us to comfort him—that Christ of whom you have been speaking. For he told that little nun—as he has told men and women of all creeds, in every century—just how it may be done: ‘Daughter, wilt thou give me thy heart, that my suffering heart may therein find repose?’ Simply to love him; simply to trust him with our happiness: that is all! And to think that we so cling to our own opinion of where happiness lies, that, time after time, we take back our offering, take back our hearts,—and leave him comfortless! Well I know what will be said: ‘there are plenty of others.’ But, when one child goes astray, is a father satisfied because others remain? Is it not true, rather, that, in the whole world’s wilderness, there is no other child but that one?”

“I am not a Christian”—it was the Old Member who spoke—“and

I do not see why anyone should feel called upon to serve one Master rather than another. Do what is right, and you will serve them all."

The Gael did not hesitate. "I am not a Christian either," he said. "I am a Catholic—at least, when I am talking with Protestants. And I have to be a Catholic, for otherwise there would be no excuse for my detestation of the Vatican and of Rome. I should be compelled to make it a family feud, even if it were not mine by birth-right. . . . Besides, you people are so grossly ignorant of what Catholicism represents, and of what it contains potentially, that, for your sakes, I would persevere. Also, I like it. . . . And as to serving one Master rather than another,—how can you, until you know them apart, or, in any case, until you find within you a feeling for one of them which you do not have for others. All comparisons are odious (I used as a boy to write that remark in my copy-book); but to compare the merits of different Masters is an impertinence. It is sillier than it would be for two small children to discuss the respective merits, say of Fra Angelico and of Fra Bartolomeo. I am not advocating especial devotion to one; and I never do, unless I find the possibility of such devotion already existing, and that that line of approach is the line of least resistance. If I were in Burma, I should unquestionably, except in rare cases, advocate a special devotion to Buddha. But your attitude" (turning to the Old Member) "impresses me as illogical. Theoretically, you insist that all Masters are working for the same end—for the enlightenment of humanity. Practically, you deny this by standing aside from the movement known as Christian, in spite of the fact that it is—at least nominally—the religion of the country in which you were born. And if I, for instance, show any special feeling for Christ, it arouses your prejudice to the point of nervous irritation. If an orthodox Churchman were to show similar prejudice against Buddha or Krishna, you would think of him as 'narrow' and would pity him. I grant you that the Protestant churches are a public scandal" (he said this, more grieved than angry,—looking into space just over the level of our heads)—"but you cannot reform people by telling them they are irreclaimable: you must hold out some ray of hope; you must look for and find what is best; you must encourage good tendencies constantly. And if that is true of individuals, why not of churches and of religions? I have seen goats sacrificed to Shiva in Hindu temples: but I do not on that account condemn the religious life of India, or refuse to recognize its saints as saints, or study the *Bhagavad Gita* merely to find fault with its doctrine. Let us be theosophical in more than name. . . . Do I not forgive these Protestants their schism" (waving a friendly hand towards the rest of us), "and say a good word, sometimes, for their very excellent intentions? Let us be reasonable about these things, and admit the entire propriety of having special friends, even among the Masters. They are not 'desiccated pansies,' as one of them once wrote; and I shrewdly suspect that they, too,

have human preferences. Would it lower your ideal of them if one were to admit that he found the temperament, perhaps of the people of France, a trifle more congenial than that of Laplanders or of Zulus? . . . So, with your permission, while I keep my mind unprejudiced, I shall give my heart wide freedom to follow the call of one who for ages has laboured with love to draw it into his own. . . . But" (the Gael has a maddening habit of proving the other man wrong and of leaving him no chance to deny it)—"but I have again been guilty of diverting the conversation from the Sage's most sage beginning. Perhaps he will be good enough to advise us how to act in this dilemma: granting that we believe in the love of some Master for us; granting that we should like to love him in return but feel that we do not as yet love him adequately—what can we do about it?"

"Your question," laughed the Sage, "really covers the whole field of spiritual progress, and I have my limits—very decidedly as to knowledge, and with almost equal definiteness when it comes to time and energy. But there are two or three points which I can suggest. First, to explain my own statement,—a Master is one who has made our highest ideal a living reality: he has done that and has passed far beyond it. Consequently, to love him, to obey him, is to love and to obey our own ideal. And, just as we need a teacher for the proper study of any art or science, whose experience will spare us unnecessary failure and waste, and whose attainments, in the direction of our study, should serve us as standard and ideal and stimulus,—so, also, as soon as we approach the problem of our spiritual development seriously (the development of our own character and powers, if you prefer so to phrase it), we need one who has already achieved to serve as ideal and guide and inspiration. To love such attainments is, obviously, the first step: because to love is to desire. And it is easier to love them in concrete form than as abstract qualities. Therefore we should learn to love some Master.

"At this point there is a contradiction, I think, in the wording of the Gael's question; because, once we not only believe in but truly appreciate that Master's love for us, we cannot fail to love him, with heart and mind and will, in return. So, in order to take the first step which I have suggested, we should meditate upon (that is to say, think over and brood upon) the way in which he loves us, always making our application personal,—specific, not general; 'me' rather than 'us.'

"In this connection we should use our imagination freely: for imagination, properly controlled, is a divine power. 'Will and imagination are the means employed in the production of every magical phenomenon,' as Madame Blavatsky expressed it: and we are speaking now of the most magical of all phenomena—the conversion of lead into gold, of corruption into incorruption, of the mortal into the immortal, of the animal into the divine. . . . So, then, we should use our imagination

boldly in order to gain appreciation of what a Master's love for us means, and of how we should like to love him in return—using also the world's great scriptures as foundation, as these are full of instances and illustrations, left us for the very purpose of helping us in this work.

“Meditation alone, however, will not do it, any more than the cold study of books. By means of meditation we shall gain light and temporary warmth; but the light and the warmth will disappear unless we use them: unless we flap our wings as the bird does, and gain strength from exercise. What I mean is,—we must live by the light we have found, and turn meditation into action. There will be resistance (and if it were not for the resistance of the air, the bird could not fly at all). We shall have to contend against the resistance of all that is selfish in us; and we shall be tempted to make the mistake of attributing to outer circumstances the cause of the difficulties which beset us. May heaven or some kindly Djin protect us from that mistake! The only enemy that concerns us is the enemy within our gates; the enemy we see as a friend, and to whom we give power by thinking of him as “myself.”

“We must do the deed, then, if we would have the power. And this means more than obeying the ten commandments and a few more rules of ethics. Such obedience will make us good; but it will not make us occultists; it will not make us disciples, or give us knowledge of spiritual laws and forces. If we love the Master we must wish to serve him; and if we wish to serve him we must desire his power to serve. So we must use our imagination again. Failing still to love him utterly—to the point of thinking no longer of ourselves at any time, but only of him,—we must say to ourselves, ‘I will act as if I did so love Him. I will learn to love by behaving as if I did. In my soul, in my inmost heart, I do already love him better than I love corruption, better than I love my lower self. I will externalize the real. I will make that Immortal live in all the details of my life. I will take love as the truth of my life. I will ask myself, fifty times a day, what I would do in that minute *if* I loved the Master with a consuming passion of love: and I will obey my vision whether I love him or not!’

“Do you catch that? It is tremendous. It is the most creative thing that a human being can do. For what is the result? You act *as if*; and, before you know it, the ‘as if’ *is*. And that is divine magic; that is to use will and imagination on behalf of all the longing and the effort of the universe; that is to throw yourself irrevocably into the burning heart of the Master. No longer will he need to cry to you through the darkness of your mind, ‘child, give me thy heart;’ for you—you and no other—will cry to him day and night, with an anguish of desire, ‘Master, take my heart and give me thine: give me thy heart of flame: in the name of pity, give me thy heart—Thy heart with which to love Thee and all that is Thine; Thy heart that I may live.’”

The Sage had spoken very quietly, but it was easy to see that he

felt deeply the reality of what he said; and the Objector did not like it. The feeling was foreign to his habit. He could not understand it, and he said so. "It is beyond me—the whole business! If I didn't know you better, it would remind me of the hysteria of some of the mediæval monks. No—don't misunderstand me: I am not accusing you of the extravagance with which, nevertheless, you seem to sympathize: I am not making that mistake. What I do not understand is how so normal a person as you are can admire that kind of emotionalism."

The Gael exploded (he loves the Sage). "Most innocent Objector," he said; "truly you wrong him. If the Sage were the cold-blooded fish you take him to be, he would not be my friend: and that settles it. Incidentally, what in the name of all that is wonderful do you suppose the heart of man is made of? Or the heart of a woman? Jelly? Or some amorphous pre-amœbic plasma? Why such passion of love? Why,—because some people are alive! And because—yes, historically, mathematically, scientifically—human beings have been known to exist who loved someone or something better than they loved themselves!"

He was interrupted by the Sage, who pushed him back into his chair (for the Gael had risen for the occasion), and who told him to keep quiet.

"The Objector is all right," he said. "He represents a different point of view, and one that is entitled to at least as much respect as my own. We are Theosophists, or, more correctly, are trying to be; and, for us, fanaticism should be impossible. But there is this to be said, and he will be the first to admit the truth of it: that you have as between men and women many instances on record of a devotion so complete that the mind and feeling of one were lost in love and consideration of the other. We must suppose that the great lovers of history were conscious at all times—no matter how busy they were with other things—of the object of their devotion. Everything they did must have been begun, continued and ended because of their love, and with the fire of it smouldering always as the source of their inspiration. The driest duty, in that case, by its perfect performance, would have served them as means to express and to prove and to glorify the love that was in them. They would, as it were, have done all things in the name of the one whom they adored. And we know that to be the fact. We know it from biography and history and poetry. Nor need we suppose that a Master necessarily must be loved less completely: the lives of the saints, both men and women, prove that. How can we escape the conclusion—understand it or not—that the passionate love I spoke of is not unattainable? . . . Is it desirable? That must depend upon what our purpose in life is. Some men will say frankly that they want their own kind of happiness and that they want to find it in their own way. But, from beginning to end, my argument has been based upon the proposition that selfishness spells misery, and that the lower personal self, though it may find enjoyment



in transitory sensation, is constitutionally incapable of happiness. If we were to judge by the experience of the personal self only, we should be compelled to identify this world with Hell (you remember the phrase of St. Benedict: 'the intolerable burden of our own will'). My own belief is that the world is meant to be our Heaven, and that we can find Heaven here and now, in the midst of life as it is, if only we will consent to pass through the Purgatory of self-surrender."

"Do you suggest, then," asked the Objector, "that we should cultivate love for a Master in order to find Heaven: that we should love in order to be happy?"

"Far from it," answered the Sage. "To love for the hope of reward is a contradiction in terms. To love is its own reward. I have heard a small child say, 'Daddy, I will love you ever so much if you will give me five cents.' But you and I know that a small child is not expected to understand love. Any conception of it such as that, belongs to infancy—to the infancy of religions as much as to the infancy of human beings.

"But I have not touched what is really at the root of your objection, which I imagine to be practical rather than theoretical—theoretically there can be no objection. Granting even the faithful and regular practice of all that I have suggested, you fail to see *how* such love can develop. Well,—the full tide of it cannot. You are right in that. But let me tell you a discovery that awaits you, if ever you try that method. You will have had some idea of the Master as a task-master,—very kind and very self-sacrificing, doubtless; but still, he will have seemed to you to have been trying to save you from sin and from selfishness, at the cost of much pain to yourself, and chiefly in order that you may become one of the workers for humanity—one of those strange beings like himself, whom you have imagined to be removed from all human needs and feelings. You will have felt that your sense of duty has pushed you as far as you have gone (as probably it has), and that, though you look for no reward, your consent to the process has shown considerable generosity on your part. Then you try the method which I have ventured to recommend. You try to imagine what a Master, in his character and nature, actually is like. You begin, perhaps, by asking yourself what light you can obtain on the subject by considering what you are like in your best moments—not as an abstraction, but as a man. If I am not mistaken, you will find that you get the keenest pleasure, in those moments, from any successful effort to make those whom you love happy. You want them to be happy. You cannot imagine yourself as happy except on condition that they are happy too. And you are not selfish about it. If you love poetry and they do not, you do not try to make them happy by reading yards of poems to them—not even the poems of other people. You put yourself in their place and ask yourself what will give pleasure and, if possible, lasting pleasure to them.

"Then it will dawn upon you that the nature of a Master cannot differ radically from the best that you find in yourself. His insight will be deeper—his view of consequences and reactions far more comprehensive; but his desire must surely be similar to your own.

"Apply this to your past attitude and relations. Have you not done the Master a grave injustice? Have you not failed lamentably in gratitude? You have thought of yourself, not as 'badly used' (I exonerate you from that), but as enduring bravely the blows of outrageous fortune; as suffering stoically for your past sins; as trying to accept, without complaint, the sort of discipline and discomfort which, you suppose, is the penalty to be paid for occult training. Suddenly you realize that, throughout it all, the Master has taken upon himself the burden of your sins; that he has held back from you, by main force, and at infinite personal cost, the blows of fate which otherwise would have crushed you; that he has been toiling incessantly, tirelessly, with no thought of himself, or of his own happiness, inspired by no other desire than that you, whom he so dearly loves, may attain quickly to the happiness which he sees within his reach to give you.

"Surely the least you can feel is a flood of gratitude! And you have made a discovery. You are beginning to understand him—to understand his love for you. You will begin truly to love him in return; and you will begin to feel, as a friend of mine said of a Master not many days ago—'It does hurt him so to see us suffer.'

"Will our path be rose-strewn now for ever? It will not. For, even if we cease to suffer for ourselves, we could not cease to suffer for the suffering of others. But life will be made wonderful by love, and love of him will give us the right to relieve him of some of the burden of this world's pain. That will be our first reward: to carry our cross so cheerfully, day by day, that we relieve him of its weight, —carrying it as that part of his burden which he asks us, for his sake, to carry; and so to gain strength to share with him, purely for love of him, and to our infinite delight, not only his work for others, but that dominion over the world which endless love of the world at last will give him."

**T.**

# A PRIMER OF THEOSOPHY

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## I.

IN studying any system of religious thought worthy of the name, we are at once confronted by the problems involved in the relations of the Creator to the created, of Man to God. But we soon find that it is man who is really the creator, and that it is in his image that his God is made. The god of the savage is an intensification of the traits that the savage most fears, and admires and naturally worships, and as civilization carries its broadening light into darkest Africa, for instance, the deified savage takes on the semblance of something higher than himself in the scale of being, or if not higher, at least more powerful. In Browning's wonderful poem of "Caliban upon Setebos," the poet seems to have penetrated to the very core of primitive man's nature, and to have painted a perfect picture of what he calls "natural theology in the island," as embodied in the savage Caliban's description of his creator, "placable if His mind and ways were guessed, but rougher than His handiwork, be sure. . . . "Also it pleaseth Setebos to work, use all His hands and exercise much craft, by no means for the love of what is worked. . . . Believeth with the life the pain shall stop. His dam held different; that after Death, He both plagued enemies and feasted friends. Meanwhile, the best way to escape His ire, is not to seem too happy."

And yet even through this dim and bewildered brain, creeps a faint notion of "something higher than Setebos, that made *Him*, . . . something quiet o'er His head, out of his reach, that feels nor joy nor grief. . . . This quiet, all it hath a mind to, doth."

So comes into imperfect understanding, a suggestion of something greater than Setebos. If Setebos made man, then who made Setebos? And so, step by step with the development of man, grows the development of the idea of a Divine Being, embodied in the majestic figures of the sculptured gods of India, of Egypt, of Greece and Rome, as the objects of men's adoration. Later on, the jealous God of Israel sweeps away the worship of beauty, and then with the Christian era, begins the worship of a God of Love.

But all these phases of the Divinity mostly concerned the people, for among the priests and philosophers of every age is handed down a "Wisdom-Religion," the portion of "those who know," the keys that open the doors of all knowledge, behind which lie hidden the answers to all the enigmas of the universe.

And the first and most important of these answers is the teaching that God is Spirit, not *a* Spirit, but SPIRIT, One and Indivisible, that from Him all things proceed, and to Him all things must return. But while

we look upon Him as the source of all Being, we have a dim feeling that beyond the heavens that declare the glory of God, there is what Browning's Caliban would call "the Quiet," an all-embracing something, a spiritual atmosphere, so to speak, but utterly beyond the power of primeval man to comprehend. It is impossible to formulate the basic ideas of theosophy without a metaphysical background, it only remains to make that background as simple and easily comprehensible as possible.

If we attempt to pierce through the veils that represent to us the limits of thought, we find ourselves confronted with that vague something which our philosophers, in default of a better word, have called the ABSOLUTE, or the UNKNOWABLE. "The Absolute is not to be defined," (says the *Secret Doctrine*, Abridg. p. 322) "and no mortal nor immortal has ever seen or comprehended it during the periods of existence. The mutable cannot know the immutable, nor can that which lives perceive *Absolute Life*."

The first and fundamental axiom of theosophy then, is this metaphysical conception of the Absolute, "the Causeless Cause," from which is derived "the *First Cause*." Because when we speak of the *first*, we think of something that is dependent on time, and space, and rank, and none of these can have any relation to the Absolute, which is entirely outside of our conditioned existence. As an old Kabalistic poem says: "Thou art One, the root of all numbers, but not as an element of numeration, for Unity admits not of multiplication, change or form. Thou art One, and no thought of ours can fix for Thee a limit, or define Thee"

From "the Causeless Cause," the "Unknowable," is derived "the *First Cause*," the Creative God of all theologies. This is the Logos, in the theosophic philosophy the synthesis of the Seven Creative Powers, the "Word" of St. John's Gospel. "All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was Life; and the Life was the Light of men."

And at the beginning of a new cycle of existence, when this Light springs forth from the bosom of Darkness, "the pairs of opposites" come into existence, and the work of creation, or rather evolution, begins. Spirit-Matter divides into Spirit *and* Matter, two aspects of the One Unity, and from them radiates the Divine Energy, *force* as science calls it, which corresponds to "the Son" of the Christian Trinity. Spirit, Matter, Force, these are the three in one that form the basis of every theological trinity.

That which theosophy calls *Universal Substance*, is underlying matter in all its different grades, and that which it calls *Universal Thought* is the root of all individual consciousness. But apart from Universal Substance, Universal Thought could not manifest as *individual* consciousness, because it is only through a vehicle of matter that consciousness

wells up as "I am I." And apart from Universal Thought, Universal Substance would remain an empty abstraction..

But just as the opposite poles of Spirit and Matter are but twin aspects of the one Unity, so there exists in the manifested Universe the guiding power of all manifestation, the Thought Divine, transmitted and made manifest through the intelligent Forces which are the architects of the visible world. Thus from Spirit, or Universal Thought, comes our consciousness; from Universal Substance the several vehicles in which that consciousness is individualized and attains to *self*-consciousness; while the Divine Energy, in its various manifestations, is the mysterious link between Mind and Matter, the animating principle electrifying every atom into life. Universal Thought includes Law, and the Forces of Nature are comprised in Universal Energy, while *Life* and *Motion* are convertible terms.

We must begin, then, by recognizing the existence of an Immutable Principle, which is entirely beyond the range of human thought, and therefore is best spoken of (if spoken of at all) as the *Unknowable*. This is symbolised by theosophy under two aspects, absolute, abstract Space, and absolute, abstract Motion. This abstract Motion is the *One Life*, eternal, invisible, but omnipresent, without beginning or end, yet periodical in its regular manifestations. It is often spoken of as "the Great Breath." Upon the boundless plane of the universe the worlds appear and disappear, in a regular tidal ebb of flux and reflux, confirming the absolute universality of that law of periodicity, or cyclic law, which obtains in every department of nature.

Moreover, we are taught, *first*, the fundamental identity of all souls with the universal Over-soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and *second*, the obligatory pilgrimage of every soul through "the Cycle of Necessity" or reincarnation, in accordance with the all-powerful law of cause and effect, and that of periodicity spoken of above. The Monad or unit of consciousness making this journey, is called "the Pilgrim," and is the only immortal and eternal principle in us, being an indivisible part of the Universal Spirit, a Ray of the Divine. This obligatory pilgrimage springs from the law that no purely Divine Soul can have an independent, conscious existence until it has passed through all the lower grades of being, belonging to this cycle of life, and thus has acquired the individuality which makes it immortal, first through natural impulse, and then by self-devised efforts, modified by the experiences it has gathered on the way. Thus it ascends through all grades of intelligence, from that of the mineral to that of the holiest archangel, and works out its own salvation by its own efforts, for the pivotal doctrine of the esoteric philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in any man except those won by his own Ego through personal effort during a long series of re-incarnations.

This teaching of "the Cycle of Necessity" is very important because

so many have asked, why should "the Pilgrim" leave its celestial abode and go through so much misery and such long and painful struggles, only to get back to where it started? But it gets back with the conscious, immortal entity it has made of itself, and this is the salvation it has won. It has built up its individuality and is now an immortal Soul, not merely part of a wave of life, one indistinguishable drop of the ocean of being.

"Just as at the close of the sidereal year the heavenly bodies return to the same relative positions which they occupied at its beginning, so at the close of the Cycle of initiation, the inner man has regained the pristine state of divine purity and Knowledge from which he set out on his cycle of terrestrial incarnations."—(Abridgment 184.)

"It is the spiritual evolution of the *inner* immortal man, that forms the fundamental tenet of theosophy, the re-incarnating *Ego* that existed before its physical body, and survives all bodies that it may be clothed in." (Abridgment 285. 476.)

## II

### EVOLUTION

The law of Evolution as defined by the scientist, means first of all, "a law of continuity or causal relation throughout nature," or in other words, "a continuous progressive change according to certain laws and by means of resident forces." (Le Conte on *Evolution*.) These "resident" forces of Le Conte, are the same thing that theosophy calls "the essential faculty possessed by all the cosmic and terrestrial elements of *generating within themselves* a regular and harmonious series of results, a concatenation of causes and effects, which proves that they are animated by intelligence coming either from within or from without." In fact, to become complete and comprehensible, a theory of the universe has to start with a primordial Substance diffused throughout boundless Space, of an *intellectual and divine nature*. That substance must be the Spirit and Soul, the synthesis and highest principle, of the manifested Kosmos. And to serve as a physical basis to this, there must be its vehicle—*primordial physical matter*, so to speak, though its nature must forever escape our limited normal senses, and we can know it only through its phenomena, the results, that is, of the action of the laws or forces of Nature, the life of the physical world. These forces may be roughly summed up as Light, Heat, Sound, Cohesion or Attraction, (which of course includes Repulsion) and Magnetism, or Nerve-Force, together synthesized as *Motion*. These are not the "blind forces" of science, but the manifestations of intelligent Powers, the Builders of the Universe. And while science recognizes innumerable degrees in the scale of physical being, theosophy maintains that there are at least as many in the scale of spiritual existence.

But while the degrees are infinite, none the less does this philosophy

assert as its fundamental law, "*the radical unity* of all the component parts in Nature, from star to mineral atom, from the highest spiritual being to the smallest infusoria, throughout *all* the worlds, whether spiritual, intellectual or physical."

"The informing Intelligences, then, which animate the various centres of being, \* \* \* are called by the truly ignorant, gods; by the learned-profane *the One* God; and the wise, the Initiates, honor in them only the periodic manifestations of *That* which neither our Creators nor their creators can ever discuss or know anything about."

The dawn of manifestation begins with *attraction*, the first flutter of awakening life being towards the centre, and after attraction comes expansion, or the action of the repulsive force, the two forming the rhythm of the Universe, or "the Great Breath." A fundamental law of theosophy as well of science, is that known as "the conservation of energy," which maintains that there is no such thing as rest or cessation of motion during these periods of activity, that which seems rest being only the change of one form into another. And another fundamental law is, that there is no such thing in Nature as *inorganic* (or lifeless) substances or bodies. Minerals and even chemical atoms are simply organic units in profound lethargy, which has an end, and their coma becomes activity, when the wave of the new cycle of Life sweeps over them.

There is no room here for the details of the splendid system of evolution as described in the *Secret Doctrine*, but it should be explained that in the earlier theosophical books, such as *Esoteric Buddhism*, an error has crept in as to the teaching of the "planetary chains," Mr. Sinnett having therein described the Earth as one of a chain of seven planets, including the chief planets of our solar system. But the *Secret Doctrine* teaches that the Earth has its own seven states of matter and consciousness like all the other planets. These seven "globes" as they are sometimes called, are of varying materiality, descending through three grades of increasing density to the fourth or most material, (represented by our Earth in its present state) and ascending through three grades leading back to the spiritual. And as our physical eyes are only capable of perceiving objects on the physical plane, it follows that any stars or planets visible to us are on the same plane as ourselves, and neither higher nor lower in the scale of being. And these seven "globes" or conditions of matter, are capable of simultaneous existence, as the more ethereal interpenetrate the more substantial. Theosophy teaches that the matter of the heavenly spheres has its seven forms. First, we have *primordial* homogeneous matter, the One Element; then the second stage, called by science Cosmic dust, and Fire-mist; the third stage is the nebulous; the fourth is the atomic, when Divine Force thrills through this primordial matter, and the eternal vibration in the unmanifested world becomes vortical motion in the manifested. With motion, the differentiation of the elements begins,

and we have the fiery, or *germinal* stage, so-called, because these "elements" are but the germs of those we know. The sixth stage, the vaporous, the four-fold, shows us the beginning of our elements, the future earth, and the seventh stage is the cold and solidifying globe, dependent upon the sun for life and light.

Very briefly and roughly sketched, this is the *field* of man's evolution. The *reason* of it is to be found in that often-quoted saying of Patanjali: "The universe exists for the sake of the soul's experience and emancipation," in other words, to give the soul its opportunity for development and salvation. And as man, to accept the popular division, is composed of body, soul, and spirit, the *process* of this evolution must necessarily be three-fold—physical, mental and spiritual.

The Ray of the Universal Mind, then, (the Monad, or the Pilgrim) passes through seven planes, three below and three above what the scientists call our threshold of consciousness. First it passes through three elemental planes or nascent centres of force, which answer to the nebulous stages in the earth's history; then through the mineral kingdom, the turning point in the evolution of consciousness, where it becomes wholly latent, then through the three stages of "organic" life, the vegetable, the animal, the human. In the higher animals the Monad almost becomes an individual entity, while in the vegetable kingdom there is hardly any tendency towards individual consciousness, which can only be seen in such attempts as the persistent struggle of a vine towards a support upon one side of it, or the unwearied seeking of a poplar's roots after the water of a distant well.

The Sun gives Life to man, and therefore in the Eastern symbolism is rightly called his father, while the Moon represents his mother, for it is to the "lunar ancestors" that he owes that astral form around which is built up the physical body, given by his nurse the Earth. This astral prototype is formed of molecular matter far too ethereal to be perceptible to our normal senses, and interpenetrates the matter of our physical bodies, as a subtle odor interpenetrates the air.

And as the seed that perishes in the ground nourishes, by its decay, a new plant, so the Moon, having completed her cycle of existence, transferred her energies in dying (according to the law of the conservation of force) to a new cosmic centre which became our Earth. The process of evolution upon the Earth, as well as all other worlds, is by seven successive waves of life-giving energy, which it has been agreed to call *Rounds*, and during each of these stages of evolution, seven *Races*, with many subdivisions, inhabit the earth, each Race being specially adapted to the conditions which surround it.

But the human Monad which has begun its pilgrimage upon this globe does not merely touch upon each of these conditions and then pass on, but has to go through many incarnations in each Race, the development of the individual soul being a long process. Between each individ-



ual incarnation, and between each Round, or wave of evolution, the human Ego passes through a period of subjective, or unconscious life, thus completing the analogy with the shorter cycles of day and night, life and death, etc. Four times that great wave of evolutionary force has swept over the Earth, and four great Races have passed away. The present humanity is the fifth division of the Fifth Race, so that we have passed the lowest point of materiality, and are beginning to ascend towards spirit. But the eighteen millions of years which embrace the duration of perfected *physical* man, have to be enormously increased if the whole process of spiritual, astral, and physical development, is taken into account. All analogy goes to show the truth of the theosophical teachings that man was not "created" the complete being he is now, however imperfect he still remains. Worlds and men were in turns formed and destroyed, *under the law of evolution and from pre-existing material*, until both the planets and their men became what they are in the present cycle.

In strict analogy, the cycle of seven Rounds that gradually leads man's physical body through every kingdom of nature up to its perfect form, is repeated on a much smaller scale in the first seven months' life of the human embryo.. As the embryo although fully formed at that period, yet needs two months more in which to acquire a perfect development, so "man, having perfected his evolution during seven Rounds, remains two periods more in the womb of mother Nature before he is born (or reborn) a Dhyani, (or Divine Intelligence) still more perfect than he was before he launched forth as a Monad on the newly built chain of worlds" (*Secret Doctrine*, II. 259).

K. HILLARD.

(*To be continued.*)

# THE PILGRIM

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THE long, weary journey was nearly over, how long, how weary, the Pilgrim himself scarcely realized, for he felt that only one more steep ascent lay before him, but one sharp corner must be turned and he would stand at the door of the Temple.

Months, nay, it was years ago, he had received the message, bidding him leave his old home, the land of his birth, and journey with all speed to the distant Temple, where, if he wished it, he would be admitted as a Neophyte.

What joy and gratitude had been his when he received this order; with what glad haste he had gathered together his most precious possessions, made due preparation, and staff in hand, had turned his face towards that strange land which until then had been only a name to him!

At first all had gone well. The road wound through beautiful, fertile plains and exquisite forests, filled with fragrant flowers and the song of birds. Moreover, he had not been alone, quite a large company of pilgrims, all bound for the Temple, had journeyed by the same road and in conversation with them the hours had passed swiftly. All too soon, however, the foot of the mountains had been reached, the first difficulty had arisen, for there the single road became two, one skirting the foothills and then leading across open plains to a great city that could be dimly seen on the horizon, the other winding up into the mountains. A heated discussion had ensued amongst the pilgrims, some declaring it absurd to follow a path leading into mountainous regions where no Temple could be built, when they were sure to find it in the city; the others affirming with equal certainty that the Temple lay far from plains and cities and could only be reached by crossing the hills.

Being unable to agree the little band had separated, more than half had turned their steps city-ward, the others taking the mountain road. Then the difficulties of the way had become apparent—the Pilgrim shivered as he remembered them. The weary path winding ever upwards, growing steeper day by day, the burning noonday sun, the freezing nights, the dense mists, enveloping them for many days.

He had pressed on and on, assisting his weaker comrades, nursing them when sick, searching far and wide for food for them, guiding them carefully over the worst places and binding up their torn and bleeding feet. The little company had dwindled sadly, for some had turned back as soon as the path became really rough, while of those who had persevered many had fallen and died by the roadside. Now only two or three remained with him, worn, spent and aged, but how dear to him were these comrades, these loyal friends with whom he had endured so much.

One thing only troubled him. The treasures he had carried away

from his distant home, which he intended as gifts to the Temple, had proved too heavy to carry far. Sadly and reluctantly he had been obliged to drop them, one by one, by the roadside. All that remained were a few jewels hidden in his breast; his hand sought them continually, but he grieved to think his offering must be so small. With a mighty effort the Pilgrim crawled up the last ascent, turned the last angle and, with beating heart, paused for an instant thinking his goal must now be in sight. He raised his eyes and a cry of disappointment escaped him, for here was no Temple—only a wind-swept, narrow plateau, a sheer wall of rock at the end making all further progress impossible and, at the foot of the rock, a tiny iron door, heavily barred, in front of which stood a grim, motionless figure gazing across at him with stern, cold eyes. Faltering, the Pilgrim advanced and asked of him the way to the Temple.

"It lies there," was the answer, "through that door of which I am the guardian, there is no other way." "May I enter," begged the Pilgrim. "I received an order to come to the Temple and have travelled with all possible speed, but the way is long and weary, and I have been much delayed." "You may enter," replied the guardian, "but only if you leave your burden at the door," and he pointed to the hand hidden in the Pilgrim's breast. The latter drew forth the jewels and held them out: "I have no burden," he said, "all my treasures had to be abandoned long ago. These poor jewels I kept only for an offering to the Temple. I cannot enter without a gift in my hand."

But the grim figure only pointed sternly at the jewels and with a heavy heart the Pilgrim laid them at his feet. At that the guardian drew the heavy bolts, the door swung ajar and the Pilgrim advanced to enter, when suddenly remembering his companions he stood aside and bade them pass in first, but the guardian swiftly barred the way. "Nay!" he exclaimed, "that cannot be, through that door none enters but alone. Your comrades must remain outside!" A cry of indignation escaped the Pilgrim. How could he abandon those loved and faithful friends?

A fierce battle raged in the Pilgrim's heart. His whole being revolted at the idea of deserting his friends. Surely it would be better to remain outside, to perish with them, if need be; yet a voice within him told him that he had been ordered to go to the Temple and that the order must be obeyed, no matter at what cost. In agonized tones he told them he must go, begging them to forgive him, saying that once in the Temple he would surely find some kindly priest or attendant who would guide him back to the door and let them all in. But they clung piteously to him, till at last he had to tear himself from their grasp and, brushing past the silent, motionless guardian, entered the door, which immediately clanged heavily behind him.

Half fainting, he sank to the ground and, on recovering consciousness, found himself in thick darkness, no ray of light anywhere, and groping around discovered that he was in a narrow passage in which

it was impossible to stand upright. On hands and knees he dragged himself along, weary, breathless, aching in every limb, his heart full of misery and longing at the thought of those he had left outside. Each minute seemed an eternity, his strength was failing fast; he felt the end near at hand, when, looking up in agony, he perceived a dim ray of light and with a supreme effort dragged himself towards it. Brighter and brighter grew the glimmer till it broke on his dazed eyes in a great flood of glory and scarce conscious of how he had come there, he found himself in a vast hall, full of radiance and warmth. Tall, shining figures advanced to meet him, greeting him with kindly eyes, welcoming him as the new Neophyte. As in a dream he found them gently stripping off his foul rags, clothing him in spotless white garments, pouring rare perfumes over him, crowning him with fragrant flowers and finally leading him across the hall and through a great, glittering portal.

Here a far greater radiance smote him, a great awe filled him, for he stood at last in the Temple, whose glory was beyond all he had ever dreamed of.

Not daring to raise his eyes, he sank on his knees behind a pillar and strove to pray, but could not, for his thoughts turned ever to his loved companions and the longing for them grew more acute every moment. He could feel nothing but that and a hot revolt at the thought of them perishing miserably in the cruel mountains. Suddenly a rush of melody fell on his ear, low at first, then growing stronger, till the whole structure of the Temple vibrated to it and then his aching heart overflowed and bowing his head on his hands, at last he prayed. His whole soul rose in prayer to the One Spirit, praying for those he had left, beseeching that they might enter and be blessed as he was.

Nor for them alone did he pray, but for all the others, those that had fallen by the roadside and those who, fainthearted, had turned back. All, all, must come in. His heart dilated and filled with immortal love. As from a height he seemed to gaze down on the suffering, toiling world of men; and he knew he could have no happiness, no peace, while one of them remained outside. His soul soared upwards in supplication for all his brethren, losing all thought of self in love for them, begging only that he might be permitted to return to suffer with and work for them, till all had found the way.

Slowly the great harmonies died away. Silence fell on the air, but still the Neophyte remained bowed in prayer, when a gentle hand was laid upon his shoulder. Looking up with awe, he beheld the guardian, no longer stern and forbidding, but smiling, tender, and majestic.

"Lo, friend, there is your answer," the Radiant Figure spoke. At His voice and gesture the Neophyte turned and there beheld them—all his companions of the mountain, all, even to the least and poorest of them, with love filled eyes and welcoming hands, outstretched to him.

E. M. S.

# WHY I JOINED THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

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TOO bad that so many interesting things occur before we have any interest in them! There is the complicated process of learning to talk—each one of us was obliged to devote much persevering effort and time to that task. Why did we take the trouble, when we knew nothing about the avenues to human intercourse that would be opened up by this painful mastery of words as symbols? At that time we certainly had nothing to say that went beyond the limits of universal sign-language.

If only a lusty two-year-old could give us his version of the impulses that pushed him on to speech! To be sure his story would have only an occasional connection with the actual facts of the case as known to his elders; but what interest there would be in tracing the means by which the smaller and personal desires of the child were molded and controlled by the larger and more universal purposes acting on and through him. Some day let us hope that his story will be written!

Meantime here is an equally partial and inaccurate account of another adventure, undertaken like the child's with little conception of the reaches that were to be opened by it. As I attempt to tell why I joined the Theosophical Society, it is with the saving sense that none of us will take these "reasons" as the real ones. They have to do with the surface currents that were useful as mind-hushers, while the real things, of which the mind was not conscious, took place elsewhere.

It was several years ago that I *first* joined The Theosophical Society, but I have been joining ever since, and as yet I am only a partial member. Every few months I find a new phase of the Society to join, or a new part of me that never joined. Indeed, I have split myself into so many different members that it would be disastrous if the Treasurer were to assess me annually for each one.

Perhaps my progressive attempts to unite myself with the Society were made necessary by the debonair manner in which I made my application for membership; that was made with little notion of the Society's high calling and wonderful mission. I had some superficial information about the tenets and aims of the Theosophist, as popularly understood; had read with heedless eye and heart the best known of the Theosophical manuals; and had found in them little to provoke more than a passing interest. The whole scheme seemed to me to be based on an analysis of man's needs and possibilities that was clear but profitless. So I had classified Theosophy as an admirably constructed highroad that led nowhere.

Consequently it was with a special tug at my social patience that I accepted an invitation to a drawingroom talk by a Theosophist. Much to my surprise it was a remarkable talk, touching on the problems of life with a directness and insight that challenged attention. I was so deeply impressed with the speaker's vision and force that it seemed worth while to undertake the task of separating the real wheat from what I considered the Theosophical chaff. So I asked where I could hear more. If the speaker had replied, "Come to our Theosophical meeting next week," I fear years might have passed before I was ready to try that pasturage. Fortunately he told me that some friends were to meet soon for the discussion of similar topics and I would be welcome as a guest. I went and found there people of unusual power and with that peculiar lucidity of speech and vision that characterized the speaker of the previous evening. There was also something about the atmosphere of the gathering that was profoundly impressive, and to a strange degree both compelling and deterring. An invitation to attend subsequent meetings was eagerly sought.

Several months later I faced the disconcerting discovery that I had actually been attending, with keen satisfaction, the regular meetings of a Branch of the Theosophical Society—at the worst I had imagined them to be gatherings of friends interested in metaphysical discussions, among whom were numbered some with a bent toward Theosophical half-truths. Even this surprising discovery did not alter my conviction that Theosophy was a road, full of "blinds" and pitfalls, that circled around but did not ascend the Delectable Mountains. Yet I began to feel that I must either become a member of the Society or cease to attend its meetings, since there was no reason why I should seek to enroll myself as perpetual guest. With the declared objects of the Society I had no quarrel, though I was certain that those objects could never be realized by its methods. However, I wanted to secure the right to attend the meetings, so I made application for membership. I meant to be one of those "by night" members, for I did not intend to let any of my friends know that I was a member of the Society—and really all I had done was to arrange for a pew in that house of worship, from which I could watch proceedings.

Even though I was joining the Society in such a tenuous way I did cherish the hope of being useful to it. For I was persuaded that it was wasting time in mining little pockets of ore, while somewhere there was the "mother lode" that would infinitely repay the effort necessary to locate and work it. While I had never seen it I thought I knew how it might be found by those who, like these rare Theosophists, were qualified for the search. It was not that I felt a call to instruct them, that would be absurd, but I did fully expect that the "real light" of which I had caught distant reflections in other lines of study, would suddenly break through for them. When it came I had no question that they would recognise and follow it. Gradually, I came to see that these Theosophists

had more standing-room in the divine world than any people I had ever known. Then, in my mind, I joined the Society over again. To be sure I still thought that there was some more direct and authentic path to the great goal, but I was sure that I had a better chance of finding it if I went along with the Theosophists than if I trudged alone. I wanted to be at hand, ready for the start, when these good people found the true path.

Up to this time life had been a drab affair, even from the start. As a child I had lived alone in a world of my own construction—and had proved a very poor creator. The little interior world of which I had made my small personality the center was most unsatisfactory, even then. I was dogged with a constant sense of incompleteness, almost too heavy to be borne. It was nearly burdensome enough to drive me from my self-centered position. Only I could not find either in the youngsters or in the grown-ups about me any real companionship—probably because I presented a chestnut-burr exterior. At least I discovered no way of breaking into their world, or of bringing others into mine. Unable to fellowship with folks, I early concluded that my only chance was to fellowship with God. On that subject my ideas were distorted little copies of the notions prevalent in the dogma-ridden community in which I was brought up. To assent to certain interpretations of the God-man and his mission, to give up certain so-called worldly amusements—that was the sum of everybody's obligation. When one had met this obligation the burden of all the rest was on the shoulders of the Almighty. I knew these formulas by heart, but somehow the experiment did not work for me, the miracle I was expecting would not happen: I was still in my cramped little, mean little universe, as much shut off from God as from the human beings around me. And while I grieved, it never occurred to me that it might be my duty to seek out and do the will of God. My desire was centered in *feeling*, religious feeling to be sure, but I wanted a real orgy of it. Fortunately I was baffled at every turn and kindly thrown back on myself, instead of being allowed to set my feet in the miry soil of the psychic plane.

Naturally, I entered early on the well-known pilgrimage of doubt. Had I not already tested the Christian formula and found that it would not work! The nature and scope of the doubt grew with my growth; and the bitterness and intensity of the interior struggle kept pace. It furnished a natural center for the youthful melancholy with which the entire universe is tinged at certain stages, even for the less reflective of its children. Mine was a "good old-fashioned case" of melancholics: the gloomiest of the poets was a pettifogging trifler; Carlyle's reverberating thunders always held a suggestion of coming illumination, even if of the jagged lightning brand. With what joy I discovered the old philosophers and their thoroughly inscrutable solutions of the problems of the universe. What a delightful feeling of tender comprehension, tinged

with calm superiority, I had for Descartes because at the end of his "noble doubts" he found satisfaction from all his questionings in the quagmire described by his famous "I think, therefore I am." Unlike Descartes I was by no means prepared to posit my existence as a thinker. I saw myself as a miserable discord and felt no assurance that there was harmony anywhere in the universe.

Outwardly, I went through the usual motions of an ordinary, humdrum existence, yet I was haunted by the feeling that there might still be something real in life that I had failed to find. I could see no traces of it. The people around me, the most active church members, told of experiences and assurances in which I had no share; but when the great tests came, when they needed some fresh courage, some new power in an emergency, they seemed to have no access to any hidden source of supply. Like myself, they looked white-faced and stricken before experiences that ought to have carried them in confidence to their fountain head of love and of strength.

One day I strayed into a new church and had a new experience. The rector read the service with a sincerity and a depth of feeling that were a revelation to me; he preached a sermon that was in my language. I felt that he had fared through the valley of doubt, and was actually in sight of some land of promise. Sunday after Sunday, I listened eagerly to this man. I hardly dared let myself hope that I had found someone who knew that there was a King because he had seen His glory. Finally I was convinced that this man thought he saw, believed that he knew the King. Then I launched myself on a great experiment: I said I will try this thing thoroughly. For twelve months I will live in the faith of this new guide. I do not believe for a moment that there is anything in it, but having reasoned about all these things to no purpose, I will simply accept them this time; I will *pretend* that they are true and live in the light of them. So the rector acquired, all unknown to him, a faithful understudy. His words of faith I took to heart, and said to myself, over and over again, this is what we believe, the rector and I, this is what we are going to live out during the coming week. Every day as I went past his church I would rehearse the list of our beliefs, the rector's and mine. In the midst of that experiment circumstances kept me away from the newly found church—and the new faith slipped away.

By and by a new mirage appeared. I am thankful for it, too, as it served to hearten me on my way, and gave me some further needed preparation. My mirage was one of the many New Thought systems, in which there is a curious blend of mysticism and materialism. Force, I was told, fills the universe, learn to draw on it and there is no limit to the possibilities of accomplishment. Had I not been looking, all my life, for the hidden source of all life and love—now I was actually to be



taught a simple, direct way of reaching it, could even bring it down and use it as I wished. This would be real emancipation!

There was fattening food for my familiar unbelief, in the attitude of this new cult toward the forms of Christianity that I had found so unprofitable. They felt a profound pity for those who were still setting in Christian darkness while the dynamics of real life, as taught and practiced by the great Leader of the Church, were forgotten, unknown. Why must people waste precious time in religious observances instead of listening to the new evangel of unlimited force and how to use it? Why not be creators instead of creatures? So it was with a glad and final farewell to Christianity that I turned my face toward the new light shining in that darkness. For several years I lived in a welter of newly acquired "facts" about the universe, from its beginning to its end. There was keen fun in assorting and labelling them. They made most attractive furnishings for my new mansion and I enjoyed living in it. No "facts" could be permanently satisfying, however, and I began to be conscious of one serious lack in the mansion—it had no shrine: I craved an altar and a living flame burning there.

It was after this need was clearly established that I stumbled into The Theosophical Society, by the route already described. When I came to recognize the burning on its shrine, I tried to import that shrine into my mansion furnished with facts; later I sought a place before that shrine, ready to wait until I could catch a spark for my candle from the central fire burning there. The slow stages by which I eventually came to this position seem even more needlessly absurd now, after this retrospect of the many chances life has given me, than they seemed at the beginning of this story. There were evidently so many points along the way where I stood near enough to the heart of things to reach it, had I persevered. But my perseverance seemed to be limited to the continued search for new roads to the goal; it did not serve to carry me over the final difficulties of any one. Yet I was always waiting for the real thing to happen; intent on it, without faith, without hope, still I waited.

In that attitude of strained attention there was nothing to share. With an empty larder the habit of hospitality and its niceties are difficult to maintain. This is no story of a soul living in No-Man's-Land, and still there has been little in it reflecting the familiar experiences of everyday life. Where are the folks, the teachers, the learners, the loved ones? Certainly, they have had a far-reaching influence on this inner life, but the connections are too subtle for me. There always seems to be a veil between the outer world of folks and the inner world of life, as impenetrable as that curtain between the seen and the unseen. And yet I know that both are only made of dream stuff, and that both must be worn away.

To me there is nothing more impressive in the wonderful history of


the Society than the attitude, spirit and work of its present leaders; nothing so indicative of the tremendous unseen forces behind the movement as the living bond that holds those leaders together. This bond, evidently formed by a common consciousness of responsibility and privilege, enables them to work, not only as individual centers of force, but as one united current of power, guided by an insight both profound and loving.

This was to me a new type of leadership. I also found in the Society a new type of citizenship. In some of its members I discovered people of marked intellectual gifts, in others people whom circumstances had not permitted to cultivate the graces of the mind; but I found that all had graces of the heart; all had turned their lives toward the center of life and light.

In my progressive joining of the Society I have been increasingly impressed with the light that Theosophy throws on the inner meaning of the religion that Jesus came to reveal anew. At one time I fancied that I had said good-bye to it forever, now I see that through Theosophy I am just beginning to understand the meaning of his words, the aim of his sacrificial life, the measure of his uncompleted work, and his constant effort to strengthen and to steady our hold on the things of the spirit.

So here is the return and the affirmative side of the old negations. In Christianity, as I first knew it, I could find no saving grace, no healing power. After many wanderings, in despairing search for some path to the kingdom of the heavens, I come upon one, Theosophy, accredited by many signs as leading to the land of realities where the real work of the world is done by the real workers. And now this path, sought for years, proves, after all, to be no new and foreign way to the great goal, but the very same narrow way into which Jesus strove to lead his disciples, when he walked among them in Galilee.

Why, then, is that path so hard to find—if he is still with us, still the eager and loving guide? Partly, I think, because the search is too often half-hearted, inconstant; partly because dogma and doubt, like brambles and vines, have been allowed to grow over the entrance to that path. Or we might say, more accurately, that Jesus made a new way; a more direct road, for his followers to that "little old path" on which, through countless ages, men have struggled up to life eternal. He made himself the guardian of that new way, holding it open himself, at incalculable cost. Only its entrance was left to the care of his followers; yet how soon that entrance was neglected and overgrown; until now those whose insight and aspiration are not keen enough to pierce these barriers must find some other entrance, through the message and life of some other great Teacher.



# ELEMENTARY ARTICLE

## THEOSOPHICAL SYMBOLISM

A GREAT many of our modern Western people suppose that all that is necessary in order to give us a clear understanding of anything is that it should be distinctly stated in words. Consequently they get quite impatient when reading ancient books or the writings of Orientals. A little study of things outside of ordinary business life will convince us that the ancients were right and we are wrong, for the deepest things cannot be expressed in words, they can only be suggested by figures.

Thomas Carlyle in his *Sartor Resartus* says, "Man everywhere finds himself encompassed with Symbols, recognised as such or not recognised; the Universe is one vast Symbol of God; nay if thou wilt have it, what is man himself but a Symbol? Is not all that he does symbolical, a revelation to sense of the mystic God-given force within him, a Gospel of Freedom which he, the Messenger of Nature, preaches as he can by act or words? Not a hut he builds but is the visible embodiment of a Thought; but bears the visible record of invisible things."

To the ancient seer, when he looked at these things, the earth was not mere earth, nor man mere man. To him the earth had an inner meaning; there was a glory above the heavens; and an inner sanctuary in the soul of man where God dwelt. Everything he saw revealed to him something he could not see; the revealed became a symbol of the unrevealed. To thousands in more modern times the world is a symbol, and the things that are made and seen lead their minds through the outer veil to the inner reality—the spiritual reality that can only be discerned by Spirit. It is the quality of spirituality to recognise the symbolic character of the world, indeed of the universe and of man. It is a characteristic of the spiritual man that he is able through the symbol to commune with the Reality; he can enter behind the veil of the material universe and there find Spirit; behind the veil of history and recognise the Divine will and purpose, and behind the veil of human personality and in the inner sanctum find God. Such were Pythagoras and Plato, Jacob Boehme, Thomas á Kempis and Swedenborg with his great wealth of correspondence. Such too were Milton and Keats, Wordsworth and Coleridge, Browning and Tennyson, with an innumerable company of

others. Our Christian Bible is full of symbols—clouds and storms, the sea and the mountains, thunder and lightning, earthquakes and volcanoes, lions and eagles, the vine and the husbandman, sword and crown, seal and robe, bread and wine, water and light, the white stone, the palm, the dove, the anchor—all creation and all life is made to contribute some idea or conception of God and spiritual things. And yet even these symbols so suggestive, are but attempts to express the inexpressable, for after thunder and storm God is still the silent One, known yet unsearchable.

This is true of our beautiful Theosophical symbols—the Lotus, the moon, the serpent, triangle and others. H. P. B. in the *Secret Doctrine* has told us that “every symbol in papyrus or olla is a many-faced diamond, each of whose facets not merely bears several interpretations, but relates likewise to several sciences.” And we are further told that to every symbol there are seven Keys, or that they may be turned seven times, corresponding to all the septenaries in nature and in man. To look for some of the infinite interpretations that can be discovered in Theosophical symbols, such as the seal of the society, is not time wasted, nor time devoted to an artistic superstition. The *Secret Doctrine* seems to teach that these symbols are the formulæ of the laws, forces, and powers of nature and of mind. Let us begin with the serpent that forms the circle of the seal, that is, the serpent biting his tail. The serpent stands for wisdom. Legends and traditions from all over the world, from Egypt, and Chaldea, Mexico and Peru, ancient Britain and Scandinavia, as well as India, all inform us that the serpent was regarded with great reverence and was sacred to the God of Wisdom. It also stood for inspiration, and the Initiates of all ages have been called serpents. As the serpent is oviparous it was regarded by the ancients as a symbol of the Divinity which issues from the egg of space. The *Secret Doctrine* says, “The Spirit of God moving on chaos was symbolized by every nation in the shape of a fiery serpent breathing fire and light upon the primordial waters, until it made it assume the annular shape of a serpent with its tail in its mouth.” Then too, the serpent sloughs his skin and so symbolizes the Ego that sheds its various bodies, or personalities, during its cycle of reincarnation. The same thing symbolizes rejuvenation and immortality. It also stands for time and duration, and with its tail in its mouth it symbolizes eternity. These are not one tenth of the things that the serpent symbolizes to the ancients. Bible readers will remember the brazen serpent lifted up by Moses in the wilderness to save the people who had been bitten by fiery serpents, so typifying the great Teacher, who by his power can heal those who have been bitten by the fiery serpent of the passions and Kamic nature. Students will also remember that, *The Voice of the Silence* speaks of Kundalini, one of the powers latent in man, as the “Serpentine or annular power,” and says “it is an electric fiery occult or fohatic power, the great pristine force which underlies all organic and inorganic matter.” The serpent, like all other

symbols, is a dual figure and it symbolizes both spirit and matter, good and evil. The circle made by the serpent with its tail in its mouth is one of the most ancient, most mysterious and universal of all symbols. It stands for the Absolute, or Absoluteness, for space, the idea of which can never be eliminated from thought, never destroyed. The Serpent is not the circle, but assumes the form of a circle which symbolizes abstract space whose center is everywhere and its circumference nowhere. The absolute circle includes every idea of space and time, that is, duration or eternity, as it has no end and no beginning. The cycles or circles of time play an important part in all ancient systems and all astronomical calculations. The terms wheels, rings, rounds, and so forth, are all included in this symbol. The perfect type of space is also the type of the perfect or heavenly man. Plato has told us this and Egyptian hieroglyphics also testify to it. So we have the same figure for the Macrocosm, or great world, or universe, and for the Microcosm, or small world which is man—"As above, so below."

Let us now consider the interlaced triangles. The white triangle with its apex pointing upward symbolizes spirit in its three aspects; the three aspects of the Logos, three persons of the Trinity, in common language. It is the Everlasting Yea of Carlyle, the positive pole of the Universal Magnet. The darker triangle with its apex pointing downwards symbolizes matter, or prakriti. It is the negative pole of the Universal Magnet, the Everlasting Nay of *Sartor Resartus*. As the other represented the three aspects of the Logos, this lower triangle represents matters with its three qualities, the Gunams. The first is said to represent fire and this one water, yet the two are essentially one, the higher being reflected in the lower. The two are interlacing, which means that we knew nothing about spirit except as revealed through matter, and nothing of matter except as vivified by spirit. The student will find a great many more ideas symbolized by the triangles than I have mentioned here, and if interested in numbers will find a new world opening to him there.

The *crux ansata*, or handled cross is an ancient symbol of eternal life, immortality. We are told that "In ancient Egypt the initiated adept who had successfully passed all his trials was bound to a cross of this shape, upon which he remained for three days plunged in a deep and sacred trance, during which his higher principles, or Spiritual soul, were supposed to hold communion with the Gods." After three days, just as the sun rose, the cross was brought out of the crypt of the temple or pyramid and the glorified initiate brought back to earth life. In this connection the handle of the cross symbolizes the immortal, spiritual Ego. The dark crypt in which the crucified one was placed is the body. When we put to sleep the lower nature we shall be glorified by the awakening of the spiritual senses. There are many other things symbolized by this cross. There is another curious figure near the mouth of the serpent at the top of the circle, which is commonly known as the *Swastica*. In India it is

called the Wheel of Krishna, while in the west it is known as the Gnostic cross, and is identical with the wheels of Pythagoras and Ezekiel. It is also the Hammer of Thor, in Scandinavian mythology, the magic weapon forged by the Dwarfs in their war with the giants; that is, the forces of matter. The turning back of its ends denotes its revolution and is said to symbolize evolution and progress.

Looking at the symbol of the society as a whole it is most instructive. If we proceed from exterior to the interior we are really going from the interior to the exterior of things as manifesting the eternal idea, which suggests that the Theosophical method is from universals to particulars. First we have the serpent circle which, as a unity represents the one substance, the *Mother-Father* of the stanzas of the Book of Dzyan in the *Secret Doctrine*. This substance is not matter, but the one *Something*, which is for us pure thought. The whole process of creation, or evolution from this *Something* is portrayed in the figure. Perhaps most interesting of all is the fact that the seal includes and symbolises the three objects of the Society. It shows that the center of the universe is man—the intelligent and self-conscious center of the arc of evolution—so showing that all men are essentially one, thus giving us the first object of establishing a nucleus of universal brotherhood. Then as the seal unites in itself, in one symbol, the symbolism of all the great world religions, it shows their essential unity, which is the basis of Theosophy, the synthesis of all systems; showing the second object of the society, which is the study of comparative religions, sciences and philosophies.

In the third place, as the power of Cosmos, nature and man—of the Macrocosm and the Microcosm—are set forth in the symbolism of the serpent, so the third object of the Society is suggested—a study of the undiscovered laws of nature and the powers of man. Is it worth while thus to study symbolism? What good will it do? Let Thomas Carlyle answer for us, "In a symbol there is a concealment, and yet a revelation; here therefore by silence and by speech acting together, comes a double significance. And if both speech be itself high, and the silence fit and noble, how expressive will their union be! Thus in many a painted device, or simple Seal-emblem the commonest truth stands out to us proclaimed with quite new emphasis."

Now from Carlyle, let the Student turn to the *Secret Doctrine* and study carefully the sections on mystery language and symbolism and he may catch the spirit of the ancient seers and gather from earth and air and sun, the suggestions of a nobler, higher, and purer life. Every day in the great outer world he may find that which will quicken faith, enrich understanding, comfort the heart, and turn the whole world into a holy temple.

JOHN SCHOFIELD.



# REVIEWS

*The Gleam*, by Helen R. Albee, published by Henry Holt & Co., New York. This work might have as a sub-title, "The Story of a Soul," for it describes the inner life of the author, from earliest childhood, through storm and stress, trial, pain, happiness, success and failure, until, finally, a fair measure of real peace and understanding is attained. It is graphically, at times even dramatically written; is interesting from start to finish; and yet it is a difficult book to review. One can admire the author's purpose, unquestionably that of helping others in their struggles; one can sympathize with her experiences; one can and does agree in the main with her final conclusions; one can even accept as wise, and approve of many of her methods; and yet there are certain things about the book that make one question whether it will not do more harm than good. The reason for this is quite simple. Mrs. Albee traveled a dangerous road, and while she seems to have come through without obvious harm, it is quite certain that others without her special qualities of mind and heart would end in disaster if they tried to follow her path. She realizes this, inadequately, and in part, for she gives one or two gentle warnings to too eager disciples; but not having herself suffered from the mistaken methods she tried, or not being aware of the effects of these things on her own character and inner being, she gives the general impression to her readers that they could not do better than repeat her experiences if they wish to arrive at her goal. She herself would probably deny this and say that, quite the contrary, her main object in writing the book was to enable others to avoid the snags and pitfalls that she met, and surmount difficulties without going through the pain and suffering she experienced. But she forgets two things. One is that human beings will practically never take warning from the experiences of another. The second is that psychic phenomena have an almost irresistible attraction for most people, and they will run any theoretical risk and undergo any theoretical danger for the sake of having such experiences. So long as these things are so, it were better for the average human being to remain entirely ignorant of the possibility of cultivating psychism.

For instance, Mrs. Albee once tried to and succeeded in producing marked psychic effects by breathing exercises. She minutely describes the experiences and their psychical results, interesting and seemingly valuable, and ends with the brief statement that it is not advisable to try these things without guidance. Now the plain truth is that it is always exceedingly dangerous to try them with or without guidance, for they tend to induce consumption, insanity and other physical diseases and always produce serious disturbances in the psychic body. It would be much safer and better to take opium or hashish; for the value of the psychic experiences which result is quite as reliable and trustworthy in the one case as in the other, while the permanent results of opium are not so harmful, evil as they are.

Mrs. Albee also tried automatic writing and other purely mediumistic processes. Indeed, one of the most objectionable parts of her book is the generally mediumistic tendency of her advice. She does not realize that she had certain admirable qualities, a strength of will, a fixity of purpose, a fundamental sanity, which

carried her safely through experiences which would land most people in a quagmire of evil, physical, mental moral and spiritual. In other words, although Mrs. Albee has learned much during a most interesting life, and has passed through a great variety of typical experiences, she does not know enough to write this kind of a guide for others. It is not necessary for soul growth that we should operate the planchette, or indulge in automatic writing, and because she did so with no known harmful after effects is no reason why others should try experiments which are known to be exceedingly dangerous. Psychism is alluring and this book shows such things at their best; shows them as they can be only when they operate through a person as pure, as well-intentioned, as strong and sane as Mrs. Albee. There is the danger. She was an unusual person with unusual qualities, and the average person who reads her book and who seeks to repeat her experiences, would be subjecting himself to grave dangers, all the more serious because not understood and perhaps not even believed in.

Before leaving the ungrateful and ungracious task of fault-finding, there are two more things we must mention. One, the most repellant in the book, is the matter-of-fact way in which she will use spiritual power to produce material objects and results. She does not hesitate to furnish her house by a conscious command upon the spiritual world for a rug or a rocking chair! She does not seem to realize how absolutely shocking this prostitution of her power really is; and that saves her from what, to give it its real name, is nothing more nor less than outright black magic.

The remaining fault is the old one of curing physical disease by the use of spiritual power. Most people seem to think it right because it can be done. Their difficulty is in believing it possible, not in its morality or immorality. Mrs. Albee can see and she points out the fallacy in the philosophical position of the Christian Scientists, and she is blind to the immorality of her own practices, just as she seems entirely free from any doubt about the propriety of calling down from Heaven the particular kind of teapot needed to supplement her table furniture. Indeed, we despair of convincing people of the fundamental danger of these practices until they know enough to see for themselves that all they do is to escape an immediate and apparent disease, at the cost of a much more dangerous and painful inner trouble. It may be the same disease in an aggravated form later on, or it may take the shape of serious defeat in the moral nature, or still again, a distorted and deformed body in some future incarnation. What is certain is that the present expression of any disease is the easiest and simplest way in which nature can discharge from the system the poison which is there. It is at our peril that we disturb the natural process and stop its expression. We do not and we cannot eliminate the actual poison. The whole mighty power of the universe would have to be violated before we could do that. Barring a certain lack of sympathy for and understanding of orthodox religions, and their usual expression, this is all we have to say in criticism.

