

# LUCIFER.

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## On the Watch-Tower.

NAMO NAMASTE!

**G**REETING, greeting to thee, Reader, whoever thou art, whether a friend of Theosophy and a devoted worker for thy suffering fellows, or a carping critic, or a relentless enemy! For:

"Time is the judge; time has nor friend nor foe;

False fame must wither and the true must grow." (YOUNG.)

The Past is the "spook" of the Present, and he who is wise suffers this "spook" to disintegrate in peace in its proper graveyard. For the good of the Past is ever reincarnated in the Present, within the hearts of men, would they but there seek it. That which remains over and the senses can still discern is the spook-shadow, the purgations, which nature works up again to better purpose. Be wary, then, of waking the shadows of the Past to illusive light, for there is more evil than good in them. Seek the ever-living Truth within the eternal Present. And let us not blame the times in which we live, or put all our energy into an increase of physical comfort. As Beaumont says:

"Why slander we the times?

What crimes

Have days and years that we

Thus charge them with iniquity?

If we would rightly scan,

It's not the times are bad, but man.

"If thy desire it be

To see

The times prove good, be thou

But such thyself, and surely know,

That all thy days to thee

Shall spite of mischief happy be."

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Now is the time for new resolutions and new energy; now is the fit period to seize the opportunity that may not recur for a cycle. As H. P. Blavatsky wrote on LUCIFER'S first New Year:

"Let no one imagine that it is a mere fancy, the attaching of importance to the birth of the year. The astral life of the earth is young and strong between Christmas and Easter. Those who form their wishes now will have added strength to fulfil them consistently."

And this year more than ever is it necessary for the Theosophist to be unwearied in well-doing, for a certain period when the forces are intensified for good or evil is drawing to its close. How often since May 8th, 1891, have we heard the regret, "Ah, I wish I had known H. P. Blavatsky"; how often, perchance, a few years hence, shall we hear the regret, "Ah, I wish I had worked harder in the past."

The year 1894 promises much work and many developments of activity, some of which it is even yet premature to speak of. The highly successful lecturing tour of Annie Besant in India, accompanied by the Countess Wachtmeister and Colonel Olcott, is undoubtedly the most important theosophical event that has happened in the East for many a year. The enthusiastic crowds that welcome the travellers at every place prove that the smouldering fire requires but fanning to cause it to burst forth into flames. Strange that a Western and a woman should preach in Eastern temples of the Wisdom of the past; a phenomenon indeed—one of the real phenomena of the Theosophical Society, which, perchance, has still other and greater surprises in store for the wisecracks who confine their attention to "scientific tests" for "psychological tricks" or researches into "spook-land."

Meantime the Convention at Adyar promised to have been more crowded than any meeting that has ever been held there. Then comes the continuation of the long tour in the North of India and the sailing home at the end of March. Some five months' work in England, and then our eloquent lecturer starts for the far distant Antipodes on a long tour, where she will endeavour to complete the work so ably inaugurated by Mrs. Cooper-Oakley.

The year 1894 also sees the publication of the new edition of H. P. Blavatsky's great work, *The Secret Doctrine*, revised with much labour and care, and rendered doubly valuable by the addition of an exhaustive index of perhaps a hundred thousand words. There is still three months' work to do on the index, and if there be any who have difficulty in possessing their souls in patience, they should reflect that Rome was not built in a day, and that *The Secret Doctrine* is neither *Answers*, nor *Tit-Bits*, nor even *Borderland*.

In addition, the H. P. B. Press has just completed the composition of a new and revised edition of that most useful work, *Five Years of Theosophy*, and has in hand a new and revised edition of *Nature's Finer Forces*. H. P. B.'s articles from *The Theosophist* are being edited for the first volume to be printed under the auspices of the H. P. B. Memorial Fund, and the third volume of *The Secret Doctrine* is being type-written from the MS.

Such are a few indications of activity, but there are many more for which there is not space here. For everyone of us can work and labour each in his own way according to our several capacities. It is most cheering to notice the many evidences of self-reliance in the Lodges and Centres of the Section; the journals and transactions of Lodges, the lists of lectures and classes. But in our newer activities and our individual publishing efforts, do not let us forget the older undertakings, that have borne the burden and heat of the day. If *LUCIFER* has deserved well at your hands, do not let it starve for the necessary means to insure its existence. You, who are readers of *LUCIFER*, are its only advertisers. It asks but a "living wage," and it is for you to say to others whether or no it is a labourer worthy of its hire. Among its subscribers are complex units, two or three clubbing together for one subscription; there are others, too, who not only subscribe for themselves, but also for those who are poorer in this world's goods. All this is good and worthy of imitation, and *LUCIFER* is not ashamed of having to speak so plainly, for it is without self-interest in the matter. Let, then, this be one of our activities for the New Year.

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But what though we compass sea and land with our activities, what will it avail if we do not show forth the true spirit of brotherhood in our own lives? Our thought and the spirit behind our work attaches to all we do, and if the thoughts are impure and the motives selfish, if our actions are ignoble and our lives inharmonious, the greater our external activity the greater disharmony we shall spread through the world. If the message of Theosophy is not one of harmony and peace, of toleration and wise adjustment, of action according to the fitness of things, then it would be as well that the message were not spoken. Few individuals can bear correction, fewer societies; let it be the boast of the T. S. that it can bear criticism and profit by the onslaught of its enemies, whenever there is justice in the criticism or real cause for attack. And yet we are not to set our sails to every breeze that blows, or even put into port if a tornado is raging. We work from within without, seeking no recognition, undismayed by the apparent non-success of our efforts. We build for the eternity. Let our ideal be that of the Companions in Walt Whitman's magnificent lines:

"We all labour together, transmitting the same charge in succession,

"We few equals, indifferent of lands, indifferent of times,

"We, enclosers of all continents, all castes, allowers of all theologies,

"Compassionaters, perceivers, *rapport* of men,

"We walk silent among disputes and assertions, but reject not the disputers nor anything that is asserted,

"We hear the bawling and the din, we are reached at by divisions, jealousies, recriminations on every side,

"They close peremptorily upon us to surround us, my comrade,

"Yet we walk unheld, free, the whole earth over, journeying up and down till we make our ineffaceable mark upon time and the diverse eras,

"Till we saturate time and eras, that the men and women of races, ages to come, may prove brethren and lovers as we are."