Turning now to the merits of the book, it is a pleasure to bear testimony to the splendid manner in which Mrs. Albee has learned many lessons which we are all endeavoring to learn. We can give unstinted admiration to her courage, her fine will, her endurance, her mental honesty and to many another quality of mind and heart. Above all, her love of nature and the keenness of her powers of observing it, and the beautiful manner in which she uses natural objects and natural phenomena to illustrate some subtle psychological problem, excite our admiring envy. It seems hardly necessary to say that when such a character, endowed with so many rich gifts of mind and heart, filled with an intense desire for steady improvement, seeking the underlying causes for things and events, tells her story, she tells many, many things which are inspiring and helpful.

Her whole idea of life as a school in which the soul learns its lessons by

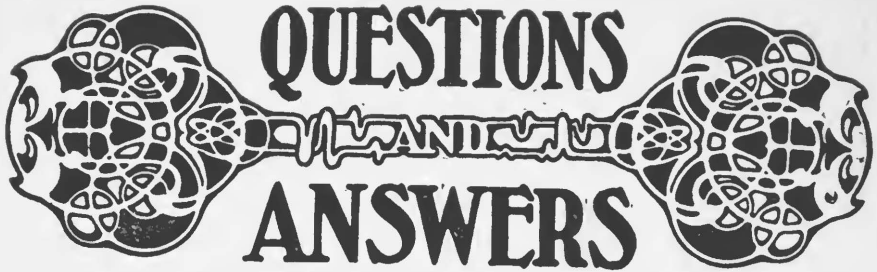


carrying on a perpetual warfare against circumstances and things, is in accord with our philosophy. Her ideas about its discipline and training, and the way in which this discipline and training come, seem to us eminently correct and sane. Her ideals are high; almost the highest, and she gives us the impression of having read much more Theosophy than she acknowledges. Some of our books she must have read, for she uses whole sentences from them, as for instance *Light on the Path*, which may well be the little book which led to her awakening, but whose name she does not give. Indeed, one can say quite truthfully that all that is best in the book is pure Theosophy and that it is only when she departs from Theosophical teaching that we begin to doubt the wisdom of her methods or her conclusions. This is not because we believe Theosophy to be the only expression of truth, for we do not. It is because Mrs. Albee approaches life from the Theosophical standpoint, but lacks thorough knowledge of its teachings and when she diverges from it, she does not improve her position.

She believes in reincarnation and refers to it, but not directly by name. Her book ends with a sort of appeal to her readers to believe in the existence of Masters, again without using the name. Her psychological explanations are at times profound and penetrating, and would be helped if she had at her command a larger vocabulary and a better classification of human principles. It is here that the English language fails us. Her analysis of mental processes, of the mere activity of the brain, and the distinction between it and the consciousness back of it, is admirable, and unlike most Western writers, she knows the difference between meditation, contemplation and prayer. She knows these things by personal experience, and not by study, and that makes her presentation of them all the more vivid and enlightening. She has much, but not too much to say about concentration, its difficulty, and its absolute necessity.

Indeed, we do not see how any sincere minded person, with a desire to go forward along the Path of life and Immortality, and who knows enough to avoid the subtle pitfall of psychism, could fail to get help and inspiration from the reading of this book; and that makes it all the more distasteful to end our notice of it by repeating the warning that its defects as a spiritual guide, are serious, because it tends to glorify psychic experiences and put them in the place of spiritual experiences which are much more rare and difficult of attainment. The psychic nature can be artificially developed, and Mrs. Albee so cultivated hers. The spiritual nature cannot be, and spiritual experiences will never happen save to those who have earned them by hard and faithful work along the time honored path of self-conquest and renunciation. Needless to say the book is Vedantic in its approach to the problems of life, and there will be many who will miss the personal note which exists in the religion of Christ. Will it be amiss to say to these that this is only a difference in method and not in essence? Exactly the same experiences can be lived through and the same lessons learned in terms of the Christian religion, if that is a more sympathetic or customary means of approach; as it will be to most of the people who will read this most interesting and unusual book.

C. A. G., JR.



# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION 130.—*“Does not the theosophical philosophy contradict the modern theories about the rights of man?”*

ANSWER.—Yes, without doubt Theosophy demonstrates that man has no rights, and the more one studies Theosophy the more fallacious appears the easy rhetoric of the Preamble to the American Constitution, which attempts to define these rights. Who gave man any rights? Who could give him rights?

A little reflection will show, I think, that only God can confer rights, and so far as I know, he not only never has conferred any on man, but every sacred scripture, of every race and time, has laid all its emphasis on just the opposite side of the question—has insisted that what God wants is the surrender of absolutely everything which man considers a right.

The Preamble speaks of the “right” of every man to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and yet the Constitution provides the machinery whereby he may be deprived of life, liberty and the opportunity to pursue happiness.

We are a queer people, much given to delusions, and I know of none more universal and few more pernicious than this Western theory about rights. For it is a Western theory. A number of Hindu chēlas were being taught something about Western civilization, not so long ago, and they came across this question of people’s rights. After puzzling over it for some time, one of them asked the teacher, “What are rights? Is it some new kind of Western sin?”

The trouble is that it goes so deep. Take children, for instance. There is much talk nowadays, about the average American child, about his bad manners, his lack of deference and respect for his parents, his general low taste. I believe the reason to be that our minds have become so perverted by this idea of “rights,” that it has affected our ideals of education, of discipline and of the proper way to bring up children. Indeed, we hear much about the rights of children, their right to the free play of their individualities, and other nonsense like that. I know one fond parent who is so bitten by this modern craze that she lets her children eat whatever they want. I cannot imagine any way of corrupting a human being more efficient and more far reaching than to be brought up by a modern exponent of the “rights” of the individual to his own life and to the free expression of his nature.

Now what is the fundamental principle which governs this question? It seems to me to be simple. The whole of life provides the discipline needed for the conquest of self; for its conquest, its control, its suppression, if necessary; not in any way whatever for its free expression. In due time we shall hope to express freely the developed soul, but that time is far off for all of us, and in the meanwhile, the fewer opportunities we have for the full and free expression of our personalities, the better. We shall have that much less to overcome. I believe, therefore, that the whole spirit and genius of our modern, and particularly our American life, is really contrary to what it should be, and must be, before we can hope that the race as a whole will progress and not degenerate. No wonder the

sociological writer notes a spirit of lawlessness in our people; no wonder that we have been warned that license is not liberty; no wonder that our children are famous all over the world for their disagreeable and unadmirable qualities, so that in a foreign hotel, an American child is considered an unmitigated nuisance. How could these things be otherwise?

No wonder that all over the Western world, the snake of socialism has raised its crest, and that the whole social body is in a feverish delirium from its poison,—rending itself in internal strife, and arraying class against class in the unrestrained struggle, through strikes, lockouts, boycotts and even wholesale murder, to gain or hold their fancied and so-called “rights.”

Face to face with death,—in times of plague or war or famine—a man knows that he would be grateful to be allowed to live at all. But in times of ease this knowledge passes from him. Then someone tells him he has “the right” to live—that the “world owes him a living.” He may try to put this theory into practice, and, taking what the world seems unwilling to give, get a living, but in jail. But even if its crudest applications be rejected, once the idea of inherent rights finds lodgment in the mind it grows beyond all limits. The right to live becomes the right to live in comfort,—the right to all one desires and can get by force or stratagem. The workman’s wage must be a “living wage” no matter how poor and dead the work. And the right to a living wage becomes the right to a wage which will support him in comfort. Then he wants the law to recognize that “right,” and his “right” to leisure, and to have it forbid longer hours of labour or a less rate of wages. In England, to-day, he sets the minimum at \$10 a week. But if he feels he has the “right” to \$10 a week, and can get it by legislation, he will not think his rights stop there. Why not \$15 a week or \$50 or \$500? Why put any limit? There are no limits to the magnitude of our “rights,” if we possess even the smallest. Truly we people of the West are laying up an extraordinary Karma for ourselves in this preaching of rights, and when the bubble bursts there will come a hard awakening.

The plain fact is that no one of us has any “rights” at all,—not even to life itself. Life is a privilege, a gift from the gods, and we would be wise to be grateful for it,—grateful for the opportunity to work like galley slaves for mere existence, if those were the only terms upon which we could get it.

G. HIRJO.

ANSWER.—The theosophical philosophy does not contradict modern theories about the rights of man if those theories are really understood. Everything appears to have at least two aspects or lines of approach, and the other side of the *rights of man* is the *obligations of man*. The right of every child born into the world to care and nourishment during its early years, approached from the other side is the obligation of the child’s parents to provide those things. The right of every member of society to a limited measure of freedom and protection is the obligation of the State to ensure that freedom and protection and the obligation of every other member of society not in any way to interfere with it. The right of the laboring man to a living wage is the obligation of his employer to make possible that living wage, even at the sacrifice of his own superfluous comfort.

Socialism looked at from this viewpoint presents an unusual and altogether spiritual aspect. Instead of the masses clamouring for their rights and threatening the unearned or extortionate gains of the captains of industry, the situation is reversed: These captains of industry, realizing the debt they themselves owe to the democratic principle and feeling the obligation to protect and extend that principle, pour back their surplus incomes into the common fund, or, better still, stay their hands in the early days of their successes from the “sharp” or dishonest policy to protect a weaker neighbor and leave him in independence to acquire

his share of the gains. This is the spirit of socialism from the capitalists' standpoint. It has apparently the hallmarks of the theosophical philosophy—brotherly love and self-sacrifice.

If the maxim, "Thy right is to the work but never to its fruits" applies to the laboring man who clamours for his "rights," it applies with even greater insistence to the capitalist who builds a wall around his "privileges."

Standards vary with different stages of spiritual progress or different periods of evolution. Struggle for life, independence, "rights," egoism—are right at a certain point. When a man has gained these "rights" and learned what he can from those experiences he comes under the sway of a higher law—the struggle for the lives of others—altruism. This is no mere sentimental theorizing; it is a plain statement of fact, and every member of the human race who has earned the right to know, knows it to be a fact. If it could be shown that the "masses" were in the earlier stage of development and the "classes" in the later and more matured stage extremes would meet, and our social problems would be solved in the winking of an eye. Would to God they might be so solved.

L. E. P.

ANSWER.—Before attempting to answer this question on the rights of man, it was my privilege to see the two answers which had been previously received and which appear herewith. They interested me greatly,—more, I confess, than the question itself,—and as I read them I began to wonder whether the majority of readers would not fall between the two stools set for their accommodation. The more I reflected the more it seemed to me that they would eye each a little askance, and remain standing where they were before. Neither stool seems exactly suited to the restful occupancy of the mere-ordinary-person's common thought. We admire uncompromising rigidity,—but we think it might soon become uncomfortable; that stool has no back. We marvel at the mental suppleness which can twist itself around and repose upon contradictory opposites, facing two ways at once. We marvel, but we know we cannot imitate; that stool, also, is not for us. On the whole we prefer to stand where we are.

But where are we standing? There the original question repeated itself, and it seemed to me there was need for a third answer which would not presuppose such an unusual moral or mental equipment in the reader as are respectively assumed in the answers of G. Hijo and L. E. P. As a mere-ordinary-person, I felt myself admirably qualified for the task of writing it.

But now that I have undertaken it, the task looms larger than it did at first. I wonder whether the mere-ordinary-person is safe to approach this subject at all. I wonder whether the readers of the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY are mere-ordinary-persons. I wonder whether G. Hijo's attitude, rigid and uncompromising as it is, may not be the only safe one, even if it does look uncomfortable. I wonder, particularly, whether we do not make a mistake to assume that an attitude will be uncomfortable before we have tried it. Perhaps we have a stronger backbone than we imagine.

What is it we mean when we speak of the "rights of man"? I fancy that we do not need to look very deeply into our thought about our "rights" in order to see that when we use that term we are almost always talking and thinking about something we deem to be a "right" of the personality. We very rarely say: It is my right to be courageous, honourable, self-sacrificing in my duty. We do very frequently say, or think: It is my right to protect myself, to get a little rest, to take some enjoyment. We are rather careless in our thought of the rights of the soul, as rights, but the "rights" of the personality we are inclined to insist upon as such. The reason for this is simple. We think about rights, as rights, only when they are questioned,—when the horrid doubt comes into our

minds as to whether some possession or power we have enjoyed or desired is not to be taken from us. No one can take from us the powers and possessions of the soul. Neither man nor circumstance can prevent our being courageous, honourable, and self-sacrificing. But both men and circumstances are forever endangering our safety and robbing us of ease and pleasure. And because we want these things we cry out against the danger and the robbery. We say we have a right to them,—a just claim which ought to prevail and which we purpose to enforce against all comers.

Now here we are face to face with a pretty complete self-contradiction in our conception of "rights" when we regard them as attaching to the personality. Certainly part of our conception of a right is that it is something which is inherently ours, which cannot in justice be denied us. If we felt it could be justly denied us, we would be forced to recognize it as a privilege and not a right. Yet we have just seen that what we desire to claim as the rights of the personality are precisely those things which are most commonly denied us, and which are forever being threatened. Indeed it is not stretching the paradox to say that it is precisely because the gratification of our personal desires does not seem to us included, as an inalienable possession, in the existing scheme of things, that we are led to claim it as a right; precisely because we realize that our tenure in the goods of the personality is in fact so insecure, is the reason why we cry out that they should be secured to us. We are forced to the conclusion that either the existing scheme of things is fundamentally and continuously unjust, robbing us of what is inherently ours; or else that these goods of the personality are not inherently ours, and that our thought that we have just title to them is a delusion bred from our desire.

Upon this point the study of theosophy throws much light. The doctrine of Karma is as complete a denial of the fancied injustice of life as it would be possible to imagine, and the delusive glamour which arises from Kama-Manas (the brain under the influence of desire) has been exposed and analyzed in a hundred ways. There can be no doubt to which horn of the dilemma the theosophist is forced. In his thought the personality can have no rights, for the very simple reason that the universe as it is does not recognize them. Willy, nilly, we find ourselves sitting on the stool G. Hijo offered us.

But before we are content to remain there we are tempted to glance at one other aspect of the common thought on personal rights. Almost always what we call a right is something we claim for ourselves as against others. Most of us are not so much inclined to rail against the universe as against our fellows. We say that probably the universe is just enough, but we are quite convinced that John Smith is not. We are inclined to forget that John Smith is part of the universe. We stand on the corner waiting for the omnibus, and the policeman tells us to "move on." We grow indignant and say we "have a right" to stay where we are. If he moves us on we are a hundred times more indignant and consider that our rights have been grossly violated. If we were standing on the same corner and a sudden cyclone blew us down the street, we should not think of appealing to our rights. We would know the futility of it,—and the folly. Yet in fact the universe "moved us on" just as much in the one case as the other. There is no "right" of the personality which the universe respects, least of all the so-called right to life, and, as we reflect upon this, we begin to think that perhaps after all our idea of our rights did not attach itself to the things we claimed,—to this or that possession or power which we desired,—as much as to our feeling of what was due us from others, to a standard of conduct to which we felt others should conform. Surely, we tell ourselves, we "have a right" to expect, and to demand, decency and justice and fairplay from those about us. And this, we add with some heat, is all we ever asked; if we had been given that we could have had all we wanted.

With this we leap up from our stool, and find ourselves back where we started from, still standing on "our rights," and with the renewed sense that we have been badly treated. We have, however, considerably limbered up our mental joints and we begin to believe that, after all, we may be able to twist ourselves into L. E. P.'s attitude. Perhaps it is not so hopelessly upside down and facing all ways at once as it appeared. We have, we are told, only correctly to understand the modern theories about the rights of man, to see that they are in harmony with the teachings of theosophy and possess its hall-marks of brotherly love and self-sacrifice. We become even more anxious than before to obtain such a correct understanding,—which will permit us at one and the same time to insist upon our rights, to retain our sense of ill usage from the powers that be, and still to feel ourselves animated by the high motives of brotherly love and self-sacrifice. We perceive that this correct understanding consists in taking everything in a sense exactly the reverse from its ordinary significance. When we talk about the "rights of man" we have only to look at its reverse, "the obligations of man." We are better prepared to do this now than we were at the outset; for now we have about persuaded ourselves that all we asked in demanding "our rights" was that other people should fulfil their "obligations." Surely it is a good and high thing, and altogether in accord with the theosophical philosophy, that man should fulfil his obligations and show love and kindness and generous self-sacrificing helpfulness to all about him. That, we exclaim, is what we were after all the time in insisting upon our "rights." If our rights were but granted us that is what we,—they,—

Here, somehow, something goes wrong when we had all but accomplished the attitude we sought. If our rights were gained it would be the rest of the world not ourselves who would be all these charming and high-souled people. We look in vain for our share in the generous self-sacrifice. Moreover, if they yielded our "rights" through our compulsion in insisting upon them, would they really be so loving and kind and generous as we were imagining? Just what part does the doctrine of man's rights play in this Utopian picture of the fulfilment of man's obligations? Something is very wrong indeed.

It takes small thought to see what that something is. It is the hypocrisy, none the less real and poisonous because often unconscious, of masking the self-seeking of the personality under the cloak of high-flown sentiments of brotherhood and justice,—which others are to practise. "The rights of man" have truly for their reverse "the obligations of man,"—as evil has for its reverse good. But to attribute to the one the good of the other is to do worse than to attribute to the darkness of night the light of day. It is to attribute to the flames of hell the light of heaven.

No, we cannot take L. E. P.'s attitude; and we begin to doubt whether it was ever really taken by L. E. P. or by any one else. We suspect it of being just a fancied pose, as we can draw ourselves in postures we could never possibly assume. We have to come back to reality and face things as they are, not as we would like to fancy them.

And when we do come back to reality we find ourselves again on G. Hijo's stool. The plain and simple fact is that as personalities, isolated and separated from other personalities, we can have no rights and no possessions. All religions, all clear thinking, speak here with one voice; and in the whole field of the theosophical philosophy there is no other point upon which the teaching is more explicit or more clear. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal." This is of the very essence of all things personal. In them can be no permanency of possession, no right not doomed to be denied and violated. We must "desire possessions above all. But those possessions must belong to the pure soul only, and be possessed therefore by all pure souls equally." It is the soul only that can possess

anything at all, or in which any right can inhere. There "neither moth nor rust doth corrupt," there "thieves do not break through nor steal." There is no power in the universe that can rob the soul, none, save the man's own will, that does not respect its rights; for these rights, like its possessions, are "the special property of the whole only, when united."

If we would but look a little deeper into life, as theosophy helps us sometimes to do, we would see the personality as it is,—not as the man himself, but as "that thing which he has with pain created for his own use and by means of which he purposes, as his growth slowly develops his intelligence, to reach to the life beyond individuality. When he knows that for this his wonderful complex, separated life exists, then, indeed, and then only he is upon the way." Could we once see this clearly and remember it,—and remember, too, that "all steps are necessary to make up the ladder," pain and loss and failure, quite as much as the aroma of virtue and success,—then we would no longer be troubled with this question of "the rights of man," but would know that in the denial of the right of the personality the right of the soul is claimed.

H. B. M

ANSWER.—Deep in the consciousness of every man lives a realisation that he has rights, rights that are a part of his being. What are they? Where did they come from? They are, it seems to me, direct powers or privileges given to man by the Creator, when he was placed in this ordered universe and started on his evolution. All of them are spiritual rights and all are essential factors in that supreme right of man, the right to recognise the Master and to become like Him

This direct privilege of becoming courageous, pure, loving, irresistibly glad, divinely patient, triumphantly obedient, we have consistently neglected or debased. But for the power that clings in it, this our goodly right and heritage would long since have departed from us. Even the common law of the land recognises that only those rights which are used may be maintained.

So far from entering into our heritage, we try to exchange it for a mess of pottage. Misled by dislike of the hardships that mould character and drunken with lust for a life of ease and sensation, we debase this spiritual right *to be* and *to become*, by our endeavor to transform it into a right *to grasp* and to gain *material things*. So transformed, it falls from our hands. The compassionate law will not permit us to retain that which we have poisoned; and still we struggle to hold it fast. No wonder that the whole world is throbbing with an economic unrest. There can be no permanent solution of the world-problem or of the individual's problem until we claim our supreme right—to know the great love of the Master for us, and to help this love to grow in the hearts of our fellow men.

K. D. P.

# T·S·ACTIVITIES

## THE CONVENTION OF THE UNITED GERMAN BRANCHES

Our Convention took place in Dresden, on May 13th and 14th, and was pronounced by all present a very successful event. Paul Raatz, Secretary, called attention to the fact that this Convention was the first one held since we gave up our national name and that the year just passed had brought no regret that this step had been taken. Each member and each branch has acquired inner strength by the direct connection with the Theosophical Society.

A public meeting opened the activities of the Convention, attended by a good-sized audience, who showed deep interest in the two lectures delivered by Kurt Uhlig on the subject: "Nature as a manifestation of Divine Thought" and by Sandor Weiss on the "Problem of Christ."

The business meeting took place Sunday morning, May 14th, and was attended by forty-eight persons, of whom twenty-nine were delegates from the German branches. The reading of the letters of greeting from Mr. Johnston, Dr. Keightley, Jasper Niemand, Mrs. Graves, Mrs. Bagnell, Colonel Knoff, Franz Lang and many members unable to be present, formed an interesting part of the proceedings.

The report of the Secretary showed that our "Union" has eight German branches with a membership of 232. During the past year twenty-eight new members have been admitted. The Correspondence Class, with Leopold Corvinus as secretary, has been active, the branches exchanging letters with each other and with other countries, especially with England. Each branch sent an enthusiastic report of its work, showing the deepest devotion and zeal.

An interesting and instructive part of the proceedings proved to be the lecture given by Paul Raatz on "Methods of Branch Work." He laid stress on the principle of *unity* which must prevail in each branch, each member identifying himself with the whole and devoting himself to *service* for the whole. To do this a branch must do *inner* and *outer* work; inner work by strengthening the feeling of solidarity among the members, by study, by exchange of thought and experience; outer work by being active for the place in which the branch is located. The principle to be followed in outer work should be: *interest* in the spiritual awakening of all who visit the meetings, especially those who are not members. The choice of subjects should not, therefore, be too narrowly restricted.

Practical work in the branches should also be of two kinds: positive and negative—positive work by strengthening the basic idea of the Theosophical Society, *Universal Brotherhood*, and negative work by correcting false impressions among outsiders, in respect to the aims and work of the Theosophical Society.

One branch has had good experience in introducing into its programme lectures delivered by outsiders, followed by a discussion, emphasizing points of agreement and theosophical principles. Members have also visited lectures held by other societies and joined in the discussion.

A social meeting was held on Sunday evening and a large number of members and guests enjoyed the hospitality of the Dresden branch in its "Home."

M. R. SCHILDBACH, *Secretary to the Convention.*





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### THEOSOPHY AND CHRISTIANITY

The Theosophical Society recently celebrated its thirty-sixth birthday, and sedately entered its thirty-seventh year. Its life has been full of events, full of blessings for mankind; full also of discords and misunderstandings. Perhaps there has been deeper and more persistent misunderstanding concerning the theme of the present "Notes and Comments" than about any other subject in our checkered and tumultuous history. So that it may be fitting that a little anniversary sermon like this should be devoted to a consideration of the true relation between Theosophy and Christianity. On the one hand, nothing has done more to block our work and chill our welcome than confusion on this one point. On the other, nothing will do more to put new life into our movement than a real and complete understanding of the relations between these two great powers, so often held to be of necessity inimical to each other. Such a true understanding will mean an immense liberation of power, a crashing of the barriers which have long held us in check, a new period of positive and creative life.

Any complete account of Theosophy and Christianity the writer of these Notes does not pretend to be able to give. Any such claim would, in a mortal, be flat presumption, since so much of divinity went into the making of both, such a sweep of high powers and angelic forces, that none not of the immortals could comprehend or chronicle. But we make up in fidelity and close application for what we lack in breadth and soaring insight; we may attain results valid within their scope, though far from exhaustive, by sticking close to what we ourselves have verified; by taking illustrations from our own immediate experience.

The Theosophical Society has, as we said, entered its thirty-seventh year. The writer of these Notes first heard of the Society about the time it was celebrating its ninth birthday, and joined its ranks some six months

later. So that this little anniversary sermon will be based on an experience of many years, an experience extended, by the grace of Karmic opportunity, from the Ganges to the Pacific Ocean, and including immediate knowledge of all the outstanding persons who have helped to make the Society's eventful history.

With such an experience as basis, what generalization do we reach as to Theosophy and the general work and scope of the Theosophical Society? To the writer of the present Notes, the following generalization commends itself: The Theosophical Society is founded on a new conception of Truth, a conception at once so original and so novel, so simple and so deep, that it is small wonder that it has not been more universally recognized, that so many have held that the essence of our movement consists in something else, whether it be a doctrine or a system or a principle. Small wonder that so many, approaching the Theosophical Society with all kinds of preconceptions and mental crystallizations, have mistaken its purpose and foundation, and have plunged into activities and exertions which, to say the least of it, have not always tended to the growth and forwarding of the movement.

A new conception of Truth, at once deep and simple, far-reaching and fundamental. Let us illustrate by citing in contrast two older conceptions of Truth which have pretty well divided Christendom between them, these two thousand years. Take, for example, the Catholic system of theology, which, it has been held for centuries, gives a complete account of the universe, and which anyone not only may, but must, understand and accept, on pain of lasting punishment in both worlds. One comes close to the truth if one says that the general opinion of educated Roman Catholics would affirm that the whole of truth is contained in the books of Thomas Aquinas, the Angelic Doctor; and, more than that, whatever is not contained in these books is presumably false. The whole of Modernism is, indeed, nothing but a protest against that idea. The orthodox reaction against Modernism is practically an affirmation of the thought that the whole of Christian truth could be contained, and was contained, in the mind of a single man.

On the other hand, it was the firm belief of a great number of those who took part in the Reformation and in the religious movements that flowed out of it, that the whole of Christian truth, which meant the whole of the truth which any wise man would concern himself with, was contained in the mind and in the books, not of Thomas Aquinas but of John Calvin. And in either case this conviction was no mere pious opinion, which one had the option of holding or not holding. On the contrary, a failure to agree, and to affirm one's agreement, was a burning matter on either side, as Giordano Bruno and Servetus learned. In either case,

and in unnumbered martyrdoms, whether bodily or mental, there was the same fundamental thought: that truth is a simple thing, which can be known by a single mind, contained in a single book or a single head, and the deduction that failure to grasp and affirm this simple thing meant a moral rather than a mental deficiency.

But we of the Theosophical Society have our base on a principle in complete contrast with this. We do not hold that Truth, the whole of Truth, can be held in a single mind, stated by a single tongue, recorded in a single book. We hold rather, implicitly perhaps, for many of us, rather than as a fully realized opinion, that Truth can only be grasped when it is approached by many minds, from many points of view, working harmoniously together, yet each with its own original and independent vision. In the belief of the writer of these Notes, it is some such principle as this, some such conception of Truth, that is the vitalizing principle of the Theosophical Society and the Theosophical movement.

Take a simple illustration. Take one of those globes which are used to impress incredulous school-children that the earth is round, not flat. If one looks directly at London, one cannot see, let us say, Australia or the Pacific, or the Antarctic regions, or great spaces of America. On the other hand, if one looks at Mexico, the whole of Asia becomes invisible. Look down directly on the North Pole, and the equatorial regions and all below them vanish. Turn the globe over, and view the white continent of the South, and nearly the whole land surface of the earth disappears from view. No need to multiply illustrations. It is already quite clear that there is no single point of view from which one can see such a simple thing as a child's globe as it really is. Much more, there is no one point of view from which one can see its prototype, the big, round world. How, then, can any mind of man, looking from a single view-point, comprehend God's vast universe as it is, as God Himself beholds it in its mystery?

But if we had half a dozen observers looking at our child's globe, one viewing it from the North, another from the South, while the four others looked at four points on the equator, ninety degrees of longitude apart, and if we could combine their six views into a single complex consciousness, then, indeed, we should have something more nearly approaching a true view of the globe, a view of it as it really is, a view of its true and essential being.

Let that stand as a symbol of the Theosophical conception of Truth. We can only get a glimpse of the true, the real, a glimpse of essential Truth, when we gather together many views in one, taking them from points of view as diverse as possible, in as many lights as possible, with

widely contrasted observers, and then combining the whole into a harmonious composite picture, viewed by that composite, collective consciousness. For this purpose, to form this collective perceiving consciousness, we should have representatives of widely different races, since each race means a new insight into life and nature, a new opening through which the Great Mystery may be viewed. Widely differing temperaments and tempers should also be included, the whole range of human faculty, so that our orchestral range of perceiving consciousness might be complete, or, at least, as complete as might be, since some races, with their secrets, have vanished out of life.

But we can command many points of view: the analytic Western, the synthetic Eastern; the practical, the contemplative; the scientific, the devotional. And here we must allow ourselves a seeming digression, to consider the difference of view and faculty between men and women. It seems to us that there are three classes of human activities: those which men alone can accomplish, or which they can accomplish conspicuously better, such as a cavalry charge, or carrying bricks on a hod up a ladder, a job from which even militant suffragettes would shrink. Then there are things the two sexes can compass equally well, such as playing the organ, or tapping the typewriter. Then there are the things which women do conspicuously better than men; and we have not in mind the nurture of infants, which birds do, on the whole, quite as successfully, but rather such high matters as religious contemplation, holiness, the virtues of devotion and obedience. If we are right, women should have such experience of spiritual life, that they could speak of spiritual reality and spiritual law with the same certainty of touch with which men speak of physical reality and natural law; nay, should not only be able to speak of these things, but should live them, in splendid certainty of immortal life. Women, who nowadays are losing the secret of rearing mortal children, should be able to inspire the immortals, should build the "house not made with hands" with the same sure faith as the bricklayer, who rears the towering wall of the visible dwelling, laying not one brick amiss out of thousands. Woman should be able to preside over the birth, growth and development of the spiritual man, breathing into him devotion, and nurturing him with her prayers. Look out of the window at any city: men have set every brick and stone of every house in place. Where is the spiritual building of the women, planned and reared with like fidelity?

One need hardly ask the question. It is too patent to all eyes that women as a class, least of all the women of the Western world, not only have no sure knowledge of the birth, growth, life of the spiritual man, but they have no inkling that there is any such knowledge, or that it is their privilege, and their duty to possess it, while their failure to

recognize and supply this crying need, the deepest need of life, is one of the most disastrous elements in the condition of the world to-day. Would that even a few might see the futility, the fatuity, of duplicating the already fairly accomplished activities of men, and set themselves to the search after those high and holy things which they could do supremely well.

We need, therefore, for our ideal view of life, the executive-intellectual mind of man and the contemplative-spiritual soul of woman. Neither can at all be dispensed with, and, as we have already clearly said, the second is to-day far more grievously lacking than the first, with the resultant materialism which all decry, but few do much to remedy. The failure of women to do their part, to know and foster the life of the spiritual man, is the chief cause of our cheap view of life, our low ideals, our lack of inspiration, of devotion: our deficiency in all the qualities that should open to us the door of future promise. We need the two views, therefore, the masculine and the feminine, as we need the view of the transcendental Eastern and the dynamic Western mind, the thought both of simple races and of those most highly cultivated. All are necessary. All must be drawn together in a nucleus of collective consciousness, the supreme noëtic instrument for piercing the mystery of the Soul.

It is a truism of our day that the collective will, the energetic corporate entity, has proved itself immensely more powerful than the individual man. So much is this so, that, in this country to-day, there is but one problem among all parties: how to direct the corporate will so as to take advantage of its wonderful power, and yet to safeguard the individual against the encroachments and excesses of that power. All discussions of the Sherman law, the Trusts, labor unions, are but varying expressions of this one theme, which will fill the electoral declarations of all our parties during the coming year, and for many years.

We have in view a corporate noëtic instrument, a collective consciousness made up of many diverse elements, just as the collective will of many individuals forms the corporate productive instrument, and is by all recognized to be incomparably effective. And this purpose and intent, the formation of such a collective noëtic consciousness, has been implicit in the work of the Theosophical Society ever since its First Object was formulated. That Object is, "to form the nucleus of a universal brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed, caste, color or sex"; to form, in other words, a corporate noëtic instrument, of elements as varied, as sharply contrasted, as representative as possible, elements drawn from many races and creeds, men and women alike. An instrument which shall be as much more potent than the single seeking mind, as the Trusts are than their weak individual competitors.

For it is evident that the separate person has well nigh reached the limit of his noëtic power. Take an illustration. The trotting horse, after many years of careful selection and training, has at last succeeded in trotting a mile in about two minutes. It is practically certain that no horse will ever trot a mile in a minute and a half. The inherent limitations of the organism are against it. In the same way, the athletes have brought the time for running the hundred yards down first to eleven seconds, then, by a fifth of a second in a decade, to ten seconds, and to nine and four-fifths, with a contested record of nine and three-fifths. It is practically certain that no man will ever run a hundred yards in seven seconds. Again, the organism has inherent, insuperable limitations. So with the personal man, whether as a doing or a knowing power; he has nearly reached the end of his string.

Remains the noëtic power of the collective soul, a thing as real and definite as the dynamic power of the corporate will, the Trust so-called, which everyone recognizes, though, so far as we know, the Theosophical Society alone clearly speaks for the noëtic collective soul, and thus stands firm on the path of the splendid and inevitable future. And we may say, in parenthesis, that we have here a certain test, to distinguish between the central stream of the Theosophic Movement, and its overflows and backwashes. Where we see the noëtic collective soul understood and worked toward, there we have the true current of the Theosophical Society. But where we see the individual authority, whether it be the emotional enthusiast, or the watery-eyed psychic, who hops about on the teaching perch, and drools forth pretended revelations about lost or non-existent worlds, then we have the backwash, the imitation, the mere copy of by-gone and outworn years.

But let us consider the noëtic collective soul in action, beginning with a simple case. There are conditions, just as there are in the formation of a musical group, beginning with a string quartette and culminating in a symphony orchestra with a full choir. The first condition is, that each of those who go to make up the collective soul must have found himself or herself to some degree, must have found spiritual life, have found the soul. Students just beginning to finger the violin would not strengthen the quartette or the orchestra. Their time is not yet. So with the search for the soul. There must be stability, poise, some mastery of life, the power to swim amid the waves of the world.

Then there must be a proper subordination and adjustment of each to the collective soul. In the orchestra, some confusion would result, to put it mildly, if the French horn were suddenly smitten with a desire to play a solo, or if the bass drum, having composed a little piece of his own, determined offhand to favor the company with it. Solos are

admirable and beautiful in their place, but symphonic playing is not that place. Yet, in a sense, every one of the four-score in a full orchestra must have it in him to play a fairly decent solo, or he has no place there at all.

So with the collective soul which the Theosophical Society seeks to form, that "nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity" which is the supreme noëtic instrument of the future. And one may say, again in parenthesis, that this defined purpose is as different from vague general friendliness as that precise and definite thing, a symphony orchestra, is from a vague feeling that music is pleasant and delectable. There are, in both, quite simple, quite imperative conditions: first, that each member must be a valid, independent individual, faithfully obeying his own law; and, secondly, that these individuals must combine in a certain way, to form a collective power, which will be able to accomplish ends and attain results that no individual could conceivably reach.

So we have our valid individuals. Further, each must be willing to say what he really knows, and, as stuff of the conscience, abstain from saying what he does not know. To come to our simple instance. Not long ago, four people sought to put this method into practice, to form a collective consciousness, and therewith to come to some understanding and expression of the life of the soul. The first to speak was a man who had been deeply engaged in Church work, but, disappointed in his ideals, had given it up and plunged into practical charities. He said: "I believe spiritual life consists in service." The second speaker was a woman, blind, who had been tried in many afflictions. She said, "I believe spiritual life is joy." The third said: "Whenever I think of spiritual life, I feel myself immortal. It is like knowing that I am awake, hard to prove, yet the basis of everything. I believe spiritual life is immortality." The fourth speaker said: "I believe spiritual life rests on communion with the Masters, with the Master who stands immediately above each in the upward path of life." Thus did each say what he had of positive to say, abstaining from all negation, from saying things unexperienced or unknown.

Now gather these rays in a focus. Take the synthesis of these four expressions, the word of that collective soul: "Spiritual life rests on communion with the Master, it carries the consciousness of immortality, it fits for service and is full of joy:" a deep and luminous approach to the great Mystery, but to be gained only on the conditions stated. Thus, had each speaker allowed himself negative as well as positive statement, we might have had one saying: "Spiritual life is service, but has nothing to do with Masters or immortality;" or another adding: "Spiritual life means obedience to the Master, but that service is devoid of joy," thus mingling manifest truth with as manifest error.

Those who follow this way, vividly realize that each of us has only his part of truth. Priceless golden particles are in the hearts of others, of all about us, to be had for the asking. All must be gathered, to make the crown of life. But we must be ready to stand aside, to listen, to seek the other's truth, rather than to insist on our own truth. And this requires a high degree of detachment, of sympathy, of humility, first to keep ourselves back, and then to reach forth in heart, and veritably to receive and entertain the soul of the other, making his treasure ours, and doubling its value to him by our receiving it. For all spiritual powers are, like the quality of mercy, twice blest: to him who gives and to him who takes.

This power to stand aside and listen is so essential that it is worth illustrating abundantly. Take an instance, in this case a ridiculous one, that it may adhere the better in our memories. Let us suppose that one begins the day with a funny story, say such a one as this: "A cyclist was overtaken by dusk at a point where three roads met. In the gloom he saw a post with a dim inscription. He shinned painfully up the post, struck a match and read, 'Wet Paint!'" Not a bad story in its way; at least sufficient for our end. Let us suppose such a one, primed with his story, to meet a friend, likewise so primed, who button-holes him, and, with gurglings of premature mirth, exudes a story of his own. Now our first friend does one of two things: either he puts his own story aside, hiding it in his cheek, so to say, and, listening with all his ears, breaks forth at the climacteric moment of the other's story into happy hilarity, and so gains a tale and confirms a friendship; or, on the other hand, he knits his brows, and repeats to himself, with heart of gloom, "When will the idiot get done, so that I can tell him my story of Wet Paint, and reap admiration and praise?"

Pursue such a one through the day, and suppose him to meet a score of jovial friends, each rejoicing in a jest of his own, and eager to impart it. In the one case, our friend makes twenty men happy by his glad hearing of them, and adds twenty stories to his own original one; in the other, he returns at night to his domicile, sour and disappointed, leaving a trail of woe behind, and, as for his one story, with the paint pretty well rubbed off.

A trite instance, but a great truth, the perception of which gave birth to the definition: "A true gentleman is one who always laughs at your funny story, and never says he heard it before." In just the same way, one who goes forth of a morning, with some little spark of truth about life in his heart, may come home at night enriched with a score of new truths, and may, by his right hearing have added riches to the truth in a score of other hearts. For truth is ever enriched by right



hearing. But, to make the result more perfect, each one of the score should also profit by all the others, so that in each heart there might be a synthesis of many-sided truth. To accomplish this, we should have to gather the score together in a single assembly, so that each might speak forth the truth that is in him, and, even more vital, add to his own truth the truth in all the others, thus bringing the collective consciousness to bear, as many lamps are united in the gloom-piercing beam of a light-house.

This is exactly what should be done by a Branch of the Theosophical Society, which should be the field for the preparation and growth of a collective consciousness, a corporate noëtic instrument like a compound beam of light. And this is exactly what has been done, and is done at each meeting, by a Branch of the Theosophical Society, to which the inditer of these Notes has the honor to belong. That Branch, seeking the synthetic view of truth, has, in that way, most fruitfully studied many themes: for example, the New Testament, Buddhism, Hinduism, the religion of China, the aim and purpose of the Theosophical Society, as expressed in its Constitution and history, or as related to ethics, to science, to religion, to social life.

It will be a natural bridge to the second part of our theme, Theosophy and Christianity, if we consider some of the results reached by the Branch in question, when it came to study the New Testament and the Christian religion. We began with the documents. Taking a general view of them, from the standpoint of many temperaments, we came to see that they may be considered, among other ways, as being the record of many views, by men of widely contrasted temperament, of the towering figure of the Master whose inspiration gives the whole collection of documents their life. We have, for example, in the two letters of Peter, one view of the Master, given by the ardent and impulsive friend, who loved rather than understood; in the gospel of Matthew, we have the record of a man predisposed to legalism, by nature a theologian, with a tendency toward ecclesiastical speculation; in the gospel of John, the view of a born mystic, who both loved and understood, who was very close to the heart and consciousness of the Master; then secondary testimony, like that of Mark, a Cypriote and the cousin of Barnabas, who spent years with the first disciples at Jerusalem, while the great events and greater inspiration were still vivid in their minds and hearts; Mark gives us a simple, naturalistic view, limited by the limitations of his own mind; another secondary view is that of Luke, the man of letters, the eloquent biographer, whose sense of style has preserved for us such treasures as the parable of the Prodigal Son, with its wonderful climax: "I will arise and go to my father;" or that marvellous speech to Simon the Pharisee, which is the most eloquent antithesis in any lan-

guage: "Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." To Luke's fine literary sense we owe also the preservation of the story of the good Samaritan, and the Pharisee and the publican, with their masterly dramatic characterization of three universal human types.

To these we must add two views, the more important, because they form a link between the days of that Master's work in the world with his first disciples, and his later work, in the spiritual body, after he had laid the vesture of the flesh aside. First of these two witnesses is Paul, the fiery antagonist who was transformed into the fiery advocate by the touch of the Master himself, appearing to him in the spiritual body, on the Damascus road, and instructing him in detail of the Master's plan to open to the whole world the body of his disciples, which, up till that time, had been made up almost wholly of Jews, Galileans, men of his own locality, all speaking the same tongue. Paul's testimony shows how the Master came to him, and gave him clear, explicit instruction, first on the road to Damascus, then at Antioch, then at Corinth, when Paul was hard-pressed and well-nigh despairing, then at Jerusalem, when Paul was in instant danger of assassination, and finally at Rome, where Paul was on trial before the judgment seat of Nero: "At my first answer, no man stood with me but all forsook me: may it not be laid to their charge! Notwithstanding, the Master stood with me, and strengthened me."

Yet another witness, this time one of the Master's family, his younger brother James. The fourth evangelist lets us see that, even on the eve of the Master's last journey to Jerusalem, his brothers, with this James at their head, not only did not believe in his power or count themselves among his followers, but even mocked at his claims, taunting him, and daring him to go to Jerusalem to prove them. But very shortly after, when Paul visited Jerusalem for the first time after he had seen the Master near Damascus, we find this same James, the Master's brother, among the chiefest leaders of the disciples and their following; we find him equal in authority with Peter and John, the elder of the disciples and the beloved disciple, and even exercising a certain dominance over the impulsive and changeable spirit of Peter. Thus, at the Council of Jerusalem, when the question of opening the

assembly of disciples to those who were not Jews, whether by birth or conversion, was formally settled, the decision of the Council was declared, not by Peter, but by James, the brother of the Master.

Almost by accident we learn, from a chance phrase of Paul's, that, just as the Master had appeared in the spiritual body to Paul, so he had appeared, at an earlier time, and therefore very shortly after his death and resurrection, to his own brother James, the son of Joseph and Mary, and that this appearance had transformed the whole view, the heart and mind, of James, just as the more widely known meeting of the Master with Paul, on the Damascus road, transformed the heart and life of the future apostle of the Gentiles. So we have, in Paul's history and letters, the recorded view of one who knew the Master only in the spiritual body; while, in what we know of James, the Master's younger brother, we have the view of one whose sight had been at first obscured by his very closeness to the Master, who, for him, was literally the "prophet without honor among his own kin." And, from these seven records, made by men of widely different temperaments and characters, we can gain a synthetic view of the Master, as seen by their collective consciousness, and thus having a truth, a depth, a relief, a reality, which no single view could ever give. We have, in fact, just such a synthetic view as we suggested in the case of the globe of the world, viewed at once from the four points of the compass, from the zenith and nadir.

We therefore gain this great insight into our records of that Master: an insight which solves many of the difficulties raised by what is called the Higher Criticism. For example the critics of that school have held that the different views of the Master, presented in the records attributed to Mark, Luke, Matthew and John, represent four successive views gradually developed through a period of two or three generations; but we see that their differences are precisely such as we should expect when the same great personage is viewed simultaneously by four men of markedly different temperaments, which we have tentatively described as naturalistic, literary, ecclesiastical and mystical; just such differences as we constantly meet in the actual application of the Theosophical method, the operation of the noëtic collective consciousness.

Great as is the light which our collective noëtic method thus sheds on the figure of that Master as depicted by our records, the light which the same method sheds on his work is even greater. What do our records show that the Master did? He chose a group of disciples, drawing them forth from the multitudes who followed him, and requiring, as the necessary condition of his teaching, that they should turn from the worldly pursuits in which they were engaged, and come to him. Thereafter, for two or three years, he kept them constantly close to him,

taking them with him in his journeys up and down the road which stretches from Galilee, under the mount of Samaria, to Jerusalem. During the greater part of this time, the disciples walked with their Master, slept under the same roof with him, crossed the Galilean lake in the same fishing boat, ate with him at the same table, until that culminating supper which he made a symbol of his whole work and the order of spiritual life he established.

But he did more than bring the disciples outwardly near him, and make them share his daily life. He strove in all possible ways, and with marvellously patient iteration, to make them share the life of his thought, his hopes, his purposes also. "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven," he said to his disciples; and he repeated to them times without number the formulas in which he summed up his view of life, sentences such as this, "he that loveth his life shall lose it; he that hateth his life shall keep it unto life eternal." Thus he made them sharers of his intellectual life, so far as the limited development of their minds made that possible.

He did this, and something more. He sought in all ways to make them sharers in his life itself, the life of his soul, his spirit, his consciousness, his aspiration, his will. And this, not merely in the sense that he sought to make them feel and think the things which he felt and thought, but in a far deeper and more immediate sense; he sought to bring them into his very life, to make them share it from moment to moment, forming with him a single corporate life, a collective consciousness and will, of which his spirit should be the nucleus, and their spirits the component members. He sought to unite them so intimately with himself that his spiritual life-currents, the very life-blood of his soul, should flow through them from him, nourishing them and building up in them the common soul of which his soul should be the nucleus, the radiant center, the source and fountain of spiritual life.

It may be suggested that these are modern thoughts and views, and should not be read into the mind of a teacher who lived two thousand years ago, and had not the advantages of these our enlightened days. But what does he himself say on this great matter of the collective corporate life? What similes and illustrations does he use? Take such a metaphor as this: "I am the vine, ye are the branches. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing." Is not this a matchlessly eloquent simile for a collective corporate life, a shared consciousness and will, with one life current flowing through all? The Master gathering the power and life from the Father, the spiritual

world, bringing it to a centre in his heart, and thence pouring it forth through the collective life of which his soul was the nucleus, the souls of his disciples the members.

Take another illustrative metaphor which he himself used, an image striking, startling, shocking even, in the sense of shocking his hearers into aroused attention, so that their hearts might be opened to receive a stupendous truth quite foreign to all their former thought and life. This is the image: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." Is it not clear that we have here another expression for the same thought: a corporate being and life, made up of the Master and his disciples, with the same life-current flowing through all as the blood flows through the body, or as the sap flows from the stem to the branches of the vine, bringing forth first the velvet buds, then the tiny golden leaflets, then the delicate-scented blossoms, and at last the clusters of grapes. A collective life, a collective consciousness and will, with the soul of the Master as its nucleus, with the life-currents flowing from his heart and soul, inspiring and quickening the whole being.

But we can test the matter thus: Does that Master use expressions which necessarily signify the operation of a collective consciousness, a consciousness which he shared with his disciples? Most decidedly, he does. What else can be the meaning of such a sentence as this: "Abide in me, and I in you"; or of words like these: "Because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."

It is quite plain that the Master of whom we are speaking had not in view a material union, an external assembly of persons, however harmonious. He says himself: "My kingdom is not of this world"; and again: "It is the Spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing"; and once again, even more conclusively: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the

Spirit is spirit. Ye must be born again." And we may say that, in a certain sense, the necessity of making the disciples realize this was what made the Master's death inevitable; only the disappearance of his external form could bring them to realize his interior presence. That they did so is shown by our records, and notably by the testimony of two chief witnesses, Paul and James, the Master's brother, who show us the corporate spiritual life, the collective consciousness and will of which their Master was the nucleus, continued unbroken after his bodily death, and inspired and directed by him through the long years of Paul's ministry.

One point more. Does that Master lay down conditions, by compliance with which one seeking to be his disciple may enter that collective consciousness? He does, and with great precision. First, the turning toward him, just as the first disciples were asked to leave their worldly callings, to follow him. Second, complete obedience to certain rules of life which he laid down. "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." Third, as the fruit of this obedience, comes a sharing of the will and purpose of the Master. And, fourth, by sharing the will of the Master, we are by degrees inducted into his consciousness, so that we come to share that also, and take our place in the collective consciousness of which his life is the nucleus.

One may consider the work of that Master and his teaching either as a definite historical event, quite real and substantially as described in our records; or, on the other hand, we may view it as an ideal, a symbol of the laws and potencies of spiritual life. In either case, the practical result will be the same, since the four steps, attention, obedience, shared will, and shared consciousness, are the universal laws of spiritual life and growth, true two thousand years ago, true now, true for all time to come.

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*"Once bodies were offered to flames for man's uplifting. Now souls are bared that men may see the way to grow."*

BOOK OF ITEMS.

# FRAGMENTS

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THE Path to the Masters is the path of *likeness*; there is no other way to go. Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me." He spoke then as the Christ. Only as we conform ourselves to the Master's image can we come to know him—for by what sign or means shall we know that which is beyond the reaches of our consciousness? If he seems abstract, vague, is it not that he inhabits another world, utterly different and removed from our own? But so, mark you, only because of our limitations. For in reality he lives in the *same* world, sees the same sky and the same fields and flowers, only it is so much vaster and more luminous! As the stones and plants and animals live also in our world, each in their place and degree, but without sharing our consciousness; so we also in the Master's world see and yet not see, touch and yet never feel.

When we awake sufficiently to realize with St. Augustine that we are "afar off in a cloud of unlikeness," then we perceive the lack, the deficiency in ourselves; then we turn our faces toward him, and our hearts; then we have entered on the path; then, as we conform our minds, our acts to his, seeking to follow as he bids us follow, we learn to catch the flutter of his garment as he makes the turn before us; we see the fresh foot-prints in the path ahead, and tones of his voice are blown back to us, growing clearer as the distance lessens.

Seeking, seeking; conforming without lessening zeal—so eager is the search—we grow into that marvellous consciousness, partake of some small corner of it, and there know face to face communion with him, growing deeper, stronger, fuller day by day, as love and faith and obedience draw us closer to his heart, until at last no friend is so near as that friend, no communion so complete, no realization so vivid and so constant.

But the path is the path of *likeness*, for which we must strive with virile power. Only in unlikeness can we be afar off from a love so perfect as his.

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There is a wonderful story told of the Master,—a tradition of the Egyptian Lodge, which has many traditions of him. That once he was travelling in the desert with two disciples, and received the hospitality

of some Arabs. And when the evening came, and the stars were throbbing in the sky, he sat at the door of his tent and began to sing—he, the mighty musician, the Master of harmony. And a great hush fell. The Arabs crept up to hear him, drawing closer and closer, charmed by the power of that marvellous voice. To them it seemed that Israfel had come forth from the gateways of Paradise and descended in their midst.

With the magic of that sound the night was filled, so that the stars grew more luminous with listening, and the cool breath of the desert was alive with seraphs of folded wings. And he sang and sang until the listening world could bear its beauty no more; and there came a cry, wrung from its heart; and when the cry had lifted to the stars and was lost among them, lo! the Master had gone.

Since then they have sought him throughout the desert, the marvellous singer—those Arabs and their descendants, though they never speak of it. But there, where he stopped and sang not so many years ago, echoes can still be heard of the music he left,—undying music;—and across the evening sky, when the stars come out, long troops of angels travel, keeping sacred the very air that vibrates still to the lasting melodies he gave.

CAVÉ.



# SOME ASPECTS OF THEOSOPHY

AS SEEN BY A NEW MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY

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## INTRODUCTION

FULL fifty times did I try to write an introduction to this series; to explain and apologize for it; and more particularly to express my great indebtedness to the busy man who with patient self-sacrifice and surprising affection has given me of his time and rich stores of knowledge that I might learn something of Theosophy.

Forty-nine times I have failed but in the fiftieth I turned to the *Book of Common Prayer* (made truly available to me by these teachings), and in the Offertory Sentences have found just what I had tried to say and failed:

“Be merciful after thy power. If thou hast much, give plenteously; if thou hast little, do thy diligence gladly to give of that little: for so gatherest thou thyself a good reward in the day of necessity.” Tobit iv. 8, 9, and, paraphrased, “All things come of Thee, O Master, and of Thine own have we given Thee.”  
SERVETUS.

## I

### THE IDEAL

To enter upon Theosophy had become my desire. But how should I? The platform of the T. S. on which I was told to stand was broad enough to take in the whole world. What definite thing must I do to set me apart? The information I had gathered from talks and books was inspiring but it was so philosophical, so universal, so simple. Christ had said it all and so had every other great Teacher of the Moral Law. “Self-control; self-sacrifice; love” seemed to embody the whole of the fundamental principles. But any good man or good woman lived up to these. The very freedom of belief afforded me made me fearful. What was the hidden secret that I felt must exist to account for such lovely characters as I found in the membership? There must surely be some formalized creed and obligation; some marking one off as of an Order.

In my search for the real qualifications all impatiently I read again the few books given to me as a beginner and asked many more questions of those patient ones who were giving me light. I felt that I simply must put myself under the unknown Rule. I dared not trust myself alone. Despite the fact that all that I had learned of Theosophy was giving reality to, and at last making something really acceptable and truly

illuminating of the Christian teachings I had received since childhood—still I wanted something more. Then after continued searching and re-searching I felt that actually I had found a real and imperative mandate. On pages 73 and 74 of *Fragments* I found:

“The first thing a Theosophist should do is *to form an ideal*, not a vague, far-away something, which he may half regretfully, half complacently believe to be impossible of attainment; but a definite, clear-cut object, varying, of course, according to the temperament and character of the man who makes it. What it is matters not, so long as it be higher and better than that which he has and is—and so long as he concentrates the full power of his nature upon its realization. As the man so working attains this ideal, he will find growing out of it another correspondingly higher, and so on indefinitely—as far as human thought can reach. In this manner a steady, consecutive growth will be ensured. He will not be one of those giant weeds that spring up in the night, only to wither when the noonday sun pours full upon it. The ideals of too many are so: born of emotion alone, nourished in a psychic hot-bed, and usually a source of gravest danger if not of ultimate destruction. Nature works slowly and surely, not by leaps, and we have been told to study nature and work with her. The cases we see of sudden unfoldment are those where growth has already taken place, and the soul, with all its stores of knowledge and experience, attained in the past, finally succeeds in commanding the personality. Those of us who believe in Masters and look to them as perfected men, have an ideal already formed to work towards; those who do not, can find innumerable types of noble and elevated thought, character and life. But the main point is that the ideal must be clearly defined, ardently desired and unflinchingly striven for. And in the fullness of time the step attained, he will see that ‘wherever we stand there are always higher peaks of effort still towering beyond, lost in the mists of cloud’; as one who has traveled this path has sent us back word.”

Here was comfort. Thrice welcome the deliberate and specific direction along the path!

How easy too—but, the ideal must be “definite.” Very good and certainly simple—I would serve humanity; my life should be devoted to all mankind. But how? That question must be answered if one was to “consecrate the full power of his nature upon its realization.” Upon consideration it became apparent that this could not be true of so huge and amorphous a subject. With a sense of vanishing pleasure I decided to limit my “ideal.” To get the right result I should be content to take up work for boys. It was most enjoyable to let worldwide schemes of a great work dance past my happy mind in a succession of gorgeous colors. I soon began to plume myself upon already being the great benefactor of the coming generations. This ideal certainly went “as far as human thought can reach.” Then, suddenly, I recalled

that this phrase of praise did not apply to me. It described a later stage and that a growth, not a newborn fancy. Painful though the process, it was certain that I must again draw in my ideal. "The boys of America" was as broad a field as I could venture to undertake. But the internal dissatisfaction was not lulled. Upon re-reading again the instructions, the statement "Nature works slowly and surely, not by leaps" stuck out. It also told me to be natural above all things. So great a project might be a characteristic concept but I had to confess it would not be natural.

The shrinkage of my ideal was resumed—perhaps I would better begin by devoting myself to the boys of New York. This vision was enticing and great were the institutions I imagined and great the power for good that I felt I would prove.

It was a little difficult to know where to begin. Especially, as I can now see, that I merely read and did not accept the solemn admonition: "But the main point is that the ideal must be clearly defined, ardently desired and unflinchingly striven for." I was too busy just then with my vision to bother with such realities! Friends of mine were interested in some church work in the city. One consecrated man was in charge. I sensed his consecration but dismissed the thought for I felt that in comparison with me he lacked practicality. So, when opportunity came, I tried to steer him on the proper course by patronizing advice. I can now see that it was only the combination of the Christ-qualities of gentleness and humor that kept him from slaying my conceit (if not me!) on the spot. I suspect he knew what would come. He listened patiently and, pending the adoption of my more ambitious plans, suggested that I try a class of boys. I felt it a waste of time for one with such a great work to do as I had, to undertake so elemental a task, but he craftily suggested that it would give me a chance to obtain local knowledge of his particular problem, and, thinking that this would enable me to advise him the better, I undertook to give twelve lessons in a certain practical science to twelve older boys.

The one thing I do not understand is why the resultant disintegration of the class could not have maintained a more perfect "curve," as the engineers say, for if only one boy had stayed until the last session I would have lost exactly one boy, on the average, for each lesson, but the last two regulars failed to show up for the eleventh lesson and the twelfth meeting is yet to be held!

I had been so busy with my vision of a great ideal, so conceited in my confidence in my own ability to do anything unaided and without thought of the motive, that I had done no work of preparation, and my boys had found me out. Having nothing to give them they refused to waste their time, even if I were willing to waste mine. It came over me, as I sat alone at the eleventh session, waiting for the two regulars who never came, that perhaps my "ideal" of service was not even one of those "innumerable types of noble and elevated thought, character

and life," given as an alternative standard. It had been ignoble to undertake the work in a spirit of patronage, coupled with the feeling that I was wasting my talents. It had not been elevating for the boys for their teacher to run in gaily from his club, not knowing what he was to talk about or else bringing some conscripted friend of scientific attainments to talk over the young men's heads. I had not given much "thought" to the subject, certainly not "character" and I had never really considered giving them anything, to say nothing of my "life"!

My palaces of delight had crumbled one after another and had kept on a-crumbling until now my last cherished ideal was a chaotic ruin. Worse yet, my consideration had now been turned to my own limitations and I did not dare even to desire a smaller class of smaller boys to work with and to work for. Had I no ideal?

Then began my first real thinking as a student of Theosophy, and its outcome was that I realized that I had made myself in various forms my own ideal. I had been vain. Worse yet, I had been stupid. I had not recognized that I had only decked myself in gay costumes for my own empty amusement. I was mortified. I was discouraged. Yet somehow I could not give up the search for an ideal. I wanted, I craved the view of those "always higher peaks of effort still towering beyond, lost in the mist of clouds." Was that great vision never to be mine?

"Then out of the darkness came a light; out of the stillness a voice." If under the very first test I had failed to qualify in Theosophy there was still something left to me. I could, at least, try to live up to the teachings I had received. As I reviewed these they focussed into the decision that I should attempt to help someone else and I seemed, somehow, to know and to know with surety that that "someone" was an older member of my own family who had never had all the happiness her beautiful life had merited. I would give up dreams of Theosophical attainment and quietly seek to give her such happiness as lay in my power.

Then it came to me that in that thought I had an ideal. Yet the ideal was merely to do my nearest, surest, simplest duty. Apparently to enter upon Theosophy the first step was to forget self; to be simple; "and to do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call me."

I had taken my step toward Theosophy.

## II

### RELATIONS WITH LIFE

At last I dared to consider that I had entered upon Theosophy. There were few newer, none cruder, but I, too, was a member on the roll of the T. S.

I had entered a new Service, joined a new Command. How would

this affect my relations with life? Of all my readings so far, that of Oriental trend had made the first appeal. How satisfactory it would be to give up all—work, caste, family and ambition, and just enjoy the marvelous philosophy slowly unfolding before me. How lucky the men of the East who could turn from things mundane to the World of Mind and, passing through that, enter into the World of the Soul. How I did envy Purim Dass the privilege to become Purim Bhagat and to give up the Star of India for a begger's bowl.

But Gradgrindian facts barred the way. To say nothing of climatic limitations and the American inability to differentiate between a wandering holy man and a commonplace "hobo," I had responsibilities not easy to put aside. Then a kind (and ever since beloved) friend had the courage among other things to tell me that such dreamings were "but the subtlest forms of self-indulgence." A cold water douche when one has been drugged is never pleasant but it does wake one up and later is appreciated with gratitude. So I set aside the drugging temptation of contemplating such unwisdom. Were such a life to be for me the opportunity would have been given me.

But the effect of the drug lingered and the illusion took the form of considering the possibility of becoming an anchorite with all the latest Twentieth Century improvements. I would go through life and work an untroubled automaton, as really removed from contact with or response to the life about me as if I were in the Desert or in the recesses of those mountains I miss but know not. Neither business duties nor kith nor kin should hamper my Soul's development.

Fortunately before I crystalized in this absurdity I began to sense that to learn aught of Theosophy one must turn back to Christ, our great Master, and, while I was almost lamenting aloud my sad lot as a business man in a great city with family duties, there came the recollection of the attempt to trap our Lord by asking him about the tribute to Cæsar. I looked up His answer (Matthew xxii, 17) and read: "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's" This seemed to be a special message for my need. The more I sought the meaning of this teaching the clearer it became. The Master had unflinchingly accepted His own lot, recognized His own limits of circumstance, respected the Law and His own status and had never sought to better or change the situation for more seemingly favorable surroundings for His accomplishment. If He did all this and did not even refuse the bitter cup how dared I not accept my easy limitations!