Let such be our ideal for the New Year and for all time to come! And *thou, too*, Reader and Brother, mayest be a Companion. Seek but the blessing of the Lodge, and Companionship is possible.

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#### THE "LIVES."

And now to the scissors and paste-pot part of the "Watch-Tower." We cut the following from *The Daily Chronicle* of December 2nd. It is yet one more corroboration of the soundness of the teaching of the Esoteric Philosophy.

"The Sunday lecture at St. George's Hall yesterday afternoon was delivered by Dr. Andrew Wilson, the well-known scientist, who gave a highly eloquent address on the work of the protoplasmic cells in animal bodies. Dr. Wilson asked his audience to take the human body—the most complex of living things—and enquire how much of it was really alive. They would find it extremely difficult to answer the question. One much more readily answered was, What was the living part of the body? He could tell them in a moment; it was protoplasm, and the subject of his lecture would be the methods in which this living substance, gathered up in one form or another in receptacles called 'cells,' was responsible for every living action which every living being might be said to perform. What was a cell? The idea was unknown thirty or forty years ago; but since then the perfection of the microscope had shown biologists that the substance of all living bodies was a vast collection of minute little chambers. In vegetable tissue they were round in shape for the most part; in animal tissue their shape varied. If you went backwards in the career of an individual living thing you would find that it had its origin in a single cell—the ovum in animal, the seed in vegetable, life. The human individual originated in a cell, the 120th of an inch in diameter, which multiplied into many other cells, and gradually grew into that complex form of living matter, the human body. What was the matter forming the substance of these cells? It was protoplasm, the one sort of living matter that the world knew, common to every form of life. But although protoplasm was apparently the same sort of material throughout all life, yet it had different properties according to its origin. The lecturer then caused to be thrown on the screen a series of lantern slides explanatory of the form and nature of protoplasm and the cellular shapes into which it was usually formed. He first gave some pictures of the

amœba, the simplest living substance. They were, he explained, nothing but microscopic specks of jelly-like protoplasm found floating in ponds, or perhaps buried under the paving stones at our feet. Yet these simple cells of jelly were each living individuals, and accomplished every purpose of life just as perfectly in their way as we did in ours. All the higher animals were merely aggregations of such units. Proceeding to other types of protoplasmic cells, the lecturer explained that the cell from which the human body was built up multiplied itself by fission just as the amœba did. The lecturer next exhibited microscopic sections of an animal ovum, and showed that it had the property of dividing itself up into various departments, each of which became in due course of development a vital part of the whole animal, such as the skin, nervous system, the digestive system, and so forth. He then gave illustrations of various cells, insisting on the point that each was precisely like the amœba, and practically lived an independent existence while doing its particular work towards the preservation and perpetuation of the whole. Dr. Wilson, by means of a series of slides, discoursed at length on the part played by the cell units in the composition and functions of the animal body. His account of the functions of the nerve cells was particularly interesting, each of them not more than one 5,000th of an inch in diameter, but all interlaced and connected to each other and to the nervous system, so that the brain, through its telegraphic system, was in touch with every part of the body. He concluded with an account of the marvellous discoveries that had recently been made as to the use and purpose of the little white corpuscles in the blood. These were only distributed in the proportion of about one to 500 of the ordinary red corpuscles, but they had the curious property of passing through the walls of the blood-vessels, and, in fact, going about in an independent way wherever they chose. If examined under the microscope they were found to be exactly like the amœba, and research had shown that they were the sanitary police of the body. Immediately deadly bacteria germs entered the system these white cells advanced and attacked them, and endeavoured to eat them up. Their movements in this way were marvellous, and there was no doubt that to their action we were thousands of times saved from disease. If, however, they were inactive or unable to cope with the deadly bacteria, then the body fell a victim to the disease."

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#### AU SECOURS!

This is funny. It appears that there is a paper called *The Anti-Infidel* of the Stiggins and Chadband school of "Christianity." We were not aware of its existence until a friend sent us the following clipping from its correspondence:

"MY DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD,—After a long interval I write to you begging for a grant of as many good tracts as you can send to meet the visit of Mrs. Besant who is shortly expected in Ceylon. The Atheists and Theosophists are very bold, and do all in their power to crush the truth, but as usual very little is done in its defence. I am too poor to do much, but I am trying to raise money to get a good supply of your ANTI-INFIDEL LITERATURE. I would beg for a supply of tracts against 'Conditional Immortality.' That is the new craze here just now and many are becoming unsettled. I send you copies of the *Ceylon Evangelist*, the organ of the 'Conditional Immortality' party in this quarter of the globe. Hoping you will sympathize and help. With Christian salutations,

"Yours in the service,

"Colombo, Ceylon.

(Rev.) J. A. SPAAR.

"[We have sent this good brother many *free* grants of our literature, and despatched per last mail a quantity of our 'Is there a Hell?' which we honestly believe to be the best antidote to the erroneous teachings of Annihilationists and Restorationists, whether at home or abroad.—ED. A.-I.]"

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#### THE POWER OF SOUND.

In the *New York Observer*, a Mrs. Sanford allows that the fall of the walls of Jericho was not so unscientific a "miracle" after all as is commonly supposed. "God knew the keynote of that wall; it was struck, and it fell." Setting aside the familiarity and *bourgeoisie* of the wording of the last sentence, there is an immense truth hidden in this allegory of the power of sound. It is the secret of the efficacy of all Mantra-vidyâ in the East, and explains why a knowledge of the Svara or rhythm of the chanting of the Vedic Hymns is said to be absolutely essential—a knowledge that all the philology in the world will not enable a man to acquire. In order to support her position the writer above-named quotes extensively from Professor Lovering, of Harvard, as follows:

"All structures, large or small, simple or complex, have a definite rate of vibration, depending on their material, size, and shape, as fixed as the fundamental note of a musical chord . . . When the bridge at Colebrooke Dale (the first iron bridge in the world), was a-building, a fiddler came along and said he could fiddle it down. The workmen laughed in scorn, and told him to fiddle away to his heart's content. He played until he struck the keynote of the bridge, and it swayed so violently that the astonished workmen commanded him to stop. At one time considerable annoyance was experienced in one of the mills in Lowell. Some days the building was so shaken that a pail of water would be nearly emptied, while on other days all was quiet. Experi-

ment proved it was only when the machinery was running at a certain rate that the building was disturbed. The simple remedy was in running it slower or faster, so as to put it out of time with the building. We have here the reason of the rule observed by marching armies when they cross a bridge, viz.: Stop the music, break step, and open column, lest the measured cadence of a condensed mass of men should urge the bridge to vibrate beyond its sphere of cohesion. Neglect of this has led to fearful accidents. The celebrated engineer, Stephenson, has said there is not so much danger to a bridge when crowded with men and cattle as when men go in marching order. The Broughton bridge, near Manchester, gave way beneath the measured tread of only sixty men. A terrible disaster befell a battalion of French infantry while crossing the suspension bridge at Angiers, in France. Repeated orders were given the troops to break into sections, but in the hurry of the moment and in the rain, they disregarded the order, and the bridge, which was but twelve years old, and had been repaired the year before at a cost of 7,000 dollars, fell. Tyndall tells us that the Swiss muleteers tie up the bells of the mules, lest the tinkle bring an avalanche down. The breaking of a drinking glass by the human voice is a well-attested fact. A nightingale is said to kill by the power of his notes. If we enter the domain of music there is no end to these illustrations."



#### THE DANGERS OF HYPNOTIC SUGGESTION.

The materialistic physico-hypnotists contend that an immoral suggestion cannot harm the subject, and that its impression at once fades out; the Esoteric Philosophy asserts that every "suggestion" is a "seed" planted in the psychic aura of the victim and ready to burst into life the instant the physical or mental environment is suitable. We know that one of the favourite experimental amusements at the Salpêtrière is to "suggest" murder to the unfortunate humans whom a heartless Science hands over to the mercy of the experimenter. The following incident bears out the views of Theosophists on the subject and went the round of the papers on Dec. 8th.

"A Parisienne, about thirty years of age, named Camper, a sempstress, fired three revolver shots at Dr. Gilles de la Tourette, who was in his study. Only one of the bullets took effect, inflicting a wound behind one ear, but it was shortly afterwards extracted. His injury is not regarded as dangerous. M. Gilles de la Tourette was (says Reuter) one of Dr. Charcot's most brilliant pupils, and followed his lectures at the Salpêtrière Hospital. His assailant was an inmate there for some time, and she is said to have declared after the crime that she had been acting under the influence of hypnotic suggestion."



## THE DENIZENS OF LEMURIA.

Once more Science corroborates the teaching of *The Secret Doctrine*. At a meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, at Adelaide, on Sept. 24th, Mr. C. W. De Vis read a most interesting paper on the fauna of the continent. What could be more Lemurian than the following paragraph from Mr. De Vis' paper taken from the columns of *The South Australian Register*?

"Sturt's 'Stony Desert,' with a vast extent of territory that is now a dreary wilderness, was clothed with a luxuriant growth. The depression which baffled Eyre and other explorers till M'Douall Stuart fought his way through, was once a vast inland ocean. Over the grassy plains bounded kangaroos eleven and even fourteen feet in height, with carcasses weighing probably a ton. Among the forests colossal opossums, weighing two hundredweight apiece, were to be found, and great arboreal bears, with a bulk of 500 pounds, must have tested the strength of huge gum-tree branches. The air was full of birds, and the wingless varieties, once supposed to be peculiar to New Zealand, stalked among the bushes. Colossal animals, of which the diprotodon is the most interesting representative, grazed in the marshes. This wombat-elephant, as he might be called, with some of the habits of the hippopotamus about him, six feet high and ten feet in length, was apparently as defenceless as a rabbit, for all his mammoth proportions. The swarming herds of the herbivorous giants of those days were preyed upon by such strange enemies as the marsupial lion, or rather hyena, and the grim crocodile that infested all the rivers and lakes. . . . The tyrant of the waters was of old, as now, a crocodilian reptile, not as now a crocodile, but an alligator, another curious coincidence with life as it is in America. This alligator must have been very numerous, and it grew to a great size, some of the armour plates on the back being four inches across. It was not restricted, as is the present crocodile, to inter-tropical latitudes, but infested the southern as well as the northern waters of the continent. Several species of turtles, one or two of them of great dimensions, haunted the waters and the land, chief among them meiolania, a huge turtle whose head was studded with great horns. But, formidable above all others to the land animals, was an enormous lizard, called megalania, a monitor, or, as we are more accustomed to call it, 'guana,' of from eighteen to twenty feet in length. Those who know the voracity and boldness of a 'guana' of five or six feet in length can imagine how exceedingly dangerous it would become were it magnified four or five times."



## India, her Past and her Future.

[A lecture delivered on board the *Kaisar-i-Hind*, in the Indian Ocean, Monday,  
Nov. 6th, 1893.]