"Limitations" did I call them! It came over me that they were blessed opportunities. I saw that with even a little of Theosophy I should have been a better lover and husband, and that I yet could be a better son, brother, father, employé and citizen. I knew then that I was put here this time to work for my own ultimate development and how

unalterably foolish to cast aside the tools placed ready at my hand to sigh for those not deemed as helpful for my task.

The "Universal Brotherhood" doctrine now first appeared as sane and practicable. I was to "love my neighbor as myself," but I must also accept my own lot and station. Since I was a son, a brother, a father, it would not be acceptance of my lot to care less than I did care for those dear ones allotted to me. The doctrine simply meant that I must not harm others but should consider and care for them as well as for my family and not seek to separate myself from any other through hate. It came as an inspiration that the Universal Brotherhood of course included my own family and that to neglect them would be to break the tenets of the doctrine!

Before joining the T. S. I had heard that occultism invariably destroyed family ties and remitted family duties. Now that I had joined the T. S. I rejoiced to find this popular fallacy utterly and inexcusably wrong and that I was to be enabled to love the more and to do the more for those belonging to me. How clearly compatible this was with the acceptance of the Universal Brotherhood. It is the law of life that each shall serve and fend for his own. If I failed in this loving task what right had I to expect some Brother to give up his allotted work in order to do mine? It all came down to a question of motives—what worse selfishness, and of the most forbidden kind, to hurt another for the sake of trying to develop one's Soul?—one's parents, brothers, sisters, children are of the Brothers—why be heretically separate against them alone!

Then I found that theosophical thinking, studying, listening, were helping me surprisingly in my business relations and efficiency. The killing of the snake of self and the acceptance of others as my brothers has proved a hard, hard task from the beginning. But from the beginning I have found that the effort to do my duty has helped me to think straighter, work harder, and get on better with others.

After the beneficial reaction upon my business situation had become noticeable to me I became frightened, fearing lest I was losing ground spiritually, and I turned in panic to my friend and patient teacher for relief and advice. "Of course you will be helped in all ways so long as you seek only the Path, but beware lest you seek the help for sordid or selfish motives. Not only will you not get what you try for, but you will lose more than it and suffer much until you learn the lesson."

Then from his associate came the word that "the Master's work is here" and that so long as I worked solely for and only by the Master and was ever, ever on guard as to the righteousness of motive; ceaselessly watching that my motive was not selfish or self-advancement in any form; that most certainly the growing power I would gain would help me in every way, even in the market place, if that were to be for my good.

So, in my earliest stage as a member of the T. S. I learned that I would be helped in every way in each and all of my relations with life just so long as (and no longer than) I was in truth a seeker after Theosophy, and not merely masquerading as one.

### III

#### “WHEN IS MOTHER COMING BACK?”

“There is no problem of life and its relations which a Theosophical attitude will not solve.” Once this would have sounded ridiculous—as either an exaggeration or as fanaticism. Yet that it is neither, the veriest tyro soon finds. Take our attitude toward the death of a loved one. What shall it be? Is there a greater problem, even to those reared most carefully in the ordinary Christian family? Yet that may be answered by the student of Theosophy; the follower of Christ’s real teachings. This at least is the conviction that comes to one as the result of the earliest advance that a student is enabled to make. When so many worthy people, even older priests, are silenced how dare any one speak? Because a little child can lead him.

The smoothest lying, the most ingenious fictions had failed to satisfy the little boy when his mother had died. For a time he had fretted; for two months he had questioned; and for a month he had been silent. “Comforted at last,” said the wiseacres. But the little body had been growing frailer and the little nerves more sensitive—painfully so. But the child had “accepted the inevitable.” Had he? In the stillness of the night he suddenly waked his father with unusual and hysterical sobbing. The little voice wailed in the darkness, “When is Mother coming back? When is Mother coming back?” What was the father to do? Relatives had advised to deceive the child with statements that his mother had gone away “to get well,” the earlier stage of the lying, and the later was to be indefinite and to lead the child’s mind off the subject and in time his recollection would be dimmed and finally he would be comforted (calloused?). This policy had evidently failed. The little boy, not yet five years old, had felt the falsehood. Until that instant the father had not accepted the doctrine of reincarnation, but in that moment of trial, in the mystery of the night, fearful lest his child should suffer into sickness, his own mind was clarified. Two recollections came to him and though different yet they were one. The first was the Order for the Burial of the Dead, last read from the *Book of Common Prayer*, over the body of the boy’s mother. The second was of the answers from time to time of his friend and teacher to his questions; questions not consecutive or always pertinent yet now the scattered answers came as one, and that one the same that St. Paul gave the Corinthians in his pæan of the victory over Death.

So, the father told his little boy the truth ; that his mother was not coming back but that the boy could some day go to her. From Oriental phraseology he caught the thought of the distinction between the "I" (the really truly little boy) and "his" body, "his" mind. The discarding of the body terrestrial for the body celestial was explained in simple terms, mostly Biblical, and it was explained that this often happened and would happen to the boy and his father. The interminability of the current church teaching of a single incarnation was avoided by the explanation of reincarnation. That God had called his mother to let her rest between bodies was plain to the child and comforting, especially after he had been reminded of how he took off his clothes before he went to sleep and put on fresh, clean clothes in the morning before he started to play. It had been thought that he had been guarded from knowledge of death, yet it came out in the confidences of the dark that he had seen a little dog which had been killed, was "dead" and that he had caught a whisper or had guessed that his mother was stiff and cold. That was the horror that had been eating into his little life. When he found that it was only his mother's body that had died his fear vanished.

At first he wanted to go to his mother at once and repeatedly since he has wished for "a new body" when hurt or not well, but the fear of death has departed. What reconciled him to waiting was not avoidance or forgetfulness but the analogy that his father and other men worked and that he wanted to grow up and do his work before he could "go to God," or "go to sleep and rest with mother," his two descriptions of Devachan or Paradise. This satisfied him, since he had been trained to put his toys away and do his other "work" before he could go to sleep, however much he had wanted to when tired. He prays for his mother and prattles of her. To him death is but a sleep, something that often happens and is not to be feared.

The little boy is now more robust than ever before. He is less nervous. He really tries to get to sleep sooner ; to keep up his day time naps, which his playmates of his own age have abandoned, and to eat what is given him so that "my body shall grow big and strong" for the work "I am going to do before I can go to Mother." Attempts to move him by reciting "his" needs and "his" appetite had failed but the spirit of fair play toward the needs and appetite of "his" body seemed to appeal to him. Relatives had feared a morbid turn of mind from such disclosures but the happiness of the conviction that his dear mother still lives, that God needs her for other work in her next body and is letting her rest now and the assurance that some day they will be together have made the little fellow happier and stronger. But the outraged feelings of worthy people who call themselves Christians and yet regard Death as defeat rather than victory, as Terror rather than Peace, have reacted on the child until he rarely and then only with reserve will say anything of his creed and convictions. He still has the abiding comfort of his own



knowledge that all is well and that "mothers don't die, only their bodies" —the simple remark that shocked one of the worthiest of his mother's friends into open denunciations that puzzled and silenced the child.

If the desire to fit his body for work and to get his work done so that he can get to his mother and the feeling that death is a commonplace helped a little child, why not a man?

"Thou turnest man to destruction: again thou sayest, come again, ye children of men." Thus the Burial Service reads; thus the student of Theosophy early learns to believe.

#### IV

#### THE REACTION FROM ONE ASPECT

One evening a connection who had just heard that I had joined the T. S. sent for me. I could not see why but after noticeable hesitancy and indirection the evening ended in the following dialogue:

"You are a Churchman?"

"I try to be; I was so baptised, educated and confirmed; and I so believe."

"You are doing some work in connection with one of the Parishes in town?"

"I have that privilege and pleasure."

"How then can you call yourself a Theosophist?"

"I don't. I hope to be one. I am, however, now only a new member of the Theosophical Society and a student of primary Theosophy."

"Well, I don't see how you can possibly call yourself a Christian and be that!"

Yet that able, charming, sincere and devout young woman has been for years active in the church and an almost daily reader of those two great Theosophical repositories, the Bible and the *Book of Common Prayer*.

But I can appreciate from my own experience how shocked she would have been had I ventured to tell her that my very first studies in Theosophy had revived my moribund Christian faith, had shown me the verity of Christ's teachings; had convinced me of the sincerity of His repeated promises to continue His work for His children, and so led me to believe that He is even this day at work in our behalf.

The physical jar, the brutal physical shock I suffered when I first heard Christ calmly accepted as a present-day Actuality with Individuality is still too fresh and painful a recollection for me ever, I hope, to be impatient with members of Christian bodies who recite Theosophical teachings and truths and know it not. Yet shocked though I was, I believed as I listened, racked and torn (and this, most emphatically, was not the same or in any way similar to the familiar evangelical conversion) and this acceptance on my part was one of the very first fruits of my preliminary studies in Theosophy.

SERVETUS.

# THE DOGMA OF THE VIRGIN BIRTH

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“A certain woman lifted up her voice, and said unto Him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee. . . .

“But He said, Yea, rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.”

THE trial of an American clergyman for views held heretical concerning the Virgin Birth of Jesus is in all our memories. And it seems that this is the type of question which will serve as a rallying cry for all those who uphold the letter of the law; that the acceptance of such doctrines as the Virgin Birth will be a test of Orthodoxy for some time to come.

As a student of religion, especially in that vast Orient whence so much of religion has come, I am persuaded that the position of the prosecutors in the trial to which I have alluded rested on a misunderstanding, a materialization of a spiritual truth; that they have misapprehended the nature and meaning of the doctrine of the Virgin Birth, and, therefore, that the clergyman whom they condemned was the victim of a judicial error, based, shall we say, on a wrong construction of the statute.

I think the truth is, that the dogma of the Virgin Birth, far from being in any sense peculiar to Christian theology, is of universal extent and of vast antiquity. It is more than a supernatural event in the life of Jesus. It is really an integral part of a much wider doctrine, a doctrine fundamental to all religion: the doctrine of the Incarnation of the Divine Man.

The universality of this teaching is suggested by Rev. R. J. Campbell, when he writes: “the idea of a divine Man, the emanation of the infinite, the soul of the universe, the source and goal of all humanity, is ages older than Christian theology. It can be traced in Babylonian religious literature, for instance, at a period older even than the Old Testament. . . . This aspect of the nature of God has been variously described in the course of its history. It has been called the Word (Logos), the Son, and, as we have seen, the second person of the Trinity. For various reasons I prefer to call it—or rather Him—the eternal Christ.”

It has long seemed certain to me that there is a connection between Babylonian religious literature and the hymns of the Rig Veda. Be this as it may, we find the doctrine of the divine Man very eloquently set forth in the Vedic hymns. Thus the *Purusha Sukta* declares:

“ . . . Such is his greatness; the divine Man is yet greater—  
 “The universe of creatures is one part of his being,  
 “Three parts are immortal in the heavens.

“From him was born the Word. From the Word was born Spiritual Man.

“When the Powers, making the divine Man the offering, accomplished the sacrifice,

“Spring was the oil, Summer was the fuel, Autumn was the oblation.

“From this sacrifice, where he who is the world became the offering, all things were born. . . .

“The Powers, accomplishing the sacrifice, bound the divine Man as sacrificial victim.

“These were the first religious rites. . . .”

The thought is, that the Logos, through self-sacrifice, became manifest as the created universe, in every particle of which the Logos lives and moves. This Incarnation of the divine Man in the world must be distinguished from the pantheism which sees Deity immersed and absorbed in the universe. For “the universe of creatures is one part of his being; three parts are immortal in the heavens.” These three parts are the three divine Persons: Creator, Preserver, Regenerator, in the One Eternal.

#### THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF OSIRIS

The Incarnation of the divine Man through sacrifice was the religion of ancient Egypt. The central figure of the teaching was Osiris, in the ages before the dynastic kings. Osiris, or Hesiri, was the son of the goddess Nut, and a double paternity, human and divine, was attributed to him. At his birth, a divine voice rang out, proclaiming that “the Lord of all has come into the world.”

During the eight and twenty years of his life, Osiris brought civilization and culture to Egypt, teaching the people the use of corn and the vine, which thus came to be associated with his worship. He left Egypt to carry his message to other lands, and we find independent traces of his teaching in the oldest records of the Euphrates valley. On his return to Egypt, he was ensnared by Set, “the serpent,” slain, and enclosed in a coffin, which was set adrift on the Nile. After long search, his body was found by Isis, or Hes, his sister-wife. Isis opened the coffin, and laid her face on the face of Osiris, kissing him and shedding tears.

Set again seized the body of Osiris, and cutting it into twice seven fragments, cast it into the Nile. Isis found the fragments, bound them together with bandages, and fanned the cold form with her wings.

Osiris was restored to life, and reigned as king of the dead, and judge of souls.

The Egyptians saw in the resurrection of Osiris the evidence of life beyond the grave: "as surely as Osiris lives, shall we live also." Osiris is at once the type of the divine Man incarnated primordially in the world, his body being cut up by the serpent of Matter, and scattered through the world; and also the divine Man definitely incarnated in Egypt for the good of mankind, offering his body as a sacrifice, and rising from the dead. He is an Avatar, a divine Incarnation, not only in the cosmic, but also in the human sense. And we find that every spiritual manifestation of religion rests on the same thought of a definite divine Incarnation in human form; the history of every religion is that of a slow decline from the pristine teaching of the incarnate divine Man.

The bas-reliefs of Dendera show Osiris lying swathed on the bier, then gradually raising himself till he stands upright. An ancient inscription declares that: "He gave his body to feed the people; he died that they might live." We are told that Apis, the symbol of the life of Osiris, was born through a divine conception, the impregnation of a divine power. Apis was, therefore, in the symbolical sense, a Virgin Birth.

#### THE INCARNATION OF KRISHNA

The *Purusha Sukta* depicted the divine Man putting forth the power called the Word, and then causing himself to be born through the Word as spiritual Man. In other words, the Logos, through his own divine power, becomes manifest as the soul. This is the heart of the religion of ancient India.

In the long centuries before the birth of Buddha, when the Three Persons of the Trinity had come to be called Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva—Creator, Preserver, Regenerator—the divine Man, who was considered as related in a special way to the Second Person of the Trinity, was called "the Lord." The Lord manifested himself through the power of Maya, the feminine Word. This was his Virgin Birth. The Lord causes Maya to bring him forth, and is himself the child who is brought forth. Thus Maya comes to be symbolised as the Mother of the Lord.

As in Egypt, we have also the particular incarnation of the Logos in human form, the incarnation in India being Krishna, son of Devaki. Krishna is now recognised as a historical person, born several centuries before the Buddha, who was born six centuries before Christ. The incarnation of Krishna was twofold. First, there was the Virgin Birth of the Logos, the Lord, through Maya personified as a goddess. Then there was the human birth of the same Lord, as Krishna, son of Devaki, the wife of Vasudeva. This was a normal human birth, yet it was attended with signs and wonders, which are eloquently described by the *Vishnu Purana*: "on the day of his birth, the heavens were irradiated with joy. The winds were hushed. The seas made murmurous music,

as the spirits of heaven sang." The voice of an angel sounded in the father's ears, warning him that the child must be taken away, to escape the wrath of the tyrant Kansa, who sought to slay him. The tyrant, enraged at the child's escape, ordered a slaughter of all new-born children, of two years old and under. Krishna escaped this slaughter, and lived to become a great teacher, later revered as the incarnation of the Second Person of the Trinity.

#### THE BIRTH OF THE BUDDHA

Several centuries later, and some six hundred years before the birth of Jesus, was born Siddhartha the Compassionate, also esteemed a divine Incarnation. The Buddhist scriptures, Sanskrit and Pali, tell the story with great beauty. I shall try to summarise their narrative.

The Lord, who was to be born as the Buddha, "the Awakened," is depicted as dwelling in heaven, and perceiving that the time had come for him to be born among men, for the salvation of the world, he chose the family of king Suddhodana, in the ancient city of the sage Kapila. "The mother of a Buddha is one who has kept the precepts unbroken from the day of her birth. Now this queen Maya is such a one; and she shall be my mother." Maya the queen falls asleep and in a dream is caught up into Paradise. There she beholds the future Buddha miraculously entering her womb. She awakes and tells her dream. The wise men declare that she has divinely conceived, and that a son will be born to her "who will roll back the clouds of sin and folly from the world." At the moment of her conception, a great light spread through all the world, the blind received their sight, the deaf heard, the dumb spoke, flowers bloomed everywhere, heavenly music was heard in the sky, and the fires of hell were quenched.

Angels guarded queen Maya with drawn swords, until her time was fulfilled. Then she desired to return to her father's home. Between the two cities was a grove of sal trees, and at this time the grove was a mass of flowers, with birds singing among the branches. When queen Maya, passing on her way to her father's house, beheld it, she desired to enter the grove to gather flowers. Going to the foot of a mighty sal tree, she stretched out her hands toward a branch. The branch bent down to her hand, and formed a canopy of leaves round her. Then the birth-pains came upon her. Four angels received the future Buddha as he was born, and bathed him with streams of miraculous water. Then placing him before his mother, the angels said: "Rejoice, O queen, a mighty son has been born to you!" The future Buddha strode forward seven paces, and said, with a noble voice: "The chief am I in all the world!" The aged saint Kaladevala came to see the new-born babe, and rejoiced over him, lamenting also that he would not live to see his full glory.

There is also a noteworthy passage: "A womb that has been

occupied by a future Buddha is like the shrine of a temple, and can never be used again. Therefore the mother of the future Buddha died when he was seven days old, and was reborn in heaven."

Here the two elements of the Incarnation are blended together. The divine Maya becomes queen Maya, and the divine birth is blended with the human birth. Yet we have the conception in Paradise, as well as the birth on earth.

Herodotus notes that the Greek story of Dionysus almost exactly repeats the Egyptian teaching of Osiris. In the same way Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador to India, identifies an Indian hero, who seems to be Krishna, first with Dionysus and then with Hercules. Hercules in his turn finds his prototype in ancient Babylon. We thus see that all these divine Incarnations, "goddess-born," who "bruise the head of the serpent," are but different presentations of a single idea.

In western Asia, which was influenced both by Babylon and Egypt, we find several versions of the same primeval teaching, often materialised and overladen with sensuous details, yet recognisably the same in origin. In Syria, the doctrine of the divine Man attached itself to Adonis, whence the rites of Adonis reached Greece. In Phrygia the corresponding divine personage is the hero Attis, and circumstances decided that the worship of Attis should have a marked influence on the religious ideas of Rome.

#### THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF ATTIS

Dr. J. G. Frazer has learnedly set forth the history of Attis, in his recently published book: *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*. He shows that Attis was said to have been a fair young shepherd, beloved of the mother of the gods. His birth was miraculous. His mother Nana was a virgin, who conceived through the power of a sacred tree. The priests of Attis "made themselves eunuchs" in honor of their divinity.

The worship of Attis was brought to Rome at the time of the great struggle with Carthage, two centuries before Christ. At the vernal equinox a pine-tree, cut in the woods, was brought to the sanctuary, and decked with violets. The effigy of Attis was tied to its stem.

On the next day, the "Day of Blood," the effigy of Attis was buried. Late in the evening, "the tomb was opened; the god had risen from the dead; and, as the priest touched the lips of the mourners with balm, he softly whispered in their ears the glad tidings of salvation." The next day, March 25, was a public festival in honor of the resurrection.

The sanctuary of Attis and his divine mother was on the Vatican hill, and St. Jerome tells us that the traditional birthplace of Jesus was a cave shaded by a grove sacred to Adonis. It is further noteworthy that in Phrygia and Gaul, and even for a time in Rome, Easter was celebrated on March 25, being thus a fixed solar feast, instead of a movable lunar feast, as Easter now is, in conformity with the Jewish

Feast of the Passover. There is also an intimate connection between the celebration of December 25 and the Mithraic festival of the birth of the sun-god.

#### THE NATIVITY OF JESUS

This brings us to the nativity of Jesus, and the Virgin Birth as a Christian dogma. Let us first consider the negative side of the question.

To begin with, Jesus himself, though clearly affirming his divine incarnation and divine parentage, makes no mention of a miraculous human birth. On the contrary, when the woman cried out: "Blessed is the womb that bare thee!" we find Jesus replying: "Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it." In exactly the same way he says: "Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? . . . whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." It cannot, therefore, be said that Jesus lays stress on the Virgin Birth, as a necessary article of belief, nor indeed does he ever suggest such a doctrine.

In like manner neither John nor Paul nor Peter have anything to say of the Virgin Birth, either as an article of faith or even as a tradition, though Paul had an admirable opportunity to do so, for example, when he wrote to the Galatians: "When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law." It is noteworthy that Paul does not write: "made of a virgin," and we know that this epistle is an autograph. Peter also speaks of birth through "incorruptible seed," through the Word of the living God, but refers to the regenerate in general, and not in any special way to the physical birth of Jesus. And John, though writing of "the Word made flesh," says nothing of Virgin Birth in the material sense. The same is true of James, "the Lord's brother," and of Jude "the brother of James."

The only references in the New Testament to the Virgin Birth, as a material fact in the history of Jesus, are in the passages, Matthew I, 18-25, and Luke I, 26-38. The verses in Matthew immediately follow the genealogy of Joseph, whose father is said to have been Jacob, and who was descended from King David through Solomon. We are told that: "the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. . . . Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel."

The reference is to Isaiah VII, 14. Literally, the Hebrew reads: "Behold, the young woman shall conceive, and shall bear a son." On this passage Prof. Toy writes: "The rendering 'virgin' is inadmissible. The Hebrew has a separate word for 'virgin.'" He further points out that a definite historical event, in the eighth century before Christ, is

referred to, and that there is no allusion in it to a future time of prosperity for Judah.

In Luke, the essential part of the story is contained in verses 34-35 of the first chapter: "Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing that I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

Only in the third chapter of Luke do we find the genealogy of Joseph. But here the father of Joseph is called Heli, and his descent is derived from David not through Solomon but through Nathan. The occurrence of the genealogy as late as the third chapter of Luke suggests that this gospel originally began with that chapter, thus starting at the mission of John the Baptist, as the second and fourth gospels do. Similarly, the verses 18-25 of the first chapter of Matthew might be omitted without in the least breaking the continuity of the narrative. This is exactly what we should find, if the passage were a later insertion.

#### THE BROTHERS OF THE LORD

It would seem, therefore, that, with the exception of these two short passages, which bear some evidence of being later additions, we find no allusion to the Virgin Birth, as a material fact in the life of Jesus, in the canon of the New Testament. The real home of that doctrine is in the apocryphal gospels.

There we find the doctrine set forth at great length, and with a multitude of details, to some of which we shall presently recur. It is very significant that, at the same time, we find the appearance of a cognate doctrine, that of the "perpetual virginity" of Mary, which presently becomes of primary importance. As the emergence of this latter doctrine sheds much light on the later insistence on the material Virgin Birth, we may briefly examine it here.

What have the canonical books of the New Testament to say as to Mary's "perpetual virginity"? Bearing on this question, we have such passages as this, in Matthew: "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us?" The parallel passage in Mark reads: "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us?" Luke also speaks of "the mother and brethren" of Jesus, though without citing the latter by name. John has a noteworthy passage, in which the brethren of Jesus rather ironically urge him to go up to Jerusalem, and show his works publicly. In the Acts, we have the mention of Mary the mother of Jesus and his brethren. And finally we have Paul speaking of James "the Lord's brother," and also of "the brethren of the Lord." I am inclined to think that the



mother of Jesus is referred to by Luke, as "Mary the mother of James," who was a witness of the crucifixion, and who is called "Mary the mother of James and Joses" by Matthew. At least it is certain that these passages were taken to refer to the mother of Jesus by writers of the apocryphal gospels who explain them away by telling how Mary had adopted James.

But leaving out these last references, we have nearly a dozen passages in the New Testament (in the four gospels, in the Acts, and in Paul's Epistles) referring to "the brethren of Jesus," and always in connection with Mary. The plain meaning of these passages is, that James and Joses, Jude and Simon were the children of Joseph and Mary, Jesus being the "first-born" son, their elder brother. It is noteworthy that Matthew and Luke both speak of Jesus as the "first-born" son of Mary, at least suggesting that there were later children. Dr. Alford, who examines these passages very fully, comes to the conclusion that the brethren of the Lord were the children of Mary the mother of Jesus, and of Joseph.

#### THE VIRGIN BIRTH IN THE APOCRYPHAL GOSPELS

When we come to the apocryphal gospels, we find the doctrine of the Virgin Birth of Jesus occupying a very important place. A whole cycle of narrative confronts us, in which every side of the doctrine is given ample scope. The question of "the brethren of the Lord" is covered by declaring that Joseph was a widower with four sons, James, Joses, Jude and Simon, and two daughters, Assia and Lydia, when he was espoused to Mary. The book called the "Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew" makes Joseph say: "I am an old man, and have children; why do you hand over to me this infant (Mary), who is younger than my grandsons?"

The book called "The History of Joseph the Carpenter" goes even further, and makes Jesus himself narrate the circumstances of his miraculous birth: "Joseph, that righteous man, my father after the flesh, and the spouse of my mother Mary, went away with his sons to his trade, practising the art of a carpenter. And I chose her (Mary) of my own will, with the concurrence of my Father, and the counsel of the Holy Spirit. And I was made flesh of her, by a mystery which transcends the grasp of created reason." This choice of Mary by the future Savior strongly reminds us of the choice of Maya by the future Buddha.

When we come to the conception of Jesus, the apocryphal gospels offer us a richly colored narrative. The dogma of the Virgin Birth is safeguarded by the declaration that, immediately after the formal betrothal in the temple, Joseph departed to the seaside, leaving Mary in his house. Then we have the annunciation by the angel Gabriel, in passages resembling the narrative in Luke, but very much more elaborate. Then, six months after the conception, Joseph returns, and witnesses,

human and divine, appear to testify to the virginity of Mary. Joseph and Mary later go up to Jerusalem, and on the way the babe is born, in a cave to which Mary had retired. The cave is filled with miraculous light. The voices of angels are heard. And the babe is born without pain. Several of these ancient books tell us, further, that the virginity of Mary, even after the birth of Jesus, was established by a midwife, or, in some narratives, two midwives, who had been brought by Joseph. All these works at the same time insist on the "perpetual virginity" of Mary, and affirm that "the brethren of Jesus" were children of Joseph by a former wife.

We may complete this part of the story by saying that the Virgin Birth of Jesus, in the material sense, is taught in the *Koran*, which tells us that Gabriel appeared to Mary, announcing the birth of her son; that he breathed on her, and at that moment she conceived. This breath of the angel is evidently the distorted form of the teaching of conception through "the holy Spirit," which in Greek would be "the holy Breath."

Mirkhond, the Persian historian of the fifteenth century, tells us that Mary brought forth her son while leaning against a palm-tree, and that angels attended her, and produced a shower of miraculous water to wash the babe. These details, like the choice of Mary by the future Savior, and the doctrine of the "perpetual virginity," strongly suggest that the story of the Nativity was influenced by Buddhism in the early centuries, during which the apocryphal gospels were crystalising out of popular legend. I am inclined to think that these works reacted on the canonical gospels, and that from them the narratives of the Virgin Birth overflowed into Matthew and Luke.

#### CONCLUSION

We are justified, therefore, in saying that Jesus himself has nothing to say of the Virgin Birth, as an abnormal event in his own life. On the contrary, he brushes aside an attempt to glorify the physical circumstances of his birth.

John and Paul, Peter and Mark, James and Jude are equally silent as to the material Virgin Birth of Jesus, though many occasions for referring to this presented themselves.

On the other hand, Jesus himself, and also John and Paul, Peter and James, have very much to say of the real Virgin Birth, in the spiritual sense, the "birth from above" through the Holy Spirit, the birth of "the new man, the Lord from heaven." Peter speaks of all the regenerate as thus "begotten of God, of incorruptible seed;" and James speaks of "the Father of Lights," who "of his own will begat us with the Word of truth." In this spiritual rebirth, the Virgin Birth from above, Jesus is, as Paul says, "the first-born among many brethren."

When we come to the apocryphal gospels, we find this idea of the spiritual Virgin Birth materialised into an abnormal physiological event,

which is described with abundance of realistic detail, and elaborately developed. We find it in intimate association with two other doctrines, that of the Virgin Birth of Mary, and that of Mary's "perpetual virginity." It is evident that this ascetic view of the events of life dates from the period of the hermits and celibates, during which the celibacy of the clergy was also formulated, though we know from the New Testament that Peter and the other apostles, as well as "the brethren of the Lord" were married, and Paul especially recommends the choice of married men as bishops. There is every likelihood that the material doctrine of the Virgin Birth flowed back from the apocryphal gospels into the early chapters of Matthew and Luke, which are not closely attached to the rest of the New Testament.

This is the conclusion as to the purely Christian side of the dogma. But it is in no sense a peculiarly Christian doctrine. On the contrary, it is already in existence in the oldest records of mankind. We find it as a twofold doctrine, cosmic and particular. As a cosmic doctrine, it gives an account of the formation of the world, by the manifestation of the Logos, the divine Man "immortal in the heavens." As a particular doctrine, we find it applied to divine Incarnations, who are held to be manifestations of the Logos in human form, for the salvation of mankind. These incarnations are always associated with the idea of the Virgin Birth, a "birth without sin."

When Jesus came to be recognized as a divine Incarnation, it was both natural and right that all the characteristics of such Incarnation should be applied to him; that he should be endowed with all the insignia of royalty, including the Virgin Birth, as a spiritual teaching. This was as natural and right as that John should apply to him Philo's doctrine of the Logos, which was but the restatement of the oldest spiritual teaching in the world. It was equally natural that pious but unlearned devotees should materialise this teaching, and turn it into an abnormal physiological event, as we find in the apocryphal gospels.

If these conclusions are just, then we are in no sense called on to accept the Virgin Birth of Jesus as a physiological fact; but on the other hand, the Virgin Birth of Jesus, as of all the regenerate, in the true spiritual sense, is not only true, but is an integral part of religion.

CHARLES JOHNSTON.

# DEVOTIONAL BOOKS

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THE typical missionary of a decade or two ago has been used as an illustration by many a lecturer from the platform of the Theosophical Society. The splendid symbolism of the great Eastern Scriptures, to which the Society has been given the key, was to these narrow enthusiasts but unintelligible hieroglyphs, or the most literal anthropomorphism. They could see only the heathen in his blindness bowing down to wood and stone.

The thought of the world has changed in intervening years and the depth and profundity of Eastern mysticism is being recognized throughout the Western thinking world. But the light which we can now see behind the stranger imagery of other times and races is still obscured for many of us by forms different but yet much closer to our own; and many protestant Christians of to-day turn from the early Catholic writers with the same contemptuous, ignorant condemnation of idolatry that our missionaries used to reveal in their description of Buddhist or Brahman literature. Sometimes great differences are more easily overcome than little.

It is, I think, for this reason that the great mystical literature which Christianity has produced is to-day so little known and studied. The forms and symbols in which it is couched have been misunderstood and misinterpreted too recently by those about us for it to be wholly easy for us to read them now aright. Yet within them is the age-old truth of the way of life and the pathway of the soul. No one can understand Christianity who is content to pass these records by with careless indifference. No one can really understand Theosophy, or its universality in all religions, who ignores them or is balked by their symbolism.

It is for these reasons, and because they are so little known, and far from being generally accessible in the ordinary book-store or library, that it seems it would serve a useful purpose to give a list of some of the greatest of them; some of the first hand records, each independent, each original, which describe with such astonishing unanimity the journey of the soul and the laws of the spiritual life.

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The number of mystical devotional books of really good quality is limited; so limited that even within the space of a single article it is possible to give a fairly comprehensive list, with some description of those least known, and where and how to get them.

First, there are the well known purely Theosophical devotional books which may be obtained from the Secretary of the T. S., 159 Warren Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.: *Light on the Path*; *Voice of the Silence*;

*Through the Gates of Gold; Fragments*; several translations of the *Bhagavad Gita; Letters that Have Helped Me*, Vol. I and Vol. II. These do not require any comment. We recommend beginning with *Fragments* and *Light on the Path*. Then there are the *Upanishads* and the Bible which of course must be included in our library. The best translations of some of the *Upanishads* are by Mr. Charles Johnston, but unfortunately they are scattered through many publications, some of which are unobtainable. *The Song of Life* and *From the Upanishads* contain the bulk of his work, however, and he is now preparing a volume which will collect the balance and will contain some new translations. His aim is to make available for English readers the seven or eight great *Upanishads*,—those dealing with the essence of the mystery doctrine. There are many others, some thirty-nine in all. Max Müller tried to translate them in his *Sacred Books of the East*, but as he did not understand what they were about, his work is practically useless. Professor Deussen of Germany has published a complete translation which is the best in any modern language, but this has not yet been put into English.

There are, of course, many commentaries on the *Upanishads*, some of which have been translated, and there are the *Yoga Aphorisms*, of Patanjali, which have just appeared in *The Quarterly*, and which are being republished in book form by Mr. Johnston.

The Bible hardly requires comment. I would advise a Red Letter Testament and the recent American Standard Version as useful supplements to the King James Version with which we are all so familiar. They serve to bring the ideas to our minds in a fresh manner and, in consequence, often with a fresh meaning.

Our main task, however, is to give a list of the best mystical books of devotion, published in the West, since the time of Christ, and to this we shall devote our remaining space, taking them up chronologically:

*The Confessions of St. Augustine* (A. D. 354-430): too well known to require description. Many have found this work inspiring because after a riotous youth St. Augustine became converted and turned into a good mystic. It can be obtained at any book store. The best translation is by Dr. Pusey.

The next few hundred years were barren of works that have stood the test of time. We must skip to the great St. Bernard (1091-1153) to find an author still widely read. Some of St. Bernard's Letters and Sermons are very fine. His *Life and Works*, by S. J. Eales, will give an adequate idea of his power and spirit of devotion. Together with the Scotch or Irish Richard St. Victor, a contemporary, he dominated the spirit of religious thought for two hundred years and can be said to begin mediæval mystical literature. Richard's best work in English is *A Very Devout Treatise Named Benjamin*, included in *The Cell of Self-Knowledge*, translated by Gardner. (New Mediæval Library, London, 1910.)

Those who wish to go deeper into the general subject of mystical literature must next look up the writings of a series of women mystics who followed Bernard and Richard St. Victor: St. Hildegarde (1098-1179), St. Elizabeth of Schoenan (1138-1165), the new Gertrude (1251-1291), St. Mechthild of Hackborn (1241-1298), Sister Mechthild of Magdelburg (1212-1299) and finally St. Gertrude The Great (1256-1311). They had between them every variety of subjective experience and mystic vision and have left beautiful and suggestive accounts of their religious life. *The Exercises of St. Gertrude* (London 1863) is the best example of their writings. There is no doubt that Dante read and was much indebted to these women and owed some of his most profound conceptions to them.

St. Francis of Assisi (1182-1226) comes next in order. Unfortunately he wrote little and left no regular treatise, but every one should have *The Little Flowers of St. Francis*, published by Methuen & Co. in their series entitled The Library of Devotion. His great disciple, the Blessed Angela of Foligno (1248-1309) well expresses his spirit in her *Book of the Divine Consolations*, translated by Mary B. Steegman, 1909. A valuable work, *The Mirror of Simple Souls*, by an unknown French author, belongs to this period, but has not, so far as I know, yet been printed. There is also a beautiful fragment of the work of Margery Kempe (about 1290), anchoress of Lynn, published in *The Cell of Self-Knowledge*, mentioned above, which is all that survives of her writings. *The Cell of Self-Knowledge*, besides containing this, and Richard St. Victor's work, has five other translations, three of which are by unknown authors, and can be obtained in no other form, *The Epistle of Prayer*, *The Epistle of Discretion*, and *The Discerning of Spirits*.

Richard Rolle (1300-1349) is the first of a series of brilliant English mystical writers. His chief work, *The Form of Perfect Living*, is as alive and vivid and useful to-day as it was six hundred years ago. Almost at the same time appeared one of the greatest and least known of all devotional books, *The Divine Cloud* or "The Cloud of Unknowing," as it used to be called. It introduced the spirit of Dionysius the Areopagite into England and is almost pure Vedantin in tone and in its treatment of the inner life. The only edition I know is that by Rev. H. Collins, London, 1871, and is not easy to find. It is worth the trouble, especially to members of the T. S. who are used to the Eastern methods.

John Tauler (1300-1361) has already been much written about in the QUARTERLY. *The Inner Way* (Library of Devotion) and *The Following of Christ* (T. Fisher Unwin, 1910) will give a good idea of this great man. Tauler was followed by the celebrated group of German mystics. Henry Suso (1300-1365) who should be studied in his autobiography, is now thought to be the author of *Theologia Germanica*, another of the world's great mystical books. A new edition, published in The Golden Treasury Series, by Susanna Winkworth, 1907, makes it easy to secure.

*A Little Book of Eternal Wisdom*, London, 1910, has long been credited to Suso, but authorities like Poulain now say that Rulman Merswin (1310-1382), one of the Friends of God, is the author. Van Ruysbroeck (1293-1381) has been made available and has attracted attention recently by Maeterlinck's translation (into French) of his *Spiritual Marriage*.

*The Imitation of Christ*, said to be the most widely read book in the world next to the Bible, is generally attributed to Thomas of Kempden or Thomas à Kempis; often erroneously referred to as St. Thomas à Kempis. He has not been canonized because of this very doubt about his being the author of the *Imitation*. A manuscript exists in his handwriting, but that is not proof, for he spent a very long life transcribing religious works. That was the *raison d'être* of the Brethren of the Common Life, to which order he belonged. Their occupation and finally their existence passed away with the invention of printing. Thomas was born in 1380 or 1381 near Cologne. *The Imitation of Christ* was given to the world about 1441. He died in 1471. The treatise was called *The Ecclesiastical Music*; the name now used being properly the sub-title of the first book. It was, of course, written in Latin, and the original is in either Rhyme or Rhythm. It has been translated many times. The most familiar version follows an edition which appeared in 1633, by Anthony Hoskins, a Jesuit. It contains many omissions and many mistranslations. The best modern translation, or edition, is that of Prof. C. Bigg of Oxford, published by Methuen & Co., of London. Modern scholars, both Catholic and Protestant, now feel sure that Thomas wrote most, if not all of this wonderful book. It should be in every library of devotion.

Another Dutch mystic, Gerard of Zutphen, wrote *The Spiritual Ascent*, which is a valuable treatise, much loved by Thomas à Kempis, who wrote a biography of the author.

Walter Hilton (died 1396) and Juliana of Norwich (1343-1443?) end the stream of English mysticism for nearly two hundred years. *The Scale of Perfection* by Hilton (London, 1908), and *Revelations of Divine Love* by Juliana (London, 1901), are books to possess and read and reread. Juliana, in particular, was a poet as well as a seer, and her work is considered the most beautiful of all English mystical writings.

The *Letters* and the *Dialogues* of St. Catharine of Siena (1347-1380) must be added to our library, for she was one of the very greatest of the Saints, and is an exemplar of the practical work, in the worldly sense, that can be performed successfully by the nun and the contemplative. Nothing but the fact that she *did* get her directions from Jesus Christ himself, as she claimed, can explain her success. Algar Thorold's translations of her *Dialogues* (London, 1896) and Vida Scudder's Edition of her *Letters* (London, 1905) make her work available to English readers. Those who wish to read more about her can get Edmund Gardner's *St. Catharine of Siena* (London, 1907) or *The Mystic Bride*,

by Mrs. Aubrey Richardson, published this year by T. Werner Laurie of London.

Next on our list come the works of the Venerable Blossius (1506-1565). He was a prolific writer and his *Mirror for Monks* is one of the most popular of devotional books in Catholic communities or among those who are not repelled by a distinctly Catholic method. He also wrote *A Book of Spiritual Instruction, Comfort for the Faint-Hearted*, and *The Sanctuary of the Faithful Soul*, which have been translated recently by an English Passionist, Bertrand Wilberforce, and can be secured in London. *The Mirror for Monks* gives the essence of Blossius' method and is probably enough for our library. *The Spiritual Combat* by Lorenzo Scupoli (1529-1610), an Italian mystic of renown, is a necessary addition to the list. It is published in the Library of Devotion.

This brings us to the great group of Spanish mystics, who lived in the 16th century. St. Teresa (1515-1582), St. Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556), St. Peter of Alcantara (1499-1562) and St. John of the Cross (1542-1591). They all wrote and we can get in English, and we should by all means have in our library *The Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius, *The Dark Night of the Soul*, by St. John of the Cross, *The Interior Castle* by St. Teresa, and *Pax Animæ*, by St. Peter. We should also get St. Teresa's *Autobiography* (translated by D. Lewis, 3rd Edition, London, 1904).

If we were making a list of the books of the great mystics, we should, of course, include Jacob Boehme (1575-1624) and George Fox (1624-1690), but this is meant to be a devotional library. Augustine Baker's (1575-1641) *Sancta Sophia* or *Holy Wisdom*, is a long-winded but very valuable and useful treatise covering every detail of the spiritual life. Many would find it helpful (London, 1908).

It seems almost trite to add the writings of St. Francis de Sales (1567-1622) to our list, they are so well known, but our library would be incomplete without them. *On the Love of God* and *Introduction to the Devout Life* are both published in the Library of Devotion.

We must also get *The Practice of the Presence of God* and *The Spiritual Maxims* of Brother Lawrence (1611-1691). These are published in the Heart and Life Booklets (H. R. Allenson, London).

*The Spiritual Guide*, by Molinos (1640-1697) (Library of Devotion) is a useful addition; so also are the works of Madame Guyon (1648-1717) the great French quietist. *A Short and Easy Method of Prayer*, is published in the Heart and Life Booklets, while this and her other devotional work *Spiritual Torrents* were translated by A. W. Marston, London, 1875.

*Maxims of the Saints* and *Meditations for a Month*, by Fénelon, published in the Heart and Life Booklets, are an entirely inadequate representation of Fénelon's genius. One must go to his *Letters to Men* and *Letters to Women* to get the full benefit of his inspiration and



spiritual learning. Many people like and are helped by the *Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*, by William Law (1686-1761), a non-juring clergyman who was influenced by Boehme and who was almost alone in keeping the fire of mysticism burning in the England of his day.

*The Hidden Life of the Soul*, excerpts from the writings of the French priest, Père Grou (1731-1803), translated by Mrs. Sidney Lear, is a charming little work. His *Spiritual Maxims* have also been translated but I do not know by whom. During recent years another French priest has been issuing, and is still issuing, delightful little leaflets from time to time, under the title *Paillettes d'Or*. Some of these have been translated by Mrs. Charlotte M. Yonge, and are called *Gold Dust*.

Our list comes to an end with a very valuable and remarkable book, published this year by Watkins, London, called *The Path of Eternal Wisdom*, by John Cordelier. It is the best devotional book, outside of our Theosophical books, which has been written for many years and represents the most exalted form of Christian Mysticism.

The above list, which of course cannot be exhaustive, still does, I think, fairly well cover the field and contains examples of books which will supply the needs of nearly every kind of temperament. They are all treatises on the inner life, and they are designed to teach people how to live the inner life, giving detailed instructions for every step on the way. The obstacles we shall meet are described, as are the means for overcoming them; weaknesses and doubts are set forth and analysed; warnings given; experiences related for our guidance; and all by people who knew what they were writing about and who had lived what they are describing. It is that fact which gives vitality to these books and has safe-guarded them throughout the ages while hundreds of thousands of other works have perished.

I would advise beginning with the simpler books, such as, to give the names of three or four, Fénelon's *Letters to Men* and *Letters to Women*, *The Spiritual Maxims* and *The Practice of the Presence of God* by Brother Lawrence, and the *Mirror for Monks* by Blossius. The *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius is also excellent.

JOHN BLAKE.

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*"It is rare when injustice, or slights patiently borne, do not leave the heart at the close of the day, filled with marvellous joy and peace."*

# LETTERS TO FRIENDS

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## II

DEAR FRIEND:

I HAVE your letter, bitterly complaining that I have withheld from you the help and teaching you say I could have given, and which you deem our personal friendship entitled you to expect from me.

You tell me that I have always failed you,—failed to sense and meet your need, failed to recognize that you had found the Master, failed to perceive that the only motive in your life was to do his will,—and that this constant failure of mine and my reserve and aloofness have bred a resentment which stands as a barrier between you and the peace which you can only know as you feel in harmony with all about you. You ask me to remove this barrier.

I cannot offer you the justification of myself which you desire. Nor would it profit you at all for me to do so even if I could. Not only because when self-justification enters, friendship ends; but because our barriers are always in ourselves and never in circumstances or in others. It is not I, nor my neglect nor failure, real or imagined, which is the barrier to your peace; but it is your own resentment. And this is in you, not in me. It is true that if I could place myself before you in a more favorable light it would give you some temporary easement and palliate your feeling. But it would be only a palliative and the cause of the trouble would remain untouched. Sooner or later you must face in yourself that which prompts this resentment; and, as you have asked my aid, it is better for me to help you to do this now, even though its first effect be to increase the intensity of your feeling, than to attempt to cover it over or to remove only the occasion for its manifestation.

Let me be quite clear upon this point before we proceed further. Over the circumstances and environment of our lives we have little or no control. We have limitless control over the character of our own reaction from them, and what is to be their effect upon ourselves. We cannot spread a carpet over all growing things, over the rocks and stubble and brambles of the earth. But we can shoe our own feet. We cannot remove evil and unkindness and neglect from all those with whom our lives bring us into contact. We cannot, dare not even if we could, safeguard ourselves from the pain which these can give us. But we can make this pain a blessing, not a curse. We can make it yield us strength and courage and clear insight, tenderness and breadth of charity which is not blind to fault. We can learn to suffer and not grow bitter, and, above all, we can learn that there is no single thing in all this wide universe that can come to us without bringing us a gift,—will we but take it.

There is in every man's spirit an alchemy which, as we learn to use it, transmutes outer evil into inner good, and hardship into growth. By this alchemy alone can you win and hold the peace which you desire.

Let us grant that I am guilty of all of which you accuse me. You do not wish to grant it. You wish to be persuaded it is not true. But that is only to evade the issue. If not I, then sooner or later some other will manifest this same attitude which now you find so intolerable in me. Is your peace to be dependent on another's attitude? Why should what is in another be so intolerable to you? Can we only be happy if we are justly appreciated, not slighted nor neglected? Can another stand as a barrier between us and the great Master who called sinners and outcasts to his love and whose kingdom is within? If we think so, it is not the Master whom we have found, but a deification of our own self-righteousness. Why is it that you feel this burning resentment? What is it in you that is injured?

First it is vanity. We think that we put vanity away when we cease to care, overly much, about our clothes, or to look with self-approval in the glass. But this is mere childishness, and vanity is not mere childishness. It meets us at every turn when we look out anew upon the world about us and see the image of ourselves reflected back to us from its myriad mirrors. Most men live for and from such reflections; their lives moved by the external stimulus of these images of themselves coming back to them with magic colour and deceptive potency. And this is vanity. Vanity is not only self-approval. It differs from pride in this: that its self-approval must be fed by its reflections. To one it is the halo of fame he must see about the image of himself. To another it is the echo of his power that he must hear resounding from the outer world; to yet another it is the aroma of fair deeds that must come as incense to his nostrils. But all alike are vanity—the mere reflections of the self as we would see and have it seen—a glamorous and enchanted world which holds us spell-bound and enthralled.

But glamorous as these reflections are, there is something within us which keeps whispering they are unreal. It is the innate integrity of the soul which is never wholly blinded, but knows its kingdom must be inner and not outer, and that these things are outer things—even the best and highest of them—even the aroma of fair deeds. And though we listen but little to this inner voice, and ask ourselves in answer if such deeds, as here we see, are not both real and good, yet it makes us a little restless, a little keener than before to be reassured by the beauty of the image which we see. So if then it happen that there be but one direction where we look and see no halo, listen and hear no echo, scent and smell no perfume, our very existence seems in danger and our whole world threatens to melt away into a mist of shadow. We have built our house upon the shifting sands.

It is not easy, much less pleasant, to realize that the greater part of

all our suffering is but injured vanity. It is still harder to recognize how deeply it enters into the motives of our lives and colours all our works. To do this requires some knowledge and experience of a life that is not vain—into which no image of the self as actor or enjoyer enters. To those who live in reflections such an experience would seem utter annihilation, not only of themselves but of their whole world. And so, in unconscious dread, in the mere blind instinct of self-preservation, they cling to the delusive shadows of their works, the images of themselves they see about them, and strive to alter the mirrors, not the reality, till they see themselves again as they would be.

From vanity springs jealousy. And this is the second thing which is wounded when neglect or reserve or aloofness appears in the attitude of others toward us. If vanity is subtle so also is jealousy. Each takes a thousand forms; each carries the other in its train; and both mask themselves against our recognition,—the more impenetrably, the higher courts they enter. In crudely physical natures we see them readily for what they are; but when our desires for ourselves have been moulded on a higher model, and the center of our life advances to the psychic and emotional planes, then their unmasking requires a courageous honesty of self-examination it is not easy to command. We wish to think of ourselves as loving, and as serving those we love; as shedding gracious kindness, dispensing charity, radiating peace and light, a source of strength and help to all about us. We tell ourselves, and tell ourselves truly, that these are high and noble aims. The model is indeed good. But the desire to see ourselves in its form and guise is vanity pure and simple—differing not at all from the desire to see ourselves as beautiful, famous or admired. And if, when we find someone who seems not to require our charity or to recognize our light or to turn to us for the help and peace he finds elsewhere,—if then we find bitter resentment springing up in us against him and his refusal of what we offer, we may know that in essence our feeling differs no whit from the blind jealous rage of thwarted vanity and ambition which an actress may feel, when applause is withheld from her and given to a rival; or which may prompt to murder when drink is withheld from a drunkard. We, too, are drunkards of vanity, living on self-adulation and the incense of our own reflected perfections.

You will accuse me of again misunderstanding you wholly—of refusing to see the purity and selflessness of your feeling and desire of loving service. But we are not wise to consider ourselves exempt from the great snares and mirages of human life. Granted that there is purity and selflessness and genuine depth of noble love in your desire to serve. The question remains how much of vanity and jealousy are mingled with them. When a man is ill the physician does not speak of what is sound, but seeks that which is diseased and the extent and origin of the poison in his veins. There is one test which, if honestly applied,

reveals the answer: To what extent do we desire that happiness may come to those we love, that good may be done in the world, in which we have no part or share as actor, agent or enjoyer, but which comes through other hands than ours and bears no trace or reflection of ourselves upon it? To what extent are we willing to be unnecessary and as naught?

Let us remember that these questions cannot be answered by assertions. We do not become selfless by the self-assertion that we are so. It is written: "It is easy to say 'I will not be ambitious'; it is not so easy to say: 'When the Master reads my heart, He will find it clean utterly.' . . . One fancies he has removed his interest from self, but he has in reality only enlarged the limits of experience and desire, and transferred his interest to the things which concern his larger span of life. Do not let yourself be easily deceived by your own heart. For now at the threshold a mistake can be corrected. But carry it on with you and it will grow and come to fruition, or else you must suffer bitterly in its destruction."

It is to minimize this suffering that I write this letter in answer to your request, though it imperil still further the friendship you tell me my attitude has so impaired. The pain of your resentment is but part of the larger suffering that vanity, jealousy, and self-will must always breed. And to these presences, the great enemies of us all, you resolutely close your eyes. It is important above all things that you should recognize them in yourself and face them as your deadliest foes—the traitors within your gates which stultify and poison all you seek to do or be, and every relationship into which you enter.

I have written of vanity and jealousy. But still more dominant in your life is self-will. You have not learned the alphabet of tolerance. Differences, even minor differences of opinion upon trivialities, when your view is not agreed to, weigh upon you as an insufferable burden. You would have all men conform to your standard, pursue your ideals, seek happiness or service or rest where they exist for you. And you do not see that in consequence your will is constantly pressing upon those about you, necessitating either a surrender of themselves or ceaseless opposition, with the knowledge that they are causing you nervous strain and suffering. For against all obstacles to your own will you throw yourself with a reckless disregard of consequences that makes mortal issues of the commonplaces of daily life.

How can I help you to see this,—to see that your great need is to subordinate your own will, to cultivate passivity, to let differences lie, and to let others be unwise or mistaken or uncomfortable, if that be what they desire? If you think of it, putting yourself in the place of others, will you not perceive that there is as much self will in insisting upon being last as in struggling to be first; in pressing hospitality as in withholding it; in refusing to receive as in refusing to give? Will you

not see, further, that if to open a topic of discussion means that it must be fought out into all its ramifications until agreement or flat opposition results, or if what is said is always given a personal application, that then only such topics as are wholly impersonal can be raised in safety? And it does little good to put an obvious bridle on your speech, if your mind and will continue to press upon the theme in silence. The strain is evident, and what is outwardly repressed at the moment is only pent up to break forth with increased intensity later on. It is the will itself which needs the restraint of tolerance and respect for the will, the opinions and the reticences of others.

No friendship can endure that does not respect the silences of friendship. No friendship can stand save in complete liberty,—of will, of opinion, of action. And silence is not respected, nor liberty accorded, where its exercise is resented.

I venture to think that when you tell me you have found the Master, and seek only to do his will, you do not realize the meaning of the words you use. To find the Master is to find a blaze of light in whose white radiance our sin stands out, unveiled and naked, and fills us with an intensity of self-loathing and abasement that would consume us where we stand, save for the compassion of his love. We long to be as nothing, but what we are is there in all its hideous unlikeness. There are no exceptions to this experience. Neither saint nor seer nor warrior has ever stood before the Master and not known its truth. Those who have passed through it will tell you that no trial of darkness is comparable to this trial of light—to the self-revelation which comes with the light of the Master's face. If you have not received the teaching you think has been given me, and which you deem I should have given you, it is because you have not wanted it. Even now you do not want it,—though you have asked for it. But because you have asked, and because, if I could, I would give much to help you, I have answered. That which you have found and thought the Father is a mirage of your own making, full of emotion, full also of the poison of self. You are as one dwelling in a black pit, filled with poisonous vapours that you cannot see, but whose walls are lined with phosphorus. If you touch them rightly they glow with many colours, and there is light and beauty and reflection. Before these walls you stand entranced and do not know that you are in a pit where the pure sunshine does not enter. As in Dante's *Inferno* the only way of escape was from its lowest depths up along the back of Lucifer, so from this pit of self the only road leads through its deepest blackness. There comes a time, therefore, when our trance must break, when, in pity, the phosphorescence is withdrawn and no longer answers to our touch. One by one the lights fail us and go out. We are left in darkness. But with the darkness, and the dread and pain of it, comes the craving for escape.

All this has been written and described in many places, for it is the

growth, the fruition, and the death, of vanity and self-will. It is a stage in the life of the soul through which all pass who do not tear those things from their hearts at the outset of the Path. You will find in *Fragments*:

"Behind all striving and seeming, behind all laughter and tears, behind our failures and the successes which are often more disheartening lie the eternal verities of existence. And by and by, like children weary of playing, we rise and put away our toys. There falls then a hush, a silence, and to many a sense of blank. Suddenly it seems the great tide of life has rushed past us and left us alone. The world which had been so teeming with interests, so crowded with occupations and enjoyments, has, in a flashing turn of consciousness, become a world of shadows; the hands we held so warmly in our own have slipped away; the flowers we were weaving fall faded and unheeded. Why this has come about and how, is part of the mystery, but come it has, and life is no more the same for him forever.

"This is the critical moment, when the weak soul faints and falters and succumbs. But the strong soul, crying: At least *I* am! struggles forward, and struggling, finds that he plunges deeper and deeper in the silence and the dark. Still move he must, live he must, terror of unconsciousness goading him, faith in that one knowledge of his own existence the dim rush light by whose faltering flicker he must seek his way. Since I am, then God must be! his agony wrings from him, and lo! his rush light has grown brighter and the path more clear.

"The turmoil of the world lies far behind. Wars may be raging there and nations rise and fall. He heeds it not; the darkness has enveloped him and the giant conflict of the universe is nothing to him who is struggling madly for his life and freedom, swallowed in its awful gloom.

"On, on, oh struggle on. These are the birth throes of the living soul. The toys are put away, the flowers are faded. Yea, but God has other flowers that do not fade, and He has gifts worthy the soul of man.

"Out on the sunlit plain the warrior stands, and ministering angels bear to him the blessings of the gods. He finds a new heaven and a new earth, dew dipped in morning freshness. Men of shining mien and eyes of understanding meet him here. Here is no jar nor fret, but a serene stillness full of rhythmic cadences. A soul is born. Through darkness and through pain and a wild conflict hand to hand with death, he has entered into life. The Path is found."

There is no easy road to these "sunlit plains," no escape from self which is not fraught with pain. Before you can even understand these things the bubble of vanity must be pricked and with it your whole world will seem to fall into an abyss of nothingness. But if you would find and tread the Path, here is the way to it.

“Seek in the heart the source of evil and expunge it. It lies fruitfully in the heart of the devoted disciple as well as in the heart of the man of desire. Only the strong can kill it out. The weak must wait for its growth, its fruition, its death. And it is a plant that lives and increases throughout the ages. It flowers when the man has accumulated unto himself innumerable existences. He who will enter upon the path of power must tear this thing out of his heart. And then the heart will bleed, and the whole life of the man seems to be utterly dissolved. This ordeal must be endured: it may come at the first step of the perilous ladder which leads to the path of life: it may not come until the last. But, O disciple, remember that it has to be endured, and fasten the energies of your soul upon the task. Live neither in the present nor the future, but in the Eternal. This giant weed cannot flower there: this blot upon existence is wiped out by the very atmosphere of eternal thought.”

There is no other way for you than this; and no other can tread it for you. You will suffer,—not with a suffering you take upon yourself by your own will, but with a pain that overcomes your will. And this too is necessary. From where you are, only such suffering as this can lift you. If you will read further in *Light on the Path*, you will see why this is so.

“In the early state in which man is entering upon silence, he loses knowledge of his friends, of his lovers, of all who have been near and dear to him: and also loses sight of his Teachers and of those who have preceded him on his way. I explain this because scarce one passes through without bitter complaint. Could but the mind grasp beforehand that the silence must be complete, surely this complaint need not arise as a hindrance to the Path. Your Teacher or your predecessor may hold your hand in his, and give you the utmost sympathy the human heart is capable of. But when the silence and the darkness come, you lose all knowledge of him; you are alone and he cannot help you, not because his power is gone, but because you have invoked your great enemy. By your great enemy I mean yourself. If you have the power to face your own soul in the darkness and silence, you will have conquered the physical or animal self which dwells in sensation only.”

But though you must suffer, this suffering may be long or short. Pray that you may have the strength to make it short. You have both strength and power of obedience when you can free them from yourself. Pray that you may do this. Pray, humbly and on your knees, that you may recognize in yourself the vanity, jealousy and self-will which are poisoning your life. And pray that you may gain the humility and self-abasement that will enable you through self-subordination to use the will of others to help you conquer in your battle against your own.

Does this seem vague to you? Will you tell me that every day of your life you have done this—or its equivalent? I do not think that



what you have done has been its equivalent; but if you wish some concrete thing to do, do this. Turn to the man who is nearest to you, living in the same house with you, whom all these years you have thought to help and influence aright, and make with him the first great *volt-face* which your whole life needs. Resolve that for one whole year you will subordinate your will to his, be he right or wrong. That you will permit yourself even in thought, much less in speech, no criticism of him. That when deficiencies or faults appear in him you will turn your eyes from them, and looking upon your own instead, match fault for fault. That you will not answer back or argue or appeal. That you will not question. That in all which concerns him, you will be only the servant of his will or whim, cheerfully, quietly obedient—not asking orders, not making your submissiveness obvious, not pressing yourself upon him,—fulfilling literally, to the utmost of your power, whatever wish he may express.

If you have the strength to do this you will doubtless do many things which, in your opinion, will seem mistaken. You will have the satisfaction, however, of acquiring the virtue of obedience. And you will have begun the conquest of your will, and entered the Path which will lead you to “the sunlit plain.”

Faithfully yours,  
JOHN GERRARD.

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*“We are sons of yesterday, not of the morning. The past is our mortal mother, no dead thing. Our future constantly reflects her to the soul. Nor is it ever the new man of to-day which grasps his fortune, good or ill. We are pushed to it by the hundreds of days we have buried, eager ghosts. And if you have not the habit of taking counsel with them, you are but an instrument in their hands.”*

GEORGE MEREDITH.

# WHY I JOINED THE T. S.

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IT took ten years to remove my prejudice against the T. S.—and a portion of my conceit. I came first to know something of the society after leaving college. During college years my interest in religion seemed ended. For religion appeared something aloof from and hostile to the world of art in which I was interested, and for which I was sacrificing everything else. After the breaking of home and college connections a new environment brought me into contact with Unitarians—a form of religion until then more unknown than Islamism or Buddhism. I began regularly to attend Unitarian meetings, and, through the people I met there, I came into touch with many sorts of “liberal” and “progressive” movements, such as socialism, woman-suffrage, and theosophy. As I prided myself on being “liberal” and “progressive,” I felt a certain responsibility toward everything that should swell the great tide of liberalism. Consequently, after reading a page or two of some theosophical propaganda literature, I took delight in calling myself a theosophist, when in the presence of orthodox church-goers. This continued for a year or two when I went to Paris. There my interest was wholly in literature and art, and after months of artistic revelry I returned to America—to be depressed and dissatisfied with everything that had previously pleased or interested me. American daily life was vulgar, prosaic, and hideous. I shut myself away from it in a tower of French poetry. To my consternation, the Unitarian meetings also, and their connotations, were impossible. The cathedrals of Amiens and Paris, in which I had boasted merely an artistic interest, had made it impossible for me to draw any semblance of religious emotion from Unitarian logic. In this bankruptcy, I began again, almost against my will, a study of Dante. I had had courses in Dante both at college and university. But his work had been presented as history and syntax, and professors and students were both frankly bored with the poem which public opinion compelled us to consider. Freed from the historical and syntactical grind, I began to feel the poetry. And in two weeks I made the very important discovery that the poem is connected with life. Next, I saw the semblance between the doctrine of Purgatory and the Eastern teaching of Reincarnation. So I read on and over the poem, through the winter, with increasing admiration and delight. In the spring, by invitation, I made an address on the *Divine Comedy* before my “liberal and progressive” acquaintances, Unitarians, Socialists, Suffragettes and Theosophists. Shortly after, I was told by one of them that I had been talking Theosophy without knowing it, and I was given a copy of *Light on the Path*. My interest in the poem and my dis-

coveries as to its content, led me to look a little into both the T. S. and the Roman Catholic Church. I went to a branch meeting or two. But the people were uninteresting—not of the artistic type. At one meeting they were discussing a blue aura, and they made me feel that they knew nothing about the color blue, or the thing aura, whatever that thing might be. The Roman Church was much more satisfactory. For months I went regularly to Mass—shutting myself up in the tower of poetry when sermon time came. I interviewed priests from time to time to discover if they had any intimations of how vital their doctrines are. I got very little from *Light on the Path*. The book seemed a vague kind of poetry, but all of the first part made me very angry. I understood the first rules to mean that life was to be emptied of all human feeling. I shuddered at the thought of monsters whose eyes were incapable of tears, and who nourished spectral souls on the blood of the heart. The Warrior passage alone attracted me. Still the book was uncommon, and suited for shocking the orthodox, so from time to time I read parts of it to them, pretending clear understanding of its meaning and entire sympathy with its purpose. A copy of the *Gita* came to me shortly after I received *Light on the Path*. I did not understand two words of it, yet I read it. I cannot remember now why I went to the book again and again. It must have been something more than faddishness that drew me to the little volume, every few months. I could not read the *Gita* for long, however. The reading of it was always attended by suicidal impulses. These I attributed directly to the *Gita* and the Oriental teaching of Nirvana, and gradually laid the book aside altogether.

I went to Celebrations of the Mass for a year and a half. Then my church going ended altogether. The beauty of Catholicism made all forms of Protestantism impossibly dreary. To please friends I tried to find the Anglican High Church satisfactory. But it impressed me as an imitation of the Roman *mise-en-scène*. I should have been glad to follow Newman, to lose myself in the pomp and glory of the Roman ritual, to become an actor of hieratic roles. But I knew a time would come when the acting would be intolerable, and I should be wretchedly unhappy. So I tried to find or construct an ideal Catholicism for myself. My construction went well—on paper; as a living form and creed it bound together a dolorous congregation—my own wretched self and the corpses of half-a-dozen saints whose living flaming spirits I was altogether unable to reach.

Thus for several years, five years, things seemed to rest *in statu quo*. I went along complacent in my conceit, and satisfied with my opinions. A certain superficial affection drew friends about me who generously lavished kindness upon me. But I was loveless. I pleased myself with the congeniality of friends, until their limitations and deficiencies became apparent. Then I estranged them, cruelly sacrificing them to a selfish

and irrational demand for human perfection. My days were Epicurean—an endeavor to absorb the visible, audible, tangible loveliness of things. On paper I professed burning love for the race. But the individuals who came into relation with me I found intolerable—and the mass of men was loathsome. I could not enter a railway or ferry without repulsion, wonderment why all those men and women should exist. I was indifferent to their interests and welfare unless they should begin at once to make themselves over on my model. Above all I hated clergymen and churches.

At the end of five years came bankruptcy. Ill in body, and half-mad I had to give over my selfish pursuits, and come nearer to the prosaic lives of average humans. The friends I had treated with horrid unkindness tended me with gentleness and affection; and the men and women above whom I had elevated myself on towered ivory unconsciously rebuked me by their kindly solicitude. I saw that I had been right much of a fool. But it took another year to make me completely insolvent. For a very short time I lay at death's door—and learned a little bit more. I had thought the world needed me, and that I had much to give it. But I saw that I was insignificant. That recognition of unimportance was not discouraging, however. For with it came a recognition of something Real, something kind, that made my nothingness not altogether valueless, since It cared for me. That was my first experience of religion. At the time I knew it was religion, and knew it was different from everything else in my life. I wanted to share it; to give others something of the happiness that had come to me through "acceptance." But I could not speak. I could only run and wander over the mountains, half-drunk with my new happiness, calling on all Saints and creatures to behold the beginning of my conversion toward God.

A few months after my heart had turned that small fraction of a degree away from self toward God, I met my first real Theosophist. It was in this way. I felt I could not return to my former mode of living but must seek something better. I resolved to spend a year in search of "the better." The Theosophist was the first of many people I came upon in my year of search. I did not know him at first as a Theosophist—I might have turned from him if I had—but only as one interested in Oriental thought. The first time I saw him I knew he was different from everybody else, and better. He gave me a little book which pointed the way to "the better." This little book made me desire to stop right there in my search, and learn of him. But he said I must carry out my original intention to travel. So I went, North, East, South, and West, wherever I heard that men were working devotedly for others. I wished to learn so to work, and to find a teacher. I saw many earnest, devoted workers, and much benefit from their endeavors. But to none could I swear allegiance. Disinterested as their endeavors were, they were all laboring for the things that perish. I had dimly glimpsed the

Eternal for a moment, as I lay at death's door. Nothing could satisfy me that was not a striving after the Eternal.

As I travelled I met people to whom I wished to give the little book that my new Theosophist friend had given me. Thus I was brought into connection with the Secretary of the T. S. who, after one or two letters, sent an issue of the *QUARTERLY*. From this I first learned of the existence of a society. My former acquaintances, Unitarians, Suffragettes, Socialists, Theosophists had told me that theosophists were as bad as Christians, had quarreled with one another, so that the societies had gone to smash. That issue of the *QUARTERLY* came as a surprise. It contained the article, "Meditation," which brought a new planet to my ken, and it informed me that my new friend was a Theosophist and a member of the society.

I was grateful for his friendship, and grateful to the *QUARTERLY*. But I was still overflowing with conceit; I could not repress regret that my friend should narrow his splendid ability to the service of a small sect, instead of being a free lance like myself. "Theosophy," I said to myself, "is everywhere, in all lands, in all writers. Madam Blavatsky's formation of a society was a fanatic's mistake, similar to that of all religious leaders; it came out of her desire for a following—self-worship. I approve the Theosophical philosophy but I will not confine myself within the limits of their society."

Soon after I took up again *Light on the Path*, after having forgotten it for several years. I read it in amazement and tears. I had grown up toward it somewhat. It no longer made me angry. It became a light. That book and the life of St. Francis (Assisi) were my sole reading during one summer.

The following autumn I sent in a subscription for the *QUARTERLY*. I still was hostile to the society, however. But as I worked through the autumn and read the *QUARTERLY*, I came to recognize that what I had for years been awkwardly trying to do was not antagonistic to the spirit of the T. S. as expressed in the *QUARTERLY*. I saw that I had blundered stupidly because I knew so little about things. It seemed sensible, therefore, for the sake of what I was trying to do, to endeavor to get some help from the society. It was in this mood that I wrote to my friend—if the T. S. would accept me, I should like to become a member and be taught.

One good the T. S. has given me is the restoration of Christianity. Six months after I became a member of the T. S., I saw that it was my duty to go back into the Church which for ten years I had particularly hated. I had approached the T. S. seeking a substitute among the Eastern religions for the religion I had outgrown. The T. S. soon showed me that I had never known anything about Christianity, and that instead of having outgrown it, I must now begin to grow up toward it. But, above all, through the T. S. I have been given love. Kindly friends

I have always drawn around me only to estrange and alienate them by my self-love. Through the T. S. I have found friends of deeper affection. Their love of me has been so live a flame that it was not quenched or cooled by my selfishness. Their love has burned up a small portion of my selfishness, and has kindled a little flickering flame of love in me.

SPENSER MONTAGUE.

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*“Meditation may be likened to a prospector pursuing his silent pilgrimage into regions as yet unexplored by him, and with untiring vigor and persistence breaks away the crust and ‘pans out’ the base material in his search for the ‘golden color,’ which, when found, stimulates him with renewed energy to delve deeper for the precious ‘mother lode,’ which will bring to him his heart’s desire.”*

L.

# WITHIN

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*The keynote of Theosophy is brotherly love; the keynote of discipleship is "within." The child is father of the man. Theosophy is the child; discipleship is the man.*

THE language of religion contains many references to the higher as opposed to the lower. Heaven to man, his highest ideal—the goal of his human striving as well as the life after death—is symbolized as "above." The contrary pole, hell, man's lower nature, is thought of as "below." The Master has told us that the kingdom of heaven is within not above us and that like a grain of mustard seed it is at first the smallest of seeds, but that it grows and spreads out its branches till it is the largest of herbs—a refuge and shelter for many creatures.

Yet saints in the ecstasy of their vision of the kingdom are pictured kneeling, their eyes raised, looking up. How could it be otherwise? If the attempt is made to translate the ecstasy literally, without symbol, painter, canvas, and colors disappear, and the picture is transmuted into a vision perceptible only to the inner eye of other saints. Thus the unsanctified many, capable nevertheless of sincere aspiration, in whom the aspiration of others awakens responsive chords, lose the whole meaning of consecrated lives. For their sakes symbols are used, crude symbols perhaps, material symbols if necessary, but symbols capable by reason of their crudeness, their materiality, of carrying subtle messages to souls that would find them unintelligible if less crude. For their sakes is spiritual truth expressed in terms of human life. By them are symbols to be justified. Yet in so far as a man can see first within, finally independently of the symbol, in so far as he is spiritually mature.

In attempting to penetrate to the real meaning hidden behind the symbols of religion, let us take the hint given us and substitute within for above, without or outside for below. By this substitution the direction of advance is changed and the subject at once takes on a new suggestiveness, characterized rather by possibilities of infinite extension than by the chance that anyone of us will ever be in a position to say, or even hear, the last word on the subject. Students of art have noted an advance along this line from mediæval to modern methods of symbolizing holiness. Painters of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries set a gold plate or rim firmly outside the head of the sanctified. The sentiment of to-day tolerates nothing more external than a faint light emanating from the soul within. Often the expression of a face is made to do duty for the elaborate insignia of a cruder age.

The development of literature is analogous. Mediæval romances of external adventure, tales of the dangers and chivalrous deeds of brave knights, have been gradually superseded by novels where the whole interest is centered on the portrayal and development of character. The miracle play which symbolized the glory of God by mask and hand pieces of gold laid on outside a perfectly material Deity has given place to a type of drama in which the conception of interiority is strong. For instance, in "The Passing of the Third Floor Back" the expression of one man's face and his attitude toward his fellows transforms the sordid life of the home into which he enters into a reflection of his own beautiful spirit. It is not too much to say that the whole great power of this play lies in the loving spirit of one man expressed in look rather than act. And it is a favorable comment on the spiritual maturity of our age that this play, which depends wholly for its appeal on its message, should have been a brilliant dramatic success.

Undoubtedly a similar tendency of direction could be found in the music of the last four centuries. The transition from Bach to Brahms is suggestive enough to a musician, but one must already be a musician to even hear the language of music, much more to decipher its symbolism.

Science, too, once it has acquired the courage to believe that man can know, and dared to look beyond proved and tabulated facts (so soon alas to be disproved and to require retabulation) shows the same tendency of direction. Matter, only recently a somewhat inert, hard, objective substance, has recently revealed itself to scientific experimenters as something quite other than they thought, something finer in quality, less hard and fast in its make up, less objective than they had supposed that it could be, more akin to the force element in nature than to what had commonly been called substance.

To define matter as ions of electricity explains nothing. It merely pushes the mystery one degree inward. But one thing the ion theory does do. It shatters into bits the confident dogmatism of objective realism. And this is much. The scientist who realizes that his confidence in the solid objectivity of nature must be renounced in favor of a tentative belief in a reality more intangible and interior will soon, as he learns by being tentative to be truly scientific, sense the existence of a reality less objective and tangible even than his ions of electricity, lying behind or within them as they have all unseen lain behind or within this husk or shell of existence which we call the universe.

The chemist or the biologist who examines with his microscope any portion of the world of "reality" discovers that all this solid looking substance is but an aggregate of varied and moving particles. Does not this revelation alone destroy all confidence in the impenetrability and ultimateness of the "solid world of reality" in which we live. And if by the aid of the microscope we discover that within the world as seen



by the naked eye is another finer world on which our visible world depends for its existence, which in reality it is, is it not a justifiable method of procedure in a scientist who has learned to be tentative to turn with a certain seriousness to the teaching of *Light on the Path*: the teaching that within the world as the microscope reveals it there lies a mystery which no machinery can probe, a world which is self-illuminated, permanent, the life and substance of this shell of a world; and that this world though real and omnipresent is perceivable only by those who have developed within themselves the faculties by which it can be perceived, otherwise invisible, just as the great world of germs and microbes was invisible till our weak natural sight was supplemented by those laboratory spectacles—the microscope?

Any dogmatic denial of this teaching is as absurd as it is unscientific. Throughout nature as we know it, the more vital parts are hidden within, the less vital. The life of man's body resides not in the epidermis but in the interior organs. The husk of the corn, the shell of an acorn, the skin of a snake are dead compared with the more vital parts which they enclose. And the relative inferiority of the outer covering is recognized all through nature. The husk of the corn, the shell of the acorn, the skin of the snake are cast off as worthless when the life within has developed beyond their capacity to contain it. Is it unreasonable to see the force of the analogy applied to man as we know him—to see quite clearly that his entire body with all its wonderful mechanism is a husk, a shell, a mere outer skin, soon thrown off and left to decay where it has fallen, while the life of the young creature develops unhampered, like a prisoner released from bondage? Does the fact that we can not *see* the young immortal weigh in the slightest degree against his existence?

The physical sight of every creature is relative to the development of its organ of vision. The "eye" of the angle worm is no more than a sensitive spot—an eye spot—at the end of its spinal column. By means of this it is conscious of light and darkness and of nothing else. All the great world of varied forms visible to an ordinary dog is to this creature as though it did not exist. And the dog, proud when compared to the angle worm, must be humble when contrasted with man. Take the most alert, the most intelligent dog that ever lived for a walk through beautiful country. What does he *see*? Does he halt to admire the shapely trees or the odd flowers by the wayside? Does the red glory of the sunset or the immensity of the sea draw his attention for one moment from the rabbits or birds on which his whole consciousness is centered. Take him to a concert or, as Professor James suggested, into a library where wise men are conversing. Do the realities which draw us to the concert and the library, which make the music and the conversation determining influences in our lives, exist for him? Would he not say quite confidently, if he could speak, that they were not there? By what right, then, does man, the vain, claim exemption from the law

valid for other creatures that knowledge is relative to the organs of perception in the knower?

Man too is as dependent on his physical eyes as is the angle worm or the dog. And his eyes are hardly better than theirs. They can not even see the life within matter, which is the life of matter, till sharpened by the aid of the microscope. And even the microscope does not reveal those ions of electricity of which our most solid looking matter is composed. Electricity we never see; we infer its existence from its works. So we may infer the existence of the self of man. Does not the difference in working efficiency between a living and a dead body indicate that in the case of the latter the worker has been withdrawn? Does not the vast and intricate working efficiency of nature force us to the conclusion that the Worker is still there? And where can he reside if not within? Above and below are mere forms of speech related to the gravitation of this earth. If the vital part of all that we know lies within it, and if increase of power means increase of fineness as it seems, where should we look for the life and power expressed in the universe if not within.

Aspects of the apparently universal truth of inwardness as the key to progress meet us at every turn. Development along the line of dimensional space mathematically conceived is from without within. The one dimensional being must go within to find the second dimension; the two dimensional being must go within to find the third dimension; and we, three dimensional beings, must look within if we would understand the mystery of the fourth dimension. The presumption is that the analogy holds all the way up (or in) to the complete fulfilment of all dimensional space.

Wireless telegraphy is a fragmentary expression of the same law. Certain things can be done in the visible physical world, certain forces transmitted by well understood media. The atmosphere carries the message of a man who calls to another across the street. But in wireless it is the ether which carries the message which one man sends to another across the sea. And the ether is a medium of which the particles are smaller than the particles of the atmosphere and lie within them. Literally the ether is inside the atmosphere.

The Eastern theory of thought transference carries out the analogy. Within the ether lies the akasa by means of which thoughts can be transmitted regardless of material bounds.

The increase in relative reality marked by a progressive inwardness gives, as has been indicated, increase of power. A man can call a certain distance with his natural voice, but not across the sea. Thought transference appears to be free even from the limitations of wireless. Another characteristic is increase in richness, in fullness of manifestation. A two dimensional space is richer in possibilities, a fuller manifestation of the Great Source than a one dimensional space, a three than a two. Progress is from the mathematical point to infinity. Increase of har-

mony, of oneness, appears to be a concomitant of the increase in fullness of manifestation, but it is hard even to illustrate this point. However, it may be thrown out as a suggestion for the reader to verify as he can that power, fineness, scope of manifestation, and harmony are more marked at each advance on the path of inwardness.

A Master once told his disciples to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. The dove-like quality of non-resistance has been much emphasized in Christian literature. The wisdom of the serpent has been pretty generally overlooked. Yet to one who has even the faintest insight into Christ's purpose—what he was trying to accomplish—the non-resistance of his death upon the cross is not more remarkable than the shrewdness of his method of saving men without their knowledge, even against their wills. The same method has been applied in the foundation and development of the Theosophical Society—the same method and for the same end.

Brotherhood, toleration, the comparative study of religions, and psychic research were laid as corner stones of the Theosophical Society. For toleration, though not one of the stated objects, is so fundamental a principle of theosophy and received such emphasis at the inception of the Society that it must be included in any summary of the principles on which it rests. These, though able to maintain their right to consideration on their face value, are not merely the simple and worthy objects which they appear. Each has a greater than itself hidden within it, which, as the stated object is followed begins to reveal itself to the inner eye of the astonished beholder. It is as though a man picking up what seems to be an empty purse should find some inner pocket which is full of gold, as though a college student perfunctorily taking a required course in English prose should chance on the *Sartor Resartus*.

And herein lies the wisdom of the serpent. He who, obedient to the letter of the law, faithfully follows one of the four objects of the Society soon receives the great and surprising revelation that within that object lies another subtler and more far reaching than he could have guessed, leading to heights only yesterday beyond his power to imagine. Starting out, perhaps, with the simple, manly resolve to do his best for his fellow men, he suddenly, sometime—if he really has done his best—awakens to find himself a disciple, well started on the road to liberation. This is the wisdom of the serpent which has taught us to build that which we knew not, that has set us on a path which until well started on our way we were incapable even of conceiving.

Let us take the objects of the Society in order and look within.

The one pledge required of those who join the Theosophical Society, is that they shall help to found the nucleus of a universal brotherhood of man without distinction of race, creed, class (I use this word inten-

tionally), or color. This brotherhood is to be founded on the external plane of our material life, where alone the social distinctions referred to exist. The Theosophical Society, be it remembered, at the time it was founded functioned on the external plane, could function, so far as its ordinary membership was concerned, on no other. Madame Blavatsky distinctly states that the first step toward the kind of brotherhood the Society is attempting to establish is the organization of society depicted by Edward Bellamy in *Looking Backward*.\*

A letter published in the "Notes and Comments" of the QUARTERLY of January, 1911, endorses this position. "The Theosophical Society was chosen as the corner stone, the foundation of the future religions of humanity. To achieve the proposed object a greater, wiser and especially a more benevolent intermingling of the high and low, of the alpha and omega of society, was determined upon. The white races must be the first to stretch out the hand of fellowship to the dark nations, to call the poor despised 'nigger' Brother. This prospect may not smile to all. He is no Theosophist who objects to this principle." In the same letter the idea that the Theosophical Society should ever drop its noblest title, the "Brotherhood of Humanity, to become a school of philosophy" is vehemently repudiated.

Now what is the significance of all this emphasis on brotherhood materially expressed in a society the foundation and tendencies of which are spiritual? What is the spiritual meaning within the stated object, or has it none?—Just this: the observance of the outer has power to induce the inner; the man who is brotherly to his fellows in all his human relations grows gradually like "the wise" in the *Gita*. "A Brahman full of wisdom and virtue, a cow, an elephant, a dog or a feeder of dogs; in these the wise behold no difference." This, of course, means that the wise has attained to the realization of the unity of all souls with the Oversoul, the higher consciousness of the Vedanta philosophy. It means that by living the brotherhood (neighborliness) of the parable of the good Samaritan the spiritual unity of the fifteenth chapter of St. John's Gospel is attained.

This, therefore, is the method of Jesus who taught the parable of the good Samaritan, the Golden Rule, and the "inasmuch" precepts. And his teaching is reinforced by his example. This was his teaching to the multitudes. To his disciples he revealed the mysteries of the kingdom. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me" has a peculiar significance to a theosophist who applies the rule of inwardness and who knows the Master's habit of speaking for the higher self. It is first to lead the life, then, as effect to cause, to know the doctrine.

Buddha's method was the same, if we are to trust Mr. Edmond

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\* *Key to Theosophy*, III.

Holmes, and for the same reason.\* Four of the five rules in his Code of Moral Law are details of the principle of brotherhood expressed in man's external relations with his fellows.

Such was the method of the Masters who founded the Theosophical Society, and such apparently is their method with the world to-day. Is not all the crude groping after political and social equality, all the rampant, incoherent democratic and socialistic agitation merely the effort of spiritual children to embody the glimpses they have had of the principle of the unity of all life, and who needs must express their vision of unity where they are, if at all—in the darkness of material consciousness. Do not such well-intentioned children deserve to be understood, and their purposes, so far as possible furthered?—as we would help a real child to build a tower of blocks that we knew could last but a moment, if thereby he might learn what was vastly more important for him to know than how to lay one block on another—the working of the law of gravitation.

Any other method of attaining the end of us all—the higher consciousness—appears to be as fallacious as dangerous. To build a house without first laying out a broad ground plan and looking carefully to the foundation is to build badly. The foolish man who hears the sayings of Jesus and doeth them not is likened by him to “a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth;” the wise man who hears and does them is he who “built an house, digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock.” The house of the foolish man was destroyed by the flood; the other remained standing.

To overlook the claims of external brotherhood is like attempting to solve the problems of trigonometry before one has gained a thorough knowledge of arithmetic. The only justification for the mathematician who ceases to study arithmetic is that he has so thoroughly mastered this elementary science that its laws have become automatic. The only justification for the theosophist who ceases to study and practise brotherhood externally is that the laws of external brotherhood have already become a part of his nature—that he has joined the company of the wise, who, regarding all men as the soul, literally see no difference. Each plane binds in relation to that above it. On each the self must be mastered before the student advances to the next.

The architects of our Society designed the plan of a tower and gave it to us to build. They called the tower the higher consciousness and they drew it very beautiful and very high. It was to reach clear to the heavens and from its summit command a far view of the surrounding earth. The ground plan they called toleration. The foundation they named brotherhood. Little by little the builders were set to work as they were able. Stone-masons were needed as well as artist builders. First the ground plan was laid out, broad and spacious so that there should be

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\* *The Creed of Buddha*, IV.

room for all people; then the foundations were placed deep and firm, strengthened with steel beams of endurance and chains of human kindness. Not till this had been done could the superstructure be raised, as fair and high as the ground plan was wide and the foundations strong and deep. Could a tower be built otherwise? Yes, but not with safety. A tower could be built on a narrow ground plan and weak foundations, but it would not stand. It would totter and perhaps fall with the first strong wind that shook it. Happy the builders of such a tower if the first wind is not too strong and if they still have time to reinforce the ground work and so save the superstructure from ruin.

The dangers of overlooking the external plane can not be too strongly emphasized. Faults not overcome there return in finer form. The snake of self reappears with changed aspect in the heart of the disciple. Selfishness not killed out becomes spiritual selfishness—the desire to save one's own soul—and defeats its own end even by seeking it. Ambition and vanity become the desire for spiritual leadership. An autocratic temper evolves into the dogmatism of creed or of an ecclesiastical hierarchy. Pride becomes spiritual pride; and "He who thinks himself holier than another,—who believes himself wise, or in any way superior to his fellow men, is incapable of discipleship." The interfering nature, the busy-body, takes on itself the duty of another, "full of danger." Anyone of these weaknesses unconquered below is enough to neutralize the progress of a lifetime. The chain breaks at its weak link. The tower falls for the lack of one bolt. The pity of it!

So long as we live on this plane it is necessary to express ourselves here. We must therefore be brotherly or unbrotherly, there is no third path. The good Samaritan and the thieves are set against one another as alternatives in the parable. If, like the priest and the Levite, we attempt the medium way and go by on the other side, we at once range ourselves with the thieves. "Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin." The Master expressed himself clearly in regard to those who in the parable attempted the impossible feat of neutrality.

We exist not for ourselves but for the world. Those who see theosophy through us know nothing of our higher consciousness. They see and recognize the external fruits alone and are drawn to or alienated from theosophy according to those fruits. And we *are* our brothers' keepers.

Toleration is an aspect of brotherhood. It means more than allowing a man who disagrees with us to express himself and still live. It means understanding, imaginative sympathy, and finally love: for the man who understands another inevitably loves him. If admiration and respect are out of the question, compassion remains. And compassion is also an avenue on which love freely walks. The more spiritual love becomes the more it partakes of the nature of compassion. Does any one deny that Christ loved the human race? If not, would anyone

venture to suggest that admiration or even respect was the basis of his love?

Barring inevitable illness and death most of the troubles in life spring out of misunderstandings. Two men see a thing from different standpoints and accordingly emphasize its different aspects. They believe themselves to be hostile to one another, irreconcilable. Lacking the power to see themselves as others see them, they may each be the victim of the same limitation, or they may really be emphasizing different aspects of the same truth. A catholic sees the value of the collective consciousness in religion; a protestant recognizes the importance of individual initiative. They stand opposed to one another on a basis of antagonism which is a mere figment of their fancy acting on the basis of their ignorance. A large intellectual toleration would recognize the evils that have always attended the attempt to ignore either one of these supplementary factors. Toleration of the heart intuitively teaches the same lesson. No system lives by the error that it contains but by its intrinsic rightness. Each man holds his opinion because of the truth he sees in it. That particular truth he sees; other equally true truth he misses.

But there is an even deeper significance to toleration. The Theosophical Society has often been likened to an orchestra. An orchestra produces the grandest music, the highest harmony, the most complete unity. Yet an orchestra is made up of instruments differing as radically from one another as the violin, the horn, and the drum. Stringed instruments alone could never bring forth symphonies, neither could wind instruments, nor drums. These different instruments are not antagonistic to one another in the production of harmony. They are supplementary. The jarring of their different tone qualities is as necessary to harmony as the jarring of chords of the seventh or even of interloping sharps and flats is to the peace and unity of the tonic triad.

Our opponent must be endured; he must be understood; and finally he must be loved as our best friend. He is no longer antagonistic but supplementary. He adds to our spiritual life elements which we, because of our limitations, could never get from our own natures, and which because our friends are of our choosing, we could never get from them. By faithfully carrying out the theosophical principle of toleration we learn the meaning of spiritual unity which is heightened and strengthened by differences bravely overcome.

Brotherhood and toleration belong to the exoteric side of theosophy, yet unfolding we find them laden with esoteric truth. The comparative study of religions and the investigation of the psychic powers latent in man are esoteric at the start. Have they too a deeper meaning hidden within?

The study of any great religion shows that it contains a revelation of an order of nature higher than the order in which we consciously

live, a revelation also of a place or state to which we are introduced at death. The directions are given for the attainment of that state. A close comparison of descriptions and directions of guidance prove them to be identical. Each Teacher is describing the same thing—the Path and its goal. Thus by entering upon the comparative study of religions, ingeniously enough, we stumble upon the teachings of occultism hidden within. Seeing these teachings from so many different standpoints, yet always the same, the conviction bursts upon us with the force of a revelation, that these great Teachers agree in their description of the path and of its goal because it is one path they are describing and one goal, a true path and a true goal that they know.

When we recognize that the path is for us to tread and accordingly begin to tread it we have become disciples. This is to investigate the psychic powers latent in man. Looking within for a hidden meaning we see at first faint letters scrawled. If we fasten our attention firmly and persistently on the dim outlines we soon find them growing clearer till finally we can spell out the word. Then the vision grows before us as we watch breathlessly, a vision of the meaning of the whole of life advancing as it does from the outer to the inner—a vision of immortality. We see immortality no longer as the faint hope of a stricken race, but as a clearly defined fact awaiting verification. The wisdom of serpents has been surpassed, and the harmlessness of doves transformed into positive and far-reaching love.

Truly God has a sense of humor, and must needs laugh outright at the blind gropings of "his wondrous manikins here below": not with the shallow laugh of amusement or satire, but with the deep, sane laugh of clearer insight, the still laugh of infinite joy that is born of finite pain.

LOUISE EDGAR PETERS.

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*Life is like swimming. The man who struggles anxiously with the water, fearful lest it engulf him, sinks as the result of his own cowardly mistrust. But he who strikes out firmly, confident in the good will of the water to uphold him, lies on its surface as safely as his peace in the heart of a friend.*

L. E. P.



# A PRIMER OF THEOSOPHY

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## III

### THE NATURE OF MAN

“THE development of ‘Man,’ from his first appearance on the Earth in this Round, forms the subject of the second volume of the *Secret Doctrine*.”

The quotation marks, above, around “Man”, point to a condition or conditions of being quite different from anything *we* should call man. If we can conceive of a ball of fire-mist gradually becoming a solid globe, settling into a man-bearing world, and if we see everything on it evolving from a speck of protoplasm to the gigantic forms of antediluvian monsters, is it impossible to imagine man himself going through the same transformations? The carbonic vapors and steaming soil of the early globe could have no effect on such human life and organisms as we are told existed at those remote periods, and the *Secret Doctrine* tells us that it is shown in every ancient scripture and cosmogony that “man evolved primarily as a *luminous incorporeal form*, over which, like the plastic clay around the iron framework of the sculptor, the *physical* frame of his body was built by, through, and from, the lower forms and types of animal terrestrial life.”

In studying the nature of man and his environment, we are struck by the omnipresence of the number *seven*. But after a long and careful comparison of these correspondences, it seemed that the principal reason for the omnipresence of this number lay in its relation to the phenomena of *life*, and in fact the *Secret Doctrine* says that in our world the rhythm of life is in *sevens*, because that is the rhythm of our Mother the Moon, who in dying imparted her life to her child the Earth, according to the great law regulating the cosmic forces. Other planets and stars and solar systems, have other rates of vibration; in them the rhythm of life throbs faster or slower as the case may be. The Sun is the heart of our solar system, and there is a regular circulation of the Life-Essence throughout that system, like that of the blood in the body, only instead of a few seconds it takes the solar blood ten or eleven years to complete its rounds, and the astronomers are beginning to recognize this rhythm as the cause of the recurrence of sun-spots.

To return to the evolution of man—we are told that the first human stock was a reproduction, by higher and semi-divine beings of their shadowy selves. They “became” the First Race, just as the “eternal cell” of which Weismann speaks, became the endless number of cells into which it subdivided. When the Earth had become dry land, the

Spirits of the Moon came to fashion the astral body of man, the shadowy prototypes of future human beings..

These "lunar ancestors" as they are called, bear the same relation to the physical body of man that the Moon bears to the physical Earth. As the Moon formed the model, and still controls many of the phenomena of Earth-life, (the rhythm of diseases, of the tides, of generation, etc.), so the astral body still gives the model of the physical form, and controls the ebb and flow of its energies. But as these "lunar ancestors" corresponded to the elemental kingdoms preceding the mineral, and were devoid of the ray of Universal Mind, they could only give birth to astral man, a phantom with neither form nor mind.

"The Solar Ancestors" properly so-called, could and did, impart to this astral body a semblance of life (for from the Sun comes that great flood of vital force that vivifies all nature), but they could not give man that sacred spark which expands into the flower of human reason and self-consciousness, for they had it not to give.

It is the Solar Ancestors alone who could complete man, that is, make of him a self-conscious, almost a divine being—a god on earth. But as they were devoid of the grosser *creative fire* they were unable to create *physical* man. The Lunar Ancestors, though possessed of creative fire, were devoid of the higher intellectual element, and could only give birth to the astral man, the model of the physical. The reason why the Solar Ancestors could not give to man the "sacred spark" just referred to, is because they were too divine and pure, too near to the Absolute Cause of all things. To complete the nature of *septenary man*, to unite his three lower principles with the spiritual Monad, two connecting principles are needed, *Mind* and *Desire*, or the emotional soul. It would be impossible for the Monad to dwell in a form without these, except in an *absolutely latent* state, as in the higher animals.

We find primeval man, then, described as ethereal, devoid of compactness, and *Mindless*. He had no middle principle to serve him as a medium between the *highest* and the *lowest*, the spiritual man and the physical brain, for he lacked *mind*. For the Monad, the Ray of Universal Mind, has no hold upon the mere form. It cannot affect the form where there is no agent of transmission. But as no process of evolution is sudden or unprepared for, even the human mind developed by degrees, and although the First and Second Races were not what we call men, but merely rudiments of the future human beings, still even among these appeared here and there some faint foreshadowing of the intelligence to come.

The *Commentary* sums up the early Races in a few words: "*First* came the *Self-Existent* on this Earth. They are the 'Spiritual Lives,' projected by the absolute *Will* and *Law* at the dawn of every rebirth of the worlds." (These, of course, are the Creative Powers, the fashioners of man.) "From these proceeds

I. The First Race, the 'Self-Born', the astral shadows of their progenitors. The body was devoid of all understanding (that is, mind, intelligence, and will). The inner being (the Monad), though within the earthly frame, was unconnected with it. The link was not there as yet.

From the First Race emanated the

II. Second, endowed by the preservers and the incarnating gods with the first weak spark of intelligence.

And from this proceeds

III. The Third Race, the Two-fold, or androgyne. As the process of evolution went on, and matter became more and more dense, the Third Race separated itself into three distinct divisions, according to its methods of reproduction. From being entirely without sex, it became androgynous, and having gone through the earliest stages of propagation by fission and by budding, in the Third (or egg-born) Race, the soft cell gradually turned into a man-bearing egg. These beings began to give birth, gradually and almost imperceptibly in their evolutionary development, first to beings in which one sex predominated, and then to distinct males and females. While the earlier Races were little higher than the sea-anemone in development, with the Third Race, and its increase in materiality, came many changes of form, and towards its end, men came into the world under the same conditions and by the same processes as at present. This change required of course many millions of years, and followed the general lines of evolution very closely.

With the separation of the sexes, strife came into the world, and the conflict of natures bred passion and sin and death, for as some of our naturalists have said, reproduction has death as its inevitable consequence, "it is the price paid for a body." This is the real fall of man, "the descent of the soul into matter," and involution, or the union of the spiritual with the physical having been effected, *evolution* or the return towards the spiritual began.

The Third Race shows three distinct divisions: physiologically and psychically; the earliest sinless; the second, awakening to intelligence; and the third and last decidedly *animal*, where the *mind* succumbs to the temptations of desire. The brain had continued to develop, until it had at last become a fitting vehicle for Mind, and the divine spark having kindled the fire of intelligence in man, he acquired the consciousness of his own powers, and ate of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. That is, having been given *mind*, *self-consciousness* had arisen from its union with matter, and man had become a god, knowing good and evil. Good and evil, light and darkness, heat and cold, male and female, active and passive, etc., etc., are the two scales of the ever-vibrating balance of creation. Therefore evil *must* be relative, and only through constant struggle can man work out his salvation, and win his way back to the Divine Source of all.

IV. With the Fourth Race developed language, and the men of its

early sub-divisions are described as being of gigantic stature, and endowed with extraordinary faculties. From the men of this Race we get our traditions of Titans and Cyclopes, the three-eyed, the third eye being however, at the back of the head. The old *Commentary* says that when after the separation of the sexes men had fallen into matter, and their spiritual vision had become dim, it had to be awakened by artificial stimuli, and the third eye gradually disappeared. But it has left a trace of its existence in the *pineal gland*, which Descartes called the seat of the soul. It was an active organ in man at that stage of evolution when the spiritual element reigned supreme, and it did not become entirely atrophied till the close of the Fourth Race, when man's divine powers had been made the servants of his newly awakened physical and psychic passions instead of the reverse. The sin lay, not in using these powers, but in *mis-using* them.

The first civilisation of our Round (the Fourth) began with the Third Race, of which a few remnants are now to be found among the flatheaded Australians. With the Atlanteans, physical beauty and strength reached their climax (in accordance with the law of evolution), towards their middle period. They represented an almost countless number of races and nations, and at their best, Greek, Roman, and even Egyptian civilizations, were as nothing compared to theirs. Their knowledge of the hidden powers of nature was far greater than ours, they built and navigated flying machines, and their houses were floored with gold. But little of their literature is now preserved, and their art and science have left scarcely any vestige except in China, although one of the principal astronomical works in Sanskrit is the production of an Atlantean astronomer.

It was the abuse of their knowledge of the subtler forces of nature which led to the downfall of the Atlantean Race. And as in any series of seven the fourth must be the central or point of equilibrium, so with the Fourth Race the spiritual element had become most deeply imbedded in matter, and with the

V. Fifth the re-ascent towards the spiritual begins. Only by the *union* with matter can Universal Consciousness become individual Mind, only by the *purification* of matter can it regain the glorious liberty of the Sons of God. With each Race, we are told, a new sense and a new element come to perfection, and already the fifth element, Ether, is beginning to be recognized. Prof. Crookes has said that in its vibrations hardly understood as yet, "lie possibilities of a new organ in the human brain answering to these vibrations as the eye answers to the vibrations which we know as light." And so the way is being prepared for the development of that *sixth sense* which will be the distinguishing characteristic of the coming (Sixth) Race.

After the destruction of Atlantis, the Fifth Race "was ruled over by the first divine Kings \* \* \* who re-descended, who made peace

with the Fifth, who taught and instructed it." "When mortals shall have become sufficiently spiritualised, men will *Know* that there never was a great world-reformer, whose name has come down to us, who was not a direct emanation of the *Logos*, and who had not appeared before, during the past cycle." Each of these, and many others, had first appeared on earth as one of the seven Powers of the *Logos*, individualised as a God or angelic messenger, then, more material in form, they reappeared in turn as the great sages and teachers of the Fifth Race, and finally sacrificed themselves for the good of mankind, to be re-born under different circumstances at various critical periods."

#### IV

##### THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF MAN

So far we have seen the evolution of man to be conducted on three lines, the physical, the mental, and the spiritual, but the closer we look into this marvellous system the more we realise that many problems present themselves that can only be solved by a more minute division, and the doctrine of "the seven principles" seems to be the Key that opens many locks. These seven principles, to begin with the lowest, or the most material, and therefore the best known to us, are (1) The physical body; (2) The astral body; (3) Vitality, or the Life-Force; (4) The passionate or emotional nature, the lower mind; (5) the higher mind, or the intellectual nature; (6) the spiritual nature; and (7) that Ray of the Divine that overshadows man, rather than forms a part of him.. Or instead of speaking of the emotional nature, etc., we may say the animal Soul, the intellectual Soul, and the Spiritual Soul, but the other classification is perhaps simpler.

I. To begin with the physical body, the most material of the component parts of man: This outermost "sheath" as the Oriental philosophers call it, is built up of countless cells, or "Lives," under the constructive energy of the Life-Force, the third principle. These cells have a consciousness of their own, entirely apart from the brain-consciousness, which enables them to select from the nourishment provided them, that which suits their needs, and reject that which would be injurious. Another phase of this cell-consciousness is shown in the way the cells hasten to repair wounded tissue in any part of the body. The brain-consciousness feels the *pain* of a wound, but has nothing to do with the action of the cells in repairing the damage. The memory, which is a function of the brain, urges the cells to repeat the repairing process even when it is no longer needed, and this is the cause of scars and other things of like nature."

When the body dies, it is because the life-force is withdrawn from it, and the energy expended in building it up is changed into the energy which tears it to pieces. Wherever there is an atom of matter, even in

the most gaseous condition, there is life, however latent and unconscious that life may be. The expression "inorganic substance" means simply that the latent life in the molecules of so-called inert matter cannot be detected by our senses. The *Commentary* says that "the worlds to the profane are built up of the known elements. Fire alone is *One* on the plane of the One Reality; on that of manifested, hence illusive, being, its particles are "fiery lives," which live and have their being at the expense of every other life that they consume. Therefore they are called the "Devourers." The preservation and destruction of the physical body are due to the alternate functions of the "fiery lives" as builders and destroyers. They are "builders" by sacrificing themselves in the form of vitality to restrain the destructive influence of the microbes, and compelling them under that restraint, to build up the material body and its cells. They are "destroyers" when that restraint is removed, and the microbes, unsupplied with vital constructive energy, are left to run riot as destructive agents. During the first half of a man's life the fiery lives are indirectly engaged in building up the material body; life is on the ascending scale, and its force is used in construction and increase. After thirty-five, the age of retrogression sets in, and the fiery lives having exhausted their strength, the work of decrease and destruction begins.

But it must not be forgotten that there is in reality a principle more material than the physical body, or even the astral, and that is the fourth principle, the animal soul, the body of desires, as it has been called, the real animal centre through which the beast in us acts all its life, and of which the body is but the irresponsible shell and medium.

II. The second principle is the astral body, the framework upon which the physical body is built, and which is still molecular, though of a finer grade of matter than the physical body. The evolution of the *external* form round the *astral* is produced by the terrestrial forces, but the evolution of the *internal* or real *Man* is purely spiritual. The stories of perfected men, like Enoch and Elijah who are taken up to heaven alive, symbolise the death of any spiritual man who has reached the power and degree, as also the purification, which enable him to die only in the physical body, and *still live consciously in his astral body*. The Pauline expression that "Enoch should not see death," has thus an esoteric meaning, but has nothing supernatural in it. The Biblical hints that Enoch will share with Christ and Elijah the glories of the last Advent, signify, *esoterically*, that some of these perfected men will return in the Seventh Race.

Theosophists will remember that during a period of cyclic rest, which answers to our nightly slumbers, everything visible and invisible remains in *statu quo*. All forms, as well as their astral types, remain as they were when the great clock of the Universe stopped. With the beginning of a new cycle the Monad has only to step into the astral body of the "lunar ancestors" in order that the work of physical consolidation

should begin around the shadowy model. For there can be no *objective form* in all the universe, without its astral prototype being first formed in Space. From Phidias down to his humblest workman, a sculptor has to create a model in his mind before he can reproduce it in a figure, the most trivial thing that can be fashioned by the hand of man, must first exist in the mind of the artificer.

The astral body *inheres* in the physical body, and "to project the astral" means to disentangle every particle of the astral molecules that form it from the physical molecules, a most difficult and complicated performance, needing the knowledge and skill of an adept to complete successfully. Only in occasional cases, the astral and the physical bodies are both so loosely built, that the astral can slip out of its sheath, as can be seen sometimes in seances, when the astral body appears to ooze out of the *left* side of the medium, the spleen, which has been called the factory of astral matter, being on the left side. The astral body dies with the physical, or very soon afterwards, and one of the strongest arguments for cremation is, that by hastening the dispersion of the molecules, the higher principles are the sooner set free from the bonds of matter.

III. The third principle is "Life," or Vitality, which pervades all the rest, as indeed do all the principles, nor can any one of them be thought of as a separate compartment, as it were, of man's nature, while all of them are but a portion of the Universal Soul in whom we live and move and have our being. The principles of man correspond to the principles of the Universe, and so the Life of the universe is the "Spirit" of Electricity, we are told, "as an abstraction we call it the One Life; as an evident reality we speak of a septenary scale of manifestation, which begins at the top with the Unknowable, and ends as omnipresent Mind and Life, immanent in every atom of matter." It is the action of the vital force upon a compound or even a simple body that produces life. "When a body dies, it passes into the same polarity as its male energy, and repels therefore the active agent, which losing hold of the *whole*, fastens on the parts or molecules, this action being called chemical." (*Secret Doctrine*, I. 526, note.)

IV. The fourth principle is the emotional nature or Desire, which must be carefully distinguished from Thought. In its lowest aspect, it is the emotional and passionate nature, the part of consciousness which is common to man and the animal; in its highest, it is aspiration, the motive power of the soul. It is this distinction between the consciousness of the animal and the *self*-consciousness of man, that solves so many of the problems of the psychologist as to the reason or instinct of animals. Romanes has shown that they have all the passions of men, and that they possess the reasoning faculty to a large extent, cannot be denied by any careful observer. What then is the difference? Simply that the animals have not what is called "the I am I" consciousness, that

*self*-consciousness which enables mankind to develop the inner man, and to become the Higher Ego, the immortal Spirit, or the Higher Mind.

Perhaps the nearest approach to self-consciousness in the beast is the sense of ownership which many of the higher animals possess, but even this strong sense of individual property is hardly to be called self-consciousness. In the *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge* there are some very clear explanations of the true dividing line between man and beast, and even more in the second volume of the *Secret Doctrine*. "Man is a perfected animal," says the former, "the vehicle of a fully developed *Monad*, *self-conscious* and deliberately following its own line of progress, whereas in the insect, and even the higher animals, the Higher Triad of principles (the overshadowing Divinity, the Intellectual Soul, and the Spiritual Soul), is absolutely dormant." And the *Secret Doctrine* (II, 267) says: "No animal has the three higher principles awakened in him; they are simply potential, latent, and thus non-existent." Therefore, "between man and the animal there is the impassable abyss of mentality and Self-consciousness." And yet we must not forget that "in relation to *its own plane* of conception and perception, the ant has as good an intellect as ours, and over and above instinct, shows very high reasoning powers." (*Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, I, 13.)

But the three higher principles that go to make up man's complex nature, the Intellectual Soul and the Spiritual Soul, with the overshadowing Divinity, *can have no individuality on Earth*, cannot be *man*, that is, unless there is (1) the Mind, the Ego, to cognise itself, and (2) the terrestrial *false* personality, or the body of personal desires and will, to cement the whole to the physical form of man. It is the Mind and the body of desires and passions that contain the dual personality; the real immortal Ego (or the individuality) and the false and transitory *personality*, the two having to be closely blended to make up a *full* terrestrial existence. "The most perfect soul incarnated in the most perfect physical body, would be only a beautiful and unconscious being without Mind." (*Abridgment*, 395.)

V. It is then very evident that the most important principle of our nature is the fifth, the Mind, the pivot upon which all the other faculties turn, and which is the foundation of our immortality. It is the close and intimate union of the Mind or the Intellectual Soul, with the Spiritual Soul, that forms that immortal Ego that persists forever. Consciousness, that which beholds itself in the mirror of thought, is all that we can feel secure of in the beginning. "I think, therefore I am," said Descartes. "I am, therefore I think," is equally true, and it is the Thinker within us that spells out by slow degrees the complex characters of itself and its surroundings, and learns at last to discern the important from the unimportant.

VI, VII. But higher even than Mind, because nearer akin to Spirit, is the sixth principle, the Spiritual Soul; *Intuition* as opposed to *Under-*



*standing*, and the seventh principle, which is its vehicle and can hardly be treated of separately. "The Spiritual Soul (the sixth principle), is but a mirror that *reflects* absolute bliss, a reflection not yet free from ignorance; the Supreme Spirit (the seventh principle), alone, is the one real and eternal substratum of all—the essence and absolute knowledge." (*Abridgment*, 269.)

But it is better to leave the lofty speculations of philosophy for the present, and busy ourselves with matters more closely concerned with our everyday problems.

K. HILLARD.

(*To be continued*)

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*"A little thought will show you how vastly your own happiness depends on the way other people bear themselves towards you. The looks and tones at your breakfast table, the conduct of your fellow-workers or employers, the faithful or unreliable men you deal with, what people say to you on the street, the way your cook and housemaid do their work, the letters you get, the friends or foes you meet,—these things make up very much of the pleasure or misery of your day. Turn the idea around and remember that just so much are you adding to the pleasure or the misery of other people's days. And this is the half of the matter which you can control. Whether any particular day shall bring to you more of happiness or of suffering is largely beyond your power to determine. Whether each day of your life shall give happiness or suffering rests with yourself."*

GEORGE S. MERRIAM.

# ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

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## THEOSOPHY AND THE GREAT RELIGIONS

“THE relation of Theosophy to the great religions, and particularly to Christianity, is a subject I wish greatly that you would bring into the next *Screen*,” said the Philosopher. “Most absurd misunderstandings are current, even among some members of the Society.”

The Recorder professed complete ignorance. Would not the Philosopher explain?

“I am tired of explaining,” he responded. “It is so simple, and it seems to me always that people whose misunderstandings persist, must close their ears deliberately. Yet perhaps that is not fair: perhaps pre-conception and prejudice will account for it, as they account for so many other stupidities. Here is a man who calls himself a Theosophist, actually abusing Christianity. And he is not insane in any ordinary sense. Tell him that Theosophy *is* Christianity, and he froths at the mouth. Add for his consolation that Theosophy is also Buddhism and any other religion which he prefers, and instead of enlightening him, he thinks you are trying to trick him into your heresy. He hurls at you a host of crimes perpetrated in the name of Christianity—as if crimes had any more to do with it than the quarrels or misbehaviour of so-called Theosophists can affect the character of Divine Wisdom! Then he talks about priest-craft, ignoring the fact that Brahmanism has developed a system of priest-craft which puts Rome hopelessly to shame, and that he thinks none the worse of the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* or of the *Upanishads* on that account. Point out such discrepancies, drive him into a corner, and I have known him as a last resort to argue with Nietzsche that Christ taught obedience, and that obedience makes slaves, while Theosophy makes men. As if Theosophy, which is a practical working principle, were not based upon obedience, and as if the chief difference between a man and a child does not lie in the ability of the man and the inability of the child, faithfully and intelligently to obey someone or something which he recognizes as superior in wisdom to himself—his own flickering conscience to begin with!

The Student carried the argument a step further. “Suppose,” he said, “that we were compelled to live and to work in Burmah among the Burmese: should we try to convert them to Christianity? Should we attack Buddhism and denounce Gautama Buddha? Is that the way in which members of the Theosophical Society should set to work to help the people of that country and of that religion? Of course, membership in this Society does not necessarily cure a man of bigotry, although it

ought to do so: it gives him endless opportunity. Consequently there may be members who would violate the laws of common-sense and of good taste by conduct affirmative of my questions. This would prove that they do not understand even the elements of Theosophy, though they may have been members of the Society for years, and may have read every book and magazine ever published on the subject. . . . All of which is clear, and all of which would meet with the approval of those who, in this country and among Christians, see fit to attack that small fragment of Christianity which their narrowness permits them to see. Their position is not consistent, and that is because they have no understanding of the fundamental principles of Theosophy upon which their procedure in either case ought to be based. Of course there are evils in Buddhism, in Hinduism, in Christianity: there are evils everywhere and in all people. But faults are the distorted reflections of virtues, and the best way to eradicate faults is to concentrate attention upon their substance—that is, upon the good qualities, upon the truth and beauty and power of that which the faults perversely represent.

“At one stage—whether the field of our endeavor be a garden, a character, or a religion—there is destructive work to be done: overgrowth to be cut down, weeds to be torn up, accretions of all kinds to be removed. But that work, though of vital importance, is preparatory. It was done in this country years ago by Robert Ingersoll, whose work was negative; and by Madame Blavatsky with marvellous success, because she attacked all views that were hide-bound—hard-shell science, hard-shell Spiritualism, hard-shell religion, with large impartiality; and because, while ‘breaking the moulds of minds,’ she knew how to inject the seed of construction which, as she was well aware, would come to fruition under the fostering care of her successors. Her work, therefore, though often destructive in form, was at all times creative in effect, and was intended by those whose agent she was to prepare the way for the purely constructive methods of to-day. It is our part to reap the fruit of her sowing. If we were to insist upon tearing up just because she did so, we should undo her good work—not aid it.”

“To use another simile,” added the Philosopher, “you may have to begin the capture of a city by bombarding its walls; but once you have captured the city, or any part of it, your effort is to preserve and to govern—to work from within outwardly, instead of from without towards the centre. Adaptability is one of the first requisites in war, in business, and in Occultism; and one of the troubles with the people of whom you have been speaking is that they have not moved forward with the procession: they are out of date, and they imagine that because they seek to reproduce the work of twenty or thirty years ago, they are the only survivors of the original movement. . . . Well, it is a pity. But I do not see that anything can be done for them. Their minds are shut. And certainly the clock of the universe cannot be put back to

please them. Theosophy means more than they know. They pay the penalty of limiting its significance."

"But there is still another phase of it which ought to be referred to"—it was the Disciple who spoke now—"and which has not been mentioned as yet. I mean that the test of Theosophy is a life, not a doctrine. We cannot reform people; we cannot help them in the least, except in so far as our own lives are the outcome of self-reformation. No man can rule who has not learned to obey. No man can afford to talk who has not learned to keep silent. No man can give light to another whose heart is not illumined. His head may be full of words and of logic, and yet he will be no better than sounding brass. Others may think that he helps them; they may say that he does: but "by their fruits ye shall know them," and the test to-day as ever is, how much more is there of patience, of gentleness, of dignity, of self-control, of quietude, of joy, of kindness, of fire, of courage, of sagacity, of endurance, of devotion, of vigour, of consideration for others, of fidelity, of humility, and of those other qualities which go to the making of real men and of true women? Relatively speaking, so long as that basic fact be included, the nature of the doctrine will matter very little; and it will in any case be possible so to phrase the other clauses of our belief that people will understand them as an explanation and extension of their own. Membership in a Society, acceptance and declaration of certain beliefs, does not make a man a Theosophist. To be a Theosophist is to live a theosophical life, which means an ideal life. To be a Christian, in the real sense, can mean no less. Neither Christ nor Buddha asked people to adopt some intellectual formula, some new explanation of the universe, or to join a church. Both of them, in language which their hearers could understand, said, 'Follow me. I have found the Way. I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Live as I live. Obey as I obey. Become what I have become. Be what I am. Love is life.' Egotists call that egotism. Humility understands, and adores such self-abnegation. . . . It is folly to say that the imitation of Buddha will not make a man a Theosophist. It will. And by the imitation of Buddha, he will in time discover Christ. It is folly as great, or greater for western people, to say that the imitation of Christ will not make a man a Theosophist. It will. It does. And, by the imitation of Christ, he will in time discover Buddha. The man who refuses to follow is following himself. His end will be destruction, and, if his vanity be positive enough, he will lead others with him. . . . But can it be that anyone of this day and generation claims seriously to know more about the spiritual life than Christ knew and knows? It were well, in that case, to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest such a book as Madame Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*, as an experience provocative of humility, and then to remember that Madame Blavatsky spoke and wrote of Christ as an Avatar—as the embodiment of wisdom and love and power."

“Here are a few quotations from the writings of Madame Blavatsky,” said the Orientalist at this point, “which I copied out a few days ago, and which are fortunately appropriate. For instance she says: ‘And now once more we have to beg the reader not to lend an ear to the charge—against Theosophy in general and the writer in particular—of disrespect toward one of the greatest and noblest characters in the history of Adeptship—Jesus of Nazareth—nor even of hatred to the Church.’ Elsewhere she says: ‘And this . . . shows Him, beyond any doubt, as an Initiate of the Egyptian Mysteries.’ Again: ‘Those great characters who tower like giants in the history of mankind, like Siddhartha Buddha and Jesus,’ the one ‘as noble and as loving’ as the other. But no one who knew Madame Blavatsky or Mr. Judge personally, can doubt the veneration in which they held Christ as Avatar and Jesus as Adept.”

The Wanderer had joined our party before the Orientalist had begun to speak. From where he came, no one knew and no one asked. We have learned better than to ask him personal questions. He had over-heard the last of what the Disciple had been saying, and he is quick to draw inferences.

“Obedience is the thorn that pricks in this case,” he said. “But their resentment is due often to lack of understanding. They hate priestcraft, and they are right. They are wrong, however, when then confuse that with obedience. The two things are poles apart. They are right when they demand force and individuality. They are wrong when they forget that the force of Niagara itself must be harnessed and concentrated before it can be transformed from mere noise into utility. Objections to obedience always are voiced loudly. Power is quiet. The worship of the Higher Self will lead to liberation. It is one of the paths. But, as Krishna says in the *Gîtâ*, it is a path of great difficulty, and many a man who has followed it, owing to his immersion in a self less high than the highest, and owing to his mistaken view of impersonality, has failed to find the intermediate link, the person, the teacher, the one who has gone before, who would have saved him from destruction. No matter what path is followed, a teacher is needed. The moment a path is entered, a teacher stands ready. We may recognize him or not: but he is there and should be sought and, being found, should be obeyed.

“There is this further truth, however: no one can recognize his teacher—not though he talks with him daily—until he has recognized the voice of his own conscience. No one can obey his teacher until he has learned first to obey his own conscience unflinchingly. Obedience, therefore, begins most simply with the effort to do what we know to be right. And against that obedience, no one, theoretically, rebels. Those who rebel against an extension of that principle and who declare that they would never obey a person; those who go further than that and who condemn the teaching of Christ because of his insistence upon obedience to himself, are the people who, through lack of obedience to the

highest they have seen, have not experienced its value: and no one can appreciate a quality who has not at least the beginning of that quality in himself, and who has not tried to manifest it.

"The fact is that obedience, like love and gratitude and all other virtues, has to be acquired. We have to learn to obey. Destined to govern all things—to bring 'all things in subjection under our feet'—we have first to bring our personal wills into subjection to Wisdom, and to wisdom as embodied in some Master of Wisdom. This is merely another way of saying that we have to learn self-control: that the lower self must be brought into subjection to the higher Self—not killed, but dominated. And do you realize how many different kinds of activities, in the ordinary person, take place without so much as his recognition of them? Naturally, he has no control where he has no recognition. But take some obvious instance, such as self-control in matters of speech: are there many people who can say that their tongues are completely and permanently bridled? Dare they claim to be masters of their speech—or even of their written words? Most people talk before they think, which is more dangerous than to leap before looking. Will not 'a single word put the spirit of a lion into a dead fox,' and is not death as well as life 'in the power of the tongue'?

"Obedience to the will of the highest in the matter of speech, unbroken recollection of that duty, will enable the student in time to govern his thoughts and his feelings—to bring them also into a state of subjection. And until he has done that, he is not free: he is a slave. He has learned, presumably, not to squander his money (our present civilization exists very largely for the purpose of teaching him self-control and obedience there). He must learn not to squander his time, his words, his thoughts. He must include as part of his rule of life this saying: *the unnecessary is the immoral.*

"One result of such discipline will be a tightening of the fibre; a greater intensity in action. He will, at least to some extent, be able to throw the force of his entire nature into whatever it may be his duty to undertake. If he speaks, if he bargains, if he fights, if he meditates, if he prays, he will do it with power. His obedience will give him dominion."

The Student asked a question: "Is it not helpful to concentrate the mind upon the duty of the moment, and to make a practice of living from moment to moment—treating the past as a back number, stale and unprofitable, and the future as none of our concern? Many people brood so over the past and worry so over the future, that they seem to me to fritter their energies and to reduce their working capacity by one half."

"Cavé" was with us and answered. "To brood, to worry—that must always be wrong. To throw our full force into the performance of the moment's duty must always be right. But the duty of some moments must be to reflect; and although, when people are inclined to

be morbid, it may be necessary, as a temporary remedy, to advise them to turn their minds away from the past, and to live only in the present, there can be no question that those who wish to become disciples must learn to live *continuously*. After all, your past is a living fact—not dead at all, but part and parcel of what you are to-day, no matter how much you may have changed, developed, turned from it. It defines, limits, modifies your present, and will continue so to do in your future, until the causes there generated are worked out. Rightly to understand and to manipulate your present and future, therefore, you *must* understand your past: and to understand it you must reflect upon it; you must study it with the utmost care, both as a storehouse of causes, perpetually moulding and determining things to-day, and as lessons whose full value and significance should not be lost in the slightest detail. Otherwise you are working in the dark, unaware of danger, unprepared for difficulties, every one of which it is possible to change and often to eliminate, though only when taken intelligently in hand, never when ignored.

“The disciple does not live in the present; he lives in the Eternal, which includes past, present, and future, as one: and he learns to regard them, and his life, therefore, in the essential spirit of unity. . . . You cannot divorce yourself from your past: if you try to do so, it will become as a ghost to hound and hinder you at every turn. You must face it, study it, take possession of it, master it, learn from it, profit by it, and make it serve as means to your ends. If you do not possess and dominate it, it will possess and dominate you. You have created it, putting your own life and power into it: only you can destroy that in it which should be destroyed. And without the force it contains, you will be crippled hopelessly in your work.

“To work without your past is to cut yourself off from one of your bases of supply, which are two—the spiritual world on the one hand, and, on the other, that mass of generated force of a personal kind which is sometimes called a man’s Karma. . . . The past holds the key to each man’s present, and without that key he cannot understand his present. To live in any other way is to drift; is to live in a third of oneself instead of in the whole (‘regard the three truths, they are equal’) is to live, not even in time, but in only a portion of time, instead of in Eternity.”

#### THE HOLY COURT

At our next meeting, the Philosopher commenced at once. “That the Master’s kingdom may come; that his will may be done on earth as it is done already in heaven:—a great prayer!” he said; “a prayer which Christ himself said on the cross, and which we should learn to say with him, as he then said it, so as to add to our own power the tremendous volume of his.

“For what else are we working, if not for the Father’s reign on

earth: for the restoration of the Adept kings who, before men deserted them for evil, ruled the world in peace? The Age of Gold, though of the past, is also of the future, as the cycles return upon themselves, and as innocence, lost in sin, becomes converted, by the fires of love and suffering, into purity. . . . So the Father of Adepts will yet reign on earth, though first his children, to prepare the way for him—that men be not blinded by his glory; and before them even, there must come those who will rule in *his* name, for love of him, with understanding of the Lodge, and with delegated power. Not so far off, though not in your life-time or in mine, is that day of conscious effort, when a Court, nobler than Arthur's, will take a Master as its unseen King, and when royalty will strive to serve him as his messengers and representatives,—guided by him, let us hope, as Teresa and many another was guided knowingly by Christ.