NEVER, I think, since I began to lecture many years ago have I felt, in standing on a platform, more of difficulty than I feel to-night—difficulty, because I doubt how far I can win your interest, and still more I doubt how far I can win your sympathy. For India, as you look at it and as I look at it, has a very distinctly dual aspect. Your India and mine are probably very divergent. You know her as she is to-day after eight centuries of conquest and degradation. You know her, many of you, by taking part in the foreign government by which she is subjugated, and therefore you are very largely shut out from the real thought and the real life of the people. Whereas to me she is in very truth the Holy Land, the land whose great philosophy has been the source of all the philosophies of the Western world, the land whose great religion has been the origin of all religions, the mother of spirituality, the cradle of civilization. When I think of India I think of her in the greatness of her past, not in the degradation of her present. For to-day but few of her children know anything of her great philosophy. To the mass of her people her mighty religion is veiled, becoming to the ignorant many a superstition, to the cultivated few but a poetical allegory. No longer the very life of the people, it is a form rather than a spirit. And so India fallen is the India of the present, while the India to which I would win your thoughts to-night is India unfallen, India as she was in her past, as she shall be in her future—mother once more in days to come, as in the days behind us, of art and of knowledge, mother of spiritual life and of true religion. That is the India I know; that is the India which has given to us the literature that I am going to say something of to-night; the India whose polity was built by King-Initiates, whose religion was moulded by Divine Men; the India which even so late as five thousand years ago, felt her fields trodden by the feet of Shri Krishna, which even twenty-four centuries ago heard her cities echoing with the sublime morality of the Buddha; the India which later, when her great wars were over, had her poets who in the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyana* gave epic poetry to the world greater than that of Greece; dramatists who in later times still left treasures of beauty that the learned in the West are just beginning to appreciate. That is the India of which I have to

speak—the India which, as I said, is to me the Holy Land. For those who though born for this life in a Western land and clad in a Western body, can yet look back to earlier incarnations in which they drank the milk of spiritual wisdom from the breast of their true mother—they must feel ever the magic of her immemorial past, must dwell ever under the spell of her deathless fascination; for they are bound to India by all the sacred memories of their past; and with her, too, are bound up all the radiant hopes of their future, a future which they know they will share with her who is their true mother in the soul-life.

Though that may seem to many of you an extravagant view of India, still to some who by no means share my faith in her philosophy and in her religion there has been a great fascination in Indian thought. Take the testimony of Max Müller given not long ago in one of his lectures in Glasgow or Edinburgh (I forget which), in which he said that India with her civilization was unique, as was her literature, in the history of the world, and the uniqueness lay in this—I am only roughly quoting what he said—that there once, and only once, you had a whole nation bent on the search for spiritual truth; that there from one end of the land to the other the people sought and honoured spiritual wisdom; so that the man who made any great discovery in truth had the highest title to honour, and kings would leave their thrones to visit the mud hut of some ascetic, because he had found out some truth about the soul, and was willing to teach it to whoever should come as a worthy pupil. Even there you see how something of what I have called the deathless fascination of India has been felt. Even Western orientalist also admit the uniqueness of her power and the uniqueness of her position in the world.

The India to which this thought really applies is the region which lies between the Himālayas and the Vindhya Mountains, and between the eastern and western oceans. I give these as the limits laid down by Manu as those of the true Âryāvarta, the land of the Âryas, or Âryans. That then, the north and the north-west, is what we may call the religious and heroic India. There was settled the great race called the Âryan or the noble. If you want their type you may find it almost pure, in fact quite pure in a few cases, in some of the great Brâhman families of India, the noblest physical, mental and spiritual type which the earth has produced. This race, settled in that land, had for its teachers men who in past ages had finished their spiritual evolution, and who came to the infant race as its instructors in civilization, came as the inspirers of its earliest literature, as the builders of its religion, and so moulded this people dwelling in the great plain of the Ganges, in this ever sacred land. From them came the mighty literature of which only a few fragments remain to-day; for the Vedas of that time and the Upanishads of that time are not the Vedas and the Upanishads that we have to-day. Noble as these are, they are but the fragments of

the ancient literature, fragments left for the Indian people when they were entering on their dark age as being as much of spiritual truth as they were able to understand, while the others were withdrawn, to be kept for better times, for a more spiritual race. And then there were built up in this north and north-western part of what we now call India, a polity, a religion, a social life, a general national condition of which the results were that unique civilization of which Max Müller spoke. Its uniqueness consisted in the fact that it was all framed for a spiritual purpose, planned to assist spiritual evolution. The state was framed to a spiritual end; the family was built on a spiritual basis; the whole daily life was moulded to conduce to spiritual progress. So that even to-day it is easy in India to be religious at least on the outside, and the Hindû has ready to his hand the forms in which spiritual life may show itself; once more to quote Max Müller, he eats religion, drinks religion, sleeps religion, and breathes religion—a statement which is perfectly true, as you may see for yourselves, if you once get hold of the meaning of his religious ceremonies and mark the way in which those ceremonies are woven into his daily life.

The polity was the polity of caste—not of caste as you have it to-day in endless subdivisions, but of the four great castes into which, after all, if you think of it, all human forms of life must throw themselves. There were first the Brâhmans, the spiritual caste, the teachers of the young, the teachers of the people in the spiritual life, the students, the priests, the literary class—the class, that is, that includes the great intellectual professions as well as the spiritual order, and consists of those who are naturally, by their intellectual and spiritual qualities, fitted to be the guides and teachers of the people. Then after them the Kshatriyas, the warrior caste, the royal and ruler class, the class that administered justice, that saw to the administration of the state that defended it from internal disturbance as well as against foreign aggression. Then the Vaishyas, the merchant caste, that included all the commercial and trading classes and the agriculturists. And lastly, the Shûdras, or the serving caste. Those four castes are those which were originally instituted, and those which still remain, though masked by the innumerable sub-castes. They have given stability to Indian life; they have preserved her civilization despite all kinds of conquest and of degradation. And if India has not disappeared as Assyria, as Egypt, as Chaldæa have disappeared—all of them with civilizations younger than her own—it is largely because of the stability given to her national existence by this system founded on natural divisions and with the stability of all natural things. And, mind you, the Indian standpoint from which caste is seen is very different from the standpoint that you may take in the West. Looking at this life as the one life which a man has, it may seem to you hard that he should be born into a caste in which he remains all his life with but rare exceptions. But where

people know that they are incarnated time after time, that the soul has to be trained in every department of life, then it seems helpful as well as natural that these four castes should exist, as the four great schools of the evolving soul, and that the Brâhman caste, pure in its blood, developing the most delicate organism, the subtlest brain, the most perfect mental mechanism, should be inhabited by the most advanced souls. And so in gradation with the other castes in the land.