“A gloomy Court, you say” (the Objector had commented, and the Philosopher turned to him in reply). “Dear man, why so pessimistic? And besides, as I have mentioned Saint Teresa, was she gloomy? Only a few minutes ago I was reading a sketch of her, by a Protestant, who says:

‘This gracious, aristocratic Castilian, who receives with high-bred courtesy such visitors as may chance to call,—this charming lady of brilliantly witty conversation, *au fait* with all manner of current topics, a letter-writer who has never been excelled,—this marvel of contagious merriment, who keeps her fellow-nuns in constant amusement if not shaking with laughter, breaks every rule for saintship that has been consecrated by time and by tradition.’ One of the greatest of the saints, both in spiritual and in worldly attainment (you remember Crashaw’s wonderful poem), she was a ‘marvel of contagious merriment.’ With someone like her to inspire a Court, it would become the gayest in all Europe; and it would be gay, not in spite of but because of its ideals.”

The Student has just returned from Europe. The Philosopher had interested him. “What you have been saying reminds me,” he remarked, “of criticism of the Queen of Holland which has appeared recently in certain Dutch newspapers, significant only because these newspapers are conservative and in all ways devoted to the interests of the throne. They complain that the Queen is becoming ‘too religious’: that she rarely attends the theatres, and, when she does, seems to make a point of arriving very late and of leaving long before the end; that she is inclined to display her dislike of music, while the Dutch are a nation of music-lovers; that she appears to be morose, and that she leads a life of such seclusion that her people feel themselves entirely out of touch with her. Such criticism is personal and could not be referred to in the QUARTERLY were it not for the fact that the Queen’s warmest friends are responsible for it, and that they have made the extraordinary mistake of attributing her shortcomings, whether real or imaginary, to her growing interest in



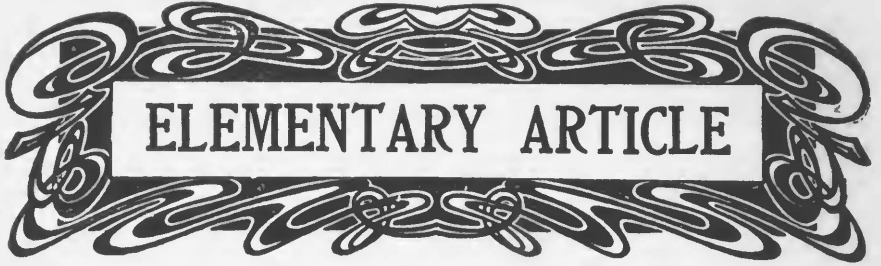
religion. The Queen of Holland is, of course, a Calvinist; and Calvinism has the reputation of being 'dour.' But I doubt, even, whether a proper understanding of Calvin would warrant behaviour so unfortunate in a Queen as that alleged against Her Majesty of Holland. What a hideous perversion of Christianity! Surely, if any Master were consulted—if Christ himself were able to prescribe—he would say that a Queen's first duty is to love her subjects and to charm them by constant evidence of her love. How else would he himself reign over us! The love of God, if it be real, must express itself in love of our neighbour; and for a Queen, with the eyes of the world upon her, there can be no higher form of 'yoga' or of prayer than to sit through a concert which bores her, with all the appearance of deep interest and appreciation. Nor is it as foolish as may seem, for us to discuss the duties of a Queen: is there any woman living who may not and should not be the Queen of her own kingdom? Four bare walls may contain it, but the fact of her womanhood makes her royal, if she understands what womanhood means. She does not need to assert it—only to be it; and her sweetness and purity, her consideration for others, her loving heart, her gracious dignity, will bring every man, who is a man, to his knees. What woman is there who, many times a day, in nursery or in kitchen, with brothers or with friends, is not called upon to practise just that kind of 'yoga' which I have suggested for the benefit of Queens! And what does it mean but self-surrender, as opposed to self-indulgence—the subordination of personal will and preference for the happiness and encouragement of others." T.

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*"If instead of a germ, or even of a flower, we could cast the gift of a lovely thought into the heart of a friend, that would be giving as the angels, I suppose, must give."*

GEORGE MACDONALD.



# ELEMENTARY ARTICLE

## THEOSOPHY AND SOME DARK PROBLEMS

**T**HAT there are some dark problems in life I think no one will deny, and they sometimes seem so insoluble that we are brought to the edge of despair. Millions of hearts desired to know

“By what power without our own consent,  
Caught us in the snare of life we know not how,  
We are placed here to suffer and to sin,  
To be in misery and we know not why.”

None of our modern philosophies has solved the great problems of life. We may freely admit that these philosophies throw some light on the perplexing questions of life and so give us some comfort and help. One of the dark questions most frequently asked us is: why are a few people born to wealth and luxury, while the masses are born to poverty and toil? If we look back over history we may see the greed and crimes of the strong, the torture and sorrow of the innocent and weak; and all through the centuries there seems to be a fearful waste of martyrs' blood. Think of the great and noble and good, the world's greatest benefactors, who for trying to bless their fellow-men have received stripes and imprisonments, scorn and persecution, crowns of thorns and crucifixion. Think of the cares, the tears, and the sorrows that so often come to the mother in return for her love and service. All around us are living martyrdoms. Here a sweet and virtuous woman marries a sober and industrious man, but after a few years he falls into bad habits and sinks lower and lower until he becomes a drunken brute, making her life one long agony. Here in another home is a bright and lovely child, the joy of father and mother. This child is apparently healthy until he is seven years old; then a painful disease attacks him and the parents watch the progress of this lingering disease, knowing what the end will be and dreading it, suffering slow torture for three weary years; then they are left childless, with heart wounds that are never healed on earth.

Read a book like *Twenty Years at Hull House*, by Jane Addams, where the life and experience of the squalid districts of a great city are vividly painted. There are innocent children suffering terribly for the idleness, sin and crime of their parents. Born in poverty, cradled in dirt, not knowing what kindness is, but often receiving brutal treatment from

those who should love them tenderly. Their passions are allowed to grow strong, while their higher faculties of kindness, love of the beautiful, reverence and truthfulness are left undeveloped. Some come into the world physically weak or diseased, while their health is made even more precarious by early environment, and they seem to have no opportunity for education, or for physical and mental culture. Around Hull House are Italians and Greeks, Russians and Poles, each race despising every other, but all living in ignorance, superstition, poverty and wretchedness. It would be impossible to estimate the good that has been done by this settlement, many in each of these races have been induced to try for better things, to live for new ideals, and hundreds (perhaps thousands) have become good citizens, skillful mechanics, artists and scholars.

But here again a new problem presents itself, and a dark one too. Frequently the most earnest among these people failed because physical vitality failed. Miss Addams gives instances of several of the most successful who fell a prey to consumption, or to some other disease that carried them off. Now why should those who make the bravest attempt to free themselves from their unfavorable surroundings fail? It seems like a great waste of effort and strength, and we are led to ask what is the value to them of the efficiency they won in art and in music? Is it not all lost, all wasted? What answer do philosophers give to these dark questions? Generally they will say: "The laws of nature are uniform and are no respecters of persons, what seems cruel is not really cruel. If through ignorance we break these laws we must suffer, and through our suffering learn wisdom." It is something to be assured that these laws are good and that sometime men may come to understand them and so be freed from much of the pain and suffering they have to endure to-day. But very few will find this a satisfying answer.

What does Theosophy say? That man is a pilgrim (not a tramp) and that in order to reach his destiny—a character perfected in wisdom and love—some struggle will be necessary, for if he is to be a conqueror, he must subdue the flesh by the spirit, the earthly by the heavenly. Throughout this entire pilgrimage he is in the grip of two great laws, the law of Love and the law of Karma. The law of Love binds him to his Eternal Father and to each and all of his brothers. During a part of his pilgrimage he is only at times conscious of this law, groping upward for his Father, yet vigorously fighting his brothers as bitter enemies, as the child in delirium may fight its mother. But in time this groping and struggling open the eyes of the pilgrim so that he comes to recognize his Father and his brethren. To accomplish this great awakening the law of *Karma*, cause and effect, is used. This great law is not fully and clearly expressed in the words, "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." There is another phase of Karma that may be called the law of cost, or the law of sacrifice. In this lowest of the three worlds of our pilgrimage everything that is good, viewed from a spiritual stand-

point, must be won, must be paid for. The great law of life that we find perfectly exemplified in the Cross of Jesus flashes its light all along the pathway of human history. Sacrifice is everywhere the law and measure of progress.

All the privileges and opportunities of our twentieth century, have been bought with blood. All the safeguards of our civilization, all our security against storm, pestilence and disease; all the things which mean to us safety, comfort and enjoyment have been won for us by hardship, patience, heroism and sacrifice. Gide, a French professor of Political Economy has shown that every mile of railroad built has cost in its construction at least one human life, and that the operation of every hundred miles costs at least five lives more. That is, the seven hundred thousand miles now in operation cost about thirty thousand lives every year. This is just as true of other great departments of life, as for instance navigation. So, too, liberty of conscience and religious enlightenment have been purchased for us at a tremendous cost. To make them possible, a long procession of faithful, loving souls have not counted dear their lives or the sweet things of life, but have given up ideals of comfort, of culture and ease for our sakes. If we have escaped from the terrors and despairs of former days we owe it to men who were willing to stand alone, to be misunderstood, to sacrifice ease and peace, and to help on the progress of mankind. They laid down their lives in Roman amphitheaters, in the fires of Smithfield, and on the moors and hills of Scotland, and in a thousand other places. But the great law of cause and effect makes it certain that for this sowing in tears there shall be a joyful reaping; and those who have suffered most have assured us that even in the suffering they found great joy.

I know that to-day another doctrine is preached by many. They tell us that there can be no pain unless we make it ourselves by wrong thought; that the great heroes, reformers and saviours need not have suffered at all, but that the liberties of the world, the sanctities of the home, the redemption of society and the triumph of justice could all be won without the shedding of blood, without suffering or tears. They further tell us that sickness and poverty are curable by right thought, that death can be conquered in the same way; and to prove their faith they are now forming leagues of immortality. Thus, they say, we need not bear a cross nor sympathise with suffering at all—we make a mistake if we do. This teaching greatly exaggerates certain truths and entirely ignores certain other truths and facts. It is really telling us that we need not pay our debts, that we need not pay the cost of cleansing the slums or disinfecting the plague spot, that creation need not “groan and travail in pain” as a great seer has said. The experience of the world contradicts all this and has proved beyond a doubt that manhood and womanhood can only be lifted towards their superb possibilities through struggle and trial.

To come back to the cases given by Miss Addams in her book, when those boys and girls struggled for success and then died before reaching it were their brave efforts wasted? By no means. The law of Karma is the law of the conservation of energy. No effort is ever lost, the awakening of the soul to a consciousness of its powers is a long step forward. The culture of their intellectual and æsthetic powers is not lost to these young people although they did not live to use these powers here. Of course if this were the only life on earth it would be different, but Karma demands reincarnation. And in the other world what has been won here will be further perfected, worked up into faculty and made far more available in another incarnation. And further, the struggle to free themselves from their unfavorable environment will also bear fruit and they may be born into more favorable conditions.

The natural world is not an end but a means, and if we feel a sense of defeat it is well; for we must lose the natural in order to gain the spiritual. Theosophy teaches us that "All life exists for the purposes of the Soul, for the making of the spiritual man." It is then in perfect harmony with this great law that these trying experiences come to us to win our thoughts and affections away from the material and the transient, so that we may recognize the spiritual and the permanent. The uncertainties of life and the sufferings we have to endure are well adapted to this end. Physical pain at least arrests our attention, and mental and moral suffering, whether in the form of parental solicitude, business anxieties, or any one of the numberless forms of inward distress to which we are subject, are even more useful in drawing our thoughts and affections from the charms and fascinations of the world, and in dispelling its illusions. Sickness, pain, sorrow, calamity, death, and other sad experiences are so many teachers to set us free from our bondage to the earthly, and to help forward our spiritual development. When these rude teachers have done their work (which is preparatory) we pass into a higher grade of the great school of life, and we come to see that every thought, word, and act of our lives has a spiritual meaning and affects our character. A wise teacher said, "Children here is a beautiful china plate; it is painted with flowers just as charming as they grow. It has been and will be admired by thousands. Every one who observes flowers will be delighted with it. But I did not bring it in on account of its beauty, I brought it to tell you something about its manufacture. First it is painted; then the colors are burnt in. So it is with character; the qualities that make character must be burnt in. That is done by trials and temptations. You mean to be truthful; if you are tempted to lie and resist, you are burning in your truthfulness."

So working, fighting, watching, we are by a strange spiritual alchemy transforming our characters, being changed from glory to glory, until at last all the dark problems are solved and we enter into life eternal.

JOHN SCHOFIELD.



# REVIEWS

*Psychic Phenomena, Science and Immortality*, by HENRY FRANK (Sherman, French & Company, Boston). In this day of specialists, when every branch of science is so minutely subdivided, none but a layman would dare propose to himself so sweeping a review of the ground traversed by modern science. Enthusiasm and faith have carried the author dry-shod over many a spot which to a more logical and scientific mind would have been impassable. But anyone who accepts a certain means of conveyance, whether airship or camel-back, has no call to find fault, *en route*, with the drawbacks incidental to that method of travel. So let us as mannerly travelers set sail with the author.

"Does man live after death?" is the question that shadowed the author's days, until he was driven to seek a complete answer. This answer he sought but could not find in philosophy which, he found "always speculative and uncertain." He turned in vain to religion, knowing none but that partial and incomplete form which he says "is temperamental and but marks the residual tracings of human experience in the institutions of humankind." Finally in his perplexities, he went to Science, "whose mirror, however much betimes distorted, yet images for man the only trustworthy reflection of Nature's mysterious truths." There he found the answer to his question about immortality, both in the pronouncements of men of the highest scientific attainment and in his own application of accredited scientific principles to a range of phenomena that have not as yet engaged the attention of the great body of scientific explorers.

The reader who has not found time to keep abreast of the restless onward march of modern science will find in these pages a reflection of the great work of many great men. The varied quotations from writers on all phases of scientific research show the range of the authors investigations and will prove for many readers the most interesting and valuable feature of the entire book. Those whose certainty of the unity of life, here and hereafter, is established, beyond necessity of argument or support, will still find satisfaction in seeing the swinging searchlight of science thrown ever further forward, till it is now trained upon the confines of psychic and even of spiritual life. This direct touch that the author gives his readers with the conclusions and convictions of a multitude of the best thinkers of the present day—is after all the best service he could render them and it will surely be appreciated by those who may not find equal illumination in the author's own contributions to the discussion of his immense subject. It is more than likely that another class of readers who do not care to follow closely the different steps taken by the authorities so freely quoted may find their satisfaction in the many phenomenal experiences, both personal and otherwise which the author relates and in his own deductions from the facts and interpretations he has gathered. From the start Mr. Frank states clearly the basis of his own contribution. His thesis is always evident. His handling of it is candid and thorough. If he continually makes the bold leap from theorem to conclusion, ignoring the reader's demand for proof, it is only fair to say that his real audience will generally find it easy to make the leap with him, will usually be satisfied to subscribe to the Q. E. D.

with which he closes the discussion. For is it not true that most of us demand rather to *feel convinced* than to be convinced? When an author proposes to the minds of his readers a question that cannot be truly answered by the mind alone it were very unreasonable to find fault with his method if he shifts his ground and appeals to the heart and to the hopes of his followers when an appeal to the intellect will not serve. This shifting of the ground from cold scientific statement to the wider vision of constructive science, and then to aspiration untrammelled by a scientific basis may leave the reader gasping at times but let him cease grumbling and remember that extremes of temperature make for mental as well as for physical robustness.

To do justice to the author's argument, as presented in over five hundred condensed pages would require too much space. His inquiry is divided into three main sections: Book I, *Psychic Phenomena*; Book II, *Scientific Interpretation*; Book III, *The Problem of Immortality*. In this last section the heart of the book is found and that may be partially represented by a few quotations:

An "immaterial emanation of radiant matter flows ceaselessly around the cell centers of the brain, and is the immediate instrumentality of the energy of the will. . . . The will energy, which is the center-force of personality or self-consciousness, is itself radiant substance—that is, a pure immaterial emanation, radio-active, electric and all-penetrative. When this substance is directly manipulated by the sub-conscious mind, or subjective will, it is susceptible to extraordinary manifestations, such as intervention with the laws of gravity, levitation, etc. . . . When it manifests its properties in the intellectual, emotional and reflective realms, then it becomes the instrument of the expressions of genius, of creative art, of oratorical inspiration, and of such phases of personal force as are far beyond the normal capacity of the individual, who becomes its momentary instrument. . . .

"The normal consciousness is the result of the aggregate life of the composite cells of the brain. But there is a consciousness which tends still more to liberate the mind from the aggregate limitations of the united-cell-minds of one's body. . . . It is the consciousness of cosmic or monistic unity. . . . Within the substance of the cell we find the physical groundwork of the spiritual planes of consciousness, or the psychic activities. The outer substance of the cell is the instrument of objective consciousness. . . . Deeper within the cell . . . we find the pure substance, the nucleal plasm that acts as the instrument of the subjective consciousness, the consciousness that relates to pure intellect and formative thought. While, around the cortical cells and all enswathing them, as a golden light, we discover the super-substantial, ultra-material, radio-active emanation that constitutes the direct instrument of sentiency, volition and self-consciousness in its supreme state. . . . There reside in the human being, apparently, all the factors essential to the continuity of personal existence after the dissolution of the cellular units of the physical body. All seems to depend on the tenacity of self-consciousness, the strength of the personal will, the potency of the character or the determination of integrated individuality."

To this summary of his argument on scientific grounds, the author adds a "Conclusion" in different vein, which forms the final chapter of the book. There he says:

"The universal consciousness of life, and its constantly inciting activity, is the groundwork of belief in immortality. . . . We realise life; death we can but observe. . . . Are life and death eternal foes or, in fact, perennial allies in the warfare of existence? . . . Who can think of himself as never thinking? How can a living soul conceive the experience of not living? . . . If, indeed, there is a life beyond, we should not halt to learn the law by which it may be attained: nor think that it is our due because we have been forced into existence here. . . .

It may be, as has been intimated in the deductions made from scientific revelations in the preceding pages, that only they shall go into another vital experience who shall prove this right by force of moral fiber, by tenacity of purpose, by virility of personal consciousness."

This clear, bracing atmosphere is befitting the close of a book which represents much research, keen devotion to the truth as the author sees it, and an earnest desire to hold high his torch to light the way of others. T. E. P.

*The Golden Rose.*—The world is full of surprises, especially the literary world. Who would have dreamed of a book by Amélie Rives, Princess Troubetzkoy which should be built upon extracts from *The Light on the Path*, *The Voice of the Silence*, the *Bhagavad Gita*, et al? The motto upon the title-page sums up the tragic little story, but even that does not prepare one for all that is to follow in the way of theosophy.

"Absence kindles a great passion and extinguishes a small one," that is the thesis of the book, slightly condensed, and the characters are but four, the young widow Meraud, whose name immediately suggests Maeterlinck, and who has just been freed from a disastrous marriage; her cousin Anice, a semi-invalid and a hunchback; (Meraud has heart-disease). Steven Gordon Trafford, the hero, a commonplace young man who is being continually lifted off his feet in his efforts to keep up with the heroine, and the doctor, that all-wise and big-hearted doctor we have known taking his sapient way through the pages of so many novels. There is a little of the Topsy type of darky, to leaven the lump of mysticism, and permit one of the characters at least to have his foot on the solid earth occasionally. The book begins with a discussion between the cousins upon love, and Meraud declares that love upon this earth leads always to the same end, and it is an *end*. "There is a mighty law that few people seem to know about," says Meraud. "It's the law that fulfilment—on this earth—means death. What people call the fulfilment of love means love's death. . . . Maya! Maya! 'Under every flower is coiled a serpent.'"

The overture having been played, the hero, Steven Gordon Trafford, enters. He announces himself as an historian, he wants to write a history of "that part of Virginia," and of course Meraud can supply him with all the documents his heart could wish. They also find that they have a consciousness of pre-existence, and share all sorts of dreams and fancies. "Do you really believe in reincarnation, and—and—all that?" blurted Trafford. "And do you think that we have all lived before—often—and shall live again—on this earth?" "Until we conquer once for all," she smiled at him; "until we reach the end of that 'ancient, narrow path stretching far away, as hard to tread as the edge of a razor'." And here begins the elevation of the hero, with quotations from Lessing, Walt Whitman, and the *Bhagavad Gita*, particularly the latter. One of the chief reasons that she liked him so much was that he took her exactly as she meant him to take her—in a word, he always "understood",—even when she told him that she had once "slipped out of her body, like an Indian yogi," though this did "startle" him!

Then the Doctor comes, to find Trafford installed at Kingsweather, and his keen eyes soon pierce to the heart of the mystery. "I am afraid," he says to the cousin, "I am afraid—there's not enough to him. Just that," he ended, "not enough to him."

Several quotations from the *Gita* come in after the inevitable declaration from Trafford, followed by extracts from the *Voice of the Silence*, "Shila, the Ray of harmony in word and act; Dana, the golden key of charity and love immortal," followed by bits from Reiny de Gourmont, the Vita Nuova, Paracelsus, Michel-Angelo, and Tennyson. She tells her lover that she can never marry again, and



he professes to be content. Well he might be, as they are described as entering from that night "into a state of being which some great Trouvère might have dreamed of, Gaucelm Faydit, during his long servitude of Marie de Ventadour, or Pierre Vidal, yearning out the sad, vain years in fruitless love of Adalais de Baux." In the next paragraph we get a few bits from Browning, Pico della Mirandola, and Rossetti. The only writer of fiction of this sort to whom the Princess Troubetzkoy can be compared, is the late Mrs. Augusta Evans in her novel of St. Elmo, in which she easily distances all lovers of quotations before or since.

Upon the halcyon atmosphere of a sublimated platonic love, there suddenly breaks in a friend of the hero, demanding the fulfilment of a promise that Trafford should join him in a trip to the Himalayas for which he has already made every preparation. They go, and Meraud lives upon letters, until the terrible time comes, of which she has been forewarned, when there can be no sure posts, and there must be a gap of two or three months in their correspondence. During this time Trafford had been ill, he writes, at last, nothing serious, only his illness seemed to have left him dumb and numb, but when they met all would be well again. Unfortunately, with this resumption of correspondence a deadly chill seems to have come over them, and they meet only to part. "The wonder, the splendor of a great passion had dimmed into the commonplace for him." She had played with the key of "Dana, the golden key of charity and love immortal," but she had opened no locks with it, and now she remembered those words, terrible and piteous as life itself—"Before the soul can stand in the presence of the Master its feet must be washed in the blood of the heart." (*Light on the Path.*)

And the book virtually ends with Emily Brontë's last lines, beginning—

"No coward soul is mine,  
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere.  
I see Heaven's glories shine,  
And Faith shines equal, arming me from fear."

The value of such a book as this is above all its testimony to the far-reaching influence of the theosophical ideas in our current literature.

"The Golden Rose" is the ideal love, as contrasted with the "painted apple." The book is exquisitely written, and the impossibility of raising a thoroughly commonplace nature to ideal heights, and *holding it there* is exceedingly well portrayed.

K. H.

*The Kabala of Numbers*, by Sepharial, published by William Rider & Son, Ltd., London.

This belongs to the class of books which deals with astrology, or other recondite speculations of the restless human mind. They are a weariness to the flesh to many, a matter of contemptuous scorn to most, and, curious as it may seem, a delightful interest to a few. To that few this little work can be commended. It is clearly and simply written and does not presuppose too much knowledge of the subject. Sepharial, by the way, was once a well known member of the T. S.

G.

*True Occultism* has recently been published by the Committee of the English members in the penny form which has already made four valuable articles accessible to many who could otherwise ill afford them. It is just what is needed at the present time; a clear statement of the difference between true and false occultism, and a ringing appeal to all of us to follow that higher life which is true occultism. The writer is to be congratulated upon a fine piece of work and the English members upon the successful creation of a most valuable instrument for helpfulness. The


format, paper, and printing are admirable. American members can secure the pamphlet through the Secretary T. S., 159 Warren Street, Brooklyn, N. Y., and abroad from the Corresponding Secretary, 43 Brook Street, London, W.

G.

*Death and Resurrection*, by Gustaf Björklund (Chicago, The Open Court Publishing Company).

This is a very remarkable book, by a contemporary philosopher of Sweden. It has conspicuous defects. Its author seems to have no marked literary gift, and his translator has only a very dim idea of the rhythm of a sentence. But despite these obstacles, the book's striking merits remain. Like another Vergil leading Dante through the hidden worlds, this good Swede leads us, by devious ways, involving the mysteries of cell-life, and brings us forth at last into the clear sunlight of mysticism. He perceives with piercing vision the reality of the divine world, the existence of the spiritual body, the ultimate unity of man with God. He writes with astonishing wisdom and profundity concerning the invisible world, the relation between time and eternity; the entry into immortal life; and, at the same time, he genuinely believes that all his conclusions flow by inevitable steps from certain discoveries and theories of cell-life. Perhaps they do, as the universe throughout is one and undivided. But we are inclined to believe that his conclusions came first, and that his reasonings were hammered out to fit the conclusions. At any rate, the conclusions are full of spirituality and truth, and we look back to our reading of this book with satisfaction, even though at times it was a somewhat irritating task. Some things the author has expressed admirably well; better, perhaps, than they have ever been expressed in a Western tongue.

C. J.



# QUESTIONS

# ANSWERS

QUESTION 130 (Continued).—*Does not the theosophical philosophy contradict the modern theories about the rights of man?*

ANSWER.—The four answers to this question in the last issue of the QUARTERLY interested me greatly. They seemed flatly contradictory, and yet I doubt if the writers differ as much in principle as in their use of terms. "Rights" is a word which this generation is using much and loosely. A few centuries ago the Rights of Man meant liberty, toleration, the rights of the soul. To-day the Rights of Man mean, in general, material rights, rights of the personality, a very different proposition. The answer to the question depends on how far back "modern theories" are meant to go. Do they go to the days of "the easy rhetoric of the Preamble to the American Constitution," when, for the establishment among men of such rights of the soul as it proclaimed, brave men gladly sacrificed every "right" of the personality, even the life of the personality itself? Or does it mean the "rights" we hear more of now, the "right" to a living wage or to eight hours recreation?

"Rights" is a relative term used to indicate a certain moral relationship between beings. For the word to have any meaning it must involve two parties, the possessor of the "right" and those in relation to whom it is possessed. Obviously the "right" will change with a change in the relationship. To use a trivial illustration, if we pay for it, we have a "right" to occupy a seat at a base-ball game so far as the management is concerned, but that "right" disappears as against the employer to whom we may have sold our time. An inferior "right" must cease to exist in the face of a superior one.

In general, "rights" so-called may be roughly divided into two classes—our claim on moral grounds first, to certain immunities from interference by others, and second, that certain positive acts shall be done by others as our due. Such claims as that to a living wage are of the second class, those to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness of the first. Relationships between beings and right or wrong action therein being inevitable, men's "rights" are as inherent as good and evil. They are also as relative and as subject to change at different periods of development. With the inherent right of man to free will the Masters themselves will never interfere, much as we may sometimes wish that in our case They would. The right to believe what we will and to be accorded toleration in that belief by others no Theosophist will deny. These are rights of the soul. Ultimately, as H. B. M. says, all rights are rights of the soul. The personality is "that thing which he (the soul) has with pain created for his own use and by means of which he purposes, as his growth slowly develops his intelligence, to reach to the life beyond individuality." This "thing" has no rights against its creator and "in the denial of the rights of the personality" (as against the soul) "the right of the soul is claimed." Theosophists know that there can be no real conflict of interest among men. That which we do against the interests of others we do against our own soul. So any fancied right of our personality against another's interest must

cease to exist before the paramount right of our soul. Nor can we insist on that too strongly, for ourselves.

But we ourselves are not the only ones concerned and here we must go back to the poor, abused, upside down, facing-both-ways stool of L. E. P. and plant ourselves on its upturned legs, uncomfortable as that may seem. For rights are a relationship and as such have two sides, not "good and evil," not "light of heaven and flames of hell" but just plain rights (of the possessor) and obligation of the other party to respect them if they are rights. To possess rights does not mean to enforce them, does not even mean to ask for them. But we cannot deny that we, as men, have rights without denying that others, as men, have rights. We know that others have rights, whether we have them ourselves or not, and that it is our obligation to respect them.

To remove the conception of the rights of man, the conception that has done away with slavery and to which we owe liberty and toleration, would turn the world centuries backward on its path toward the realization of the brotherhood of man. We must respect the rights of others, must feel that with certain activities or possessions it is wrong for us to interfere. Whether these be of the personality or of the soul they must be respected. True, all rights are rights of the soul, but the personality is the creature of the soul, created not idly but with pain to help the soul on its path and to that extent the rights of the soul inhere in the personality. Thus if we impair the "rights" of the personality of another we at least run grave risk of impairing its usefulness to the soul. This is obviously so with the extreme case, murder.

Conversely we may feel that with the "rights" of our personality it is wrong for others to interfere. Here Theosophy and the modern theory of the rights of man part company. -It is wrong for us to infringe the rights of others? Yes, and we are the judge of our own actions. Is it wrong for others to act or not to act so toward us? How can we say? We cannot judge for them nor say that anyone else should or should not do this or that. Judge not, that ye be not judged. They may have reasons of which we are ignorant, rights before which our fancied rights melt into nothingness.

As was so well brought out in "The Hair Line of Duty," published some years ago in the QUARTERLY, our neighbor may even for good reasons have been inspired to attempt an interference with our action when we are actually doing what is right. To seek anything for the personality as apart from the soul, is self-seeking, and self-seeking and Theosophy are opposite poles.

Of the supreme right of man, of which K. D. P. wrote, the right to love the Master and become like him, no power in the universe can rob us, whether we deny or affirm it as a right. But there are other rights which it behooves us not to deny, rights so generally conceded to-day that we forget they were won only after centuries of struggle, the right to spread the Light as we see it, to teach the love of the Master to others and to preach the Kingdom of Heaven among men.

J. F. B. M.

The Editor is glad to publish in full the following letter from a reader of the QUARTERLY in Milwaukee. It is in further reply to Question 130, and the answers given to that question. Our correspondent writes:

MILWAUKEE, WIS., Nov. 5, 1911.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY,  
Brooklyn, N. Y.

DEAR SIRs:

I was much interested in reading in the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY for October, 1911, the four answers given to the question, "Does not the theosophical philosophy contradict the modern theories about the 'rights of man'?"

In after thought I put the question to myself, "Did G. Hijo, L. E. P., H. B. M. and K. D. P. have a right to their individual opinion?" Or in other words, "Can an expressed opinion of an individual be considered a man's right?"

If not, what's the use of trying to answer the original question?

If it can, who is going to be the judge to draw the dividing line, that shall say where the "rights of man" begin and end?

Does not individuality of character come from man's beliefs and opinions expressed or lived?

Jesus Christ undoubtedly considered it His right, to call the clothes on His back His; but if one wrongfully demanded them, He considered it an obligation on His part, not to resist evil, but yield to what the other considered his rights.

From this we would learn, that Jesus was willing to sacrifice His acknowledged right to material goods, for the sake of principle or a belief that in so doing He would overcome death.

Not only that, but when many considered it their right to crucify Him—instead of resisting evil He considered it an obligation on His part to sacrifice His right to live, in holding to the belief and opinion they could not kill His individuality of character, which He proved in His resurrection and ascension.

It seems to me the matter is pretty clearly summed up, by saying: Man has rights in material things, brought about through honest work, or there is no such thing as honesty or obligations to right and wrong: that the opinion man has as to these rights, actually lived, is what makes his individuality: that one's individuality is only rounded out and completed in an everlasting life, through a willingness to lose his life, even if holding to principle or his right to belief and opinion means the sacrifice of material rights.

If this letter can be shown to G. Hijo, L. E. P., H. B. M. and K. D. P., it would be a favor to the author, who is not a Theosophist, Christian Scientist, Catholic, Socialist, Republican or Democrat, but just a common, ordinary, everyday man, who would live his life after Christ's teachings.

Yours respectfully,

ERNEST L. HARDENBERGH.

QUESTION 131.—*Does anyone ever enjoy pain, or really feel that pain is joy?*

ANSWER.—Yes, of course. All pain ever suffered by anyone is enjoyed by some part of our being and the more enlightened we are the more parts of our being enjoy it. It is purely a question of understanding. We understand enough to enjoy the pain of sacrifice for someone we love. We enjoy, in one sense at least, the pain inflicted by a surgeon when he lances an ulcerated tooth; the red Indian enjoys torture for the pride of being able to endure it; we enjoy the keenest suffering which comes from true repentance; the saints enjoy the anguish of their ecstasies, about which they write so much. Life is full of illustrations of the love of pain whenever it is borne for some higher purpose, or for some stronger purpose; a case in point is that of the red Indian, already mentioned, who has a strong motive but not a high motive. It is purely a question of understanding.

The goodness of God would prevent anyone from suffering pain of any kind at any time unless that pain was for his good; if he really understood that he would enjoy the pain.

G. Hijo.

ANSWER.—The psychologists tell us that the extremes of pain and the extremes of pleasure meet, and are indistinguishable. And the saints and martyrs are supposed really to find happiness, or rather pleasure, in the tortures inflicted upon them. But ordinary mortals can hardly be said to enjoy pain, it is a contradiction in terms.

K. H.

ANSWER.—Hosts of people have felt that pain is joy. It is merely a question of the lower and higher self, or of the good of self and the good of others. If the lower self is stronger than the higher we prefer our own good to that of another; if the higher self is stronger we prefer the other's good. That is all there is to it. When we say that happiness is a by-product and can therefore only be attained by seeking something else, we are merely stating the truth that in all human nature the higher self—the divine principle—is so strong that it can not be ignored.

Pain doesn't amount to anything anyway. It is merely a bugaboo to scare us away from our high destiny. It is the iron gate which shuts us out of our fair ancestral garden. It is the flaming sword of the angel who stands at the entrance to the Garden of Eden. But it is a phantom gate and a phantom sword; it has no real existence. Bravely approach it and it disappears.

All depends on our consciousness, on the way we look at it. I remember once having suffered so much from so-called intellectual doubts that when a sharp physical pain came to me it was a relief. I enjoyed it. Compared to the other it was joy, and it was so strong that it took away the consciousness of the other pain. Yet I have known people who did not believe in the possibility of intellectual doubt producing pain. It all depends on where you are standing, whether you are more beast or more god.

V. V. V.

ANSWER.—On the purely physical plane any alienist, psychologist or neurologist will answer, "Alas, yes, self-inflicted, ecstatically-enjoyed pain is too often a sign of morbidity." On the plane of the lower mind there is enjoyment of pain, especially when it is lowering, as in the case of the opium-fiend or the dipsomaniac. On a higher intellectual plane pain does not seem to be accepted as joy so frequently. On the spiritual plane many people actually do "enjoy pain" and "really feel that pain is joy." This point is rather fully covered in *Fragments*, especially pages 82 to 89 inclusive, with the solemn warning in the middle of page 87 and again on pages 19 *et seq.*, 29 and 32; at least these citations have proved satisfactory, even to those not interested in Theosophy.

There are two human analogies that suggest how pain might be taken as joy. The first is the feeling of a mother toward the pains before the birth of her child. Why should not the sufferer accept pain joyously as the sign of the gathering life and coming birth of the Soul? The second is the attitude of all science which to-day accepts pain and welcomes it as indicative of need in the human body and of means of supplying that need. If a patient welcomes the pain of surgery, to continue this rough analogy, in the body terrestrial; why not rejoice in pain as a sign of surgery in the body celestial, and joyously acclaim it as indicative of improvement?

G. V. S. M.

ANSWER.—Yes. Where the pain is endured for others it may be a great joy. When one loves intensely there is an intense longing to give expression to that love. If, as sometimes happens in surgery, we were to have an opportunity to save the life of one we so loved by giving of our blood, the resulting pain would be the keenest joy. The pains of child-birth are often a wonderful joy. And we have all read of the joy the martyrs of history found in the extreme of pain suffered for love of the Master.

T. J.

QUESTION 132.—*If the mind is properly trained from infancy, developing under the best influences, must it necessarily be in the way of spiritual advancement?*

ANSWER.—Since spiritual advancement means efforts towards perfection, why should a healthy well-trained mind be a barrier any more than a healthy well-

trained body? It would seem to be only so much work done on the way towards perfecting the instrument before the person waked up to consciousness as a soul, and to a consequent insight into the values of life.

If the transcending value is soul-vision it is clear that it cannot be reached by any process of the intellect, but neither can intellectual training prevent it. The great point is to keep clear the function of the Soul and of the mind. A mind with a habit of seeking truth and the discipline which proper training gives must be a good tool rather than a barrier.

If the mind is used as an end in itself it would, of course, be a barrier, but if it is used to find the answer to the great question of the modern world, "What is the end of evolution, where does it lead?"—the better its training the surer would it be to bring the enquirer to the borders of the region where alone the answer can be found.

Kant showed us for all time what the intellect could do and just where its powers stopped. It is quite possible to make its bounds clear and then its place in our make-up becomes evident and our respect for it considerably decreases.

B. P.

ANSWER.—An adequate answer to this question would require ancient wisdom. To the student the answer appears to depend upon a definition of terms. If by a "properly trained" mind is meant purely intellectual development the answer would seem to be an emphatic "no"; for ultimately the pent-up reactions would break out in one strong and definite revolt. If character training is, however, included there should be more hope of an affirmative reply; for a better instrument might result, through which the Soul could function. But in all this reasoning let us also recollect the 20th rule of the first series of *Light on the Path*, with its preliminary admonition "Seek it not by any one road."

G. V. S. M.

ANSWER.—No faculty, *properly* trained, can be an impediment to spiritual advancement. All our faculties are necessary, but with none should we confuse our identity. Too often we consider that to train the mind is to enthrone it in the place of the Self. When this is done it is an impediment. Our minds must be our servants, not our masters, and should be trained as servants and kept to their own functions.

H. B. M.

ANSWER.—There must be some deep significance in the insulation of the child from outside influence. In spite of wise and tender study and oversight, the child is the ceaseless mystery of the home. Those to whom he holds out the scepter are admitted to certain degrees of intimacy; they may "train" a little here, or mould a bit there. But ultimately the child's own reactions on what his elders try to do for him are the only significant features of the "training." To him action is all important. He meets us with an instructive readiness for what he needs most—the training of the will. We say to him "come learn." He replies "No, no, let's do——" If we could find wisdom enough to meet his demand with proper discipline for the will we should be doing something to make him "fit" for spiritual advancement.

T. E. P.

QUESTION 133.—*How must the insanity and those perturbations and diseases inaccurately called mental be considered according to Theosophical principles? Are they the results of Karma created in another life? Are they indicative of possession by strange entities that use the Astral, etherous or dense body for realizing unknown purposes? Is the state in which they occur a form of the somnambulist state?*

ANSWER.—The various forms of brain-disease may be the result of many causes, some more or less physical, others purely mental, and some undoubtedly the outcome of Karmic law, of causes generated in a former life or lives. But we have been warned by Those who Know, never to ascribe anything to the result of another's Karma, as it is impossible for our limited intelligence to separate the tangled threads of destiny, and to trace their influence in our own lives or in the lives of others.

The less we meddle with "strange entities, that use the astral, ethereal or dense body, for realising unknown purposes" the less likely we are to be attacked by brain-disease of any kind. K. H.

ANSWER.—Insanity is a very broad term covering an immense range of abnormal mental states. It is said that everyone is more or less insane. This may be an over-statement of the case, but it is probably true that everyone is at least slightly insane at times. Not much is said in our books about the rationale of insanity. It seems probable that in the great majority of cases the trouble is with the connections between the brain and the mind. The co-ordination between the two, which must be perfect if we have a perfectly sane individual, becomes partly interrupted, or obstructed. It is apparent that there is an immense range in the extent to which this co-ordination may be interfered with; therefore there is an immense range in the kinds and types of insanity.

It is as if there were a rope connecting the brain and the mind composed of thousands of separate strings. For complete health they must all be alive and functioning. Now it is perfectly possible for some of these strings to be disconnected, or to be broken, or to cease to be adequate conductors of the nervous or vital impulse which must pass over or through them. Such conditions may be temporary, or may last any length of time. There may be one or a thousand of these strings in a disturbed and abnormal condition. We can see by this analogy how easy it is to account for the countless different kinds of diseased or abnormal mental states.

It is probable that if the rope connecting the brain and the mind be entirely broken we have the condition of complete idiocy. This may be congenital, or it may develop during life. It is also probable that when some of the strings are broken, the loose ends, as they float around in the psychic and kama-manasic planes of consciousness, can be seized and used by elementals and elementaries, and by all kinds of forces and influences; so we may have a person entirely sane in most ways, but with a queer and irrational streak. Probably the kind of influence which is attracted by a loose string is the kind of influence which that particular string was designed to transmit from brain to mind and *vice-versa*, but coming from outside the individual, and from a source not governed by conscience and will, it necessarily appears both irrational and immoral.

The astral body is of course the link between the brain and the mind and corresponds to the rope of many strings spoken of above. Insanity may, therefore, be considered a disorder of the astral body. Save when there is a complete separation between the mind and the brain, the disease is curable through the will, for the trained will absolutely controls the astral body. Modern science has discovered this fact and disordered mental states are now treated through the will.

E. C.





*The Theosophical Society, as such, is not responsible for any opinion or declaration in this magazine, by whomsoever expressed, unless contained in an official document.*

#### AFTER FOUR AND TWENTY YEARS

Immediately following the "Notes and Comments" in this number of THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY our readers will find an article of the highest interest and value, bearing the title: "Is Theosophy a Religion?" It first appeared as an editorial in *Lucifer* for November 1888, and, though it is unsigned, internal evidence shows conclusively that it is by the senior Editor of that journal, Mme. H. P. Blavatsky herself. It happens that the writer of the present "Notes and Comments" had the great privilege of knowing Mme. Blavatsky at the time this article was written, and thus had the opportunity to hear much that was said by her on the subjects discussed in this article; and thus to become familiar with the atmosphere of thought and feeling from which the article emerged. This gives it, for the present writer, an added personal interest, in addition to the deep and universal interest belonging to the treatment of such a theme by such an authority.

The interest, in this case, rests chiefly on two things: first, on the fact that Mme. Blavatsky has very eloquently and forcibly defined her position with regard to Theosophy and The Theosophical Society, and her understanding of the purpose with which The Theosophical Society was founded and the body of teaching associated with it was given forth; and, secondly, this editorial of four and twenty years ago is of vital interest because Mme. Blavatsky in it defines her position toward the great religions and religious Teachers of the world, and especially toward Christianity and its Founder.

Let us begin by reviewing the first of these two elements of vital interest. How does Mme. Blavatsky, in this old editorial, express her understanding of Theosophy? What is Theosophy, from her point of view, as there defined? Very characteristically, Mme. Blavatsky begins by telling us what it is not: characteristically, because a large part of the work of that dauntless pioneer was aggressive and destructive, in the sense

of being directed to the demolition, the sweeping away, of false ideas and false understandings, as jungle must be cleared away, to make way for fertile fields. This destructive period expresses itself in *Isis Unveiled*, in which the writer and her collaborators set themselves to attack and demolish the many false notions, barring the way to human progress and spiritual life, which made up so much of the materialistic science and dogmatic theology of that time, whether that theology had been built up by Christians or Buddhists or Hindus.

This period of destruction, of demolition, of attack, this clearing away of jungle and tangled overgrowths, was followed by an epoch of building; of positive, creative work. To the latter period belong the more positive and constructive parts of *The Secret Doctrine*, as distinguished from the critical and analytic essays directed against the errors of scientists; to it also belongs *The Voice of the Silence*; and finally, to this period of reconstruction belongs the formation of that "inner body" of the Theosophical Movement, which is alluded to, in the same number of *Lucifer*, November 1888, and also in *The Key to Theosophy*. We should always bear in mind that, in Mme. Blavatsky's relation to, and discussion of, Christianity, there are the same well-marked stages or periods: the destructive and the creative; and part of the lasting interest of the editorial we are considering, lies in the fact that, in it, both periods are represented. We have work of demolition, directed against the false overgrowths of Christianity; we have work of reconstruction, directed toward the revelation and restoration of the original teaching of Its Founder.

But to go back to our point of departure. We have, first, a definition of Theosophy by negatives, a declaration of what Theosophy is not. Theosophy, says Mme. Blavatsky, is not a Religion. Theosophy is not an "ism." The Theosophical Society is not a sect, with a particular set of dogmas or beliefs. So far our definition of negatives. Let us try to make it more explicit. Theosophy is not a set of doctrines. It is not comprised, let us say, in the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation and the teaching of the unity of all souls with the Oversoul. These, taken together, do not constitute Theosophy.

Be it understood that the present writer is a firm believer in Theosophy; and is further, if this be of any interest to any reader of THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, a firm believer in Karma, in Reincarnation, and in the unity of all souls with the Oversoul. The present writer is, indeed, firmly convinced, and on what seems adequate evidence, that we may sometimes come to know of our past incarnations in detail, and with considerable color and vivacity; may even, should this

make for our spiritual well-being, gain some vision of incarnations to come. A firm believer, also, in the law of Karma and its operation, in little things and great, in the moving of motes and mountains, in personal idiosyncrasies and in the cyclic growth of worlds. A convinced believer, too, in the unity of all souls in the Oversoul; finding, indeed, therein the general hope of salvation. So that, as regards these three teachings, the writer of these "Notes and Comments" may hope to pass an examination even with the most orthodox.

Yet the present writer is deeply convinced that these doctrines: Karma, Reincarnation and the unity of souls with the Oversoul, do not constitute Theosophy; and that this is the kind of truth that Mme. Blavatsky is so anxious to convey, when she so eloquently and ardently, even passionately, affirms that Theosophy is not a Religion, not a sect, not a set of doctrines or dogmas.

The reason why Theosophy can never be said to be comprised in doctrines like Karma, Reincarnation and the unity of souls with the Oversoul, we shall see quite clearly when we come to Mme. Blavatsky's definition by affirmatives; when she comes to tell us, not what Theosophy is not, but what Theosophy is. "It is perhaps necessary," says Mme. Blavatsky, "first of all, to say, that the assertion that 'Theosophy is not a Religion' by no means excludes the fact that 'Theosophy is Religion' itself. A Religion in the true and only correct sense is a bond uniting men together—not a particular set of dogmas and beliefs. Now Religion, *per se*, in its widest meaning is that which binds not only all MEN, but also all BEINGS and all things in the entire Universe into one grand whole. This is our Theosophical definition of Religion." Let us draw the conclusion of our syllogism: Theosophy is Religion, and is, therefore, "that which binds not only all men, but also all Beings and all things in the Universe into one grand whole." Which makes it altogether clear why Theosophy can never be said to be a doctrine or a set of doctrines. That which binds all Beings together is the Oversoul, Brahma, Paramatma. The Oversoul is one thing. A doctrine, even a doctrine concerning the Oversoul, is a quite different thing.

It would be fair to say that Mme. Blavatsky is here making Theosophy something like the consciousness of the Oversoul, the wisdom of the Father, the "Mind of God," to use the phrase of Philo or of the ancient Chinese sages. No one will be daring enough, rash enough, to claim for any doctrine, any group of doctrines, that they are "the wisdom of the Eternal," "the Mind of God," in the full sense. If you feel tempted into such an assertion, go into the night, consider the quiet immensity of the stars, and learn reverence. Mme. Blavatsky was far

too wise, far too deeply religious, ever to claim, or think of claiming, that the doctrines she taught were "the Mind of God." And one may say, with entire confidence, that no Master, no group of Masters would ever claim that even the immensity of wisdom contained in their vast and luminous spirits fully represented "the Mind of God."

Beyond the utmost knowledge of the highest Masters remains, and will ever remain, the awful, inscrutable Mystery, before which the greatest spirit must bow as a little child, in silent adoration and reverence. The utmost that can be claimed for any doctrines, whether set forth by a disciple, or a Master, or a group of high Masters, is, that these teachings represent the mirroring of the Mind of God in these minds; represent their consciousness of the Divine Consciousness. But the vast Mystery still remains. Mme. Blavatsky paraphrases her affirmative definition thus: "Thus Theosophy is not a Religion, we say, but RELIGION itself, the one bond of unity, which is so universal that no man, as no speck, from gods and mortals down to animals, the blade of grass and atom, can be outside of its light." This should make it even more clear that Theosophy is not a doctrine, or a set of doctrines. Blades of grass are not held together nor illumined by doctrines: happy blades of grass!

Here is another of Mme. Blavatsky's affirmative definitions, and a very illuminating one: "The genesis of that WISDOM-RELIGION, in which all Theosophists believe, \* \* \* \* \* has to be traced in its origin to those Beings who, led by Karma, have incarnated in our humanity and thus struck the key-note of that secret Science which countless generations of subsequent adepts have expanded since then in every age, while they checked its doctrines by personal observation and experience. The bulk of this knowledge—which no man is able to possess in its fulness—constitutes that which we now call Theosophy or 'divine knowledge.' Beings from other and higher worlds may have it entire; we can have it only approximately." Here, Mme. Blavatsky limits Theosophy somewhat; it is made the equivalent, not of the whole Mind of God, but of that part of it which is contained within the consciousness of the adepts of one system of worlds; yet even of that, how much has any single human being grasped? How much can any human being ever grasp? A cupful from the ocean.

So far, concerning the negative and the positive definitions of Theosophy, in the wise editorial which the editor of THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY has reprinted. Now concerning the second part of our inquiry: what does Mme. Blavatsky say of the world's religions, and their relation to Theosophy, thus defined? And here a word of general comment. Mme. Blavatsky mentions Mazdeism, Brahmanism, Bud-

dhism, Mahomedanism, Christianity. It would be most fitting if, in each case, adherents of these religions should speak for them, here, in the pages of *THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY*; it would be well, if each of them had its personal representatives, and many of them, in the ranks of The Theosophical Society. We have, of the great Oriental religions, few adherents. Why? Because, while the Society had many of each of these faiths, Mazdeism, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Mahomedanism, and the writer of these Notes has known members of each, yet, at the present day, they are no longer in our ranks. The painful truth, and it may as well be stated plainly, is, that half the Oriental members failed to survive the shock of the attacks on Mme. Blavatsky; the residue disappeared in the stress of the attacks on W. Q. Judge.

But to come to our definitions. Both negative and affirmative elements are represented in the following: "It is from this WISDOM-RELIGION that all the various individual 'Religions' (erroneously so called) have sprung, forming in their turn off-shoots and branches, and also all the minor creeds, based upon, and always originated through, some personal experience in psychology. Every such religion, or religious offshoot, be it considered orthodox or heretical, wise or foolish, started originally as a clear and unadulterated stream from the Mother-Source. The fact that each became in time polluted with purely human speculations and inventions, due to interested motives, does not prevent any from having been pure in its early beginnings. There are those creeds—we shall not call them religions—which have now been overlaid with the human element out of all recognition; others just showing signs of early decay; not one that escaped the hand of time. But each and all are of divine, because natural and true origin; aye—Mazdeism, Brahmanism, Buddhism as much as Christianity."

We suppose it would be entirely logical and lawful to turn the last sentence round, and write it thus: "Each and all are of divine, because natural and true origin; aye—Christianity as much as Mazdeism, Brahmanism, Buddhism." Or is the "tolerance" of some of our readers not equal to that?

Now for our practical conclusion. If, as Mme. Blavatsky tells us, "Every such religion or religious offshoot, be it considered orthodox or heretical, wise or foolish, started originally as a clear and unadulterated stream from the Mother-Source," it would seem to be a part of the task of students of Theosophy to try, in the case of every such religion, (be it considered orthodox or heretical, wise or foolish,) to get back to the clear and unadulterated stream. Does Mme. Blavatsky, in her editorial, endorse this programme?

Let two quotations suffice. First, describing her own work in the *Secret Doctrine*, Mme. Blavatsky writes: "It was found indispensable to tear away all this mass of concreted misconceptions and prejudice which now hides the parent trunk of (a) all the great world-religions; (b) of the smaller sects; and (c) of Theosophy as it stands now—however veiled the great Truth, by ourselves and our limited knowledge. The crust of error is thick, laid on by whatever hand; and because we *personally* have tried to remove some of it, the effort became a standing reproach against all Theosophical writers and even the Society." Mme. Blavatsky thus declares that she has toiled terribly to lay bare the parent trunk, the living stem, of all the great religions: Mazdeism, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Mahomedanism, Christianity. This is the necessary work of demolition, logically to be succeeded, in each case, by work of reconstruction.

Thus Mme. Blavatsky indicates the task which Theosophists should be busy at, in care of all the great religions, Mazdeism, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Mahomedanism, Christianity. We should try to clear the living parent stem; try to find the pure stream, as it issued from the Mother-Source. Mme. Blavatsky gives us a third simile: If Theosophy were not *universal*, she tells us, it "would be but a word added to hundreds other such words as high sounding as they are pretentious and empty. Viewed as a philosophy, Theosophy in its practical work is the alembic of the Mediæval alchemist. It transmutes the apparently base metal of every ritualistic and dogmatic creed (Christianity included) into the gold of fact and truth."

Here, then, is Mme. Blavatsky's view of her task and ours. We all know something, and we should know more, of her tireless efforts to get to the clear stream, the living stem, the pure gold, of the great Eastern religions. The record of her work in that field is contained in her books, and, even more, in the early numbers of *The Theosophist*. We are also, many of us, familiar with her like effort to reach the pure stream, the stem, the gold, of Christianity, but it seems that only the negative part of that effort is known to some of our readers. If the Editor of THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY is willing, it may be both interesting and valuable to try to present to our readers the affirmative part; to show what, in the view of Mme. Blavatsky, is the clear stream, the living stem, the pure gold of the great world-religion which we know as Christianity.

# IS THEOSOPHY A RELIGION? \*

*Religion is the best armour that man can have, but it is the worst cloak.*—BUNYAN.

IT is no exaggeration to say that there never was—during the present century, at any rate—a movement, social or religious, so terribly, nay, so absurdly misunderstood, or more blundered about than THEOSOPHY—whether regarded theoretically as a code of ethics, or, practically, in its objective expression, *i. e.*, the Society known by that name.

Year after year, and day after day had our officers and members to interrupt people speaking of the theosophical movement by putting in more or less emphatic protests against theosophy being referred to as a “religion,” and the Theosophical Society as a kind of church or religious body. Still worse, it is as often spoken of as a “new sect!” Is it a stubborn prejudice, an error or both? The latter, most likely. The most narrow-minded and even notoriously unfair people are still in need of a plausible pretext, of a peg on which to hang their little uncharitable remarks and innocently-uttered slanders. And what peg is more solid for that purpose, more convenient than an “ism” or a “sect.” The great majority would be very sorry to be disabused and finally forced to accept the fact that theosophy is neither. The name suits them, and they pretend to be unaware of its falseness. But there are others, also, many more or less friendly people, who labor sincerely under the same delusion. To these, we say: Surely the world has been hitherto sufficiently cursed with the intellectual extinguishers known as dogmatic creeds, without having inflicted upon it a new form of faith! Too many already wear their faith, truly, as Shakespeare puts it, “but as the fashion of his hat,” ever changing “with the next block.” Moreover, the very *raison d’être* of the Theosophical Society was, from its beginning, to utter a loud protest and lead an open warfare against dogma or any belief based on blind faith.

It may sound odd and paradoxical, but it is true to say that, hitherto, the most apt workers in practical theosophy, its most devoted members were those recruited from the ranks of agnostics and even of materialists. No genuine, no sincere searcher after truth can ever be found among the *blind* believers in the “Divine Word,” let the latter be claimed to come from Allâh, Brahmâ or Jehovah, or their respective Kurân, Purâna and Bible. For:

“Faith is not *reason’s* labour, but repose.”

\* Reprinted from *Lucifer*, Volume III, No. 15. November 15, 1888.

He who believes his own religion on faith, will regard that of every other man as a lie, and hate it on that same faith. Moreover, unless it fetters reason and entirely blinds our perceptions of anything outside our own particular faith, the latter is no faith at all, but a temporary belief, the delusion we labour under, at some particular time of life. Moreover, "faith without principles is but a flattering phrase for wilful positiveness or fanatical bodily sensations," in Coleridge's clever definition.

What, then, is Theosophy, and how may it be defined in its latest presentation in this closing portion of the XIXth century?

Theosophy, we say, is not a Religion.

Yet there are, as everyone knows, certain beliefs, philosophical, religious and scientific, which have become so closely associated in recent years with the word "Theosophy" that they have come to be taken by the general public for theosophy itself. Moreover, we shall be told these beliefs have been put forward, explained and defended by those very Founders who have declared that Theosophy is *not* a Religion. What is then the explanation of this *apparent* contradiction? How can a certain body of beliefs and teachings, an elaborate doctrine, in fact, be labelled "Theosophy" and be tacitly accepted as "Theosophical" by nine tenths of the members of the T. S., if Theosophy is not a Religion?—we are asked.

To explain this is the purpose of the present protest.

It is perhaps necessary, first of all, to say, that the assertion that "Theosophy is not a Religion" by no means excludes the fact that "Theosophy is Religion" itself. A Religion in the true and only correct sense, is a bond uniting men together—not a particular set of dogmas and beliefs. Now Religion, *per se*, in its widest meaning is that which binds not only all MEN, but also *all* BEINGS and all *things* in the entire Universe into one grand whole. This is our theosophical definition of Religion; but the same definition changes again with every creed and country, and no two Christians ever regard it alike. We find this in more than one eminent author. Thus Carlyle defined the Protestant Religion in his day, with a remarkable prophetic eye to this ever-growing feeling in our present day, as:

"For the most part a wise, prudential feeling, grounded on mere calculation; a matter, as all others now are, of expediency and utility; whereby some smaller *quantum* of earthly enjoyment may be exchanged for a far larger *quantum* of celestial enjoyment. Thus religion, too, is profit, a working for wages; not reverence, but vulgar hope or fear."

In her turn Mrs. Stowe, whether consciously or otherwise, seemed to have had Roman Catholicism rather than Protestantism in her mind, when saying of her heroine that:



"Religion she looked upon in the light of a ticket (with the correct number of indulgences bought and paid for), which, being once purchased and snugly laid away in a pocket-book, is to be produced at the celestial gate, and thus secure admission to heaven. . . ."

But to Theosophists (the genuine Theosophists are here meant) who accept no mediation by proxy, no salvation through innocent blood shed, nor would they think of "working for wages" in the *One Universal* religion, the only definition they could subscribe to and accept in full is the one given by Miller. How truly and theosophically he describes it, by showing that

". . . true Religion  
Is always mild, propitious and humble;  
Plays not *the tyrant*, plants *no faith in blood*,  
Nor bears destruction on her chariot wheels;  
But stoops to polish, succor and redress,  
And *builds her grandeur on the public good.*"

The above is a correct definition of what true theosophy *is*, or ought to be. (Among the creeds Buddhism alone is such a true heart-binding and men-binding philosophy, because it is not a dogmatic religion.) In this respect, as it is the duty and task of every genuine theosophist to accept and carry out these principles, Theosophy *is* RELIGION, and the Society its one Universal Church; the temple of Solomon's wisdom,\* in building which "there was neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was building" (I Kings, VI); for this "temple" is made by no human hand, nor built in any locality on earth—but, verily, is raised only in the inner sanctuary of man's heart wherein reigns alone the awakened soul.

Thus Theosophy is not *a* Religion, we say, but RELIGION itself, the one bond of unity, which is so universal and all-embracing that no man, as no speck—from gods and mortals down to animals, the blade of grass and atom—can be outside of its light. Therefore, any organization or body of that name must necessarily be a UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD.

Were it otherwise, Theosophy would be but a word added to hundreds other such words as high sounding as they are pretentious and empty. Viewed as a philosophy, Theosophy in its practical work is the alembic of the Mediæval alchemist. It transmutes the apparently base

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\* Whose 700 wives and 300 concubines, by the bye, are merely the personation of man's attributes, feelings, passions and his various occult powers: the Kabalistic numbers 7 and 3 showing it plainly. Solomon himself, moreover, being simply, the emblem of Sol—the "Solar Initiate" or the Christ-Sun, is a variant of the Indian "Vikarttana" (the Sun) shorn of his beams by Vishwakarma, his Hierophant-Initiator, who thus shears the Chrestos-candidate for initiation of his golden radiance and crowns him with a dark, blackened aureole—the "crown of thorns." (See *The Secret Doctrine* for full explanation.) Solomon was never a living man. As described in *Kings*, his life and works are an allegory on the trials and glory of Initiation.

metal of every ritualistic and dogmatic creed (Christianity included) into the gold of fact and truth, and thus truly produces a universal panacea for the ills of mankind. This is why, when applying for admission into the Theosophical Society, no one is asked what religion he belongs to, nor what his deistic views may be. These views are his own personal property and have nought to do with the Society. Because Theosophy can be practised by Christian or Heathen, Jew or Gentile, by Agnostic or Materialist, or even an Atheist, provided that none of these is a bigoted fanatic, who refuses to recognize as his brother any man or woman outside his own special creed or belief. Count Leo N. Tolstoy does not believe in the Bible, the Church, or the divinity of Christ; and yet no Christian surpasses him in the practical bearing out of the principles alleged to have been preached on the Mount. And these principles are those of Theosophy; not because they were uttered by the Christian Christ, but because they are universal ethics, and were preached by Buddha and Confucius, Krishna, and all the great Sages, thousands of years before the Sermon on the Mount was written. Hence, once that we live up to such theosophy, it becomes a universal *panacea* indeed, for it heals the wounds inflicted by the gross asperities of the Church "isms" on the sensitive soul of every naturally religious man. How many of these, forcibly thrust out by the reactive impulse of disappointment from the narrow area of blind belief into the ranks of arid disbelief, have been brought back to hopeful aspiration by simply joining our Brotherhood—yea, imperfect as it is.