The social life was similarly organized, always for a spiritual end. Take the institution of marriage as you find it in the early Indian books and amongst the early Âryan people. You find there side by side husband and wife, united in all the greatest things of life: the man the priest of his household, the wife the priestess without whom the daily sacrifices could not be performed, and therefore without whom the duties of the household could not be carried on; for the sacred household fire was only kindled by bride and bridegroom, and without this there was no "household." Husband and wife not only married in life but through death to the world beyond. According to Manu:

Let mutual fidelity continue until death; this may be considered as the summary of the highest law for husband and wife;

For,

The husband receives his wife from the gods [he does not wed her] according to his own will.<sup>1</sup>

In such households grew up the heroic women who stand out for all time from Sanskrit literature—women great not only in the home but also in spiritual knowledge; such as Maitreyî, who "was fond of discussing the nature of Brahma."<sup>2</sup> Again, in an assembly of Brâhmanas you may read how Gârgî, a woman, got up and put questions to Yâjnavalkya which that learned teacher answered with full care and respect.<sup>3</sup> What Hindû can there be who does not feel his heart swell with pride when he thinks of those women, or of women like Sitâ, Sâvitri and Sakundalâ? And what Hindû does not feel his heart shrink with pain when he contrasts those heroic figures with the women of to-day, sweet and pure and devoted as they are by the million, but still half-children, encaged in the prison of the Zenana and the still worse prison of the ignorance in which they dwell. Then take not only this its polity and its social life, but also its religious ceremonies; every act of life a religious service; the very food that was cooked, cooked ever as an offering to the Gods, and only secondarily as food for man;<sup>4</sup> hence very largely, let me say in passing, the abstemiousness of the Hindû nation, all the life of which was to be founded on a spiritual ideal, and not on that of material luxury.

<sup>1</sup> *Manu*, ix. 101 and 95.

<sup>2</sup> *Brihad Âranyaka Upanishad*, V. iv. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, III. vi. and viii.

<sup>4</sup> *Bhagavad Gîtâ*, III. 12, 13.

Then, five thousand years ago, came the beginning of the end, the opening of the Kali Yuga, the dark age, the time at which Shri Krishna appeared, the last of the great incarnations of Vishnu. Then coming on from that time downwards you have the time I alluded to of the great poets, those who wrote the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyana*, and so on. Then you have the coming of the Buddha and the founding of exoteric Buddhism, the teaching of a religion which, while it has a metaphysical and philosophical side, is, looked at in its exoteric aspect, to a very great extent materialistic, and in which, as a matter of fact, it was hoped to preserve at least morality, through the Kali Yuga, if spirituality could scarcely be kept alive. So down these ages of the descending cycle lower and lower the people sank, until at last the spiritual life has well-nigh disappeared. The Brāhman caste, no longer the custodians of knowledge for the teaching of the people, became its jailers rather than its stewards, using it for their own glory and not for the feeding of the people with spiritual food. Then century after century down to the Christian era, with still some exquisite poets, and still downwards after it, becoming more and more silent, until the twelfth, when the Mohammedan invasion swept over the land that had forfeited her birthright, and stifled, as it were, the last breathings of her past. Since then India has had no history. Since then India has been sleeping. Since then she has taken on many and many of the customs of her conquerors, and lately the veneer of a western and materialistic civilization has done even more harm to her people than much of the Mohammedan conquest did, for it has touched what was left of the inner as well as the outer life. Sleeping she is, and sleeping she will remain, until she turns back to that which inspired the literature of her past, to the philosophy and the religion of her greater days. Those only have in them the hope of her future, as they have in them the essence of her past. That is the hope for India that still burns hidden in some few faithful hearts, that the hope of the reawakening of India for which some still work and pray.

Turning to what India has given to the world, we find that the literature that was left as I have described at the beginning of the Kali Yuga, is the literature that contains the ideas on which was based all the great, non-materialistic philosophy of Greece; on these ideas Plato—and Emerson said that all the greatest thinkers of the world since his time were Plato's men—founded all his teaching; these, after giving philosophy to the West through Greece, were revived once more, in their Pythagorean form especially, in the Middle Ages, by Giordano Bruno, who sounded the note which awoke Europe from its fifteen centuries of slumber and made modern life and modern science a possibility. Then onward from the time of Bruno to our own day you find them constantly reappearing, until in the nineteenth century, in men like Schopenhauer, some of the thoughts of the Upanishads are distinctly

formulated—Schopenhauer, who found in these works his noblest inspiration, and who brought into the life of German philosophy the ever young philosophy of the East.

And it is to this that I now propose to turn. With this rough sketch of the fashion in which India was built, in which India lived, in which India fell, I come to the literature which is still her claim to the world's consideration, literature written in the most perfect of languages and enshrining the sublimest of thoughts.

First the Veda, a word which simply means knowledge, a word which covers that which to us to-day is the most ancient literature of India, threefold in its divisions however looked at; it is threefold as Rik, Yajur and Sâma, but it is from another standpoint that I desire to put it to you. The Veda, thus looked at, consists first of what are called Mantra or songs, hymns to the Gods, hymns used in religious ceremonies, hymns which are known by heart to the Brâhmanas as officiating priests, and used whether in the domestic or the public ceremonies in which the Gods are worshipped. Then secondly the Brâhmanas, which contain the ceremonies and rites of the religion, not so interesting save to those who under the symbolism can reach the hidden truths. And, most important to us, thirdly, the Upanishads—the esoteric knowledge of the East in so far as that inner teaching was committed to writing at all—which have raised so much enthusiasm in the Western world because of their deep philosophy; books that must always be books for the few, which can never become popular amongst the many, until the race is far more evolved than it is at present. The existence of these Upanishads—of which, as you may read in one of them, it is said that Brahma “is concealed in the Upanishads that are concealed in the Vedas”<sup>1</sup>—made necessary that Indian institution of the Guru, which is so little understood, and which has become, alas! so much of a form instead of a reality. The Guru, in the old sense of the word, was the spiritual teacher who knew the inner meaning of the scriptures, that which was never committed to writing at all, which was simply given face to face, mouth to mouth, as it was called, handed down from Guru to Chelâ or disciple, the disciple in his turn becoming a Guru and handing on to other disciples the sacred truth that he had been taught. The Guru still exists in modern India, but simply as an ordinary religious teacher, to whom the lad is sent for so many years of his life to learn the Vedas and the Upanishads. They have lost the esoteric teaching so far as the majority of them are concerned; a few, indeed, preserve it still, but they are “hard to find.”

This division of exoteric and esoteric has had a great deal of criticism thrown upon it in the West. It is said that truth should be sown

<sup>1</sup> *Shvetâshvatara*, v. 6.

broadcast, and that there ought not to be anything which is kept back. But is not that, after all, folly? As a dry matter of fact, you cannot give to a person that which he cannot take, which he is unable to understand or to assimilate. It has been the great fault of the popular religion of the West that it has divorced itself so much from philosophy and from science; and the result is that educated people are slipping away from it just because it does not dominate their intellect as well as satisfy their heart. It is all very well to say that a religion should be such that the poorest of the people can grasp it. But that which is truth for the uneducated ploughman is not truth for the educated philosopher. And it is well that we should understand that the old division is wise enough, that it is well to have a philosophy of religion as well as an ethic of religion that a child is able to grasp. The ethical religion will be the guide of the many; the philosophical will be the priceless treasure of the few; but the philosophy will be the heart of the religion, and will make it impregnable against all intellectual assaults. This, then, is the part played by the Upanishads in the religious history of India. The sacred books like the Purānas are for the multitude, and are often full of stories of exquisite moral beauty, useful as exemplifying heroic virtues and for training the people to admire a high standard of morality. But the philosophy is that of the Upanishads, and it is there that we must seek for the great value of India to the world. The Guru was not only to fully teach the philosophy; it was also his duty to show the student how he might attain to the knowledge of the Supreme by the use of certain means. This was Yoga—which means union—the method whereby the esoteric truth was rendered practically useful and developed the spiritual nature. It was not sufficient to appeal to the intellect; it was not sufficient that the mind should be instructed. It was necessary also to develop the soul and spirit in man, and Yoga was the means whereby these were to be developed. That was the work of the Guru—to teach the student how he might develop his inner nature, how the spiritual nature might become active and dominate both the physical and the intellectual. There was the Yoga of action, that which men in the world might follow, doing all action with a religious motive, and without attachment to its results, so gradually becoming fit for the higher Yoga of meditation and contemplation. Of these you may read, if you will, the details in the *Bhagavad Gītā*,<sup>1</sup> where Shri Krishna instructed his disciple Arjuna, and through him many another in the generations that follow.

ANNIE BESANT.

(To be concluded.)

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<sup>1</sup> See chaps. iii, v, vi more especially, but the dialogue constantly returns to these two forms of Yoga.

## Esoteric Teaching.

**T**HE soul of the world like the body of man has its periods of dis-temper. There may be a time when the sunlight of truth is seen clearly upon the mental horizon of humanity as a whole; but suddenly there arises in the north a dark cloud, no bigger than a man's hand. It is only a false doctrine, a misconception, a delusion, arising from the brain of a man whose intellect has become diseased, and like a black and pestilent smoke it spreads, filling the air with a nauseating fog, and spreading miasmas over the face of the earth, from which poisonous weeds and toadstools grow. The sunlight of truth then becomes invisible to all who are not able to rise by the wings of the soul above the mists, and the intellects of men and women grovel in darkness, seeking for treasures in dunghills and rubbish, and priding themselves when they find tinsel and glittering glass where they sought for gold, rubies, and diamonds.

Such a wave of darkness passed over the earth when the era of rationalism appeared. It was the reaction of an age of spiritual exaltation culminating in superstition and the domination of priestcraft, during which selfish men sought to pervert the truths revealed for their own material purposes and individual interests, either personally or as a class; and as such it was a just "punishment of heaven," not any arbitrary infliction, but the natural result of the action of that law of the spirit which perpetually acts within nature. The mists which arose were generated by the brains of eloquent, but narrow-sighted logicians, whom the world believed to be philosophers. They soon became the fashionable leaders of public opinion, and it became a matter of "good breeding" to follow in the trail of these erratic comets and to be led by the nose by the will-o'-the-wisps of a pseudo-philosophy, parading in the garb of science.

Now began the time when all expressions of feeling for the high, noble, good and truly beautiful were ridiculed, rejected, and treated as dreams, vagaries, and nonsense; nothing was admitted but what any material reasoner could at first sight grab with his mud-covered intellect; the ideal was relegated to the country of fancies; nothing was real but what could be dissected and analyzed; poetry was at a discount, and verse-making took its place; art began to imitate the grossness of nature instead of idealizing it; the religious allegories of Christendom became incomprehensible; the people could no longer



see the truths represented in them, they only saw the external shells, and not being able to get at the kernel they threw the whole fruit overboard. The would-be wise came and proved by arguments that the exoteric meaning of the allegories of the *Bible* and other religious books was in contradiction with science and common sense, and in this they were perhaps right; but they were too blind to see and too callous to feel the esoteric meaning behind the external form; they could not see the truth within the fictitious form; they had grown too big and too clever to see the object in telling a fairy tale; they clamoured for hard and dry facts and for "exact science"; they wanted to have their spiritual food cooked and chewed, so that they needed only to swallow it; their life, dedicated above all to their material interests and progression in that science which deals with the superficialities of terrestrial life, was too short to allow them to spend any time in thinking deeper and seeking for their own higher nature; they forgot that mere information is not self-knowledge, and that in spite of all theories we cannot really and practically know anything about any higher state of existence, unless we enter ourselves into that state.