If, as an offset to this, we are reminded that several prominent members have left the Society disappointed in theosophy as they had been in other associations, this cannot dismay us in the least. For with a very, *very few* exceptions, in the early stage of the T. S.'s activities when some left because they did not find mysticism practised in the General Body as *they* understood it, or because "the leaders lacked Spirituality," were "untheosophical, hence, untrue to the rules," you see, the majority left because most of them were either half-hearted or too self-opinionated—a church and infallible dogma in themselves. Some broke away, again, under very shallow pretexts indeed, such, for instance, as "because Christianity (to say Churchianity, or *sham* Christianity, would be more just) was too roughly handled in our magazines"—just as if other fanatical religions were ever treated any better or upheld! Thus, all those who left have done well to leave, and have never been regretted.

Furthermore, there is this also to be added: the number of those who left can hardly be compared with the number of those who found everything they had hoped for in Theosophy. Its doctrines, if seriously studied, call forth, by stimulating one's reasoning powers and awakening the *inner* in the animal man, every hitherto dormant power for good in

us, and also the perception of the true and the real, as opposed to the false and the unreal. Tearing off with no uncertain hand the thick veil of dead-letter with which every old religious scripture was cloaked, scientific Theosophy, learned in the cunning symbolism of the ages, reveals to the scoffer at old wisdom the origin of the world's faiths and sciences. It opens new vistas beyond the old horizons of crystallized, motionless and despotic faiths; and turning blind belief into a reasoned knowledge founded on mathematical laws—the only *exact* science—it demonstrates to him under profounder and more philosophical aspects the existence of that which, repelled by the grossness of its dead-letter form, he had long since abandoned as a nursery tale. It gives a clear and well-defined object, an ideal to live for, to every sincere man or woman belonging to whatever station in Society and of whatever culture and degree of intellect. Practical Theosophy is not *one* Science, but embraces every science in life, moral and physical. It may, in short, be justly regarded as the universal “coach,” a tutor of world-wide knowledge and experience, and of an erudition which not only assists and guides his pupils toward a successful examination for every scientific or moral service in earthly life, but fits them for *the lives* to come, if those pupils will only study the universe and its mysteries *within themselves*, instead of studying them through the spectacles of orthodox science and religions.

And let no reader misunderstand these statements. It is Theosophy *per se*, not any individual member of the Society or even Theosophist, on whose behalf such a universal omniscience is claimed. The two—Theosophy and the Theosophical Society—as a vessel and the *olla podrida* it contains, must not be confounded. One is, as an ideal, *divine* Wisdom, perfection itself; the other a poor, imperfect thing, trying to run *under*, if not *within*, its shadow on Earth. No man is perfect; why, then, should any member of the T. S. be expected to be a paragon of every human virtue? And why should the whole organization be criticized and blamed for the faults, whether real or imaginary, of some of its “Fellows,” or even its Leaders? Never was the Society, as a concrete body, free from blame or sin—*errare humanum est*—nor were any of its members. Hence, it is rather those members—most of whom will not be led by theosophy, that ought to be blamed. Theosophy is the soul of its Society; the latter the gross and imperfect body of the former. Hence, those modern Solomons who *will* sit in the Judgment Seat and talk of that they know nothing about, are invited before they slander theosophy or any theosophists to first get acquainted with both, instead of ignorantly calling one a “farrago of insane beliefs” and the other a “sect of impostors and lunatics.”

Regardless of this, Theosophy is spoken of by friends and foes as a religion when not a *sect*. Let us see how the special beliefs which

have become associated with the word have come to stand in that position, and how it is that they have so good a right to it that none of the leaders of the Society have ever thought of disavowing their doctrines.

We have said that we believed in the absolute unity of nature. Unity implies the possibility for a unit on one plane, to come into contact with another unit on or from another plane. We believe in it.

The just published *Secret Doctrine* will show what were the ideas of all antiquity with regard to the *primeval instructors* of primitive man and his three earlier races. The genesis of that WISDOM-RELIGION, in which all theosophists believe, dates from that period. So-called "Occultism," or rather Esoteric Science, has to be traced in its origin to those Beings who, led by Karma, have incarnated in our humanity and thus struck the key-note of that secret Science which countless generations of subsequent adepts have expanded since then in every age, while they checked its doctrines by personal observation and experience. The bulk of this knowledge—which no man is able to possess in its fulness—constitutes that which we now call Theosophy or "divine knowledge." Beings from other and higher worlds may have it entire; we can have it only approximately.

Thus, unity of everything in the universe implies and justifies our belief in the existence of a knowledge at once scientific, philosophical and religious, showing the necessity and actuality of the connection of man and all things in the universe with each other; which knowledge, therefore, becomes essentially RELIGION, and must be called in its integrity and universality by the distinctive name of WISDOM-RELIGION.

It is from this WISDOM-RELIGION that all the various individual "Religions" (erroneously so called) have sprung, forming in their turn offshoots and branches, and also all the minor creeds, based upon and always originated through some personal experience in psychology. Every such religion, or religious offshoot, be it considered orthodox or heretical, wise or foolish, started originally as a clear and unadulterated stream from the Mother-Source. The fact that each became in time polluted with purely human speculations and even inventions, due to interested motives, does not prevent any from having been pure in its early beginnings. There are those creeds—we shall not call them religions—which have now been overlaid with the human element out of all recognition; others just showing signs of early decay; not one that escaped the hand of time. But each and all are of divine, because natural and true origin; aye—Mazdeism, Brahmanism, Buddhism as much as Christianity. It is the dogmas and human element in the latter which led directly to modern Spiritualism.

Of course, there will be an outcry from both sides, if we say that modern Spiritualism *per se*, cleansed of the unhealthy speculations which were based on the dicta of two little girls and their very unreliable

"Spirit"—is, nevertheless, far more true and philosophical than any church dogma. *Carnalised Spiritualism* is now reaping its Karma. Its primitive *innovators*, the said "two little girls" from Rochester, the Mecca of modern Spiritualism, have grown up and turned into old women since the first raps produced by them have opened wide ajar the gates between this and the other world. It is on their "innocent" testimony that the elaborate scheme of a sidereal Summer-land, with its active astral population of "Spirits," ever on the wing between their "Silent Land" and our very loud-mouthed, gossiping earth—has been started and worked out. And now the two female Mahommeds of Modern Spiritualism have turned self-apostates and play false to the "philosophy" they have created, and have gone over to the enemy. They expose and denounce *practical* Spiritualism as the humbug of the ages. Spiritualists—(save a handful of fair exceptions)—have rejoiced and sided with *our* enemies and slanderers, when these, *who had never been Theosophists*, played us false and showed the cloven foot denouncing the Founders of the Theosophical Society as frauds and impostors. Shall the Theosophists laugh in their turn now that the original "revealers" of Spiritualism have become its "revilers"? Never! for the phenomena of Spiritualism are facts, and the treachery of the "Fox girls" only makes us feel new pity for all mediums, and confirms, before the whole world, our constant declaration that no medium can be relied upon. No true theosophist will ever laugh, or far less rejoice, at the discomforture even of an opponent. The reason for it is simple:—

*Because we know that beings from other, higher worlds do confabulate with some elect mortals now as ever; though now far more rarely than in the days of old, as mankind becomes with every civilized generation worse in every respect.*

Theosophy—owing, in truth, to the *levée in arms* of all the Spiritualists of Europe and America at the first words uttered against the idea that every communicating *intelligence* is necessarily the Spirit of some ex-mortal from this earth—has not said its last word about Spiritualism and "Spirits." It may one day. Meanwhile, an humble servant of theosophy, the Editor, declares once more her belief in Beings, grander, wiser, nobler than any *personal* God, who are beyond any "Spirits of the dead," Saints, or winged Angels, who, nevertheless, *do* condescend in all and every age to occasionally overshadow rare sensitives—often entirely unconnected with Church, Spiritualism or even Theosophy. And believing in high and holy Spiritual Beings, she must also believe in the existence of their opposites—lower "spirits," good, bad and indifferent. Therefore does she believe in spiritualism and its phenomena, some of which are so repugnant to her.

This, as a casual remark and a digression, just to show that Theosophy includes Spiritualism—as it should be, not as it is—among its

sciences, based on knowledge and experience of countless ages. There is not a religion worthy of the name which has been started otherwise than in consequence of such *visits* from Beings on the higher planes.

Thus were born all prehistoric, as well as all the historic religions, Mazdeism and Brahmanism, Buddhism and Christianity, Judaism, Gnosticism and Mahomedanism; in short every more or less successful "ism." All are true at the bottom, and all are false on their surface. The Revealer, the artist who impressed a portion of the Truth on the brain of the Seer, was in every instance a true artist, who gave out genuine truths; but the instrument proved also, in every instance to be *only a man*. Invite Rubenstein and ask him to play a sonata of Beethoven on a piano left to *self-tuning*, one half of the keys of which are in chronic paralysis, while the wires hang loose; then see whether, the genius of the artist notwithstanding, you will be able to recognize the sonata. The moral of the *fabula* is that a man—let him be the greatest of mediums or natural Seers—is but a man; and man left to his own devices and speculations *must* be out of tune with absolute truth, while even picking up some of its crumbs. For Man is but a *Fallen Angel*, a god within, but having an animal brain in his head, more subject to cold and wine fumes while in company with other men on Earth, than to the faultless reception of divine revelations.

Hence the multi-coloured dogmas of the churches. Hence also the thousand and one "philosophies" so-called, (some contradictory, theosophical theories included); and the variegated "Sciences" and schemes, Spiritual, Mental, Christian and Secular; Sectarianism and bigotry, and especially the personal vanity and self-opinionatedness of almost every "Innovator" since the mediæval ages. These have all darkened and hidden the very existence of TRUTH—the common root of all. Will our critics imagine that we exclude theosophical teachings from this nomenclature? Not at all. And though the esoteric doctrines which our Society has been and is expounding, are not *mental* or *spiritual* impressions from some "unknown, *from above*," but the fruit of teachings given to us by living men, still, except that which was dictated and written out by those Masters of Wisdom themselves, these doctrines may be in many cases as incomplete and faulty as any of our foes would desire it. The *Secret Doctrine*—a work which gives out all that can be given out during this century, is an attempt to lay bare *in part* the common foundation and inheritance of all—great and small religious and philosophical schemes. It was found indispensable to tear away all this mass of concreted misconceptions and prejudice which now hides the parent trunk of (a) all the great world-religions; (b) of the smaller sects; and (c) of Theosophy as it stands now—however veiled the great Truth, by ourselves and our limited knowledge. The crust of error is thick, laid on by whatever hand; and because we *personally* have tried to remove some of it, the

effort became a standing reproach against all theosophical writers and even the Society. Few among our friends and readers have failed to characterize our attempt to expose error in the *Theosophist* and *Lucifer* as "very uncharitable attacks on Christianity," "untheosophical assaults," etc., etc. Yet these are necessary, nay, indispensable if we wish to plough up at least *approximate* truths. We have to lay things bare, and are ready to suffer for it—as usual. It is vain to promise to *give* truth, and then leave it mingled with error out of mere faint-heartedness. That the result of such policy could only muddy the stream of facts is shown plainly. After twelve years of incessant labour and struggle with enemies from the four quarters of the globe, notwithstanding our four theosophical monthly journals—The *Theosophist*, *Path*, *Lucifer*, and the French *Lotus*—our wish-washy, tame protests in them, our timid declarations, our "masterly policy of inactivity," and playing at hide-and-seek in the shadow of dreary metaphysics, have only led to Theosophy being seriously regarded as a religious SECT. For the hundredth time we are told—"What good is Theosophy doing?" and "See what good the Churches are doing"!

Nevertheless, it is an averred fact that mankind is not a whit better in morality, and in some respects ten times worse now, than it ever was in the days of Paganism. Moreover, for the last half century, from that period when Freethought and Science got the best of the Churches—Christianity is yearly losing far more adherents among the cultured classes than it gains proselytes in the lower *strata*, the scum of Heathendom. On the other hand, Theosophy has brought back from Materialism and blank despair to belief (based on logic and evidence) in man's *divine* Self, and the immortality of the latter, more than one of those whom the church has lost through dogma, exaction of faith and tyranny. And, if it is proven that Theosophy saves one man only in a thousand of those the Church has lost, is not the former a far higher factor for good than all the missionaries.

Theosophy, as repeatedly declared in print and *viva voce* by its members and officers, proceeds on diametrically opposite lines to those which are trodden by the Church; and Theosophy rejects the methods of Science, since her inductive methods can only lead to crass materialism. Yet, *de facto*, Theosophy claims to be both "RELIGION" and "SCIENCE," for theosophy is the essence of both. It is for the sake and love of the two divine abstractions—*i. e.*, theosophical religion and science, that its Society has become the volunteer *scavenger* of both orthodox religion and modern science; as also the relentless Nemesis of those who have degraded the two noble truths to their own ends and purposes, and then divorced each violently from the other, though the two are and *must be one*. To prove this is also one of our objects in the present paper.

The modern Materialist insists on an impassable chasm between the two, pointing out that the "Conflict between Religion and Science" has ended in the triumph of the latter and the defeat of the first. The modern Theosophist refuses to see, on the contrary, any such chasm at all. If it is claimed by both Church and Science that each of them pursues the truth and *nothing but the truth*, then either one of them is mistaken, and accepts falsehood for truth, or both. Any other impediment to their reconciliation must be set down as purely *fictitious*. Truth is one, even if sought for or pursued at two different ends. Therefore, Theosophy claims to reconcile the two foes. It premises by saying that the *true* spiritual and primitive Christian religion is, as much as the other great and still older philosophies that preceded it—the *light of Truth*—"The life and the light of men."

But so is the *true* light of Science. Therefore, darkened as the former is now by dogmas examined through glasses smoked with the superstitions artificially produced by the Churches, this light can hardly penetrate and meet its sister ray in a science, equally as cobwebbed by paradoxes and the materialistic sophistries of the age. The teachings of the two are incompatible, and cannot agree so long as both Religious philosophy and the Science of physical and external (in philosophy, *false*) nature, insist upon the infallibility of their respective "will-o'-the-wisps." The two lights, having their beams of equal length in the matter of false deductions, can but extinguish each other and produce still worse darkness. Yet, they can be reconciled on the condition that both shall clean their houses, one from the human dross of the ages, the other from the hideous excrescence of modern materialism and atheism. And as both decline, the most meritorious and best thing to do is precisely what Theosophy alone can and *will* do; *i. e.*, point out to the innocents caught by the glue of the two waylayers—verily two dragons of old, one devouring the intellects, the other the souls of men—that their supposed chasm is but an optical delusion; that, far from being one, it is but an immense garbage mound respectively erected by the two foes, as a fortification against mutual attacks.

Thus, if theosophy does no more than point out and seriously draw the attention of the world to the fact that the *supposed* disagreement between religion and science is conditioned, on the one hand by the intelligent materialists rightly kicking against absurd human dogmas, and on the other by blind fanatics and interested churchmen who, instead of defending the souls of mankind, fight simply tooth and nail for their personal bread and butter and authority—why, even then, theosophy will prove itself the saviour of mankind.

And now we have shown, it is hoped, what real Theosophy is, and what are its adherents. One is divine Science and a code of Ethics so sublime that no theosophist is capable of doing it justice; the others



weak but sincere men. Why, then, should Theosophy ever be judged by the personal shortcomings of any leader or member of our 150 branches? One may work for it to the best of his ability, yet never raise himself to the height of his call and aspiration. This is his or her misfortune, never the fault of Theosophy, or even of the body at large. Its Founders claim no other merit than that of having set the first theosophical wheel rolling. If judged at all they must be judged by the work they have done, not by what friends may think or enemies say of them. There is no room for *personalities* in a work like ours; and all must be ready, as the Founders are, if needs be, for the car of Jaggernâth to crush them *individually* for *the good of all*. It is only in the days of the dim Future, when death will have laid his cold hand on the luckless Founders and stop thereby their activity, that their respective merits and demerits, their good and bad acts and deeds, and their theosophical work will have to be weighed on the Balance of Posterity. Then only, after the two scales with their contrasted loads have been brought to an equipoise, and the character of the net result left over has become evident to all in its full and intrinsic value, then only shall the nature of the verdict passed be determined with anything like justice. At present, except in India, those results are too scattered over the face of the earth, too much limited to a handful of individuals to be easily judged. Now, these results can hardly be perceived, much less heard of amid the din and clamor made by our teeming enemies, and their ready imitators—the indifferent. Yet however small, if once proved good, even now every man who has at heart the moral progress of humanity, owes his thankfulness to Theosophy for those results. And as Theosophy was revived and brought before the world, *viâ* its unworthy servants, the “Founders,” if their work was useful, it alone must be their vindicator, regardless of the present state of their balance in the petty cash accounts of Karma, wherein social “respectabilities” are entered up.

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*“The most modest little pond can reflect a picture of the sun, if it is absolutely at rest in itself.”*

CARLYLE.

# FRAGMENTS

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**T**O-DAY is the day of psychic dreams, and on all planes. The material world by one turn of revolution is to become a paradise; and the joys of Earth, not raised to Heaven, but the power of Heaven dragged down to minister to Earth. So the materialists. But are the "spiritually minded"—I use a phrase I heard in this connection the other day—who float in cloud-land visions and sounds and fancies, who deny the stern facts of life, and who often ignore its duties, less dreamers than these? Quietly, unknown, unthanked, the real workers for Humanity toil on, winning by self-sacrifice and self-discipline a footing for the world to climb by, while far, far beneath, least known perhaps to those who cry it most, the mighty stream of spiritual life is gathering for its flood.

And so men prate of the Inner Life! Strange fantastic twistings has this great truth received, this kernel of truth; for to-day forsooth the truth must be made to fit the mind, not the mind expanded to the truth!

Where is the Inner Life? Is this change in material employment the difference between an inner and an outer life? These hours of vain striving to keep the mind on one spiritual thought—is this meditation? The truth lies deeper than the mind, deeper often than the heart—untrained, and therefore often unresponsive. The truth itself when materialized is lost; for everything material is lost. What is materiality but death?

Affairs of the outer life, or circumstances there, do not affect the inner Life at all—only it affects them, in that living an Inner Life a great Light shall shine forth through all you do or say, and the colourless trivialities of your daily round shall be illumined from within, and glorified. Therefore no need for this concern with outer doings; for this Light, inwardly burning, shall bring of itself a subtile change in act and word, which of yourself alone you never could have wrought.

Remember to look for the Warrior who shall fight. Therefore the first step is one of retreat, the first force constrictive. For we cannot enter upon the Path until we have found the Gate, and that Gate is in the heart;—in each man's heart for himself; which, passing through, he travels upon a road, broad as the Universe, reaching upward to the stars, from the hell he has left behind.

Leave details aside: they quickly fall into line when great principles have command and engage the thought and energy. For great prin-

ciples are not material but immaterial. Nor is Soul Life found in the activities of the body or brain, which can never, rightly used, be more than vehicles and expressions. I feel the hopelessness in what I say of reaching some of the souls I long to reach, the more that they know by heart the form of words that I must use. They have made a drug of them with which to deepen their slumber, and brighten it with dreams. Alas! that dreams should be that which is most real, and what you call the "waking life" a shadow and illusion. All that is real in it, all that gives it semblance of truth, is the admixture of Soul life,—only a drop with some, but forming the centre for their fancy to weave about; making pictures and images; and lost in contemplating these, they forget all else and finally deny the possibility of other forms of existence; grasping the shadow, lose the substance, and sell their birthright for a mess of pottage. That is true of almost everyone, not alone of the ordinary man, but of would-be disciples. Indeed, with these latter it is worse, for the reason I have touched on, that higher things are materialized, dragged down to everyday levels, and great truths forgotten or misunderstood. The empty form of words remaining is again taken merely as a starting point for the delightful game of fancy or shadow-making, which the psychic mind so fondly plays. And thus the awakening power they had is lost and another effort fruitless.

After all these years of work, of enormous sacrifice and expenditure of force, with countless activities and an ever swelling army of candidates, tell me how many disciples are there? How many who lead the Inner Life? Each heart in silence may question itself, and answer whether its name could be enrolled among the few.

O! Humanity, too long, too long have you wandered in the gardens of material existence, plucking flowers which faded in your hands, and whose very picking you paid for in the cruel sting of thorns. Know you not there is another garden where flowers far more beautiful never fade, nor are you torn in grasping them. O! Humanity too long, too long you linger on the way.

O! slumbering souls awake!

CAVÉ.

# THE SNAKE DANCE

## A RELIGIOUS CEREMONIAL

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HERE is a special zest in approaching so bizarre a rite as the Hopi Snake Dance armed with the conviction that behind and above every religious manifestation is the same spirit of divine truth. The title savors of barbarism, and the popular accounts which periodically appear in print dwell always on the weird horror of the spectacle with small effort to explain or comprehend.

Our eighty mile drive through the Navajo reservation has made us subtly aware of the distrust and hostility latent in a people still essentially savage, but immediately on entering Hopi-land our curiosity grows hopefully inquisitive. Their frank welcome and confiding friendliness convince us that here is a diametrically differing race. Surely there must be ethical standards worthy of search or the common village life to which we are at once cordially admitted could not so abound in gentle consideration, in kindly interest and spontaneous gaiety. Their self chosen name signifies "The Good People" and on every side we see it corroborated; in the gentle old men caring for the brown babies, in the soft-voiced little girls guiding with such anxious solicitude the footsteps of the blind grandmothers—so many are blind!—in the generous hospitality and the cheerful industry of the house-holders.

Some one, Huxley, I believe, has said "Goodness is wisdom; add beauty and it is religion," and if this be true the goal has surely here been achieved. The beauty is obvious, unalloyed, constant, from the moment the climb begins through the patiently fostered fields and orchards, up the rock-worn trail with the tiny stone sheep corrals on either hand, to the picturesque adobe village on the mesa-top. Loveliness lurks at every turn of the narrow stone streets which twist between the terraced houses,—in the shapes and colors of the pots which their great creative artist, the old Nampejo is painting,—in the pretty fabrics being woven on the looms, even in the primitive implements for grinding, sifting and baking the precious meal. Apparently the entire community-life is devoted to adding beauty to the native goodness.

It is in the light of such impressions that we approach our study of the Snake Dance, or more properly speaking, the dramaturgy of the Sun-serpent Myth. Briefly stated, it is an elaborate nine-day prayer for rain "that the crops may ripen and our children have food,—then afterwards that we too may have to eat." The reptiles bear their part in it as the wise Elder Brothers who, living underground, have intimate relations with the spirits of the springs and the germinating seeds.

As long as Christian nations deem drouth a fit subject for united supplication, we can but regard tolerantly a like effort made by a simple people whose very lives are in actual peril from this perpetual menace of their climate, while real respect is due the entailed sacrifice, faith and prolonged concentration. Strange as is the ritual, it is closely bound by a rigid symbolism of color, form and number to a very beautiful myth whose underlying ideas of the serpent's wisdom, of the earth-mother, or spider-woman spinning her fateful thread, of the sun-father's vigor and power, are by no means alien to us.

The dramatization is conducted jointly by the Snake and the Antelope lodges, two of the many hereditary clans into which the Tusayan people are subdivided, and takes place every other year in each of the principal Hopi villages, alternating with the less famous but no less lovely Drama of the Blue Flute. This summer Walpi and Mishongovi were the stage of the Snake people, Oraibi and Cuñopavi of the Flute clan. Although only the events of the eighth and ninth days are performed publicly, the entire ceremony has been witnessed by patient scientific observers who gained the trust of the Indians and were freely admitted to the underground kivas. Detailed accounts of the proceedings may be found in the reports of the Ethnological Bureau and of the Field Columbian Museum.

Broadly generalizing, the first seven days are devoted to preparation and consecration. The altars, symbolizing the rainclouds and lightning, serpents of the four world quarters, are carefully painted with colored sands; always yellow for the North, green or blue for the West, red for the South and white for the East. Prayer emblems, called Pa-hos, are constructed and after being endowed with a breath-body or spiritual double, by means of ceremonial smoking, talismanic words and the sixteen traditional songs, are deposited at the surrounding shrines on the plains. The bearers, never breaking their running pace, describe on each of four successive days a complete sinistral circuit about the mesa. The farthest shrines are visited on the first day, "because the rain gods dwell afar," and on each succeeding day the circuit is contracted "that the gods may likewise so approach, the dry river-beds be swollen with water and the farmers hear the pattering of rain." Four days are also given to the capturing of the snakes, the hunt to the North, East, South and West, taking each a day in turn; afterward these formidable Elder Brothers must perforce undergo the priestly purification by water, smoke and breath before being duly laid upon the altar.

On the mornings of the eighth and ninth days, we are awakened long before dawn by the long call of the crier above on the house-top, announcing respectively that the Antelope and the Snake races will occur at sunrise. The Antelope is shorter and less strenuous than that of the Snakes, which is considered much the more important of the two. Be-

ginning some five miles out on the plain, it is participated in by about forty youths. Through the dusk of dawn the runners, silent and intent, slip forth to the place of meeting, and just at sun-up the starter having four times drawn with meal the symbolic raincloud sign across the trail, the race begins.

It is wonderfully beautiful to see—the splendor of the level morning light, the tense brown bodies with their steady spring through the deep sand and their light bounds up the sheer cliff to the kiva-top where are awarded the prizes, charms insuring fertility to the winner's field.

In the late afternoon of these two culminating days occur the spectacular public dances. They are alike in character except that the Antelope ceremony lacks the wild dramatic element of the living serpents. In each there is the solemn processional of priests and the same fine contrast of massed color, the Antelopes all in white and blue both as to paint and costume, the Snakes rich in threatening red and black, and leading each the same isolated figure of the asperger in heavy white homespun, fresh garlands of green cottonwood leaves on head, wrists and ankles. On each occasion the contrasting lodges draw up facing each other in opposing lines and for upwards of half an hour engage in intricate antiphonal songs and dance steps, rhythm and melody suggesting much which the words fail to convey. But on the ninth day, in place of quietly disbanding, the Snake Priests divide into groups of three. One of each group in turn thrusts his hand into the *kisi*,—a bower of fresh cottonwood branches, where up to this point the Elder Brothers have lain confined and concealed—and seizing a serpent thrusts it between his teeth with the head pointing towards his right, and stoically disregarding of its writhing protest, marches once about the court, when a second serpent is seized and replacing the first is treated in like manner. The second member of the group, marching with arm about the neck of the first, strives to keep the snake in good humor by dint of continual stroking and tickling with an eagle feather. The third member gathers the reptiles as they either wriggle themselves free or are voluntarily dropped at the close of a circuit.

It is an unbelievable sight, yet we accept it with strange lack of concern. The spirit of the place, remote, unworldly, primal, has gripped one too forcibly to permit the domination of twentieth century standards; our real excitement comes with a glow of contagious gratitude at the actual sudden crash of thunder, flash of lightning and the drenching torrent which fairly floods the court. The gods have given quick proof that the sacrifice has been accepted and that they found "no hearts to be bad nor thoughts to have left the straight path."

When the ceremonially attired *manas*, charmingly picturesque maidens, with their huge whorls of black hair *en* squash-blossom coiffure, have duly powdered the last reptile with offerings of sacred meal, a

circle, likewise of meal, is drawn upon the pavement. Into this the entire mass of squirming, writhing snake-dom is cast. Immediately the priests rush upon them and each seizing a double handful speed down the rock trail and deposit them, dazed but free, on the plain. Fraught with meaningful messages they wriggle their way whence they came.

The last rite of the Younger Brothers is a final purification, this time by means of a powerful emetic prepared secretly by the elder-women of the clan. It was once surmised to be an antidote to the bites which assuredly sometimes occur, but later evidence agrees in finding it wholly of religious purport.

General rejoicing and merry-making follow. The long fast of the priests is broken by an Homeric feast. From every side come laughing manas bearing great wicker trays piled high with melons and corn, with roasted kid and great heaps of the pretty piki, gossamer sheets of corn-meal baked with deft skill on polished stone slabs.

While games and contests of skill are being proclaimed for the following day, we make our way lingeringly through the friendly, gay multitude and down to our camp beneath the low arching peach trees, delighting in the new damp smell of the earth and the luminous opalescent light of the afterglow, yet with one eye warily cocked lest some silent Elder Brother should elect to wend his homeward way by the light of our blazing fire!

The legend which follows, abbreviated from Mr. A. M. Stephens' translation, is given as the best guide to the meaning of the dramaturgy, but it can well stand alone, a true myth, passed orally from generation to generation, of a people without written literature.

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Far down in the lowest depth of the Colorado Grande is the Si-pa-pu, the orifice where we and the white men and all people came up from the Below.

The mothers carrying the children on their backs went forth to gather seeds and prickly pear for food, while Morning Dove flew overhead spying out the springs and calling us to come. Some followed and built their houses at the waters he found and are still called after him, the Morning Dove People. The Horn People, the Sand People and others were led by Puma to the Navajo Mountains where they also built houses and lived many days, but the clouds were thin, rain came seldom and the corn was weak.

The eldest son of the Chief was called Ti-yo, the Youth. He seemed always melancholy and was wont to haunt the edge of the cliffs. Day by day he would sit there gazing down into the deep gorge, wondering whither the ever-flowing water went, and where it finally found rest. He questioned much, saying, "It must flow down some great pit into the

underworld, for after all these years the gorge below never fills, and none of the water ever flows back again," and his father made answer, "Perhaps it goes so far away that many old men's lives would be too short to mark its return."

At last one day Ti-yo declared that he was constrained to go and solve the mystery and to this end he hollowed out a great cotton-wood log in which he might be enclosed and so float away with the river. For sustenance his mother ground him meal, while his father prepared prayer-emblems called pa-hos; a long one bound on a single willow-wand was for Spider-Woman; four shorter ones bound on twin blue wands were for the Ancient of the Six (the Indian's six cardinal points), for the Woman of the Hard Substance (the genius of wealth and precious stones), for Ta-wa the Sun, and for Mu-i-yin-wuh, Maker of Life-germs. Together with these he placed down from the thigh of an eagle.

When all was ready Ti-yo was sealed into his floating box by means of small twigs and piñon-gum and away it sailed, bobbing up and down over smooth waters and swift rushing torrents, plunging down cataracts and spinning through whirlpools where black rocks protruded their heads like angry bears. At last it came to rest on a bank by the edge of a great water, and scarcely had Ti-yo disengaged himself and stepped forth when beneath his feet he heard a faint sound of "Hist—hist" repeated four times. Looking down he perceived a small round hole and from it spoke the voice of Spider-woman, saying, "You, the long-expected are here; my heart is glad; come down into my house." "But the entrance," answered Ti-yo, "is too tiny even to admit the point of my toe," yet as in obedience he placed his foot upon the hole it widened out and he easily passed down into a roomy kiva.

He at once presented Spider-woman with the large pa-ho and after thanking him she added, "I can be seen or I can become invisible. I go everywhere and know all things. I know whence you come and whither you go. Your heart is good. I have prepared food for you;" and she gave him to eat. During four days he dwelt there; then Spider-woman directed him to go next to the Snake-house, promising to accompany him throughout his journeyings, perching invisible on the tip of his right ear, where inaudible to all others she would whisper to him her promptings. She also gave him the medicine-charm, called Na-hu, a little of which he should put on the point of his tongue and spurt at the Angry Ones who guard the entrances of rooms.

With the fluttering eagle-down as a guide he travelled northwest till he came to a kiva guarded by a huge serpent at the top, and two fierce bears at the foot of the hatchway. All of these, subdued by the Na-hu bowed their heads and allowed him to descend. Here the walls, roof and floor were decorated with snake-skins, while men garbed in snake-skins were squatted on the ground about a sand altar. None spoke



nor was any sound heard in that gloomy chamber. On Ti-yo's displaying a pa-ho the chief merely nodded and motioned him toward the Si-papu, down which he passed immediately into the cheerful Snake-Antelope kiva. Here everything was white and cheerful and men, gay with colored garments and bright plumes, were seated about a beautiful sand altar.

All gave him welcome, and their chief, after carefully scanning the blue pa-ho which Ti-yo offered him, accepted it and laid it upon the altar. In thanking him he added, "I cause the rain-clouds to come and go, and ripening winds to blow, and I direct the coming and going of the mountain animals. Ask what gifts you desire, and you shall receive."

Prompted by the whisper of Spider-woman and guided by the fluttering eagle-down, Ti-yo then resumed his journey to the edge of a great water, in the midst of which he spied the long tips of a ladder projecting from another kiva roof, the abode of the Woman of the Hard Substance, built on a scrap of floating land. By means of the medicine-charm and the eagle-down the waters were parted on either hand and he came with dry feet to an entrance guarded by two angry pumas. On these he likewise spurted the Na-hu and they lay down on either side of the ladder saying, "Never before have we let a stranger live who came here, but now we know that your breath is pure and your heart is brave;" and stepping between them he descended. The ladder was covered with glittering shells and the inside of the room was resplendent with turquoise and coral. On the floor a very old woman was seated, quite alone. Her eyes were dim, her hair gray, her skin deeply wrinkled, her mantle old and dingy, but Spider-woman whispered, "This is the kind mother, of tender and generous heart; when she lays aside her robe, she becomes an enchanting maiden, and she is arrayed with splendor at dawn." Immediately Ti-yo stepped forward and offered a pa-ho, and after examining it she said, "This was made by one who knows. I thank you." Whereupon she proceeded to prepare a food of corn-pollen in a large turquoise bowl, explaining, "This will be ready for you and the Father when he comes, that you may eat and depart undelayed;" and as Ti-yo, to be also in readiness, drew forth another pa-ho, the Sun, with the noise of a mighty lightning-bolt, came rushing down through the air and alighted on the roof. Entering, he hung up his beautiful shining shield and it cried "cling-a-ling" as it dangled against the wall. His garment of white buckskin, trimmed with fringes of jingling shells, was thick and heavy because it is very cold in the sky region, and it had many pockets to contain all the pa-hos which he found set for him during his day's travel. Great numbers of these he laid before the old woman, who scrutinized and sorted them; part she put aside with the right hand. "These are from the folk of good heart," she said, "and I will send them what they ask; but these," and she cast

many away with her left hand, "are from liars and deceivers; they hurt my eyes."

Then the Sun took from his right wrist the scalps of those slain in battle to the right of his path, from his left wrist those who had fallen to the left, and the old woman wept and bewailed, "My heart is sad, it pains me as I look upon you, I long for my people to live at peace."

After scanning narrowly Ti-yo's prayer stick the Sun said, "It is well, my friend, my relative, my son,"—and filling a great turquoise pipe they smoked from it and partook of the corn-pollen food.

Then Ti-yo firmly grasping the girdle of the Sun, they sped away together and as a lightning flash sank to the lowest underworld, the home of Mu-i-yin-wuh. Here a host of eager toilers passed back and forth, up and down, all working with anxious haste. Mu-i-yin-wuh inspected closely the offered pa-ho and promised always to heed the wishes of its maker, adding that at his command were made the seeds of all vegetation, of all animals and of men; all that swarming multitude were ceaselessly busy at this task, the largest and handsomest among them being the earnest and industrious, while the stunted scraggy creatures were the careless and lazy.

In the same fashion as before, Ti-yo holding tightly by the Sun's girdle, the two sped upward and Eastward to the palace of the Sun-rise and alighted at the Sun's house, a beautiful kiva like that in the West, but rosy red in color, while the food bowl from which they ate was of polished pink stone. No woman lives in that lodge; Ta-wo and his brother Tai-o-wa alternately occupy it. Four days Ta-wo carries the shield across the heavens, then rests in the kiva while Tai-o-wa performs the allotted task.

Here Ti-yo learned many things, was strongly admonished to remember all he had seen, and was finally taught to make the Great Sun Pa-ho; by this his eyes would be opened; thenceforward he would know all people, and looking into their hearts could comprehend their thoughts. As a token he straightway heard the mourning of his family beseeching him to return. The Sun added, "I counsel you that your most prized blessing will be the rain-cloud from the Snake-Antelope lodge." Then swiftly he bore him once more toward the house in the West, showing him all the world until the hour of Sun-set.

There was still the yellow light of evening as Ti-yo approached the Snake-Antelope kiva where for four days more he listened to the teaching. In farewell the chief said,—“Here we have rain and corn in abundance; in your land there is but little. Fasten these prayers in your breast; these are the songs you shall sing and the pa-hos you shall make. Then when you display the white and black upon your bodies, the clouds will come. Two maidens possessing the charm against our death poison shall accompany you,” and, enveloped in fleecy clouds like a

mantle, the three were borne gently to the home of Spider-woman who in turn gave further instructions during four days time, charging him to keep secret all he had learned, revealing it only to those whose hearts he should prove. After placing the youth and the maidens in a wicker pannier, she vanished up the hatchway, and presently there floated down a filament which drew them softly up into the white clouds above. So enfolded, they were wafted on and on till the Navajo Mountain was beneath, when the filament gradually lengthened and they were lowered to the ground. The maidens were received into the house of the chief and there remained four days while bridal gifts were prepared. On the fifth day they emerged, one to follow Ti-yo to the Snake-Antelope kiva, the other his brother to the Snake kiva, and it was announced that in sixteen days their feast would be celebrated. Thus it is that even now the Snake ceremony is proclaimed sixteen days in advance.

On the fifth evening and for three succeeding evenings, low clouds trailed over the mountain, and from them trooped the folk of the underworld into the lodges where they partook of corn-pollen fare and then mysteriously vanished. In the morning they were in the valley metamorphosed into reptiles, and the Snake maidens bade that they should be gathered in, ceremonially bathed, and allowed to dance with the youths.

The order was obeyed and at sunset a house of meal was constructed; within it the reptiles were laid and all the tribe cast prayer-meal upon them; whereafter their Younger Brothers of the Snake clan again carried them reverently to the valleys whence well pleased, they returned to the underworld bearing gladly the supplications of the people.

Even thus, from that far-off time till the present day do we entrust our prayers for rain to the Elder Brothers. The chief of the Blue Flute family also comprehends these mysteries, for long ago when the Horn People separated from us, we imparted our knowledge to him that it might serve his tribe in time of need. It is for this reason that now, since we have again come together in one place, guided thither by a fire flitting about the base of this mesa and by the counsels of Morning Dove, they of the Flute sometimes lead in the ceremony, while we of the Snake sit behind, but our prayers and our songs have both the same intent.

"The uncle of my uncles," concluded the narrator, "spoke with one tongue and this is the story that he told."

A. E.

# LETTERS TO FRIENDS

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## III

DEAR FRIEND:

IT was good to see you. That was my feeling as you came in last night, after these long years of absence. It was still more my feeling, as our talk lengthened and I felt again the charm of your shy expansiveness. It was good to sit and talk with you, even of the surface things. But it meant far more to me, when here and there you lifted, as of old, some corner of the veil of your soul. For I love that soul.

And yet when you left me, late as it was, I continued to sit,—musing, if the truth be told, upon my love and hopes for you. Sometimes the light of love is terribly clear, and so it was that I did not need your letter of this morning to know that all was not well with you,—had not been well through all these years. You see we had been thinking together,—though the end of our thought was not the same.

You know me too well to expect me to deny your self-accusations. I would be doing you a poor service did I try to dim your realization of all your life lacks, of the empty vanity of what you have sought, and found so sterile of happiness. Rather would I make your realization still more keen, for even now you but half recognize it; and in the covered places of your mind there lurks the thought that had you been willing or able to seek more whole-heartedly the pleasures of worldly life you might have found content. You will never be able to seek them whole-heartedly, for your heart has heard the call of the insistent silences of the soul. "In His Will is our peace." Against that Will you cannot pit your own; outside the Path to which it leads you will never find content. Life itself has brought you to the Portals from which none can turn back save to unrest and deepening misery. "It is useless to pause and weep for a scene in a kaleidoscope which has passed."

And yet you weep; weep for the lost zest of your early youth, for your impotence in the hands of fate, for the years that are gone and have left no gift, for your lessening genius, and the vista of dead level commonplace through which your road seems to stretch endlessly ahead. You weep,—though even from me you hide your tears,—and you say you are but another of life's failures. And in so saying you are a coward.

Let us face the fact. You have, measured by your own standard, failed. Of your hopes, ambitions, ideals, how many have come to fruition? And of those few, which one has not proved bitter and un-  
nour-

ishing? Before the hunger of your own heart you stand with empty hands.

By the world's standard you have failed. Place, fame, riches, are not yours,—nor little else which the world admires and for which it gives its coveted rewards.

And by God's standard you have failed; again and yet again, continuously throughout the years. The good you willed was but half done; the evil that you turned from still drew you to itself. In the stillnesses when the flame of your soul burned clear, no philosophy of the world, no extenuating comparison, has sufficed to veil its light or hide you from yourself. You have failed, and know that you have failed, and you call yourself a failure. And I tell you again that in so saying you are a coward.

But there is that in you which is no coward. Call upon it now. Have you been all your life the prey to conflicting emotions, contradictory desires, volitions arrayed one against the other, without learning from your own experience, that there is no force, no power, no tendency or quality in this wide universe or in heaven or in hell that is not also in your own heart and nature? It is for you to choose upon which you will call. If cowardice is there, so also is dauntless courage. If you have yielded to weakness, lethargy, self-indulgence, you have known also self-sacrifice and the red glow of aspiration, which you turned from lest it kindle into a consuming flame. All are your servants,—to come or go at the bidding of your will. But they must hear a command; not a weak whimper of entreaty. You have never learned to command yourself. Begin and learn it now by banishing from your mind this craven surrender to the past, this thought of the hopelessness of effort for the future.

Was there ever a success worth the gaining that did not have its origin in failure? Is there a single human achievement that has been won by any other means than through the endurance of defeat until we had wrested from it the secret of victory? Did you learn to speak, or walk, or write, or even to digest your food, in any other way than through repeated failure? Yes, you have failed. But only when you will no longer endure failure do you become yourself what you will not endure. We are only beaten when we cease to fight.

The coward in us makes its sullen answer that it does not wish to fight. To what purpose, it asks, is all this ceaseless striving? Where is the joy of combat if we always are at war with ourselves; if whichever way the battle goes, we must be the conquered no less than the conquerors? The price of victory it deems too great, even were victory attainable. And it denies that victory is attainable. If we point to the achievement of others, it answers that they were more fortunate; they had not our complex and many sided natures. So Arjuna argued with

Krishna. So the young man of great possessions turned sorrowfully from the Master beyond Jordan.

There is profound significance in that latter phrase. The coward is always "sorrowful." There is no joy in the shameful *laissez faire* which he counsels. There is not even freedom from pain,—as you know well. And there is joy in effort, peace in battle, though we be beaten endlessly. This, too, you know. Why do you turn wilfully from the knowledge which is your own?

"He went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions." There is depicted your life from the beginning to this day. Great, and greatly to be valued possessions have been yours,—each one so greatly valued by you that you would sell none to gain greater. What else was your keen power of enjoyment, your quick instinctive response to the appeals of all sides of your nature, but such riches as you would not leave? To no one thing could you give yourself completely; and grasping for all, all have escaped your hands, or turned to dust beneath your touch.

"The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman seeking goodly pearls; who when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it."

The kingdom of heaven is the kingdom of our happiness. We shall never enter it until we find one thing for which we will give all else, to which we can give ourselves without reserve, our life and all we are, whole-heartedly, irrevocably. You say you have never found that thing. But the truth is that you have found it a thousand times, though never the courage and the will to make it your own at the price you must pay for it. You have never dared to venture all upon the hazard, and have turned your eyes away lest you be tempted despite yourself.

Now, when you feel all else to have failed you, this, the greatest of all, is still within your reach. Will you still turn from it, clinging to the mere shells whose emptiness your life has proved? The Master stands always at the Gate of Failure. He stands there now beside you, offering you the reality of all the shadows you have grasped in vain, calling you to the Great Adventure, pleading with you that at last you should face your own heart and recognize the pathway to your joy.

All these years you have been seeking life. He calls us that we may have life and have it more abundantly. You have sought it in the husk and rind of things. Life flows and grows from within. You have sought joy,—in circumstance, environment, events. Joy is a spirit, an uprushing of the heart from sources in its depths. He would unseal those depths, that your joy may be full. In Him is all that you have sought. He calls you to the Way, the Truth and the Life.

You answer that you do not know the Master. It is true; but your soul knows Him, and you, even as you are, have heard His call. You hear it now whenever you will listen, whenever you silence your mind

and enter the stillness of your soul. Be no longer afraid of that stillness. In it is the evidence of His presence. And as you listen to its wordless voice, the meaning of what you hear will grow clearer and you will see your way.

"The Way exists. Knowledge exists and is obtainable." And as you seek it you will find it. The time will come when you will thank God for the love which has stripped you of all that you now mourn, and brought you to the Gate of Failure, which is the Gate of Life,—and of knowledge of the Master.

In the heart and soul of you, you are no coward. And the Warrior within you has heard the call to arms. Obey that call. In the past you have thought of it as summoning you away from all you cared for, from all the colour and vividness and gaiety of life. You have felt, and felt rightly, that it was no voice to be trifled with or to which a half obedience could be given. It demanded all or nothing, and because you were not ready to give all you closed your ears. Is your life now so dear to you that you will still turn away?

Look out upon the world about you and see who are those that are happy. In each and every case you will see that their happiness is rooted in something deeper and greater than themselves,—in some form of love and service and self-surrender. To seek happiness alone is to pluck a flower from its stem, to hold it a moment in our hands, only to watch it fade and die. And even while we held it we knew that it was not our own, that it was something we had plucked, not some blossoming of our own heart. How can our hearts blossom if they have no root, if they do not draw to themselves, and through them to the whole organism, the life-giving currents of the soul? In literal truth, without self-surrender the heart lives only by feeding on itself. And to the possibility of this there is an end.

Is self-surrender so drab and negative a thing as you have thought it? Look back over your own life to its keenest and most vivid moments. Each one was a moment of self-surrender, when you were taken wholly out of yourself by something greater than yourself. Do you remember standing with me years ago before the picture of Napoleon at Friedland, and saying that these days of peace had no sensation to offer comparable to what a man must feel in such a charge of cavalry, reckless of life and death, carried out of himself by his cause and his leader? That is self-surrender. That is obedience. It is to that, to such keenness and intensity of living, that the soul and the Master call us. And yet we think of obedience as drab and grey, and cling to the petty and the trivial.

You will never be lifted from yourself by the lesser things you have sought. No one of them has the power to unify your divided life, or to kindle into flame the embers of your will. You know that, now, if you

will but face your knowledge. Nor will your spirit be content to remain inactive, masterless and causeless, while the great issues of the Master's warfare are being fought out about you. You are summoned to His standard.

If you answer that the summons is vague and confused—that you do not know what is asked of you or where your post may be,—I reply that you have but to listen to find your orders grow clear and imperative, and that your present post is precisely where you now are. When you have brought your own heart to His allegiance, when you seek to hear and to fulfil His orders for the round of your daily duty, then perhaps you may be summoned to some greater field. But what you will discover first is that your present field is far greater than you know, that wherever you may be you are face to face with issues before which those of life and death are insignificant. You do not need to change your place. You need only to change the focus of your vision. And as you come to see life as it is, you will perceive, not that you have outworn it (as you think); not that you have failed and are a failure (as you write); but that never have you entered into it, never begun to live.

This is why I said at the beginning of this letter that, though we had been thinking together, the end of our thought was not the same. To you it seemed that life was closed and outworn. With me was the knowledge that it lay all before you, that at last, weary of playing and living with shadows, you would turn to your waiting destiny and to the reality of the soul. The Way exists,—for you, as for all men; and at its portals you will find your orders for the path ahead, and with them the power for their fulfilment. “Seek and ye shall find. Knock and it shall be opened unto you.” And if I can help you in any way—as I know I can if you will let me—write or come to see me whenever you will.

Faithfully yours,

JOHN GERARD.

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*“Study Wisdom as if you were Eternal and Immortal:  
Do your Duty as if Death already had you by the hair.”*

FROM THE SANSKRIT.



# WHY I JOINED THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

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WHEN the key to a man's life lies untouched at his hand for years without his even turning his head to see what that unknown object may be, the question that first presents itself is rather "Why did he not see it?" than why he finally did. Misunderstandings, which a few questions would have removed, kept me for many years from joining the Theosophical Society. This is written in the belief that some of these same misunderstandings are widespread, and in the hope that it may help bring to others an opportunity to gain peace and joy. The opportunity lies waiting at their call as it lay for years at mine until unconsciously to myself the Infinite Care and Patience that has guided my life brought me to it.

I have been more or less familiar with the existence of the Theosophical Society for many years. One of my best friends was absorbed in it and through him from time to time I heard of the Society and something of the theories held by many of its members. I thought them very reasonable, very logical, but unfortunately reason has always seemed to me a much overrated faculty. That a given theory is logical is so poor a ground for adopting it. For the world to be round is truly a preposterous thing. A number of learned mediæval gentlemen proved most logically and convincingly that it was flat. The imposing logical structures built on Rousseau's *Social Contract* convinced the 18th century, but the 19th most inconsiderately kicked the props from under it. Had Achilles and the tortoise remained in the realm of metaphysics the tortoise would, I am convinced, be still leading in the race. Each age demolishes the pet theories of its predecessor and founds its own upon a rock, until the storm comes and the rain falls and the little, overlooked premise crumbles away. The truth is that reason and the universe do not get on very well together and consciously or unconsciously all men must decide between them. I early grasped the fact that I had a finite mind in an infinite universe. Did space go on for ever or did it stop somewhere? My reason said it did one or the other and then flatly refused to conceive of the possibility of either alternative. In most clashes of reason with the universe one has at least the option of blaming the universe but I could not very well lay the blame on space, so reason was forced to bear it. Thereafter I suspected that if any plan of creation could get within the limits of my mind, that very fact went far to prove the plan finite and no true representation of the infinite. Distrustful of my

ability to pick out the one faulty premise I saw little for me to gain by investigating theories.

But they did seem reasonable, the few that I heard. How the apparent injustice of the world melted before the idea of reincarnation, according to man's needs and deserts from former lives. Surely the soul that is immortal to-day was immortal yesterday and all yesterdays, as all to-morrows. Surely if our earth is but one two-millionth of that part of the universe that our poor physical eyes can see, it is not reasonable to suppose that that earth happens to contain the most highly developed beings in existence. The chances are just two million to one against it. When my Theosophical friend told me that he knew of people who could see and hear at a distance, I was not convinced. Coincidences and illusions deceive at times the most sincere and truthful. But I saw no reason for positive disbelief. I could hear a thousand miles myself by picking up a rubber instrument plus some wire and nine dollars, so why deny the possibility of its being done without the instrument and the dollars? My mind was open and I fear only mildly interested. It wasn't very important and I could not see that there was anything for me to do about it, whether they could do these things or whether they could not.

The really important thing to me was the attitude toward Christianity of the few members of the Theosophical Society that I happened to know. Here a few questions would have saved me much misunderstanding, but strangely enough I never asked them. I knew that the Society sought the truth back of all religions in the belief that every great religion that had endured, must, to have lived, contain something of truth. Academically one could not help agreeing with this. Practically I felt that I was a Christian, blessed with some measure of faith and loyalty. It was a faith of intuition, not reason. My reason was satisfied that the wonderful, complex universe of law was the product, as all laws, human, physical or spiritual, must be the product, of Intelligence and Will. Further, that as a guide to a true judgment of the essential beneficence and justice of the universe, a cross-section of seventy years out of the eternal progress of an immortal soul was as useless as a cross-section drawing of a locomotive to a savage who had never seen a piece of machinery. So reason, thus obligingly committing suicide by convincing itself of its own impotence, left my intuition a clear field.

Intuitively I had faith in God, in His goodness, and that Jesus Christ, His Son, had given His life to save men. How, I did not pretend to know. Inarticulately I felt that I was a Christian, His follower and owed Him loyalty. Any hint that the founder of any other religion could be remotely compared to Him I resented instinctively as disloyalty. Theosophical writings, which to be sure I never read, spoke constantly of Krishna, Christ, Buddha; and theosophical conversations which I did

near, did the same thing. Also the theosophists of my acquaintance never went to church. Neither did I, except occasionally, but somehow it failed to occur to me that our real reason might be the same—that so little of the spirit of Christ was to be gained there. My immediate reason was indolence, theirs I vaguely supposed to be chiefly lack of belief in the value of prayer. Strangely enough this wild misconception persisted for years.

All this is my recollection of unformulated feeling of ten to fifteen years ago. Then as a result of what seemed a chance remark made by an acquaintance to my father, I travelled for some years. In that time I learned many things, something of toleration, which my friends, with more unanimity than politeness, tell me I needed badly, of obedience, of the difference between the man and his acts, of widely differing moral codes, but of theosophy as such, nothing.

On my return I devoted to my friends and to outdoor sports whatever surplus energy was left me by my somewhat strenuous business. Now and then my theosophical friend would, with great tact, drop ideas into my mind, and watch while, unconsciously to myself, their inherent truth and power colored my entire thought. I heard too a number of religious discussions participated in by men of keen intellect and widely differing beliefs, clergymen, scientists, laymen, agnostics and some theosophists. The discussions were conducted by all with a single-minded desire to arrive at the truth rather than to prove one's own point. They brought out many interesting things, the fundamental faith of the scientists, the logical superiority in argument of those with faith over those who lacked it, (the agnostic being visibly shaken and brought to say, "Almost thou persuadest me"); but above all they brought out in the theosophists, deep devotion and spirituality combined with mental power in an exceptional degree.

The next year my personal affairs caused me great worry and anxiety. One among many acts of sympathy from my theosophical friend was the gift of a copy of the *Bhagavad Gita*. Its wonderful peace gripped me as no printed words had ever done. It made me wish above all that I could bring to the beautiful words of the Gospels the same freshness with which I read the *Gita*. In part it helped me to do this, for it illumined passages that before had been quite meaningless to me. I found nothing contrary to the spirit of Christianity, much that supplemented, deepened and vivified my own faith. Its deep peace, beauty and devotion, its sure faith, left no doubt of its inspiration. In my enthusiasm I presented copies—which they did not read—to all my friends. If the Theosophical Society was engaged in making known to the Western World such works as that I most certainly was in hearty accord with at least one of its objects. I asked for a copy of its constitution. "Universal Brotherhood," "The truth in all religions," "An

investigation of the higher powers of man." Why, all the world could join that Society and the world for years had heaped ridicule and abuse on its members! Now, to be sure, its ideas had largely triumphed and much of the storm was over. There was, however, plenty of misinformed ridicule left; and I joined the Society regretting that I had not done so when the fight was hottest and its few members had had to stand the storm almost alone. In joining I was actuated partly by my appreciation of a small piece of the work the Society was doing, but chiefly by my friendship for some of its members and as a kind of protest against the injustice of the general attitude toward the Society.

That done I did nothing further. I knew the Society held meetings but the idea of attending and hearing what I presumed would be a feminine discussion of religion had no charms for me. That, to be sure, was a ripple on the surface. The real reason, I fancy, was the unformulated half-conscious feeling that with the ideas of the *Bhagavad Gita* there was for me no half-way resting place. It would be a life's devotion or nothing. With the magnificent grandeur of those ideas there could be no playing. Complete renunciation of the fruit of all works was but the least of the four ways of reaching the Master, suggested in pity for those whose weakness rendered the three higher ways beyond their power.\* Lacking knowledge of the theosophic ideal of first doing completely those duties that lie nearest at hand and to which we have been born, renunciation appeared, vaguely and most untheosophically as the abandonment of friends, personal duties and amusement, with the shadowy outline of a settlement house in the back-ground. Something within me held me back whenever the question of a further study of theosophy arose in my mind. Not yet. Cowardice perhaps, or like St. Augustine I was willing to pray to be reformed "but not yet and not too completely." Be that as it may, I was held back by something which I was never able to define.

The anxieties passed. Business prospered beyond my hopes and at the same time came other duties and responsibilities which there could be no question of abandoning. Singularly blessed in all ways, with friends, health, capacity for enjoyment, I had all man could ask of the world. Here by all the rules I should say: "But I was not satisfied." But I was, completely, so far as I knew.

About this time I began to search for a religious church. Sermons on service to one's fellows, on organized charity, parish activities, politics, morality, most eloquently and convincingly delivered, were to be had in plenty. Sermons on theology, carrying no conviction even when not quite meaningless to me, I also found. But spirituality and the Gospel of the Living Christ were sought with little success, due in part I dare say to my own lack of understanding. Finally I went to a

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\* *Bhagavad Gita*. Book XII, 6-11.

small Episcopal Chapel in a very unfashionable neighborhood, and sought no further.

It was very simple, but the atmosphere was one of deep devotion. There was preached with a beauty and power beyond my ability to describe, yet with a simplicity that a child could understand, the wonderful truth of the Living Christ, not gone two thousand years ago to some far away heaven, but here at hand on earth, not figuratively but in literal truth; the Gospel of an undying, ever present love that stretches forth its hands and calls to us to follow, that we may have life and have it more abundantly; that happiness lies not in outward circumstance, but in character and inner attitude; that all that comes to us, misfortune, grief or joy is the gift of love did we but see and accept it.

Through all and above all there was evident a passionate devotion to the Master, Jesus Christ, beyond the power of words to express. Sentences that I had heard unheeding from childhood took life and meaning there. After the first day I never willingly missed a Sunday. The preacher was a theosophist and among the congregation were those theosophists who years ago I had thought never went to church.

At this same time a guest of mine, not a theosophist, expressed a desire to attend a meeting of the Theosophical Society. As a matter of politeness I went also. I do not recall the particular subject that was discussed that evening. I do know that it was not phenomena, auras, telepathy, spiritualism or any one of the similar things that arise in the mind of the average newspaper reader when he hears the word "Theosophy"; for in the years that I have attended the meetings of the Society I do not remember ever having heard one of these even mentioned there. It was, as always, some fundamental aspect of life viewed in the light of Theosophy. The spirituality, the purity and beauty of the theosophic ideals and the power with which they were presented, made a deep impression on me. Whence came the power of these people, their serenity, their high ideals and sure faith?

That is how, largely in ignorance, I came to join the Society. A much more interesting question is, as one member recently put it, "Why do I continually rejoin?" or why would I join now if I had it to do again.

First and far above all other reasons, because there is to be found a deep devotion to Christ, an understanding of and faith in His precepts hard to find in the churches. The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, Seek and ye shall find, Ask, and it shall be given unto you. That, on this side of death, those willing to pay the price may find, in literal truth, the Master and His kingdom, may see His face and hear His voice as He was seen and heard nineteen hundred years ago, is the sure faith of many among the members. And the price: "He who seeketh to save his

life shall lose it and he who giveth his life for My sake shall keep it unto life eternal."

Obedience, selflessness and love. Not that we should seek to save our own souls, but to do His will because it is His will; the ideal, not of conscious unselfishness but of self-forgetfulness, striving to serve Him, leaving ourselves and our fortunes to Him in the sure knowledge that our feeble love is but the faint reflection of His mighty love for us. Sure too, once we have trusted ourselves to Him, of His deep longing that we may find happiness and joy, that all that comes to us thereafter, be it pain, or loss, or grief, is needed for our happiness and contains His gift of love if we will but look for it.

Through the Theosophical Society one is privileged to come in contact with this faith. Needless to repeat neither this nor any other belief is the belief of the Society, but it is the spirit to be found there. Individual members believe what they will.

To me it has brought the belief that the soul of man is not only immortal but divine, proceeding from, and, after its pilgrimage, returning to God. Further that the foundation of the universe is love, obscured and complicated by free will. With the gift of free will to man no power in earth or heaven interferes. Though the physical accomplishment be hindered, we may will what we will, always, at all times, and in all circumstances.

So we may will to go forward on our pilgrimage; or backward; but, immersed in, and blinded by matter as we are, we are not left without a guide. Each step forward that the soul takes on its return toward God brings it something of joy, of peace and happiness.

At each misstep a voice within first warns us gently, very gently, like the voice of infinite tenderness. If we disregard the gentleness, the Angel of Pain, no less the voice of infinite tenderness, lays his hand on us to turn us back. We still persist, crying out against the cruelty of life, and the pressure grows stronger and stronger until at last we turn, not only outwardly but completely in our hearts.

This is no affair of three score years and ten.

"The soul that rises with us, our life's star,  
Hath elsewhere had its setting"

and, unfortunately comes trailing more than clouds of glory. Tendencies, faults and weaknesses, our misdirections of life's forces within us, must be straightened out. Each one is born into that environment which he, the soul, most needs, which will help him most toward his goal. What he aspires to do in the present builds his character, determines what he will need and so what he will receive in this or a future life. How slowly we learn the plainest lessons and how rich life is in lessons to be

learned! Seventy years, or seven times seventy, will not complete our lesson, nor fit us for an eternity of heaven or hell.

The key to all life is that the infinite Love and Justice of the universe, while respecting the right of the blinded divinity in man to freedom of choice, gives him for guidance what he most needs for his own ultimate happiness. His material welfare or misery at any given time is of slight importance provided he be learning and so advancing ever so little toward the happiness that does not pass away. We have little pity for those who toil unremittingly, joylessly, for a day or a year if we see that at the end of that time they will win success, wealth, leisure. So, if we regard each life as but a day in the journey of the soul, the whole perspective and scale of values changes. What traveller in the desert, hurried on by the need of water, would spend his strength in piling up by his resting place at night treasure that he could not carry with him on the morrow? Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, in that kingdom of heaven that is within us, in our souls. For what the soul gains of obedience, of power, of truth, of love, it keeps. The incidents from which they were learned pass from our memories, but the powers themselves once gained are ours for all eternity.