It was now shown that Adam and Eve could not have been driven out of paradise for eating an apple such as we buy in the market; that the world was not created in six of our days of twenty-four hours each; that Jonah could not have been swallowed by a regular whale, and that if he had been so swallowed it would be of far less importance to us than, for instance, the loss of the *Victoria*, or any other modern historical event. This was all very good and true; but the false conclusion drawn from the depths of our ignorance was, that as we could not see the inner meaning of these allegories, there was no inner meaning in them, and consequently the *Bible* and the Christian religion, and in fact all religion was false and delusive; there was no heaven, no spirituality, no immortality, no God, no ideal; there was nothing but the mud of the earth and what exact science knows about it.

In this mental darkness there appeared suddenly a glorious light, shed by the teachings of the Eastern Adepts, through the instrumentality of H. P. Blavatsky. Now it suddenly began to dawn upon many minds that they had previously mistaken the frame for the picture, the candlestick for the light, the cold marble for the warm ideal which the statue represented. The esoteric meaning of religious symbols and allegories was explained and made clear; the constitution of man and the cosmos with its "seven principles" was laid down, incontrovertible arguments were given to prove the truth of karma and reïncarnation; the smoke is clearing away, and the advocates of rationalism and animalism are retiring into their dens, shrinking to nothing within the insignificance of their illusive self; but still grumbling and fighting, although impotently, against the power of truth.

This service which H. P. Blavatsky has rendered to humanity can-

not be overestimated, and its effects are incalculable; but if we desire to reap the benefit from these esoteric teachings which they are intended to convey, we must not forget that it is not their object to gratify our scientific curiosity in regard to the divine mysteries of the universe and of man; their object is to show us the way which we must travel, but the travelling we must do ourselves. To merely study the map of a country and to know at what places the train stops will not advance us an inch upon our progress; all theoretical knowledge, if not carried into practice, remains after all only a dream; an ideal which is not realized remains an ideal and nothing more. Of what benefit will it practically be to me if I know theoretically all about Adeptship and Samâdhi, and how I might write occult letters, if I had the power to do so, if I cannot myself enter those states and do that which can be done only when one has outgrown his own selfishness and sense of separateness? Of what benefit will it be to me if I can give an exactly correct definition of the term "divine love," if my love is not universal and therefore not divine? What will it help me to talk wisely about things which I do not possess and which I make no effort to obtain?

Unfortunately there is a still growing class of people who imagine that they have attained the apex of divine wisdom if they can repeat the explanations that have been given to them in regard to the esoteric meaning of this or that. They cannot see that all such teachings have only a negative but no positive value; that information received from another is not self-knowledge, and that these teachings were not given to us for the purpose of augmenting our stock of learning, but for the purpose of removing the errors and misconceptions that are in the way of our own perception of truth. Not in a great pile of opinions stored up in our memory, but in our capacity of feeling and knowing the truth ourselves, consists our theosophy.

Why were religious mysteries always veiled within a fictitious form? The answer is: because we are to seek for the solution of these mysteries within our own soul. There is an external and there is an internal science. In external science the mere looking at a thing from the distance does not give us any true knowledge regarding its nature, it merely shows what it appears to be, but not what it actually is. For thousands of years mankind has seen the stars in the sky, without being much wiser for it regarding their nature. To know a thing we must be able to recognize it by more than one sense; we must be able to touch it, taste it, and smell it, and make it our own. Thus it is with the inner science. Spiritual powers and essences can be truly known to us only if they become living and substantial within ourselves; we must be able to feel the truth before we can know it; we must come into contact with the presence of God in us, otherwise our dreams about God will be nothing but dreams, and our knowledge consist merely of

theories. That which belongs to the soul is as much substantial to the soul as material things are substantial to the material body, and must be grasped by the soul before they can be understood by the mind. How, then, could we expect to grasp a thing, if we are not even able to feel it? The soul must become able to feel that which is good, noble, and beautiful, before the mind can realize the essential nature of these qualities; if that knowledge resides only in the imagination, it is imaginary and nothing more. Deep down in the heart is a spark of divinity; if this does not begin to glow and become fanned into a flame by true love, it will neither warm nor illumine the intellect, and the mind will resemble a corpse. This spark does not grow or become alive by means of indulging in theories, opinions, speculations and inferences, be they correct or not, but it grows under the caressing touch of that love for the highest, which is the basis of the recognition of our own higher and impersonal Self, which is called the "Christ," because it is the one and only redeemer, namely, the spirit of truth.

To "explain" the meaning of all religious symbols and allegories is merely to do away with the necessity for using one's own thought, and thereby prevent the very function of that organ which is, above all, required for becoming spiritually alive and capable of feeling the truth. How should we pity a man who would be incapable of understanding the meaning of Andersen's tales, such as "Psyche," "The Maid of the Ice," or "The Snail and the Rosebush," without having a commentary written to it; or what would we think of a scientist, who in Mozart's "Requiem" could see no harmony, and merely wished to investigate the number of vibrations constituting each separate sound! This is exactly what our "esotericists" are doing. There are those who can repeat parrot-like all that has been said about the evolution of the cosmos, and have no end of theories about Nirvâna, but do not feel a spark of truth or spiritual life, and have not even an idea of what is implied by the term "self-knowledge"; and, as it always happens, this class is the very loudest in their clamouring for attention to what they profess to teach, and they are themselves insatiable, crying for more and more information and artificial food, while they never assimilate that which they receive and make it a part of their being.

If Christianity has become degraded into mere externalism and churchianity during the past century, it is not because its representatives have become less intellectual or less clever in applying logical reasoning, but because they have become less spiritual and less capable of feeling the truth, of which they know nothing but what they have been taught by their books. In other words, they know what their books say about the truth, but they do not feel or realize the truth within themselves, it is not a living power in them. It requires the possession of holiness to comprehend holy mysteries; but holiness of the spirit and analytical power of intellect are two different things.