A great peace comes to him who knows and who holds fast to his knowledge that all that comes to us or to others, is planned by Infinite Love to help man to that final bliss to which, in the fullness of time, all will come. Peace comes from faith, faith from love and our strongest love is but the faint reflection of the burning personal love of the Master for us. "We love because He first loved us." "Ask and ye shall receive."

ROLAND PAGE.

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*With meekness, humility and diligence apply yourself to the duties of your condition. They are the seemingly little things which make no noise that do the business.*

HENRY MORE.

# THE STORY OF ADAM AND EVE

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

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IN trying to realise the thought, feeling and aspiration of the people of Palestine in the time of Jesus, with the desire to understand the thought of Jesus himself, we are influenced, perhaps, more than we realise by the form of the English Bible as we are familiar with it. We are led to think of the period described by Matthew as following and growing out of the period of Malachi, thus failing to remind ourselves of the profound change which passed over the life and thought of the Jews between the time when Malachi announced the coming of the messenger and Matthew's record that the messenger had come. If we used the Septuagint, or even some of the older English editions, we should be reminded that after the last prophet delivered his message, the peoples of Palestine, with the whole Eastern shore of the Mediterranean, had been almost transformed by Hellenic influences, spiritual and material, flowing from the campaigns and conquests of Alexander the Great.

Very largely, perhaps, because we omit the Apocryphal books, we come to think of the life and times of the New Testament following with hardly a break upon the Old; whether it be the material energies of the period of the kings, with their ever present tendency toward idolatry, or the passionate fervor of the prophets, poured forth in protest against idolatry and materialism. If we turned over the pages of the first book of the Maccabees, we should at once be reminded of Alexander's invasions and conquests, and the founding of the Greek empire, with its revolutionising influence over Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, Palestine and Egypt. And in books like the Wisdom of Solomon, or the Wisdom of Jesus the son of Sirach, we should find, perhaps, many traces of Greek feeling and Greek thought, with a view of ethical immortality nowhere very clearly set forth in the canon of the Old Testament, but very beautifully taught by Plato. We should remember also that the Jews, during the centuries immediately before the birth of Jesus, had spread eastward as far as Mesopotamia, northward almost to the shore of the Euxine, westward among the isles of Greece, and even as far as Rome, where they had their own colony, and southward into Ptolemaic Egypt. In most of these regions they came into contact with Greek thought, and, returning to Jerusalem to bring gifts to the temple, or to celebrate the great feasts of their religion, they of necessity brought something of the atmosphere of Hellas to the hill of Zion. Perhaps Philo Judæus and Flavius Josephus, the one coming immediately before



the mission of Jesus, and the other immediately after, are our best witnesses to the fascination which the poets and philosophers of Greece exercised over the best minds of the Jews. Both, writing in Greek, quote the Greek poets and the Hebrew prophets side by side, and one of Philo's great arguments for the unity of God is the Homeric verse:

*οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη εἰς κοίρανος ἔστω*  
 "A multitude of kings is not good." (Iliad, ii, 204.)

Philo of Alexandria represents the strongest and most luminous stream of thought in Judaism just before, and during, the lifetime of Jesus. He sets forth his views of life and of the world in a wonderful series of treatises which have the general form of a running commentary on the Old Testament. Philo was saturated with Greek philosophy, holding closely to the world-concepts of the Stoics, but above all, perhaps, he was a follower of Plato. He held Plato's view that this visible universe of hills and sea and sky is but the outer presentment and veil of another and finer universe, invisible to the bodily eyes, but visible to the eyes of the mind, for the mind itself is an inhabitant of that finer universe, and of its essence. This idea is closely akin to the view which is coming to dominate our best science, which divines the invisible ether as the dwelling-place of all forces, and as the womb of matter and of all material things.

For Plato, and for his ardent disciple Philo, there was first an invisible universe, immortal, incorruptible, to be perceived not by the outer senses but by the intellect, which is indeed an inhabitant of that imperishable, invisible world; and after the model of the invisible world the visible world was made, the corruptible in the likeness of the incorruptible. Philo was so saturated and possessed with this idea that things visible are but the outer husk and shell of things invisible, that he takes such outward things as histories, traditions, nay, the very doings of prophets and kings, as being themselves symbols, allegories, figures of finer, impalpable realities. In this spirit Philo bends his whole energies, the powers of a fine intellect and a lofty soul, to the interpretation of the Old Testament narratives in the spirit of Plato's philosophy, dissolving, as it were, the solid realism of the Semitic records in the sea of imagination and pure thought.

We can take no more vital and important illustration of this allegorising method of Philo's than the story of Adam and Eve and the Fall; first, because of the great place which this story has been made to occupy in our theology, and, second, because it is precisely this story which has been made the point of attack in the campaign of materialistic and destructive criticism which followed the discoveries and theories of Darwin. It is no exaggeration to say that hundreds of thousands of thoughtful people have turned away from a traditional belief in Chris-

tianity, because they feel convinced that the work of Darwin and his fellow-labourers has proved that the story of Adam and Eve and the Fall is a fable, while they had been taught by the doctors of theology to think of it as the foundation-stone of the plan of salvation, the correlative of the Redemption.

We are, therefore, led to ask whether this story was so regarded by the writers of the New Testament; and, most of all, whether it was so regarded by Jesus himself. We can best approach the solution of this question through the thought and writings of Philo Judæus.

For Philo, the story of Adam and Eve and the serpent takes its natural place in his complete system of allegorical interpretation. But first he points out, what is often allowed to sink into the background, the fact that we have in the opening chapters of Genesis two wholly distinct accounts of the creation of man. There was first, in the ordered sequence of creative Days, the making of man in the image of God, and then, as a subsequent event, the formation of the man Adam from the red earth. Philo holds that the man first created, in the image of God, was a spiritual and invisible being, a part of that divine prototype or model of the universe, which he calls the Logos, the Word, or rather the Mind of God. And he beautifully illustrates this archetypal world by picturing a powerful king setting about to found a city, and giving the work into the hands of a wise master-builder or architect. The whole plan of the future city is first formed in the mind of the architect: the streets, the walls, the harbour, the market-place, the dwellings; then this invisible city is gradually made manifest in the visible city built by the workmen of the king according to the wise master-builder's plan. So the first universe, immortal, invisible, incorruptible, dwells in the Mind of God, in the Logos; and of this invisible universe, the first man, made in the likeness of God, is a part and an inhabitant.

After this, (says Philo), Moses says that "God made a man, having taken clay from the earth, and breathed into his face the breath of life." And by this expression he shows most clearly that there is a vast difference between the man generated at this point, and the first man made in the image of God. For man as formed at this point is perceptible to the external senses, partaking of qualities, consisting of body and soul, male or female, by nature mortal. But man made in the image of God was an idea perceptible only by the intellect, incorporeal, neither male nor female, by nature immortal.<sup>1</sup>

Philo comes next to the story of the Fall. It is said, he tells us, that the old poisonous and earthborn reptile, the serpent, uttered the voice of a man. And he on one occasion coming to the wife of the first created man, reproached her with her slowness and her excessive prudence, because she delayed and hesitated to gather the fruit which

<sup>1</sup> Philo Judæus, "On the Creation of the World," ch. 46.

was completely beautiful to look at, and exceedingly sweet to enjoy, and was, moreover, most useful as being a means by which men might be able to distinguish between good and evil. And she, without any inquiry, prompted by an unstable and rash mind, acquiesced in his advice, and ate of the fruit, and gave a portion of it to her husband. And this conduct suddenly changed both of them from innocence and simplicity of character to all kinds of wickedness; at which the Father of all was indignant. For their actions deserved his anger, inasmuch as they, passing by the tree of eternal life, the tree which might have endowed them with perfection of virtue, and by means of which they might have enjoyed a long and happy life, preferred a brief and mortal (I will not call it life, but) time full of unhappiness; and, accordingly, he appointed them such punishment as was fitting.

And these things, comments Philo, are not mere fabulous inventions in which the race of poets and sophists delights, but are rather types shadowing forth some allegorical truth, according to some mystical explanation.

Applying this most valuable and fruitful principle, that the characters in the story of the Fall are types, allegorical characters to be interpreted mystically, Philo goes on to give his own interpretation of the story.<sup>2</sup> The serpent, he says, is the symbol of self-indulgence, of pleasure, because it crawls, feasts on clay and has poison under its teeth; from it come "drunkenness and voracity and licentiousness," inflaming the appetites and strengthening the impetuous passions. Using gluttony as an example of self-indulgence, Philo says that immoderate eating is naturally a poisonous and deadly habit, inasmuch as what is so devoured is not capable of digestion, in consequence of the quantity of additional food which is heaped in on top of it, and arrives before what was previously eaten is converted into juice.

And the serpent, Philo says, is said to have uttered a human voice because pleasure employs innumerable champions and defenders, who take care to advocate its interests, and who dare to assert that the power over everything, both small and great, does of right belong to it without any exception whatever. . . . Many other things are said in the way of praise of this inclination, especially that it is one most peculiar and kindred to all animals. . . . But its juggleries and deceits pleasure does not venture to bring directly to the man, but first offers them to the woman, and by her means to the man; acting in a very natural and sagacious manner. For in human beings the mind occupies the rank of the man and the sensations that of the woman. And pleasure joins itself to and associates itself with the sensations first of all, and then by their means cajoles also the mind, which is the dominant part. For, after each of the senses has been subjected to the charms of pleasure,

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. ch. 55-56, trs. C. D. Yonge, p. 47.

and has learnt to delight in what is offered to it, the sight being fascinated by varieties of colours and shapes, the hearing by harmonious sounds, the taste by the sweetness of flowers, and the smell by the delicious fragrance of the odours which are brought before it, these all having received these offerings, like handmaids, bring them to the mind as their master, leading with them persuasion as an advocate, to warn it against rejecting any of them whatever. And the mind being immediately caught by the bait, becomes a subject instead of a ruler, and a slave instead of a master, and an exile instead of a citizen, and a mortal instead of an immortal.

So far the teaching of Philo, with its admirable sanity and philosophical breadth. It is admitted by all critics that these chapters are amongst Philo's earliest writings, belonging to the period of the boyhood of Jesus, so that we may well believe that some such view of the meaning of Adam and Eve and the Fall was accepted by the best Jewish thought not only at Alexandria, but also, in all probability as far as Jerusalem and more distant Tarsus of Cilicia. We are justified in thinking that, for the better educated Jews of the time of Jesus, Adam and Eve were just what Philo calls them, symbols and figures and allegories, hardly to be taken literally, yet yielding a rich mystical meaning, and of high value for edification.

Let us now turn to the New Testament, and see what position is held by the story of Adam and Eve, in the teaching of Jesus and his disciples. When we come to count up, we shall, I think, be not a little surprised to find how very few are the allusions to Adam and Eve and the Fall, in the Gospels and Epistles.

In the four Gospels, Adam is only mentioned once, and without any reference to the Fall, or to any doctrine of original sin. Indeed, as Professor Toy has pointed out, "no distinct dogma of universal depravity exists in the Old Testament,"<sup>3</sup> and this view was, without doubt, common to the writers of the Gospels and the Jews of their day. The one reference to Adam in the Gospels is in the genealogy in the third chapter of Luke, and this genealogy is in reality hardly an integral part of the Gospel. Much the same may be said of the words of Jude, who speaks of "Enoch, the seventh from Adam." The allusion is chronological, not moral; and, as Jude is seeking to identify the author of the apocryphal Book of Enoch with the supernatural patriarch, we cannot safely give much weight to his citation.

In truth, there are only three passages in the New Testament which have any real reference to the story of Adam, and these are all in the Epistles of Paul. Taking them in the order in which they were written, there is, first, the allusion in the splendid chapter of the first letter to Corinth, which we associate with the burial service: "Since by man

<sup>3</sup> Crawford Howell Toy: "Quotations in the New Testament," New York, 1884, p. 132.

came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in the Adam all die, even so in the Christ shall all be made alive." <sup>4</sup> We must take this in conjunction with the passage later in the same chapter: "So also it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. . . . The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." <sup>5</sup>

One cannot fail to be struck with the likeness to the earlier teaching of Philo Judæus, of the two men, the one immortal and incorruptible, of the divine nature of the Logos; the other, of the earth, earthy; and to Philo's further teaching that regeneration comes when, mortifying the flesh, we turn from the man of earth, and once more conform to the image of the heavenly man. This regeneration, in Philo's view, constitutes "the perfect man," the immortal, renewed in an imperishable life. Having formerly conformed to the image of the earthy, we are to conform ourselves to the likeness of the heavenly man, who is of the divine nature of the Logos or Reason of God.

The parallelism is close indeed, and we have much warrant for believing that Paul shares the thought of Philo, that Adam is a symbol of the man of flesh, in a wide and general sense: "in the Adam, all die," rather than a definite historical personage, who, by a single sin, condemned the whole human race.

The second allusion in Paul's letters to the story of Adam is in the letter to Rome, written, perhaps, some ten or fifteen years after Philo's death at an advanced age. "Wherefore," writes Paul, "as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (for until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed where there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. . . .)" <sup>6</sup>

It is noteworthy and significant that, in this passage, on which the dogma of the Fall is chiefly founded, we find Paul applying to Adam the very word used by Philo. Adam is a "type," a "figure of him that was to come." Paul could hardly tell us in a more explicit way that he is interpreting the story of Adam allegorically, just as he did, in writing to the community at Corinth.

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<sup>4</sup> I. Cor. xv, 21-22. The Greek reads *ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ* and *ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ*. The Revised Version, in a marginal reading, brings out the latter article, but not the former. I have ventured to translate both.

<sup>5</sup> I. Cor. xv, 45, 47, 48.

<sup>6</sup> Romans, v, 12-14.

The third and last allusion to Adam is in the first letter to Timothy: "Let the woman learn in silence and all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing."<sup>7</sup>

"Eve shall be saved in childbearing:" surely this makes it plain that Paul is once more using the allegorical method, and taking Eve as a type, a genus, to use Philo's phrase; and indeed there is the closest resemblance here to the passage of Philo, already quoted, where he points out that Eve was first tempted, and then Adam through Eve.

A striking example of Paul's use of the Philonic method of allegory is that in the letter to the Galatians, where he writes: "For it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. [For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia,] and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."<sup>8</sup>

This is in the very spirit of Philo's *Allegories of the Sacred Laws*, as, for example, where he writes: "Do you not see that wisdom when dominant, which is Sarah, says, 'For whosoever shall hear it shall rejoice with me.' But suppose that any were able to hear that virtue has brought forth happiness, namely, Isaac. . . ."<sup>9</sup> and so on. And this is thoroughly in harmony with the usual Rabbinical method of exegesis, well described by Professor Toy, as "summed up in the principle, that every sentence and every word of the Scripture was credited with any meaning that it could possibly be made to bear; and the interpreter selected the literal or the allegorical sense, or any other that suited his argument."<sup>10</sup>

We are, therefore, justified in saying that, during the period in which Jesus and Paul lived and taught, Philo, who was a commanding figure among the Jews, and a recognised leader of religious thought, openly treated the story of Adam as an instructive allegory, a symbol of the sensual man; that the three passages in which Paul mentions Adam are all very close to the spirit and thought of Philo, and that in all three passages Paul makes it evident that he is speaking allegorically, calling Adam a type, a figure, just as he makes Eve a symbol of all

<sup>7</sup> I. Tim. ii, 11-15.

<sup>8</sup> Galatians, iv, 22-26.

<sup>9</sup> Philo, *On the Allegories of the Sacred Laws*, Book II, ch. xxi.

<sup>10</sup> Op. Cit. Introduction, p. xxiii.

womankind. And it is on these three passages that the doctrine of original sin, as connected with the Fall of Adam, is founded; for the two other allusions to Adam in the New Testament are purely chronological and have no moral colouring.

But we come to the most striking aspect of the matter, when we ask what meaning the story of Adam had for Jesus himself. The answer is, that Jesus nowhere mentions Adam or Eve or the Fall at all, that Jesus nowhere connects an idea of original sin with Adam's Fall, or in any way suggests that his own coming and teaching, or his death and resurrection, are correlative to Adam's expulsion from Eden. It is most significant and characteristic of the method of Jesus, that he nowhere assigns a general cause to sin, considered as a common heritage of mankind. Indeed, he uses expressions which are hardly compatible with the idea of original or universal sin. For example: "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin. . . . If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin."<sup>11</sup> But it would seem that it was much more characteristic of Jesus to speak, not of sin, but of sins, in the sense of errors, transgressions, of missing the mark, rather than in the theological sense of a condition into which we are born. In the four Gospels, the word sin (Greek *ἁμαρτία*) occurs forty times; it is used in the plural twenty-eight times, while of the twelve occurrences in the singular, only one is in the synoptic Gospels, while several of the occurrences in John seem, as we have shown, directly to negative the idea of universal, original sin caused by Adam's transgression.

The dominant fact, therefore, is that Jesus nowhere connects the idea of sin with the story of the Fall of Adam; Jesus nowhere teaches that his own work is the correlative of that Fall, or that his coming is to be set over against Adam's transgression, as we are accustomed to see it set, in our theology. Jesus takes the fact of sins, of transgressions, of errors, of failures, of death itself, just as he saw them all about him; and straightway, without theorizing, sets himself to applying the cure, holiness, purity, humility, faith, love, bringing the new birth and immortality. He teaches that certain things are to be done, rather than that certain things are to be believed. The saying that "He that believeth not, shall be damned,"<sup>12</sup> at the close of Mark, is an interpolation of a later century. The authentic teaching is: "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me;" or this: "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."<sup>13</sup>

If these conclusions be trustworthy, and, as I think, well supported

<sup>11</sup> John, xv, 22-24.

<sup>12</sup> Mark, xvi, 16.

<sup>13</sup> John, vii, 17.

by the evidence brought forward, then it would seem to be certain that the correlation of the Fall with the teaching and life of Jesus is nowhere to be found in that teaching; and that, while this dogma is made to rest on certain phrases in Paul's letters, Paul himself in all probability shared Philo's view that the story of Adam was an allegory, and that Adam was a type or symbol of that mortal nature which we all know at first hand, the passional nature which must be purified, before we can conform to the likeness of the heavenly, putting on the new man, who is of divine and eternal nature.

If these conclusions be trustworthy, then the correlation of Adam's Fall and the life of Jesus, in our theology, is based on a misapprehension as to what Jesus taught, and what Paul meant. The second event does not depend for its significance on the first. The message of Jesus is wholly independent of the story of Adam. That message must be studied in itself, in its immediate and present bearing, apart from the theories of legal theology, burdened as it is with the Roman doctrine of contract, or debtor and creditor, of imputed righteousness, or transferred credit. If we wish to test the validity of the doctrine, we must follow the injunction of the teacher of the doctrine, and test it, not by legal argument, but by obedience, by keeping the commandments, by working the divine will.

CHARLES JOHNSTON.

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*"He who is faithful over a few things is a lord of cities. It does not matter whether you preach in Westminster Abbey, or teach a ragged class, so you be faithful. The faithfulness is all."*

GEORGE MACDONALD.



# CHARITY

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“**K**NOWLEDGE puffeth up, but charity edifieth.” This saying of St. Paul’s is as appropriate to the conditions of the present age, as it was to those of nineteen centuries ago.

All earnest students of Theosophy will do well to consider it seriously; especially those who are inclined to attach as much importance to the study of the philosophy, and the investigation of the unknown psychic powers in man and nature as they give to the work for brotherhood. But the second and third objects of the Theosophical Society are, when taken alone, like a double-edged sword that cuts both ways; they are helpful only in so far as they help to advance the first object.

Knowledge, in itself, is no more a virtue than dynamite is a blessing. It is beneficial only when used for beneficial ends, or governed by love. But love is always a virtue, a Divine power, the divinest of all powers, active or latent in man. Hear what St. Paul says of love: “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophesy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemingly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophecy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.”

It is of the greatest importance that this fundamental theosophical principle should have proper application in all our doings and in all our intercourse with other men, especially with our co-workers in The Theosophical Society. We should find it profitable, therefore, every night before going to bed, to review the past day and to see, whether we have been edified by the love that Saint Paul calls charity, or whether, puffed up by knowledge, we have indulged in any unkind and uncharitable deed or sentiment. Our morning devotions, whether or not per-

formed according to any ritual, should always include a solemn vow to be charitable, a vow made with such earnestness and force that we always remain conscious of it, no matter how much attention the duties of the day may claim.

And this vow of charity must be of universal validity, not confined to certain circumstances or relations. We must lead our lives in an atmosphere of charity; we must fill our minds and hearts with charity and breathe charity into all our doings.

Life continually brings us face to face with a great many experiences, some pleasant, others hard to bear. They represent as many tests and as many opportunities. The Ever Watching Eye is always upon us, anxiously watching our steps, tenderly stretching out a supporting hand, compassionately forgiving our failures, lovingly undoing our mistakes as far as the great Law permits, and charitably arranging new opportunities for our advancement. It is a tremendous outpouring of Divine Love, and if we realized this, we should certainly be most eagerly anxious to open our hearts and to have them filled with this love in order to give it out abundantly to all who surround us, knowing that the more we give the more we receive. And we should strive most earnestly to make our hearts clean vessels; lest the Divine gift, the pure love that is poured into them, shall be defiled and its sweet waters made poisonous on its way through our hearts to our fellow-men.

Among the manifold trials, that of admiration is, perhaps, the most difficult to withstand. In most cases it calls forth self-esteem and pride; and "pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." If we were truly charitable, we should not lead our brother into this terrible temptation by flattering and admiring him, because of his fancied or real development in advance of ourselves, nor should we give him an authority which is due only to those who are so far ahead of us that they cannot mingle directly with the affairs of the material world, but have to work through agents who are fit for their service.

Self-esteem leads inevitably to uncharitable feelings toward the brother, whom we put on a lower level than ourselves, and especially toward a blundering comrade. We have met with this temptation many, many times, and we have perhaps fallen as many times. It is the old story of self congratulation, which the Christian Master narrated thus: "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican." The occasions of stumbling are sure to come again and again, till we are able to stand. As the Master said: "For it must needs be that the occasions come, but woe to that man through whom the occasion cometh!" This being so we are wise, if we consider well how to meet these occasions, and we cannot do this

better than by finding a proper answer to this question: "How would the Master have us meet them?"

We know very well that we are all failing in some way or other; but is anyone of us able to say who is the greater sinner? We cannot avoid seeing obvious failings, and the closer to our hearts the sinner is, the more we suffer from his mistakes. It is, or ought to be, a suffering of the same kind, though to an infinitely smaller degree, as the suffering of Christ, when he, drawing nigh to Jerusalem, wept over the city. His were not the tears of judgment, but of charity. Let us see to it then, that our sorrow over a brother's failings is of the same nature; and let us always match the failings of others with our own, seeking virtues in each other, not deficiencies, and forgiving endlessly.

Jesus spoke these very suggestive words to Simeon the Pharisee some 1900 years ago: "Her sins which are many, are forgiven, for she loveth much"; and the Master still says just the same thing about all those who, though failing greatly, love Him much. Remembering this, and having our hearts filled with the Master's love, we shall be able to stand, when the temptation comes. Then, instead of falling through self-esteem, we shall look at a stumbling comrade with charity, and shall love him with that love which, in some cases, binds the tender heart of a mother even more closely to her prodigal son than to the son who never caused her a moment's anxiety.

Therefore, if we have charity, and there be in our midst an erring brother, we shall love him, and our love may in time turn him from his ways. If one of our brothers is wronged, and we have charity, we shall defend him. There is no better way to do this than by shielding him with our love, letting the whole world see how we love and appreciate him. There is no shield stronger and more impenetrable than love; and the offender will feel this love, and be silenced. There is nothing for him to ward off, since no one attacks him. By disarming the offender with love, our love is shielding him, as well as ourselves, against the influence of such malevolent powers as are sure to be attracted, whenever we are indulging in a state of mind akin to their nature. Considering this, we shall better understand the saying: "But whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek turn to him the other also."

The Master Jesus said: "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me"; and again: "This is my commandment that ye love one another, as I have loved you." As Christians we ought to live up to this commandment. And have we any right to call ourselves Christians, if we daily act contrary to it? And to live up to it is not a matter of rites, customs, words, or sentiments. It is a conscious life, more real than physical life; it is the beginning of life eternal. If we earnestly strive to live this life, and have "charity" as our constant watch-word in the long and terrible contest with our lower

natures, we shall in time find that there will be no opportunity for judging, no time for fault-finding, no room for feeling hurt, or for "just indignation." By constant meditation on the nature of Divine Charity we shall come to a deeper understanding of it; we shall learn to know *how* the Master wishes us to meet the trials of prosperity and of pride as well as those of misfortune and of vexation.

This principle of charity does not apply only to moral feelings, it is just as applicable to intellectual blunderings and to cases of differing opinions. It is our right and duty to hold our own thoroughly considered opinions on religion, on rites, on dogmas—on all spiritual and material questions. But charity forbids us to try to force other people to accept our opinions. Eternal Truth has not as yet been unveiled to the world; we know only in part, and our knowledge shall "vanish away" when "that which is perfect is come." And that which is perfect is charity as a manifestation of Divine Love. To teach our fellow-men charity is, therefore, the true theosophical work. To do this is to help in spreading the teachings known as the Evangel of Love.

But teachings which are not practised in daily life, are dead letters only; they are as "sounding brass" and cause the truth-longing heart to shrink, and to turn away in pain. This tragedy has been played for ages gone by, and it is our sad fate to witness it still every day. If we want to help in carrying out the Christian mission, we must live the life of the Christian, which above all means to practise charity according to this commandment of Christ: "Love one another, as I have loved you." By so doing—and only then—shall we become true Followers of Christ.

T. H. KNOFF.

# SOME ASPECTS OF THEOSOPHY

AS SEEN BY A NEW MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY

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## V

### THE VOICE IN THE SILENCE

*“Everyone is according to his faith, descendant of Bharata. For man is formed of faith; what his faith is, that verily is he.”*  
*Bhagavad Gita (C. J. Ed.) xvii—3.*

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*“In a moment things which the imagination would take long to put together are unfolded to us, for it goes beyond all that we can understand here below. So does that Beauty and Majesty remain stamped upon the soul, that nothing can drive it from her memory. . . . Do you think it is of little importance for a distracted soul to understand this truth, and to know that she need not go to Heaven to speak with the Eternal Father, or to regale herself with Him? Nor need she speak aloud, for, however low she may speak, He is so near that He will hear us: neither does she require wings to fly and see Him, but she can compose herself in solitude and behold Him within her self.”* St. Teresa of Avila.

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THE student of Theosophy is soon told of the existence of the Masters, those divine Helpers, Who, having progressed in Their own development, by an act of supreme self-sacrifice turn back to help others onward, epitomizing the lesson that the greatest work to be done is the giving of one's self. At first it may seem that there is no novelty in this, for it is what is said in all Christian churches. But there, as many of us have found, it is too often taken as a purely academic matter, an ideal that is never real, to say nothing of realized. It is surprising at first to have Christ's teachings accepted as simple, natural rules of practice and not as ideals impossible of attainment. This point-of-view explains why to the Christian student of Theosophy his faith is made vital and at last of abiding comfort by what he is taught from the very first of his connection with the T. S.

Yet, accepting the Masters as Real and Helpers, to the student

comes the inevitable question: How do the Masters reach us to help us? There are many splendid passages in Theosophical books covering this point but at first they seem as mere words, as too many of us have regarded those teachings and explanations found throughout the New Testament; teachings and explanations so truly Theosophical that one perceives without verbal teaching that the holy writers thereof were mystics and members of a definite Order that we as beginners can recognize as somehow surviving in the T. S.—though just how and why we do not understand. Yet as persons of sense and some mental training we can not escape the force of the striking parallel.

When I asked of my guide, philosopher and friend the question "How do the Masters communicate?" he began by telling me that They "function in the fourth dimension." This, of course, came to me at first as meaningless. It is true that as a very small boy I had listened without understanding but enjoying the sound while my father discussed the fourth dimension with a naval officer, since a noted technical Professor, and with that gallant soldier, who by international reputation ranked as one of the world's greatest engineers and who was one of the leaders of the T. S.; but the revival of a child's memories did not suffice. It required a different effort—when I say one of "recollection" I shall sound contradictory to many, while to others I have made myself perfectly clear.

Many things were then explained to me; more especially the physical aspect, so to speak, that while in the third dimension the Masters and their chelas might seem to us to be afar, yet in the fourth dimension They would be close at hand and that my submerged power of functioning in the fourth dimension would slowly yet gradually emerge with my aspiration, work, devotion and faith and that the two latter were the more important factors.

This never sounded of spiritism or legerdemain to me as I have found it does to some others, which fortunate fact is due to no special merit or ability or my own, but which I credit to the wisdom shown in teaching me. The policy was followed, laid down in Hebrews V. (one of the Epistles in which, it seems to the student, St. Paul is most direct as a teacher of Theosophy) and "milk, and not strong meat" was given me and, furthermore, I was fed with wise discretion so that I was given time to digest what I received.

In passing; it may be forgiven a new student to venture the opinion that much of the repulsion which so many unfortunately find in Theosophy (to their own great loss) is due to un wisdom in working alone when "Ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God" (does not that "again" remind one of St. Paul's preaching the doctrine of reincarnation, as set forth in Corinthians and

as used in the Burial Service?) or else to unwise teaching by which one received "strong meat" when "milk" was required.

Furthermore, the warning of *Light on the Path* was often repeated: "The 'medium' or 'spiritualist,' who rushes into the psychic world without preparation, is a law breaker, a breaker of the laws of super-nature. Those who break Nature's laws lose their physical health; those who break the laws of the inner life lose their psychic health. 'Mediums' become mad, suicides, miserable creatures devoid of moral sense——"

Even in such primary study as I am permitted to undertake I am taught to avoid sensation and to suppress psychic development and urged to seek for enlightenment solely on the spiritual plane. The sweet reasonableness, the utter sanity, the satisfying rationalism and the marvellous simplicity of occultism (which to me had savored of a child's tales of "magic" until I joined the T. S.) have been made clear to me.

How the Masters could function in the fourth dimension remained more or less incomprehensible until one day in the lunch club my attention was called to our shadows in the sunlight. The familiar illustration of the second dimension by the shadow on the wall was recalled to me. To the shadow length and breadth was comprehensible but the third dimension, height, unknowable. I might put my hand one one-millionth of an inch above the heart of that shadow and yet to it I would be an infinite (because incomprehensible) distance away. Yet to me in the third dimension it would seem as if my hand were laid upon the shadow's heart. To the shadow's understanding it would make no difference whether I was that one-millionth of an inch away or a million light-years distant. In either case I would be infinitely afar to it.

Why not then believe that the Master may be near, striving to reach my heart, while to my understanding He may be infinitely afar and quite beyond my ken on the purely intellectual plane?

I have recently talked over the matter of the fourth dimension with a man who is unconsciously a Theosophist at heart though not knowingly. He attends the meetings of the T. S. with a curiously (to him) mixed motive—partly interested; partly outraged. He is an engineer of scientific attainments. He would deny that he is at all Theosophical yet he is and strongly. He told me of Prof. Mitchell's illustration of the fourth dimension.

As I gathered: in one dimensional space the point could ever move onward but to its understanding it would be utterly impossible to move off that straight line, for to do so, or to conceive of doing so, would involve the second dimension which it could not comprehend. In two dimensional space a circle circumscribed about the shadow would, to its comprehension, eternally confine it—eternally, that is, to its accepted laws of the physical world; and any shadow venturing the conception that

the circle might be stepped over would be condemned as visionary, non-scientific, a creature of faith and not of reason. The "scientifically-minded" shadows simply could not understand, comprehend or explain how one could step over that limiting circle for that would bring in the third dimension—in shadow phraseology, the Infinite. The proposition might be worked out by higher mathematics and the theoretical possibility of such freedom admitted, but to explain it practically to shadows worrying about what might be Beyond—never!

So it is, as I take in the illustration, when a three dimensional being like any one of us ordinary mortals is put in a room and all the doors closed he can not even conceive how he can get out without opening a door or breaking down a wall—(or in the larger aspects of life, escape from the physical trammels of our being without breaking a "law.") Yet to One functioning in the fourth dimension it would be as simple to escape from that room without opening a door or breaking a wall as it is for one of us to step over the circle to the absolute bewilderment of shadowland, where it would be said we had vanished or had been snatched up into a cloud. And in shadowland annals the fact would in time be called a tradition, then a myth and finally scientific nonsense. If one of us stepped back and forth occasionally those shadows who saw us would be regarded as visionary folk or liars—except by shadows with intuitive comprehension!

This illustration which I have paraphrased and, perhaps, presented too argumentatively, satisfied my engineer as rational and as bringing out why we have such difficulty in accepting the fourth dimension. When he told it to me and quoted the Professor as using the closed room analogy I was filled with joy for it seemed to give at once a scientific explanation to what my brief incursion into the field of Theosophy had trained me to accept on faith: "The same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you" (St. John xx, 19).

It may be asked: Why, if this power to function in the fourth dimension exists, is it not more often used. Between my recollection and the help given me an answer has evolved which has given me comfort, which is my excuse for offering it to others. The Helpers want to help us in what counts and in what only and alone counts—the development of our Souls. It is, practically speaking, axiomatic that it does not help to do for another the things that he should do for himself. Modern sociology and wise philanthropy recognize that it is ever hurtful, never helpful, to pauperize. Pauperization of another is unfailingly harmful, be it on physical, mental, moral, or spiritual plane. As *Light on the Path* says: "A man who desires to live must eat his food himself: this is the simple law of nature—which applies also to the



higher life. A man who would live and act in it cannot be fed like a babe with a spoon; he must eat for himself."

A few years ago a broken bone was kept indefinitely in splints. Nowadays we have gone back to Nature and have adopted the "ambulatory treatment," another name for self-help, to assure complete recovery. Gardeners do not support plants as they once did; the idea now is to develop stamina and cellulose by forcing the plants to be as self-supporting as possible. I hope I am a loving parent, yet I deliberately allowed my little ones to fall again and again while they were learning to walk and to run. Only yesterday the littlest one fell and actually drove gravel into his face and I laughed (outwardly—that is, as he saw it) in order to help him in self-control.

Now if we finite and most unwise beings have common (sublime?) sense enough to seek to develop "self-help" in plants, in pedagogics and in paupers (to use three alliterative illustrations out of a possible plethora) why should we arrogantly and egotistically deny to the Masters the possession of wisdom and common sense at least equal to our own! May it not be significant that when Jesus did use His four dimensional power (the "body celestial" or spiritual) it was when his disciples were huddled together in fear and, presumably, in doubt, after His apparent defeat? It would seem to be a fair presumption that they were in doubt because for nearly 2,000 years the Western world has found great difficulty in being able to recognize that the refusal to use physical force in spiritual development (for on such would a temporal Kingdom of Christ have rested) was the very acme of Christ's wisdom in working for us and in our behalf.

I am not wandering as far afield as some critics may think. I am seeking, and seeking with humility, I hope, firm only in the consciousness that I am being helped, to suggest to others the real comfort it has been to me to know that the Masters are trying to help me and are giving me all the help that I can stand and that I am ready for and that this conviction, this assured knowledge on my part, is not a dream, a phantasy, an imagined ideal, but is a hard, cold, every day fact and fact of Nature, with a satisfactory scientific base for the refractory minded to find comfort upon.

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This is my present state of mind, definitely reached by logical steps, as it seems to me. But I too pondered how could the Master speak to me, one of the countless children of His care? How could the "Voice in the Silence" come to me? Prof. Elihu Thomson helped me on the road to some comprehension of this phase of occultism when I once asked him whether it was true that any receiving station anywhere within the radius of action of a wireless telegraph instrument could

receive, or whether there was, so to speak, a "jump-spark" from one individual station to another and to no other. With the simplicity that marks his explanations of the most erudite problems he asked me if there was a church bell near my home. When I answered "Yes" he asked, "You can hear it two miles away to the south on a calm day?" "Yes." "Or two miles to the north? the east? the west? If there were men at each of these points they would all hear the bell, would they not? And would not each of the thousands you could get within the radius of the bell sound hear it—if none of them was deaf?"

So, it seems to me, may the Master work. He sends us His message ("seek, and ye shall find") and if we be not "dead" but are "attuned" we will receive it and translate it from its mystic code or spiritual significance into the language of our physical mind or terms of the third dimension. If a young Italian can accomplish the oncedemed scientific impossibility in the physical world of making etheric waves do work across 4,000 miles why should I doubt the power of Christ to reach me through any distance; against any difficulties? I know that no other Individuality in the western world's history has ever shown equal power. Starting His work on earth in a distant corner of the great Roman Empire; in a falling nation; in a decadent age; with a few obscure and seemingly ignorant men for his chosen disciples; He has yet been able to revolutionize the world and dominate the centuries. What if by the blindness of men His teachings have been obscured; the results He sacrificed Himself for not yet fully attained; did He not nevertheless demonstrate unequalled power: and if Marconi has triumphed as he has why should we question the power by which Christ tries to help us onward and to reach our hearts?

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At first it is heart-rending to the beginner that what he can see so clearly he cannot express to another. Soon he realizes the wisdom and mercy of this law. For instance, in his ignorance, however enthusiastic and well-meaning he may be, he might be of hurt to another through the over expression of a single aspect of some manifold truth, giving the wrong emphasis or even the wrong impression. Besides, in occultism it is the immutable law that one must learn for oneself. *Light on the Path* has expressed this conclusively: ". . . the adepts in life and knowledge, who, seemingly giving out their deepest wisdom, hide in the very words which frame it its actual mystery. They cannot do more. There is a law of nature which insists that a man shall read these mysteries for himself. By no other method can he obtain them."

The thought of this law comes back to me in connection with this effort to express something of what has been given me regarding the real "physical-fact" that the Masters do, and do because they actually can, communicate with us.

To present another aspect of the explanations I have obtained of how this communication may be established I am going to quote Prof. Thomson again (and again, I should say, without his permission). He once said that it is the present hypothesis among scientists that only the focus of the alternating current travels along the wire in an electric circuit. How comforting a thought this may be to the primary grade occultist I shall endeavor to show.

While it is practically impossible for us to imagine ourselves functioning in the fourth dimension, yet it has been helpful to the newest student to believe that the theme or basic-expressed-ideal in a dynamic (inspirational) book is one of the "wires" carrying the focii of the currents alternating, or flowing from and to the Higher Powers and ourselves. Does this savor of "magic"? Be honest, is it any more "magical" than the magnetic hoists handling tons of pig iron by the use of a secondary force induced by a primary force which even the generator designers themselves do not pretend to understand truly? Which is the more reasonable—to consider that Abraham Lincoln was inspired by the Masters or that "a poor white" self-generated his own genius? Certain combinations of words make up *Light on the Path* or *Fragments*. To one person they are uninteresting; even meaningless: to another inspirational. To the latter they actually grow and glow—that is live. Whence their power; if from themselves, why not then be inspired by the same words in a dictionary? Was it the ignorant actor or the busy courtier who wrote *Shakespeare*? What difference, why waste time in arguing before we decide whence came the inspiration? It is the current, not the wire that drives the motor. Explain a poet like Keats rationally—tell me the real why that Wellington's mediocrity overcame Napoleon's genius; Grant's persistence Lee's strategy. After all what is simpler and truer and easier to accept than "the Voice in the Silence"?

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It may also prove helpful to consider the analogy of wireless telegraphy. Religious feeling, devotion, self-sacrifice, prayer, the arousing of the higher nature, in placing us in communication with the Masters, may be considered as similar (and this is certainly the easier of the two to understand) to the "tuning" of a wireless receiver. The whole of the second "Comment" in *Light on the Path* will reward critical reading in seeking a better comprehension of this analogy. It is hard to omit quoting it all but I do want to quote one of its many prophetic passages ". . . I hold that scientific men are the pioneers of modern thought. The days of literature and of art, when poets and sculptors saw the divine light, and put it into their own great language—these days lie buried in the long past with the ante-Phidian sculptors and the pre-Homeric poets. The mysteries no longer rule the world of

thought and beauty; human life is the governing power; not that which lies beyond it. But the scientific workers are progressing, not so much by their own will as by sheer force of circumstances, towards the far line which divides things interpretable from things uninterpretable. Every fresh discovery drives them a step onward. Therefore do I very highly esteem the knowledge obtained by work and experiment." And this was written down thirty years ago when wireless and radium, with all that they involve of progress towards the "far line" were not even figments of scientific imagination!

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It has also been taught me that there is a further rough analogy between our translating the Voice into thought and action and the effect of music upon us. A certain combination of notes in a certain order, force and time, when reproduced, will suggest to the hearer definite thoughts; paint visualizations upon the mind; inspire him to action, be it only the keeping of time with a tapping foot. This force has been recognized and utilized most effectively in those two most ancient survivals of early Organization—the Church and the Army. Even to a tone-deaf and musicless man certain airs will call up to him certain definite moods, feelings, recollections. Are the Masters more impotent than a fiddle or a drum? To the musically trained an improviser can practically talk through notes and phrases, for he certainly can express what he wants to convey better than many people can with spoken words. Is Paderewski working with musical vibrations any easier to comprehend with full understanding than a Master speaking to us from afar?

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Still another rough analogy is the "reading" or receiving of a telegraph message. Morse designed his instrument to be read from lines traced on paper tape, but it soon proved that the dots, dashes and spaces were being "read" by ear. Next it was found that the letters were read as single mind-images and not as a group of detached sounds, and in the Phillips' code I am told that expert Associated Press operators now read and typewrite whole phrases without being conscious of the translation.

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Frankly, it is less wonderful to me to consider that Christ may communicate with me (if I will only let Him) than it is to review all that is involved as I now write, when, as a result of early teaching, later reading and experience, more teaching, giving me a vocabulary, I was eventually prepared to understand in part these teachings and to assimilate them in some degree, and finally have sub-consciously directed my fingers to take up my pen and write these words down. Because all

this is commonplace is it any the less extraordinary? Considered wisely and widely does it strain credulity less than to believe that every impulse for good is an "impulse" from the Divine? Radio-activity is seemingly miraculous but after all is it any more wonderful in fact than the homely illustration of the smell of cheese reaching a mouse?

Review the cases of mother-love and mother-sacrifice that you have known: remember the individuals involved as personalities—commonplace on the whole were they not? Yet if such average, commonplace people could do so much for love why doubt what the Masters do or what we could do if only we would listen to the Masters.

A young lady came to New York this winter from Europe. Wireless telegraphy was a commonplace; aviation an old story; the telephone a fact accepted so early in life that she cannot remember a world without it and automobiling as natural as dressing. None of these were to be remarked upon. What did interest her, however; what was truly marvellous to her was the New York horse car—last survival of an era almost forgotten by her host, who yet could recall the to him recent days when each of her accepted factors of ordinary, every day life was consider a "physical impossibility," a poet's fancy or a child's fairy tale.

What is the fixed standard of the wonderful?

Consider with clinical thoroughness a political meeting, a patriotic gathering, or even a mob, and try to explain all that happens and just why—also ask yourself what it is fundamentally that causes any given individuality to respect any other. Am I getting too involved? I fear so, yet I cannot reproach myself too severely for my latest failure, for in this case, perhaps it will prove to the advantage of tyro readers (in the same stage as myself!) to work out these problems for themselves. I have found it helpful to struggle with them—may it so prove to others and may they succeed where I fail.

And it is now suggested to me to close with yet another analogy: "A small and insignificant key may open a large and important door; and, if the door be locked it cannot be opened without injury until the key be found and used." Perhaps this means that we must avoid in our studies a lower mind sense of proportion "and do our work as it comes to us, but be sure we do do it or the key may never be found."

SERVETUS.

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### POSTSCRIPT

It is some time since I wrote the foregoing. It comes to me that in my endeavor to give to others something of what has been given to me I shall have failed utterly if I have placed too much emphasis upon the rationalism overlying the conviction that the mighty yet loving Helpers do help us daily; that the "Voice in the Silence" is real and

potent. I have just changed to "overlying" the word "underlying" I first wrote. Perhaps this change, in a way, expresses exactly what I want to say in this Postscript. It was once said to me, "Remember always that before you can understand anything in occultism you must first believe it." If I have ranked reasonableness ahead of faith, as I can now see, I have not transmitted my teaching. Yet it is only to-night that I appreciate at all the significance of the warning; only now do I sense its truth. Apparently no one can take one step in Theosophy without faith. Reviewing the men of great intellect, strong reasoning powers and wide, true and thorough learning who are among the most active members of the T. S. I had lost sight of the fundamental point. I was in danger of ranging myself with those of whom it was said "O ye of little faith." To appreciate the emphasis placed upon faith as the fundamental by the great Master we Christians worship, look at the number of citations to the *New Testament* under the word "faith" in a Biblical Concordance. While Theosophy is founded upon Law; is, indeed, the Law itself—all-including; the true union of purest science with serenest Religion, nevertheless, it seems to be the Law that the first step in it shall be Faith. You can not prove Mathematical Axioms but all proof of mathematics rest upon their acceptance. That great Theosophist, St. Paul, it comes to me, has summed this up for us in Galatians ii, 16: "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

SERVETUS.

# THEOSOPHY AND SECULAR LITERATURE

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## VII

### EMERSON'S JOURNALS

*"That which I cannot yet declare has been my angel from childhood until now. It has separated me from men. It has watered my pillow, it has driven sleep from my bed. It has tortured me for my guilt. It has inspired me with hope. It cannot be defeated by my defeats. It cannot be questioned, though all the martyrs apostatize. It is always the glory that shall be revealed; it is the 'open secret' of the universe; and it is only the feebleness and dust of the observer that makes it future, the whole IS now potentially in the bottom of his heart. It is the soul of religion. Keeping my eye on this, I understand all heroism, the history of loyalty and of martyrdom and of bigotry, the heat of the Methodist, the nonconformity of the Dissenter, the patience of the Quaker."*

EMERSON'S position, in the world of letters, is debatable. His *Essays* are found on every American bookshelf, even the smallest, as, we are told, Macaulay's writings are in Australia, because he is thought to represent the American ideal and the aim of American practice: "His essential teaching," says Professor Norton, "has become part of the unconsciously acquired creed of every young American of good and gracious nature." The typical American, practical, school-educated, complacent, skims a few paragraphs, occasionally a whole essay, and draws thence ample justification for his utmost independence of thought and manner. On the other hand, a large number, the literary folk, those who know, and therefore wish to instruct, would refuse any consideration whatever to a claim made for Emerson in the world of letters; "A random pensman of the obvious," they would say, "uttering with provincial crudeness commonplaces of morality." Yet a few others, some reverent Quaker, or devout soul among the sects, finds Emerson's sentences luminous with wisdom and gentle with love; and in that rare worshipper's retreat, Emerson's head is hung on the wall along with Tauler's St. Teresa's, George Fox's, and Dante's.

Three quarters of a century almost after the first delivery of his lectures, Emerson's *Journals* are now published. They bring the man and his work back as a subject of conversation, and offer opportunity for re-casting and correcting opinions about him. Perhaps the least presumptuous way of approach toward a right judgment of Emerson's

work, though it may appear the most presumptuous, will be in putting aside literary, and all other worldly standards, and in endeavoring to view his life as it appeared to the Master. Only by so doing, can a theosophist, at least, hope to get any ray of truth.

What then is the significance of Emerson's life in the great scheme of things—"the coming of the kingdom"? What did he do, between 1830 and 1850 to hasten or retard it on earth? The *Journals* now published, make these questions less difficult to answer than do the formal writings.

By 1830, the last ripples from the Lodge force of 1775 would seem to have spent themselves. Scott, Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth, Schiller, Goethe, had ended their work, practically, though several, Wordsworth, for example, had not yet ended their days. And splendidly had they done their work!

"They spoke, and loosed our heart in tears.  
They laid us as we lay at birth  
On the cool flowery lap of earth,  
Smiles broke from us and we had ease;  
The hills were round us, and the breeze  
Went o'er the sun-lit fields again;  
Our foreheads felt the wind and rain.  
Our youth return'd; for there was shed  
On spirits that had long been dead,  
Spirits dried up and closely furl'd,  
The freshness of the early world."

They had gained knowledge of the inner world within the veil of sense and had learned that entrance to it lay through, and, also, away from, the world of Matter. Through the literary sense they had been led to the realities of life; magic and mystery which the rational mind of the eighteenth century had flouted, were again potent. Both in prose and verse, in Hoffman, Coleridge, and Richter, the supernatural and mysterious imagination peopled space with goblins, fairies, elves, demons and angels. Turning in weariness from the light of common day, these poets and prose authors had all aspired toward some other light "that never was on land or sea." Like Alastor, they had roamed and wandered to the bounds of space, to find the mild eternal radiance: and then, more fortunate than that unattaining youth, had discovered that the light they so eagerly and painfully sought, was already shining every moment about them—shining within and through the light of common day. And some of them, like Wordsworth, were able to accept the "meanest tasks of life" as opportunities through which the star of their souls could shine. Scarce one of them escaped the contagion of the French Revolution. They began with socialistic or anarchistic dreams of political reform, but, where death did not cut short



the development, all grew away from that early heat to recognise the divine necessity of ordered government, and that real reform is always of the heart. In spiritual content, the writings of the English group are the most noteworthy among the secular literature of England.

Thus the Lodge force of 1775 had splendidly wrought! What can we see in movement in 1830, tending forward to 1875? First, the beginning of that earnest endeavor which was to revitalise the whole Anglican Church, leading it back from the intellectual realm of Protestantism to the spiritual treasures of Catholicism. That movement took its initial impulse, so far as anything may be said to have an initial impulse, in a little volume of verse, published in 1827, John Keble's *Christian Year*. Keble the "hermit spirit" had distinguished himself as the most brilliant of a brilliant group of young scholars at Oriel College. When his period of residence there closed, he refused to consider the academic honors that were all within his reach, went down into a country parish as his father's curate, re-read his Greek poets, and the verses of Wordsworth and others, and began to write down verses of his own, inspired by the symbology of the Church. Keble was all his life a "hermit spirit." Yet his friends, who were all their lives waging conflicts with opponents, acknowledge that he was the real leader of the High Church or Oxford Movement. Newman, later, tells of the indebtedness of his generation to Keble's verse. I quote Newman's passage entire, because it gives so vivid a picture of conditions within the Church in 1830.

"Now the author of the *Christian Year* found the Anglican system all but destitute of this divine element, (poetry);—a ritual dashed upon the ground, trodden on, and broken piece-meal;—prayers, clipped, pieced, torn, shuffled about at pleasure, until the meaning of the composition perished, and offices which had been poetry were no longer even good prose;—antiphones, hymns, benedictions, invocations, shovelled away;—Scripture lessons turned into chapters;—heaviness, feebleness, unwieldiness, where the Catholic rites had had the lightness and airiness of a spirit;—vestments chucked off, lights quenched, jewels stolen, the pomp and circumstances of worship annihilated; a dreariness which could be felt, and which seemed the token of an incipient Socinianism, forcing itself upon the eye, the ear, the nostrils of the worshipper; a smell of dust and damp, not of incense; a sound of ministers preaching Catholic prayers, and parish clerks droning out Catholic canticles; the royal arms for the crucifix; huge ugly boxes of wood, sacred to preachers, frowning on the congregation in the place of the mysterious altar; and long cathedral aisles unused, railed off, like the tombs (as they were), of what had been and was not; and for orthodoxy, a frigid, unelastic, inconsistent, dull, helpless dogmatic, which could give no just account of itself, yet was intolerant of all teaching which contained a doctrine more or a doctrine less, and resented every attempt to give it a meaning,—such was the religion of which this gifted author was,—not the judge and denouncer (a deep spirit of reverence hindered it,)—but the renovator,

as far as it has been renovated. Clear as was his perception of the degeneracy of his times, he attributed nothing of it to his Church, over which he threw the poetry of his own mind and the memory of better days."

Thus, in 1830, within the Church, was sown the seed of a true Catholicism, a movement of which Pusey was the great champion, a movement still progressing. What was actually accomplished by Pusey and his friends is often lost sight of in questions about ritual, etc. that are subordinate. The great thing is that Pusey returned in doctrine, practically, to the Athanasian position, which holds of the Incarnation and Atonement that "He became man in order that we might become gods." \*

If we pass from Oxford to Cambridge, we find a second great movement of preparation, the scientific. From 1828 to 1831 Darwin was passing his *Lehrjahre* in the laboratories at Cambridge, and in 1831, he started in the S.S. "Beagle" on that long world voyage during which he collected, and observed, and pondered his hypothesis. The Catholic movement of Oxford and the scientific movement of Cambridge, came into antagonism later. But those antagonisms were personalities between the men who unconsciously worked for the great preparation. The Masters behind the screen attained their end, notwithstanding animosities between men who dealt to one another the opprobrium of "irreligious."

Thus much that is important can be seen in its incipency in the third decade of the century. The actual conditions, however, seemed not encouraging.

"Liberalism prevailed; it was the appointed force to do the work of the hour; it was necessary, it was inevitable that it should prevail. But what was it, this liberalism? It was the great middle-class liberalism, which had for the cardinal points of its belief the Reform Bill of 1832, and local self-government, in politics; in the social sphere, free-trade, unrestricted competition, and the making of large industrial fortunes; in the religious sphere, the Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion."

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\* "He left us, but to be closer to us; He left us in Bodily Presence, but to be present still more nearly in Spirit; not without us any longer, as Teacher, Guide, Comforter, but, through that other Comforter, within us; withdrawn from our bodily sight, to fill our souls; no longer to be touched or handled by our hands, that His Spirit might be made manifest to our spirit, that we might touch Him with the hands of our heart, feed on Him with the cravings of our spirit, see Him with the eyes of our mind, be enlarged to receive Him, and, being expanded, be filled with Him, and be one with Him and He with us."

"Seek we Him in our thought, words, and actions. So, in all things, seeking Him, shall we at length find Him, and ourselves be found in Him; yea, He, who shall manifest Himself, more fully than, shall, according to His most true Promise, in earnest thereof, while hidden from the world, manifest Himself to them who are also hidden from the world in Him. He shall impart to us more of our true life, even Himself."

A modified form of Revolutionism, enlarged suffrage, etc., etc., filled the air with cries. Landor, the most important man in the literary arena was publishing the iconoclastic *Conversations*, flouting and buffooning Kings, Ministers and Priests, save the random few whom his capricious mind led him, in some queer way, to adore. Carlyle, toiling and moiling with the *Sartor* had not yet achieved success.

It was into this world that Emerson came in the winter of 1832-3, seeking a Teacher.\* Those whom he purposed seeing were Coleridge, Wordsworth, Landor, Carlyle. Coming up from Sicily—where Newman was, at the same time, seeking health and kindly light, Emerson saw Landor first at Florence, and then passed northward, finally reaching the desolate moorland home at Craigenputtock,—“the first visitor since Noah’s flood,” Mrs. Carlyle said. The meeting of the two men, each has vividly described, and for each it meant much. The friendly admiration of Emerson brought cheer into Carlyle’s lamp-black days. Yet Emerson’s journal entry, at the end of his European sojourn, and on the eve of embarkation for America, shows that his sought Teacher had not been found.

“I thank the great God who has led me through this European scene, this last schoolroom in which he has pleased to instruct me, from Malta’s isle, through Sicily, through Italy, through Switzerland, through France, through England, through Scotland, in safety and pleasure, and has now brought me to the shore and the ship that steers westward. He has shown me the men I wished to see,—Landor, Coleridge, Carlyle, Wordsworth; he has thereby comforted and confirmed me in my convictions. Many things I owe to the sight of these men. I shall judge more justly, less timidly, of wise men forevermore.”

Two weeks later, however, while still at sea, there is another entry, of great significance. It is the passage extracted and placed at the beginning of this article. It shows Emerson’s ascent to primary and aboriginal knowledge, his “passage from a remote station on the circumference to the center of the world, where, as in the closet of God, we see causes, and anticipate the universe, which is but a slow effect.”

Emerson came back into the States full of his discovery that “There is one mind common to all individual men” and that “every man is an inlet to the same and to all of the same.” As lyceum lecturer he began

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\* “After being cabined up sea and by land, since I left home with various little people,—all better to be sure and much wiser than me, but still such persons as did not help me,—how refreshing was it to fall in with two or three sensible persons with whom I could eat my bread and take my walk and feel myself a free man once more of God’s universe. Still these last were not instructors, and I want instructors. God’s greatest gift is a Teacher, and when will he send me one full of truth and of boundless benevolence and of heroic sentiments? I can describe the man. I know the ideal well, but where is its real blood-warm counterpart? I know whilst I write thus that the creature is never to dawn upon me like a sunburst. I know too well how slowly we edge along sideways to everything good and brilliant in life, and how casually and unobservedly we make all our most valued acquaintances.”

at once to bring that, his one, doctrine to the consideration of his fellow countrymen. He journeyed to and fro in the States year after year, lecturing and sermonising. From the lecture notes he made the two series of *Essays* which appeared in book form, the first series in 1841; the second in 1844.

As we read the Journals, now at last given out, and find sentence after sentence that in golden rhythm has vibrated in the memory, and the familiar and precious paragraphs of the *Essays* and addresses, we are led to a certain surmise as to the author. The Journals are the log-book of a Chela; they are part of the riches gathered from "the Infinity of Wisdom that issues from Meditation." From them the lectures and addresses were made, in cold blood, by deliberate "filling in" between portions in which there is a certain continuity of topic. And as those public performances were deliberately composed—(Emerson had none of the literary egotism which so blinded Wordsworth that he was totally unable to distinguish between inspired verses and such as Peter Bell)—for the sake of casting upon public ground the precious grain from his own garden, so, I believe, we must look upon Emerson's life. It was the giving up of private, individual gain in order to place before others some portion of the Infinite Wisdom. It was the incarnation of a Chela to further his Master's work. "For us men and for our salvation" Emerson brought Vedantin treasure to the West, and was made an American.

A very brief consideration of the "flesh" that Emerson took upon him may show the reason for such an incarnation. Emerson's New England was Puritanism *in persona*. It was the spirit of the American Revolution, in its final stage; "the dissidence of dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion" in quintessence, the eighteenth century in its last distillation—Unitarianism. Writing from Baltimore in 1843, where he says he heard with much content, High Mass in the Cathedral,\* he says, "The Unitarian church forgets that men are poets." Unitarianism is product and triumph of mind. It leaves out of its reckoning all the higher principles in man. This form of dissent held

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Baltimore, 1843, January 7.

\* "This morning I went to the Cathedral to hear Mass, with much content. It is so dignified to come where the priest is nothing and the people nothing, and an idea for once excludes these impertinences. The chanting priest, the pictured walls, the lighted altar, the surpliced boys, the swinging censor, every whiff of which I inhaled, brought all Rome again to mind. And Rome can smell so far! It is a dear old Church, the Roman, I mean,—and to-day I detest the Unitarians and Martin Luther and all the parliament of Barebones.

"January 8, 1843.

"To-day I heard High Mass at the Cathedral here, and with great pleasure. It is well for my Protestantism that we have no Cathedral in Concord; E. H. and I should be confirmed in a fortnight. The Unitarian Church forgets that men are poets.

"The Catholic religion respects masses of men and ages. It is in harmony with nature, which loves the race and ruins the individual. The Protestant has his pew, which of course, is the first step to a Church for every individual citizen, a Church apiece."

the public eye of America in Emerson's day as the creed of the most enlightened portion of the commonwealth. It was the reef toward which drifted many devout souls whose religious moorings had been broken, and in whom there yet remained some loyalty to the Master. As they were genuinely devout, they were unable to throw over all of Christianity as a monstrous lie or legend. To such people, full of "intellectual difficulties," Pusey's revived Anglicanism was an impossible heaven—it was only the Roman superstition under a new name. Starving with hunger they snatched the Unitarian crust, in a futile endeavor to satisfy the soul's craving for God by patriotic admiration of a distinguished member of the human race.

It was to these souls, genuinely devout, that Emerson spoke, and led them away from the triumphs of modern civilization to the Lonely, Original and Pure.\* He adopted American vernacular in order to point a few Americans away from the ash and lava fields of Americanism to the lovely vales of the spirit. His great Master had earlier used the familiar phrases and catchwords of the Jews in order from that Jewish multitude to gather together a small band of disciples who might study the mysteries of the Kingdom. So Emerson, with subtle wisdom, dealt out to protesting Americans their most obstreperous doctrines of self-reliance and independence, yet with such skill as to enclose a seed of true wisdom that might happily germinate.

His writings are thus as esoteric as any Scripture. The larger number of his readers are as far from being his followers as Christians are from Christ's, and, in great measure, altogether lose Emerson's teaching. It is the limitations of his New England "flesh," his mental prejudices, his Americanism, that form, as Professor Norton says, the ideal of American youth. Emerson's teaching, if it could be openly expounded, would be scornfully repudiated by Americans. For it is the old, old teaching of the Ancient East, the Orientalism which America is proud to have outstripped, the doctrine that strenuous outer activity alone is of no intrinsic worth since "we are begirt with spiritual laws which execute themselves."

I have said that the familiar and precious sentences that Emerson joined together to make the *Essays* were, in good part, first written down in the Journals. But there is also much here that is unfamiliar. And there is the same felicitous, laconic, epigrammatic phrasing which made the old words unforgettable. I extract a few entries:

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\* "The face of external nature teaches the same lesson with calm superiority. Nature will not have us fret and fume. She does not like our benevolence or our learning, much better than she likes our frauds and wars. When we come out of the caucus, or the bank, or the Abolition convention, or the temperance meeting, or the Transcendental club, into the field and woods, she says to us, 'So hot? my little sir.'"

"Unpalatable must be always the argument based upon the text, 'If ye do my Father's will, ye shall know of the doctrines,' and almost incapable of being used in conversation. It is felt as a personality."

"To an instructed eye the universe is transparent. The light of higher laws than its own shines through it."

"We are always getting ready to live, but never living."

"He that has once pronounced intelligently the word 'Self-renouncement,' 'Invisible Leader,' 'Powers of Sorrow,' and the like, is forever bound to the service of the superhuman."

"God brings us by ways we know not and like not into Paradise."

"Blessed is the day when the youth discovers that Within and Above are synonyms."

"Sects fatten on each other's faults."

"The truest state of mind, rested in, becomes false. Thought is the manna which cannot be stored. It will sour if kept, and to-morrow must be gathered anew."

Emerson stands out quite apart from our literary class that does not know just what to do with him. He is a scribe of the Silence; they are of the hour. "Converse with a mind that is grandly simple, and literature looks like word-catching. The simplest utterances are worthiest to be written, yet are so cheap, and so things of course, that in the infinite riches of the soul, it is like gathering a few pebbles off the ground, or bottling a little air in a vial, when the whole earth, and the whole atmosphere are ours. The mere author, in such society, is like a pickpocket among gentlemen, who has come in to steal a gold button or a pin."

C.

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*"We know not a millionth part of what Christ is to us, but perhaps we care less. Know what we are to him.*

*O Lord, I cannot plead my love of Thee:  
I plead Thy love of me;—  
The shallow conduit hails  
The unfathomed sea."*

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

# A PRIMER OF THEOSOPHY

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## V

### THE SOURCES OF THE SECRET DOCTRINE\*

IN the introductory chapter to the first volume of the *Secret Doctrine* H. P. B. speaks of the "Wisdom Religion" as the inheritance of all nations, all over the world, and states that Gautama's *secret* teachings form but a very small part of the esoteric wisdom of the world since the beginning of our humanity, while he limited his *public* instructions to the purely moral and physiological aspects of the Wisdom Religion. Things "unseen and incorporeal" the great Teacher reserved for a select circle of his Arhats, who received their initiation at the famous Saptaparna cave near Mt. Baibhâs—(*Saptaparna—the seven-leaved plant=man*, with his seven principles).

The main body of the doctrines given is found scattered through hundreds and thousands of Sanskrit manuscripts, some already translated, more or less badly, others still in the vernacular. These are accessible to the scholar, while a few passages, taken from oral teaching or from the *Commentaries*, would be found difficult to trace. However, one thing is certain, says Mme. Blavatsky, that the members of several esoteric schools—the seat of which is beyond the Himalayas, and whose ramifications may be found in China, Japan, Thibet, India, and even in Syria and South America—claim to have in their possession *all* the sacred and philosophical works, whether in manuscript or in type, in whatever language or character, that have ever been written,—from the ideographic hieroglyphs down. And they claim also that these works have been carefully preserved in subterranean crypts and cave-libraries in the mountains of Western Thibet, and elsewhere.

The documents have been concealed, it is true, but the knowledge itself has always been made known to the chosen few through the medium of the great Adepts and teachers. More than one great scholar has stated that there never was a religious founder who had invented a new religion or revealed a new truth. They were all *transmitters*, not original teachers, and handed on fragments of the truths they had learned, couched in the symbolism of their own nation.

The teaching of the *Secret Doctrine* antedates the Vedas, and much of it has only been transmitted orally. The present book is based upon the *Stanzas of the Book of Dzryan*, a volume written in *Senzar*, the

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\* See *Path*, Oct. 1894.

secret sacerdotal tongue once known to the Initiates of every nation. This language, besides having an alphabet of its own, may be rendered in several modes of ideographic writing. The only original copy now in existence, says *Isis Unveiled*, is so old that modern antiquarians would not even agree upon the nature of the fabric upon which it was written. This archaic manuscript, says Vol. II of the *Secret Doctrine*, is a collection of palm leaves made impermeable to water, fire, and air, by some specific unknown process.

Tradition says that its contents were dictated to the first men of each race, by the Divine Beings whose duty it was to instruct them. The old book, having described cosmic evolution and explained the origin of everything on earth, including physical man, gives the true history of the races from the First, down to the Fifth, our present race, and stops short with the death of Krishna, about five thousand years ago.

It is the original work from which many of the most ancient volumes of occult learning in Chinese, Hebrew, Egyptian, Indian and Chaldean, have been compiled. Its influence can be traced in the Pentateuch itself, and an enormous number of commentaries, glosses, etc. have been written upon it. In the *Secret Doctrine* as we have it, certain portions of the Stanzas of the *Book of Dzyan* are printed, and extracts are also given from the Chinese, Thibetan, and Sanskrit translations of the original Senzar commentaries and glosses.

In addition we are told that it was from the Divine Teachers before-mentioned that infant humanity got its first ideas of the arts and sciences, as well as of spiritual knowledge. The Cyclopean and Druidical remains found all over the world, are all, as well as many other ancient structures, the work of initiated Priest-Architects, the descendants of those primarily taught by the "Sons of God."

The *Secret Doctrine* is the accumulated Wisdom of the Ages, but such is the power of occult symbolism that the facts which countless generations of initiated seers and prophets have occupied themselves in marshalling, setting down, and explaining, are all recorded in a few pages of geometrical signs and glyphs. It is needless to say that the system in question is no fancy of one or of several isolated individuals, but is the one uninterrupted record covering thousands of generations of seers, whose respective experiences were made to test and to verify the traditions passed orally from one race to another, of the teachings of the Divine Instructors. For long ages the "Wise Men" of the Fifth, our own race, passed their lives in *learning, not teaching*, but in checking, testing, and verifying, in every department of nature, the traditions handed down to them by the independent visions of great Adepts; that is, *men* who have developed their physical, mental, psychic and spiritual powers, to the utmost possible degree. No vision of any one Adept was accepted till it was checked and confirmed by the visions—so obtained



as to stand as independent evidence—of other Adepts, as well as by centuries of experience.

The mysteries of Life and Death *were* fathomed by the great master-minds of antiquity; and if they preserved them in secrecy and silence it is because these problems formed part of the sacred Mysteries, and because they must always have remained incomprehensible to the vast majority of men, as indeed, they do now.

## VI

### THE ELDER BROTHERS

The student who has carefully followed these scanty outlines of a great scheme of philosophy, will have noticed that that scheme is based upon a few general laws which are repeated in many ways, and like the laws of physical science hold good throughout the universe. The law of the conservation of energy applies to spiritual phenomena as well as physical, and the action of the laws of evolution is as unerring upon the higher planes as upon the lower. Human nature develops along the same lines as animal nature, and from the progress that man has made in the past, we can safely forecast something, at least, of his future.

“The faith which is born of knowledge,” says Huxley, “finds its object in an eternal order, bringing forth ceaseless change, through endless time, in endless space, the manifestations of the cosmic energy alternating between phases of potentiality, and phases of explication.” And by these endless alternations, sometimes called “the Great Breath,” the universe develops, and the pebble beneath our feet changes from the mineral to the vegetable, and then to the animal, and finally to the human being. Beyond the man of to-day, what endless vistas of growth loom up, what ages of spiritual development! Huxley is often quoted as saying that it would be an impertinence to assert that there were not beings in the universe whose intelligence was as much beyond ours as ours is beyond that of the black beetle. Theosophy goes a step further, and asserts that such superior beings to ourselves, do exist among us, of different grades of development, and called by many names, one that they have given themselves being “The Elder Brothers.”

When a planet has passed through its regular stages of development, it dies, and its inhabitants, by this time far advanced entities, pass on to another field of development, where they become the teachers, guides and friends of the new humanity. They keep the knowledge they have gained of the laws of nature in all her varied phases, and are always ready to use it for the benefit of mankind whenever cyclic laws permit, for only at the proper moment can this knowledge be given to the world by these Elder Brothers who have treasured it up for us all.

They have always existed as a body, known to each other, and in some periods of the world's history, known to the people among whom they worked. At such times, certain of the Elder Brothers have been recognized as great rulers, some as teachers, a few as great philosophers, while others are only known to the most advanced of their own body. It will be easily seen that it would be very dangerous for such beings to mingle openly with men, by whom they would either be worshipped, as gods, or persecuted as devils. In our present age, one of change and transition, when so much is based upon money and money values, it would be impossible for the Elder Brothers to permit themselves to be seen of men. In a fine paper written for the *Path* (Sept. 1894) Mr. J. H. Connelly points out very clearly the conditions of their being. "If they temporarily assumed corporeal bodies, they would appear just like other men, and if embodied in more tenuous matter they would be invisible. . . . By those to whom the Mahatmas (*Maha-Atma—great soul*) are personally known—and there are such—it is recognised that theirs is not an equality of development, the greater wisdom and spirituality of some elevating them to higher planes and endowing them with greater powers, than those attained by others, and such progression extends far beyond the range of normal human comprehension."

And Mr. Sinnett quotes from the letter of one of these Elder Brothers, who writes to explain why they were supposed to have failed in making any perceptible mark upon the history of the world. "What they have done, *they* know; all that those outside their circle could perceive was the results, the causes of which were masked from view. . . . There never was a time, within or before the so-called historical period, when our predecessors were not moulding events and 'making history.' We never pretended to be able to draw nations in the mass to this or that crisis in spite of the general drift of the world's cosmic relations. The cycles must run their rounds. . . . And we, borne along the mighty tide, can only modify and direct some of its minor currents."

The laws of evolution mould alike the world and its inhabitants, and when those inhabitants have learned all that their sojourn in their present environment can teach them, they are ready to instruct the dwellers in the next planetary system, to whom we shall be "the terrene ancestors." The Guardian Spirits furnished many of our earliest nations with divine Kings and Leaders who taught humanity their arts and sciences. They had finished their own cycles on earth and other worlds in preceding Rounds, and in future life-cycles they will have risen to higher systems than ours. (*Abg.* 145-452.)

It is an interesting fact that the tradition of divine rulers and teachers runs through all the early nations of the world, and they are called by many names. Adepts, Initiates, Magi, Wise Men, Masters,

and Mahatmas, among others. And when one of these has reached the final point of his development, if he refuse to enter Nirvana, he may exist on earth as an Adept, and when at last he dies, "he remains in that glorious body he has woven for himself, *invisible* to uninitiated mankind, to watch over and protect it." (*Voice of the Silence*. Note to the "*Seven Portals*.")

"There will be Initiates and profane till the end of this present life-cycle," and *the Initiator*, or the Watcher, the Divine prototype, called the GREAT SACRIFICE, will sit at the threshold of LIGHT, looking into it from the circle of Darkness which he will not cross; nor will he quit his post till the last ray of this life-cycle. Why does the solitary Watcher remain by his self-chosen post? Because the lonely pilgrims on their way back to their *home*, are never sure, up to the last moment, of not losing their way in this limitless desert of illusion called earth-life. . . . It is under the direct guidance of this Great Teacher that all the other less divine teachers of mankind, became from the first awakening of human consciousness, the guides of early humanity, and it is they who laid the first foundation-stones of those ancient civilisations that puzzle so sorely our modern archæologists. . . . In future life-cycles they will have risen to higher systems than ours, and it is the elect of our humanity who will take their places. The next Great Cycle of being will see the men of this, becoming the instructors and guides of a mankind whose Monads may be still imprisoned—semi-conscious—in the most intelligent of the animal kingdom, while their lower principles will perhaps be animating the highest specimens of the vegetable world." (*Abg.* 119-146.)

"The most intelligent being in the universe, man,—has never been without a friend," says Mr. Judge in *The Ocean of Theosophy*, "but has a line of Elder Brothers who continually watch over the less progressed, preserve the knowledge gained through æons of trial and experience, and continually seek to draw the developing intelligence of the race to consider the great truths concerning the destiny of the soul."

KATHARINE HILLARD.

# ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

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THE clergyman had been telling us that we were mediæval and reactionary. He had outgrown the superstitions of his youth. Theology and everything connected with it, he had thrown overboard with sulphur matches and crocheted antimacassars. Humanity—yes,—the service of humanity; the improvement of conditions; the equalization of opportunity; the raising of wages and of the standard of living; the refining of taste and desire—this was where effort should be directed, so that life on earth might be prolonged and heaven be found in the glow of an improved and more effective worldliness.

He was genuine in his sympathy for all who suffer; full of rebellion against injustice; passionate in his desire to force the rich to do their duty towards the poor: impatient with us—slightly contemptuous I suspect—but also slightly bewildered, for he has always known that in most directions we are more catholic than he is, including even Buddhism, which he despises, in our range of appreciative sympathy. He is a splendid man: large-hearted and generous—extraordinarily generous; but intolerant of everything that suggests his own past, and self-willed as Nietzsche would have made his Superman. He hates to listen; but the Philosopher broke through at last.

“I ventured to say to you the other day that you had never had an opportunity to think things out. You were brought up and educated into beliefs more or less orthodox. So far as I know, you held those beliefs for a number of years. Little by little you came into close contact with scepticism of various kinds. You found it impossible to meet and to overcome such scepticism with the weapons provided by your theological training, and your mind was too honest and too eager for truth, to permit you to close it against arguments which, so far as they went, were convincing. Consequently, step by step, you have abandoned your earlier beliefs, being proud (not without reason) of your achievement. But all that you have left to you is a mental positivism of negation, a deep love for humanity,—and a dim though haunting sense of pressure from within, which you cannot define, but which, in effect, drives you to ever more emphatic protest against what you regard as superstition.

“I was amused recently to find you making a distinction between ordained and unordained men, between clergy and laity—somewhat at my expense, and certainly in contradiction to much of your theoretical liberalism. This, from my point of view, shows that the emancipation is not yet complete—and I am glad of it!”

It was evident to those who know him that the Philosopher was

working himself up to the point of a long harangue; and it is always at this point that the Gael, with remorseless insistence, interrupts.

"Do not preach at the man," he said. "The only effect is to start his mind on defence and retort. Leave him to me." Then, turning to the clergyman, and pointing a finger at him after the manner of some physicians, the Gael proceeded to lay down the law.

"We are devoted to you," he said, "but you are bad—and there is no answer to that because to deny it would not be modest. So far, therefore, my remarks are unanswerable and you are without retort! Next: one of your worst offences is that you pretend to believe in something in which actually you have no belief at all. And you cannot deny that because as yet you do not know what I am talking about. This is not an indictment: it is a verdict. So sit still and listen.

"We have not had the advantage of your theological training—though its advantage depends upon the use you made of it. On the other hand, every one of us, for twenty years or more, has believed in Humanity,—and you do not!" (The clergyman's protest was smothered by the Gael's persistence.) "You do not even believe in yourself. If I had as low an opinion of myself as you have of yourself, a lime-kiln would be too good a depository for the thing that talks to you. Also, if I had as wretched an opinion of you as you have of yourself, it would be an insult to God who made you. . . . Listen,—please just for once listen!

"For twenty years or more, all of us have believed in man's perfectibility, and therefore in our own. Not all of us have had sense or strength enough invariably to make that belief dominant in our lives, as motive and as aim. But, theoretically, we have never for an instant lost it. You have never had it, and even now, as you hear it, you do not know what I mean, though you think you do. You reject Christ, at least in the sense of a living, conscious, perfected individual, because you do not believe in Man. That human beings, in all ages of the world, and among all nations, through their own efforts, but aided by those who have travelled the same path before them, should have attained to knowledge and power and to conscious immortality, impresses you, probably, as fantastic. But how account otherwise for the facts? First, that this is a belief which is common to all the world-religions, and to all people who have even so much as begun to act upon it; secondly, that history gives us instances of marvellous success—the lives and deeds of men for which there is more evidence than for the exploits of Alexander or of Julius Cæsar or of Genghis Khan. Consider the records that have come down to us of Krishna, of Buddha, of Zoroaster, of Jesus, of Apollonius, and of their disciples: what further proof do you need of human perfectibility? They were Masters of themselves and therefore of Nature. They demonstrated control of finer forces which elude our scientists. They could read not only the hearts of men, but the past and future of

souls. The very sight of them gave vision of God. And while one and all of them claimed to be specially representative of Deity, their message in each case was that they but pointed the road along which all humanity must travel to divine perfection and to eternal life."

The clergyman could not stand it any longer. "It is impossible to sit silent while you assume, for my supposed enlightenment, so ridiculous a proposition as this last—that there is as much reason to believe in the wonder-working life of Buddha as in the military exploits of Alexander. The former would have to be accepted, if at all, in defiance of reason and experience; the latter have been repeated in modern times, as, for instance, by Napoleon."

"Whose experience?" demanded the Gael. "I have seen more of wonder-working than of war—in this life; more of spiritual insight, more of spiritual force, more of the soul's memory, than of the power of the mailed fist. Would you limit human experience to your own? And are you so sure that you understand the origin and significance of much that happens to you and within you, every day that you live, regarded by you as common-place because familiar, but actually as wonderful, though not so clearly defined, as any incident in the life of Christ? You are fond of using modern catch-words—the 'sub-conscious' among them. Modern psychology tells us that the sub-conscious or subliminal sphere of us, in comparison with our normal, waking consciousness, is boundless. How much of it can you tap consciously and at will? None! Yet you know that poets and mathematicians, and all those who are capable of deep concentration, draw upon it constantly during sleep.

"Then you say 'contrary to reason': but in what way? Have you forgotten Professor Huxley—agnostic as he was: 'Nothing is impossible except a contradiction in terms.' (Incidentally, while quoting Huxley, there is his statement to the effect that it would be absurd to deny the probable existence of beings in the universe as much greater than man as we know him, as man is greater than a black-beetle.) 'Contrary to reason'! Where do you begin? With primordial protoplasm? But what preceded that, and that, and that? Have you not yet realized with Herbert Spencer that, so far as reason can take you, involution antecedes evolution, and that all the future that ever can be is contained potentially within the present, as an oak-tree exists potentially within the acorn? There is no beginning to infinity. Otherwise there would be end. And the spirit of man, containing the uttermost of his future development, springs from a source complete and perfect in itself, which is 'birthless and deathless and changeless,' and from which the spirit of man is not and never can be separate. Existence, therefore, implying movement, means growth—growth by cyclic progress; and this means perfectibility. . . . The trouble with you is that you take too small a view of man, of his destiny, of his capacity. You take too low a view

of man's ability to enjoy, to suffer, to achieve. You long for life and you wish to give others life in more abundance. But you limit life to its material expression, to its husk; and while husk is necessary until ripeness is reached, there comes a point at which life can and should be continued without that which has served to protect and to perfect it. The inner, at first vague in thought and amorphous in fact, should become clear-cut in thought and concrete in fact. From the chrysalis emerges the moth, and the moth is no longer limited to crawling over the surface of things, but is able to fly in the air: it has added a new dimension of space to its range of activity—as man may add a fourth.

"That is an old and hackneyed illustration, but I know of none better. St. Paul expressed the same theory of evolution in that part of his Epistle to the Corinthians which is now read as the lesson of the Burial Service. He tells us in considerable detail how the spiritual body is evolved—the body of immortality, the body of the resurrection, the body in which Christ appeared after the crucifixion. If you will re-read the records of the different appearances, you will find that instead of being less of a man, or less powerful than he was before his "death," Jesus had gained greater freedom of movement and immense increase in force.

"No one can be said to live, in St. Paul's meaning of the word, until he has attained that same degree of conscious immortality. And that is the destiny of man. Until that stage is reached, he comes and he goes—a bird of passage. When it is reached, he takes his place among the children of God, consciously immortal, a master of life."

The indignation of the clergyman at this point passed all bounds. I do not mean by this that he exploded in any way unbecoming to his cloth: he remained dignified and courteous. But it was evident that he was exercising great self-control.

"I do not think that it would serve any useful purpose to discuss this matter with you," he said. "You should be aware that I have left behind me the superstitions which for years blurred my vision of reality; and I do not mean to replace them with a view of man and of the universe which is at least as unintelligible as anything which I accepted blindly during my years of theological training. I wish you good evening, therefore, and shall hope to meet you again when we can talk at our ease about the weather or some other subject similarly inoffensive."

Thereupon the clergyman bowed his way from the room. "Leaving him to you," said the Philosopher to the Gael, "was not a great success. You never were what I would call a soothing person! You have made him as angry as he knows how to be, and he is as far from understanding what you had in your mind as before you began to speak."

The Gael smiled serenely. "Some of it will stick," he returned; "the truth always does. The more violent the immediate reaction, the

better chance there is that he will rebound to some acceptance of that which, at his present stage of development, he really needs to understand. He clings tenaciously to his so-called Humanitarianism, with God on the back seat; but it is not in the nature of a man as good as he is to remain content forever with so palsied a leg to stand on. Some day he will want a leg for his soul, and perhaps then he will remember and will accept that which now he has rejected."

"To my mind," said the Student, "you have done more harm than good. You cannot reason with a man in a mood like that. His whole attention is fixed upon his own point, in self-justification of his own acts, his own purposes—and his mind is closed to everything you say. The more I see of life, the more profoundly convinced I am of the wisdom—indeed of the necessity—of the time-honoured rule that nothing can be given save as it is asked. What you give before it is asked is taken only as an obstacle to be brushed aside; and so you prejudice your later power of giving—and the truth you have spoken, instead of coming fresh when needed, must now come bearing with it the old associations of hostile misunderstanding.

"There are only two courses open with such a man: either silence, or such positive, complete and unrelenting attack that all his opposition is battered down and he is driven to his knees. As usual, half measures are failures. He must either open himself of his own will to us—and we must wait and bear with him and cleave to him till he does—or we must be remorseless and relentless in pushing home the simple truth of his position. He has fallen from his faith and turned from it. The lust of life, the vigor of his body, the appeal of his senses, his quick, open-hearted, unreasoning sympathies for all who approach him, no less than his own ambition and love of notoriety—all have combined to snare him in the glamour of material things, till he deems them all there is: all that he knows with certainty, or with which he can influence as he wishes to influence his age and surroundings. He needs to be told that in this he is false to his priesthood—betraying the Master whom he professes to serve; that he is false to his congregation, to those who have trusted him and whose faith he has taken away and given nothing in its stead. He needs to see himself as he is,—and to be brought to his knees as he sees it.

"But I do not think that you can do it. Therefore I believe it is useless to talk with him till fate does it for him—till in some merciful Providence he falls so hopelessly and openly that he cannot turn away from the recognition of his sin. Then and then only will you be able to help him.

"There are many things you might say to make him do less harm to others than he is now doing, but few things that would do himself good. Therefore, I would have kept silence."

The Gael was in no way dismayed by this criticism of his method.



"There is an immense amount of truth in what you say," he replied, "but the real question is to what extent he is set in his opinions. Personally I do not accept your premises. It seems to me that the vehemence of his asseverations is a sign of weak, not of deep conviction. He tries to shout himself into belief. . . . But I should like very much to know what the Disciple thinks about it:" and the Gael turned to him with question in voice and manner.

The Disciple pondered the matter for several moments, and then said with great earnestness: "There is only one way to appeal to that man, and that is by an appeal to the finest quality he possesses—the characteristic in the *personality* which is an expression of his soul: his generous large-heartedness and earnest desire to aid suffering wherever he perceives it. His limitation here consists in his inability to sense the needs and privations of the soul, since he is as yet only aware of physical and mental needs. Make him feel that far worse than hunger, than bodily pain, than any form of social injustice, is the struggle and agony of the human soul searching for light. Help him to hear that terrible cry. Could he once hear, if only an echo of it, it would tear his heart with so vast a pity, that all other form of effort, save that which would give it satisfaction, would be lost in its intensity. Help him to hear that cry with which the world is ringing today: 'Lord save us, we perish'—for after hearing that, his ears would be opened to that other cry with which also the world is ringing, the voice of the Master beseeching us: 'Feed my sheep'."

"Perhaps you are right," said the Gael, "though it is difficult to see how a man can be made to hear the cry of souls until he has known within himself something of his own soul's longing. It well may be that, sometime in his own life, he has had experiences of that sort; but I cannot help thinking that during recent years he has brushed such memories aside as morbid and as unreal."

"You have not asked for my opinion," interjected the Sage, "and perhaps if I were an angel I should 'fear to tread', particularly as I do not pretend to know the man as you do. Judging by what the rest of you have said, however, it seems obvious that he has been too easily successful. His very real force and intellectual power are responsible for this. The outer man has been made at the expense of his own soul. Too many flowers have been strewn along his path. He is not a vain man in the ordinary sense, but he is wrapped up in a thick garment woven from the flattery and adulation of his followers. I am afraid that it is a case where pain—mental, not physical—must throw him back upon his God. The intensity of his own need alone can save him."

"There is an infinity of good in him," concluded the Gael, "and it would be a thousand pities if life itself did not come to the rescue with whatever experience may be needed to turn his heart and mind in the

one direction from which real help can be obtained. I do not think that many people can appreciate as I do, the personal sympathy and kindness of the man, and the sincerity of his desire to serve those who are in distress."

The Recorder read the foregoing conversation aloud after he had written it down.

On this occasion the Orientalist was present and was asked for his contribution. "It is curious," he responded, "that your friend should dislike Buddhism, because, although nominally a Christian clergyman, actually he comes much nearer to being a Buddhist of the southern or materialistic kind. He is silent on the subject of God; he is vociferous on the subject of man—which the Buddhist is not, because the thought is native to him. Your friend is a convert.

"But the thing to do is to make him consistent in his Buddhism. Half measures are useless, in thought as in action. If he were logical; if he were true to his principles, he would, like Gautama, turn the full force of his heart and intellect upon the problem of sorrow's cause. He rebels against pain and poverty,—against death, disease and all the other ills to which flesh is heir. He has a deep and true compassion for those who suffer from them. But he has not thought out, as Buddha did, the method of removal. He is content to find the cause in the environment, and labours for the improvement of that. Strange that he has not discovered misery which environment does not and cannot affect: that he has not learned of the wealthiest as of the poorest that immersion in self is enough to make any home desolate!"

"What, then, would you recommend?" asked the Student.

"That he should be converted formally and officially to Buddhism," answered the Orientalist. "Personally, as you know, I sympathize with the Christian method: I believe that love of God is the first and greatest commandment. But evidently your friend feels otherwise. Let him practise Buddhism, then, as well as preach it. Let him follow in the footsteps of Buddha and ask himself, 'What is sorrow's cause?' You will remember the answer, though, if you wish to quote it, here it is"—and the Orientalist took from one of the shelves a volume of the *Sacred Books of the East*. "It is in the *Mahāvagga*," he said. "Here it is:

"This, O Bhikkhus, is the Noble Truth of Suffering: Birth is suffering; decay is suffering; illness is suffering; death is suffering. Presence of objects we hate, is suffering; Separation from objects we love, is suffering; not to obtain what we desire, is suffering. Briefly, the fivefold clinging to existence is suffering.

"This, O Bhikkhus, is the Noble Truth of the Cause of suffering: Thirst, that leads to re-birth, accompanied by pleasure and lust, finding

its delight here and there. (This thirst is threefold), namely, thirst for pleasure, thirst for existence, thirst for prosperity.

“This, O Bhikkhus, is the Noble Truth of the Cessation of suffering: (it ceases with) the complete cessation of this thirst,—a cessation which consists in the absence of every passion,—with the abandoning of this thirst, with the doing away with it, with the deliverance from it, with the destruction of desire.

“This, O Bhikkhus, is the Noble Truth of the Path which leads to the cessation of suffering: that holy eightfold Path, that is to say, Right Belief, Right Aspiration, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Means of Livelihood, Right Endeavour, Right Memory, Right Meditation.\*

“But your clergyman,” continued the Orientalist, “need not be frightened unduly by the ascetic demands. Buddha did not believe in extremes. Hear him in the same chapter:

“And the Blessed One thus addressed the five Bhikkhus: ‘There are two extremes, O Bhikkhus, which he who has given up the world, ought to avoid. What are these two extremes? A life given to pleasures, devoted to pleasures and lusts: this is degrading, sensual, vulgar, ignoble, and profitless; and a life given to mortifications: this is painful, ignoble, and profitless. By avoiding these two extremes, O Bhikkhus, the Tathagata has gained the knowledge of the Middle Path which leads to insight, which leads to wisdom, which conduces to calm, to knowledge, to the Sambodhi, to Nirvanâ.’

“On the other hand, it would be a mistake to make too little of the requirements. When you undertake his conversion” (and the Orientalist smiled encouragement at the Gael), “it would be as well to mention the ‘hindrances.’ They are enumerated in *Tevigga Sutta*:

“And in the same way, Vâsettha, there are these five hindrances, in the Discipline of the Noble One, which are called veils, and are called hindrances, and are called obstacles, and are called entanglements:

“The hindrance of lustful desire,

“The hindrance of malice,

“The hindrance of sloth and idleness,

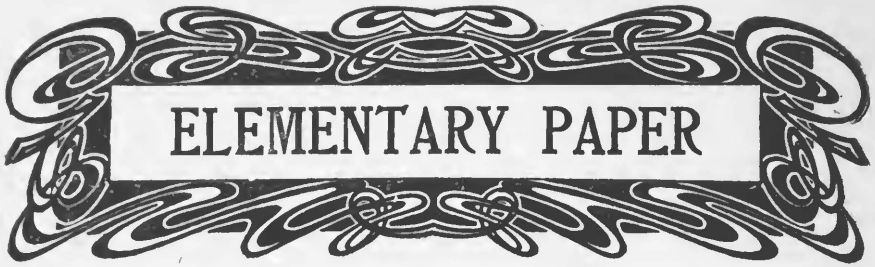
“The hindrance of pride and self-righteousness,

“The hindrance of doubt.’

“If he is to be made a Buddhist,” commented the Gael, “I leave his conversion to you! I prefer my own plan; and I do not like converts. I want to make him what he pretends to be—a Humanitarian with a belief in man.”

T.

\* S. B. E., vol. xiii, pp. 94-96; M; I, 6, 17-22.



# ELEMENTARY PAPER

## THE MYSTERY AND MAGIC OF SOUND

THE study of sound is one of the most interesting in our modern physics, and whoever reads Prof. Tyndall's "Lectures on Sound" will surely be charmed by them, while the study of sound from a musical standpoint may be even more fascinating. But Theosophy has opened another door revealing unthought of mysteries in sound. H. P. B. says, "The army of the voice is a term closely connected with the mystery of sound and speech, and it has been said that the words spoken by, as well as the name of every individual largely determines his future fate." Again, she tells us that, "To pronounce a word is to evoke a thought and make it present. The magic potency of the human speech is the commencement of every manifestation in the occult world. Names and words are either beneficent or maleficent; they are in a certain sense either venomous or health-giving according to the hidden influences attached to their elements—that is to say the letters which compose them and the numbers correlated to those letters." (*Secret Doctrine, Abridgment*, pp. 77.) And from further information given in the *Secret Doctrine* one feels sure that H. P. B. is quite right in saying that the spoken word has a potency unknown and unsuspected by modern sages, for it seems never to have occurred to them that "certain vibrations in the air are sure to waken corresponding powers with good or evil results as the case may be;" and she is entirely outside of their world when she says, "Sound is the most potent and effectual magic agent, and the first of the keys which opens the door between mortals and the immortals." But she makes even more startling statements yet (*S. D.* 264-265 *Abridgment*). "We say that sound, for one thing is a tremendous occult power, and may be produced of such a nature as to raise the pyramid of Cheops in the air, or to revive and restore a dying man, even at his last breath. For sound generates, or rather draws together, elements that produce an Ozone, the fabrication of which is beyond chemistry, but within the limits of Alchemy. It may even resurrect a man or animal whose astral vital body has not been irreparably separated from the physical body by the magnetic or odic chord. As one saved thrice from death by that power, the writer ought to be credited with knowing personally something about it." Readers of the *Secret Doctrine* will also

remember the passage which says that, "Vach and Kwan Yin both stand for the occult potency of sound in nature and Ether, which *voice* calls forth the illusive form of the universe out of chaos and the seven elements."

Hippolytus, an early Christian father tells us that Marcus received a mystic revelation. "It was revealed to him that the seven heavens sounded each one vowel which combined together formed a complete doxology, the sound whereof being carried down to earth, became the creator and parent of all things that exist on earth." St. John in the tenth chapter of Revelations and in other places speaks of the seven thunders, voices, or sounds. And in other parts of the Bible we find mystic language in which under the light of the *Secret Doctrine* are hidden great truths about creation that our own modern Scientists have not yet attained to. How was the world and man created? "By evolution," the scientist replies. "Out of the homogeneous has come the heterogeneous; out of star dust worlds have been made, and out of a drop of protoplasm the human body has been unfolded." How? The scientist does not know, but perhaps the Hebrew Seer has some insight into the problem when he says "by the Word of God," "by the breath of His mouth;" "For he spake and it *was*, he commanded and it stood fast." (Psalm 33: 6, 9.) This put into plain language means by sound, that is vibrations. In the first chapter of Genesis too, this thought is put in dramatic form, "And God said Light! and light was." (Gen. 1.3.) Regarded in this way, it may be that the story of the falling of the walls of Jericho was something more than a silly legend. There are those who assert that by constant repetition of certain notes you could disorganize the steel in a bridge and ultimately break it down, just as a glass shade has been broken by the vibration of a note struck on a piano. So when the Bible represents God as sending out his voice and through it calling worlds into existence and also destroying them, it may be expressing a great truth. The Welsh people have a tradition that the ancient Druids raised their great stones, not by material instruments, but by the magic power of the chant. They say that the ancient Bards trained great choirs so that by their occult knowledge of magical sounds they lifted the great stones to their places. I have already quoted H. P. B. as saying that by the magical power of sound the Pyramid of Cheops could be raised in the air.

Our two most prominent channels of communication with the outer world are the eye and the ear, and their mysteries of structure and action are about equally wonderful. They are both made to respond to vibrations. The eye catches and measures the pulsations of ether (which is far more delicate than the atmosphere) whose shaking produces light. The ear detects and interprets the vibrations that travel to the mind as sound. Two waves of vibration at once break through the ears upon

the brain, yet they fall in perfect time and are reported as one sound to the soul that uses this double set of senses to contact it with the wonders of the world. The eye has a wonderful power to see several colors in a landscape or a picture and yet receive one impression of symmetry and beauty. Each color is caused by a certain fixed number of vibrations upon the eye, of inconceivable swiftness, yet to enjoy a glorious view in nature, or a triumph of art on canvas where blue and gold and purple are mingled, the eye must be played upon incessantly by different sets of vibrations, and yet be quick enough in its report to hold the colors distinct for the inspection and enjoyment of the mind. But the wonder of the ear is just as great as that of the eye. Each object in nature is endowed with the power of influencing the air by vibrations. The ear is delicate enough in its sensibility to distinguish the whole gamut of the voices of things. When fifty different instruments or several stops in a great organ are pouring sheets of braided vibrations through its narrow tunnel upon its drum, it is not overpowered, but analyzes them, and trembles to the most subtle pulsations that thrill through the surges of tone, detects whether the instruments or pipes are properly balanced or combined, and enables the mind to discern the grade of sentiment and the degrees of genius that dispose and vitalize all. We used to admire the power of Cæsar who, it was said, could dictate to six scribes at once. But in the cultured human ear listening to a symphony you have threescore reporters talking at once to an inward Cæsar who rapidly condenses their incessant speech into orderly information, and is free to respond also with the imagination and heart to the quality—whether inspiring, pathetic, or amusing—of the news they bring.

As the voice corresponds precisely with the character of the instrument by which it is made so does the living voice reveal the nature of the creature producing it. The cooing of the dove, the roaring of the lion, the growl of the tiger, the bleat of the sheep, the neighing of the horse, the braying of the ass, or the grunt of the pig—each has a voice according to his character. So the human voice is an indication of the individual character. The intonations modified by cultivation and refinement are not the same as in the uncultured man. Take two men from the same class, one educated and refined, he speaks in a low modulated key, regulating all intonations, expressing each thought and emotion with the proper word. The other altogether uneducated, speaks on a high key at the top of his voice, without modification or regulation. So that by listening to men's voices you can tell whether the lower propensities have been brought into subjection to the intellectual and moral sentiments, or whether these are controlled by appetites and passions. Where the moral and religious sentiments are strong the voice is mellow, sweet, and subdued, with a grace, a gentleness, and a charm, so that even in the dark you could easily distinguish a person of a devout character

from a pugilist or a drunken vagabond. There is as great a difference as there is between the voice of a ferocious wolf and that of a gentle lamb.

The method of a great musical composer is the most subtle of all the processes of genius and comes nearest in kind to the method of the Creator as represented in the Bible. The sculptor, the painter and the poet all work slowly and cannot always clearly express their ideas and feelings. But the grandest inspirations of great composers seem to be caught without distortion or deflection of their first majesty and grace. So far as subtlety and mystery of genius is concerned Mozart is greater than Shakespeare. His conception of Lear, Hamlet, and Othello dawned on the great dramatist's vision and was slowly wrought out into rhythmic fact. The process was not so mystical, so akin to the Divine calling of the world from the invisible as was Mozart's creation of a grand passage in a Symphony or an Opera. According to his own account it did not come to him in a thin stream of melody, nor in a theme that he expanded by a conscious mental effort. It burst full-voiced, as it were from an ideal orchestra or a celestial choir, upon his imagination from which it was only copied into human score.

No wonder a poet said of a great musician:—

“What a vast majestic structure thou hast builded out of sound  
With its high peaks piercing heaven, and its base deep under ground,  
Vague as air, yet firm and real to the spiritual eye.”

What a mighty power has sound in speech and music—power to build and power to destroy! There are many reports of Jenny Lind's first visit to New York, but all agree that the power of her voice was magical. When she sang the little love song “Coming thro' the Rye” she gave expression to the social feelings and her voice was lively, rattling and joyous, stirring the same faculties in those who listened, so they all laughed and were merry. But when she sang “I know that my Redeemer Liveth,” there was a grandeur and a solemnity in her tones which seemed unconsciously to lift the great audience to their feet and hold them spell-bound by the magic of her voice. So the human voice in speech and song inspires courage, hope, fear, trust and love, and shakes the soul to its center. H. P. B. left us a little book, *The Voice of the Silence*, which tells us that if we will yield ourselves to the Master Builder he will without material tool build the temple of the soul, and do it by the magic of the silent voice.

JOHN SCHOFIELD.



# REVIEWS

*The Sixth Sense*, by Charles H. Brent. It has long ceased to be pertinent to point out that mystics are not necessarily dreamers or religious fanatics. Writers like Von Hügel, Tyrrell, James, have by their serious treatment of mysticism forever removed the subject beyond the reach of the amateur and set it firmly on a basis of scientific scholarship. But the world has not yet grasped the idea that the mystic is not only *not* insane, but is in reality the only sane man among us; that the normal man is the mystic; that the exercise of the mystic sense is what distinguishes man from animal; and that instead of the mystic sense being used for one exclusive purpose "it is only under its operation that man's faculties, one and all, become human."

These facts are set forth in Bishop Brent's *The Sixth Sense*, with all the force of a clear and intuitive mind. He regards the Sixth Sense as the Mystic Sense, the sense "which relates man to the spiritual or psychic aspect of reality," just as man's physical senses relate him to its material aspect. "There is an objective physical world and an objective psychic or spiritual world." The latter is immanent in the former, or, in other words, "every material object has spiritual contents." "The spiritual is no more an inside without an outside than the physical is an outside without an inside." The physical is a medium through which the phases of the spiritual are reached. If it were not a sacrament it would be a phantasm. And just as the physical world is perceived by a sensory apparatus of a substance identical in nature so the spiritual world must be sensed with spiritual faculties—that is proved spiritually.

Faith in its larger meaning is the term used to cover the entire workings of the Mystic Sense. It gives substance to things hoped for, is the testing of things not seen. "When the Mystic Sense goes exploring in high altitudes it never comes back empty handed." Health of body is one of the gifts it brings, for its influence on the physical man is always salutary, frequently indispensable if a cure is to be worked. Health of mind is a still greater gift. "A blithe spirit in a feeble body can accomplish more than a sluggish spirit in a robust body." "Mere existence and mere longevity are false gods."

"The mind includes the Mystic Sense in somewhat a similar way to the manner in which the body includes the physical senses." The Mystic Sense perceives and the mind acts. One of its chief functions is to present hypotheses. On its findings science confidently builds; by means of its hypotheses invention and discovery proceed. "Generalization of a tentative character precedes and gives a starting point for induction." The doctrine of evolution, the definitions of mathematics are children of the Mystic Sense. Poetry, the parent of prose, is its embodiment.

Character is the Mystic Sense expressing itself in life. The inner ear of this sense delivers its message through conscience. The price men set on character is so high that frequently one puts as much effort into pretending he has it as, turned in the right direction, would win him the real thing: thus he pays "the price of gold for tinsel." But just as religion without morality becomes superstition, so character must have a solid point on which to rest. "Righteousness, which is the Christian term for morality, is to be had only in part by the practise of embrac-



ing the excellent and bathing our mystic self in the fountain of ideals." "The end of life is religion, and the end of religion is to know God."

Here is the point at which, perhaps, most of all Bishop Brent has pushed mysticism beyond the limits ordinarily accorded to it, has insisted on its normality, its universality. "Just as the sense of bodily sight which views the dirt beneath our feet is the same sense which contemplates the blue sky, so the inner sense of sight which perceives an electron, an ideal, or a hypothesis is the same sense which sees God. It is as possible to see God as to see a hypothesis, and as possible—(not more and probably less), to see a hypothesis as to see God." In a footnote it is explained that a hypothesis receives passively our quest, while God moves to meet us.

Taking its beginning in mere gropings, like the baby's awkward use of his limbs, the Mystic Sense can be trained by use till it is capable of orderly and accurate movements. Its early beginnings in superstition are analogous to a false scientific hypothesis. Both are capable of developing into ascertained fact. But here Bishop Brent utters a warning against extreme individualism. "Mystic experience must be organized like all other experience." In fact, the danger of individualism is greatest in religion: "a church is more necessary than a chamber of commerce, a national government, or an academy of science."

Thus the whole reach of the Sixth Sense is defined as indispensable to the normal man, salutary in its effects physically and morally, holding within itself the key to knowledge of spiritual as well as of material things, capable of growing from faint beginnings by appropriate exercise like any other faculty, and, like all other faculties of man, dependent for its normal development on the corresponding faculties of all other men. If any reader thinks that this summary claims too much for a faculty which to him seems vague or unverifiable let him give this little book a half dozen careful readings. It is packed tight with meanings which gradually, as the line of thought becomes familiar, relate themselves to individual experience. In the fullest sense it is a book to make one think. L. E. P.

*Spiritual Science, Here and Hereafter*, by Sir William Earnshaw Cooper. In this day of small families and thick books, many volumes come from the press which one hesitates to put onto the scales for critical weighing. Chief among this class is a certain range of books that speak eloquently of the devotion and zeal of their authors, yet at the same time leave one to regret that this enthusiasm had not found some other outlet than the printed page. *Spiritual Science* is of this number—one comes to respect the author's earnest desire to bring to his fellows the light that has illumined his own experience. But what a pitiful substitute it is for the "light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world!"

There are nearly four hundred pages devoted to a practical, "business-like" exposition of the fundamentals of Spiritualism, to which the author assigns some 20,000,000 adherents. His interest is not in the dramatics of the seance room, but in the "cultivation of the highest mediumistic form—that form of mediumism which attracts the mighty ones from heaven's highest reaches, and invites *and compels*" (the italics are the reviewer's) "the co-operation of those who form part of heaven's great hierarchy."

This fearful picture of man issuing commands to high heaven does not stand alone. Earlier in the book we are told that the spiritual body is "the Working Partner in our Earth-life." At another point the author refers to the "Occult Sciences," classing among them "Theosophism, Swedenborgianism, Spiritism and others." He states that they all agree on two points—"The survival of man after death" and "Communication with those who have passed onwards to the wider life beyond." Probably few adherents of that philosophy of life that is called Theos-

ophy would assent to the second of these two propositions. To those who are seeking the path of discipleship, this book has neither illumination nor guidance to offer, for it does not lead in their direction.

I. E. P.

*The Life Everlasting*, by Marie Corelli. In the Prologue of her latest romance, Marie Corelli traces her line of thought from her first book to the last, showing the evolution of her conception of life and of man's responsibilities. As a "human document" this Prologue cannot fail to be of interest to many who might not be attracted to the story which it precedes.

Miss Corelli takes up in her Prologue the possibility of communication with departed spirits, and declares in the most positive way that such communication is not according to natural law, and therefore can never be. She is convinced that the so-called "dead" are not dead at all; that they have merely been removed to new spheres of action, but under such circumstances that they cannot communicate with us in any way unless they again assume human form and human existence. "It often happens," she says, "that when obstinate humanity persists in considering its own ideas of right and wrong as superior to the eternal decrees, that a faulty civilization sets in, to be presently swept back upon its advancing wheels and forced to begin again. In the same way a faulty Soul, an imperfect individual Spirit, is likewise compelled to return to school and resume the study of the lessons it has failed to put into practice. . . . Spirit—the creative Essence of all that is—works in various forms, but always on an ascending plane, and it invariably rejects and destroys whatever interrupts that onward and upward progress." The Prologue ends with these words: "The Fountain of Youth and the Elixir of Life were dreams of the ancient mystics and scientists, but they are not dreams of to-day. To the soul that has found them they are Divine Realities."

As for the romance itself, it would seem futile to attempt to describe its characters and its incidents, since they appear to the author herself of so little value as compared with its teachings. Through the arguments between the millionaire of the story and its heroine, Miss Corelli is constantly striving to impress upon her readers the conviction that Love, and Love alone is the web and texture of happy Immortality. "Wouldst thou have eternal Life? Then find the secret in eternal Love!—To Love there is no time, no space, no age, no death! What it gives it receives again,—what it longs for, comes to it without seeking,—God withholds nothing from the faithful soul!"

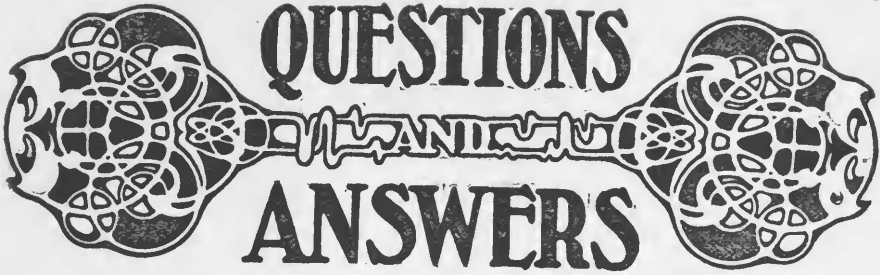
Some profound philosopher has defined imagination as "an advanced perception of truth." Frequently our author seems to be endowed with such perceptions—as when she says: "In the infinitude of space there is no time, but only Eternity. Therefore the Soul which knows itself to be eternal should associate itself with eternal things and should never count existence by years. . . . The joy of life is to love rather than to be loved—and the recipient of love is never so fully conscious of perfect happiness as the giver."

The author's meaning and purpose throughout this story are entirely clear. Her reach is evidently long. And while it may seem to some of her readers that she seeks "the secret of life, the secret of youth, the secret of love" on a plane lower than that on which they must have their real being—no one can presume to judge how far she has tempered her own philosophy, again, to the supposed tastes and prejudices of her public.

KATHERINE HILLARD.

The second volume of *Letters That Have Helped Me* has been translated into German and published by Paul Raatz. The paper, type and binding are all admirable and a most presentable book is the result. Copies bound in paper cost 60 cents; cloth, 85 cents. It is hardly necessary to commend this work to the readers of the QUARTERLY. It should be in the library of every member.

G.



# QUESTIONS

# ANSWERS

QUESTION 134.—*What is the most important fact for a beginner in Theosophy to learn: and what is the most important quality or power for him to develop?*

ANSWER.—The most important fact for the beginner in Theosophy to learn is that all knowledge is relative to the knower; and that therefore true toleration is the *sine qua non* of Theosophy. The most important power for him to develop is the power to start again. Intellectually this means plasticity, to be able to change his mind whenever new light requires it. Morally it means to start afresh without pride or self consciousness after every failure. I say *every* failure, because the sooner a theosophist recognizes the certainty that he is going to make a great many failures, and that in reality he is no good till he has made a few and learned their lessons, the better it will be for him. Occultism, being a matter of individual development, is based on trial and error. For we learn more from our mistakes than from our successes, more from our sorrows than from our joys. It would be a good idea to apply this principle to others. When a man makes a stupid or terrible mistake of any sort why not say, "What a wonderful lesson he has received!" or "What a wonderful chance he has for self-conquest!" Such a practice would help us to a deeper understanding of toleration. L. E. P.

ANSWER.—"Doctor," asked the medical student, "which would you say was the most important of the gastric juices?" "That one," replied the physician, "which in the given case and at the given time is secreted in the most insufficient quantity." M.

ANSWER.—In George Fox's *Journal* there is constant repetition of a phrase which it would be well for all to make their own who seek to interpret life to others. Fox met many men and records that with each he "spoke to his condition." It is the step ahead from where he now stands, that to each of us is the most important step—for until we take it we can take no other. Therefore the knowledge of this step is the most important fact for us to know, and the power to take it is the most important power to develop. But what this fact and this power is differs from individual to individual.

The question speaks of a "beginner in Theosophy." Surely this is a strange misconception of the possible. If Theosophy be the "applied wisdom of God," no one of us can be beginners in it. We need not regard men as standing on different levels—though this is true—but we must recognize that they stand at different points and that the road ahead begins for each from precisely where he stands. B.

ANSWER.—One of the interesting tricks of the mind is its way of leading us to believe in "last analyses", in "final methods", in "ultimate goals", and, all our experience of life to the contrary, we are prone to delude ourselves into thinking that some day we shall comfortably hold in our laps and gloat over the pot of veritable gold at the end of the Theosophical rainbow.

The really interesting thing about a small baby is not that he is beginning to learn to be a perfect, ultimate baby, but that he will soon begin to be a lively boy, and then he will begin to be a man, and then he will begin to be a citizen, a husband, a father, a factor in the life of the nation. So the most important thing for a beginner in Theosophy to learn is that Theosophy itself is but the beginning of a life, and that before he has fairly begun to live Theosophy he will naturally and normally begin to find comradeship in another beginning which will test his ability to endure the essence of all things, and to withstand the consuming fire of joy.

What is the most important faculty or power for him to develop? Why, if he is to be forever a beginner, a learner, the most important thing to develop is teachableness—obedience—detachment from things and from self,—attachment to the will and love of the Master; beyond that there must be other beginnings on the planes of reality where, as Plato said, "The designs of all earthly things are laid up."  
K. D. P.

ANSWER.—A beginner in theosophical reading and study is confronted with a staggering array of new facts and ideas, rich in suggestiveness, deep and far-reaching in implication. They deal with distinct sides of a man's nature,—broadly speaking his intellect and his soul. And the first appeal is more often made to the intellect, because our modern literature gives little attention to Reincarnation, Karma, Planetary Chains, Seven Principles, or even to Saints and Masters of Wisdom. Out of this mass of New Knowledge our questioner wishes, if we read him aright, to plant his feet firmly on some one, solid, fundamental fact—the most important—on which to build a secure superstructure. A knowledge of the Secret Doctrine of Theosophy will do but little good, however, unless the spirit in which that knowledge has been acquired is seconded by serious and earnest realization of the vital importance and tremendous power of the Theosophic life. Theosophy is not meant to be studied alone, to be thought about alone; it must be lived. The first fact for a beginner in Theosophy to learn is, then, that he is approaching a subject which will demand all of his attention, all of his life and energy—not away from his daily life, but in and through the course of every occupation or activity. Until this fact, this question, is clearly and seriously faced by every student, his knowledge will avail him little and cannot go very deep. This leads directly to the second half of the question—what is the most important faculty or power to develop. Undoubtedly the most important is self-control, or, speaking on another plane, the spiritual will as against the personal self-will. As soon as the student enters the path in quest of higher knowledge by which to lead and guide his life, he must acquire a sure hand in regulating the actions, thoughts, and speech of his ordinary existence; and the conflict between his lower and higher self will call forth at the start a necessity for self-discipline and self-control. Whether the beginner understands or thinks he understands Reincarnation and Karma or not makes very little difference if he can develop the will to do, in spite of disgust or ennui or open rebellion. And having once obtained this control, having awakened the spiritual will he is in a position to acquire vastly greater information and to demand a much more exhaustive knowledge on all the inner planes, than he ever could before.  
C. K.

QUESTION 135.—*In Letters that Have Helped Me I find the statement that the Law is only conscious of injustice as an infliction, without any recognition of personalities, and that therefore an injustice to oneself is as much a wrong as an injustice to another. In Light on the Path, we are told that when the neophyte has reached a certain point he can never again raise his voice in self defense or*

*excuse. In other words he must suffer any injustice to himself without protest, and allow misunderstandings to grow without attempting to remove them. It seems to me that there is a contradiction here. Will some one explain?*

ANSWER.—The two statements are perfectly reconcilable when one realizes that the Neophyte who has reached the point of development spoken of in *Light on the Path* has absolutely surrendered all individual rights. Nothing subject to outward stress is his to defend. The only possible wrong which he might suffer would be on an interior plane, such as failure to give his powers the widest possible scope and fullest training. This is injustice to oneself which the Law would assuredly be conscious of as an infliction.

Submission and silent acquiescence to outward injustice is insisted upon over and over again. Mr. Judge preached it in his letters and exemplified it in his life. Through it the great Masters have inculcated the highest truths. A. E.

ANSWER.—The very fact that the Law is only conscious of injustice as an infliction should lead us to understand why the Neophyte after he has reached a certain point, i. e., Knowledge of the Law, can never again raise his voice in self defense. What we term "The Law" is the natural order of the Universe, and It, being only conscious of injustice, is applied only to the restoration of the natural harmonies which are disturbed by thoughts and deeds of injustice. The Neophyte can suffer injustice to himself only by setting up opposing injustice, and when he does this the Law, being impersonal, operates as strongly against the acts of injustice committed by him as It does against the acts of injustice which he seeks to oppose. His duty, under the Law, is well stated in: "A soft answer turneth away wrath."

In other words, knowing of the Law, the Neophyte must "stand aside" and allow The Law to bring order out of chaos. As under the Law "misunderstandings" cannot "grow" unless one attempts "to remove them," so the Neophyte is protected by his knowledge and love of the Law. We cannot "suffer without protest." Unless we "protest" there really cannot be any suffering, our protest may not be made in words or actions, but it is made in our natures. When we reach that "certain point" where we can truly say, "I take my refuge in Thy Law of Good" we are above the need of self defense, above the feelings of outraged personalities, and we will no longer raise our voices in protest. We will know the truth of:

Ye suffer from yourselves, none else compels,  
None other holds you that ye live and die,  
And whirl upon the Wheel, and hug and kiss  
Its spokes in agony.

F. A. B.

ANSWER.—Any act of injustice involves two parties: the doer and the recipient. One of the authorities quoted is, it seems to me, dealing with the doer and the other with the recipient. So the apparent contradiction is like that seen in a pair of gloves and disappears when they are related as they were made to go. In *Light on the Path* the teaching is with reference to the duty of the one who is the recipient of injustice. In *Letters that Have Helped Me* a different situation is discussed, the case of the doer of injustice. To be sure the man who does injustice to himself is both doer and recipient; but it is in his capacity as doer that he is here rebuked, and in the same terms that would be used for doer of injustice to another. I. E. P.

ANSWER.—I see no contradiction. The similarity of wrong between doing one's self an injustice and doing injustice to another, has nothing to do with the resenting of an injustice which another does us. G. HIJO.

QUESTION 136.—*How can I increase my love of the Masters? By this I mean a personal love, not merely an abstract feeling of gratitude and appreciation?*

ANSWER.—“How can I increase my love for the Masters?” Is it not true that the Masters' love is an impersonal love? And must we not return love in kind? I very much fear that we are all inclined to render our gratitude and appreciation to the Masters in a personal way. This is because our sense of personal things is so strong that it shuts out the idea of the impersonal. The Masters' love, like the Sun, shines for all. We can take a “burning glass” and concentrate the sunshine and make of it a consuming fire, likewise we can take the “personal self” and make of it a “burning glass” and concentrate a few rays upon some object or person, and then, in the fullness of our desire, we turn the “burning glass” upon ourselves and are consumed thereby. This seems to be our way of testing the strength of our love—by trying it on ourselves.

If we really desire to increase our love for the Masters we must first partake of the Masters' love, and in so far as we do this in that measure will our power to love others increase—for in loving others we love the Masters.

F. A. B.

ANSWER.—By service. The more we do for a person the more firmly do we become attached to that person. If we seek to find out what a friend likes and get it for him at some cost, we not only awaken his love but intensify our own. If we can think of the Masters as personal friends and do everything that we believe will please them and forward their cause we shall find our personal love for them increasing. Or if we think of them as leaders and comrades in a great cause it will be perfectly natural for our love for them to increase as does that of the soldier for his comrade in arms, his captain, or his general. If we are fellow-workers in any unselfish cause our fellowship increases our attachment to each other. The Masters are leaders, teachers, comrades, friends, fellow-workers, brothers; and to think of them as such will surely increase our love for them.

J. S.

ANSWER.—By consecrating our lives to their work. This means, first, doing the duties that are nearest to us; second, striving in every way to fit ourselves to help and teach others—giving ourselves in unselfish service, so that the general average may be a little higher; third, doing all this with the constant thought that we are doing it for the Master, offering work and life to Him for His use. It is only by keeping the image of the Master constantly in our hearts that we finally awaken to His presence, His power and His love. G. L. O.

ANSWER.—The questioner is wise to seek some means of making his love of the Masters more personal and less abstract. As soon as belief in Masters has been assimilated, every effort should be made to understand with increasing definiteness the nature of a Master and of a Master's love. The trouble with most of us is that our ideals are too vague. But intellectual processes will not give us understanding. Meditation and action are the only means. Masters are human and have divinely human qualities—qualities altogether admirable and desirable, which it should be our effort to acquire. Meditation will give us the first glimpse. Action will give us vision. For as soon as we catch a glimpse, we must try to

express in and through ourselves the glimpse we have caught. In other words, to know the doctrine we must live the life; to draw near to the Masters in understanding and in love, we must strive in all things for likeness to them. This means that we must obey their commandments,—which are an expression of the laws of life by which they themselves are governed. The smallest act of obedience gives more insight than the reading of libraries without obedience, for every such act gives vision for the next, and power with which to perform it. So, also, our love becomes more personal,—we, making it personal by the expression of it through our personalities, as the call of daily duty gives opportunity for obedience, in speech, manner, feeling, motive,—to that ideal of personality which Masters have attained.

E. T. H.

QUESTION 137.—*How would you interpret such an experience as this? With a sincere desire to help others I saw what I thought was an opportunity and took advantage of it—only to be met with a cold rebuff and a closing up of all channels of communication with the person I had desired to help.*

ANSWER.—I think the lesson to be learned is one of courage and patience with oneself. You tried to help and were rebuffed. Do not stop trying to help but rather try to help differently—more perfectly—that is to say with less of self in your motive for helping.

I think it is largely a question of putting oneself in that other person's place. We all find it infinitely more difficult to accept lovingly than to give lovingly. The picture of ourselves accepting is not as lovely to look upon as that of ourselves giving. We all glow at the thought of being a helper—glow while looking at the lovely picture. The person whom we are trying to help and at the same time using as a minor figure in our background is, unfortunately, looking at a very different scene where the central figure is being helped. Naturally there is a rebuff.

Our love must be warm enough and big enough to melt away the difficulties of accepting. We must forget self—forget the pleasing picture so utterly that the unpleasing picture also fades before the eyes of that one we would help. The consciousness of giving or accepting drops away and love meets love in true help.

T.-J.

ANSWER.—Many times, indeed, we are disappointed in our efforts to help another. Either the time is not ripe for such an effort, or we, ourselves, are to blame for the seeming failure—or, we may be at fault because we expect immediate results.

A story is told of a certain man who, outlawed, fled to the desert and stopped at a pool of brackish water for rest. As he ate a handful of dates he idly cast the seeds about him. These seeds, thus unthinkingly scattered, sprouted and grew into a grove of trees. In after years a prince, descendant of the king who proclaimed the man an outlaw, found much needed rest and comfort within their shade. "Blest be he who planted this grove!" cried the prince. "I know not his name, but in his honor I will call it 'The Grove Of The Blest One.'"

F. A. B.

ANSWER.—Forget the rebuff, and do not let it discourage you! You do not need to worry about results. While all channels of communication may seemingly be closed, you still have the power of thought. Besides you never can tell how much good you may have done and the only thing is to keep on trying, if not with this case then with others. Above all, don't worry!

G. L. O.

ANSWER.—Inasmuch as our understanding of others is but partial and limited, we must often experience failure in the effort to help, however sincere the motive. The ensuing coldness and rebuff should do much toward enlightening and explaining the other's attitude and view-point, and in such measure as we comprehend we may hope in time to alter and lift it. We do not attain to speech before we have attained to knowledge.

The spirit in which the rebuffs are suffered may prove a veritable revelation of the wisdom of the soul, more compelling than any spoken words. If the life can be visibly lived those in need of our help will seek it, and to those who ask we can give without fear of the result.

A. E.

ANSWER.—The experience is a very common one. It may be interpreted, perhaps as a lack of judgment on your part, or as suspicion and misunderstanding on the part of the other person. You have really lost nothing for the good-will you have shown will sooner or later bear fruit. Wait patiently, do not resent the rebuff and all will be well.

J. S.

ANSWER.—A sincere desire to help others, while in itself a good thing, should be coupled with judgment and discretion. It may not be amiss to show a readiness and a willingness to help, but there is wisdom in "Davy" Crockett's motto "Be sure you are *right*, then go ahead." There is also a kernel of wisdom in the slang admonition "Don't butt in."

J. W. McB

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#### OFFICIAL NOTICE.

##### THE ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society will be held at the Brevoort Hotel, Fifth Avenue and Eighth Street, New York City, on Saturday, April 27, 1912, beginning at 10.30 A. M.

Branches unable to send personal delegates are requested to forward proxies, for the number of votes to which their membership entitles them under the constitution, to the Chairman of the Executive Committee, Mr. Charles Johnston, 387 Ocean Avenue, Flatbush, N. Y. The proxies should be accompanied by a statement of the number of members on the Branch rolls.

All members of the Society, whether Branch delegates or not, are invited to attend the Convention, and those expecting to be present are requested to inform the Secretary, Mrs. Ada Gregg, 159 Warren Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

March 1st, 1912.

CHARLES JOHNSTON,  
*Chairman Executive Committee.*