Holiness sees the whole, the great and divine essence in every part; intellectuality seeks to tear that which is a unity to pieces; not being able to grasp the whole it wants to grasp the separate parts; but if the whole is torn to pieces, the life, being one and indivisible, leaves the separate parts, and there will be nothing left for examination but the lifeless form.

This is especially the condition of "Protestantism." It began by protesting against the abuses of papal authority, and ended by protesting against everything that was not compatible with reasoning from the material plane, or above the understanding of the earth-bound intellect. Christianity originally was the religion of love, the "science of the heart"; Protestantism made it a religion of selfishness, a speculation of the brain with no end of dogmas, beliefs and opinions, but without any true faith. Therefore the Protestant churches are split into numerous sects, each sect and even each individual (if he is in the habit of thinking at all), representing so many varieties of opinions, but without any real self-knowledge unless it came to them in spite of their church; nor will any agreement among them in regard to the acceptance of certain doctrines put them upon a more solid ground. Churches built upon opinions are built upon sand; the true rock upon which the true church is builded is not a dogma or an opinion, nor is it to be found in a belief in the pope or in a Mahâtmâ, but only in the belief in the Higher Self, which means the recognition of the divine nature in man.

If a peasant meets me in the street and says and thinks, "God bless you," I know him to be much nearer to the truth and nearer to God than a doctor of divinity who comes with learned definitions about atonement and reviles everyone who does not partake of his views; and I may say that I even consider him wiser than a "Theosophist," who can explain all about Mûlaprakriti and Nirvâna but who never felt that he himself has a soul, or that the soul has him: for the peasant, although he cannot intellectually define the meaning of the term "God," nor describe his qualities or explain the way in which he blesses mankind, *feels* that the words which he says are an expression of goodwill, while the others described above do not know that goodwill or unselfish love which is the true redeemer, the only germ from which divine wisdom springs. From this seed springs the recognition of truth and the enlightenment of the spirit. He who cultivates that seed will need no esoteric explanations; he will know the truth, not from hearsay, but because he possesses it as a part of his own being; he will not need to ask questions, but be able to answer them. While the theorist only talks about what he has heard or what he supposes, such a simple-minded person can speak of what he knows, for he is himself that which is the object of his discussion.

There is a large class of professed "Christians" who are afraid of

the teachings that have come to us from the East, because they think that they might come into conflict with the dogmas which they have accepted and which they do not desire to give up, be they true or false. Such persons are to be pitied, because the teachings of the Adepts are furnishing the key to the understanding of the allegories of the *Bible* and the mysteries of the Christian religion, which the theologians have lost owing to the fact that they wanted to make the Christ a servant of the church, instead of the church being a servant of Christ. The teachings of the Adepts are clearing away the obstacles for the self-perception of truth, the network of errors which priestcraft has woven around the pure teachings of the founder of Christianity; they are calculated to make a true Christian out of one who has merely tried to appear as if he were one.

But there is also another class of short-sighted persons, who, after having received a smack of Indian philosophy, look with contempt upon everything connected with the name "Christian." They are generally such as having become disgusted with the hypocrisy of outward Christianity, are not able to recognize the true essence within the fictitious shell. There are some upon whom the mentioning of the word "Christian" has a similar effect as the waving of a red rag upon a bull.

It is absurd to believe that the Christian religion has no concealed truth, while the very fact that this truth is concealed and that the followers of the churches are not able to find it, is precisely the cause of the present degradation of the Christian churches, which on the whole are now nothing more than places for social religious amusement, if not schools of logic for the perversion of truth. The very name "Christian" is a mystery which can be solved truly only by becoming Christ-like at heart. "Christ" means the Redeemer, the redeeming principle in the universe, the recognition of truth. There is only one eternal and universal truth in the universe, consequently only one Redeemer, one Christ, and it follows that there can be only one true religion in the world, namely the religion of Christ, the Redeemer (*Âtmâ-Buddhi-Manas*), no matter by what name this religion may be called. If "Christ" is the light of divine wisdom, not even Gautama could have become a Buddha, which means "Enlightened," without having become "resurrected in Christ"; but the Christianity of which we speak is quite different from that which is popularly known as the "Christianity" of the present day, that of which we speak is the True Church of Christ that exists only "in heaven," which means in the self-consciousness of divinity in humanity. What we see of Christianity upon this earth is its animal body (*Kâma Rûpa*), its lower principles, which are the vehicles of impurities and so much filled with them that the divine spirit would be glad to depart if compassion were not compelling him to linger awhile.

The Christian exoteric teachings, no less than those of the East

have all their esoteric meaning in forms well adapted for Western educated minds, and these esoteric meanings would become clear to everybody and require no explanations, if only everybody were to follow the plain instructions of the divine teacher and seek for the spirit and the truth of these doctrines, not in their external forms and modes of expression, but, as he says, "*in spirit and in truth*," which can be done not by external reasoning, but by the spirit of truth itself manifested in man. Let them learn to feel the spirit of Christ, which is divine (universal) love in them, and the spirit of Christ itself will be their instructor and teach them divine wisdom, without any explanations given by man; for, as mentioned above, all such explanations can only serve to destroy error, they cannot reveal the truth—the truth reveals itself, and unaided, if no obstacles are in the way. The brain of man is not eternal or self-existing, it is merely an instrument for the accomplishment of a purpose. Its science is not its own object; the object of knowing is not knowing, but the formation of character, the removal of that which impedes the liberty and expansion of the soul. This illumination of the soul by the spirit of truth itself is the only kind of "esoteric teaching" which is of any permanent value, all the rest is changeable, perishable and belonging to Mâyâ.

This divine illumination is the easiest thing to attain, in so far as we ourselves are not required to do positively anything whatever for the purpose of helping ourselves to obtain it; all we have to do is to be obedient to divine law, and let that law act in us without our own aid or interference. This is taught by the *Bible*, which says, "For it is God [the Higher Self] which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (*Philippians*, ii. 13), and "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven" (*John*, iii. 27); and the same doctrine is taught in the *Bhagavad Gîtâ*. Arjuna (man) is only the charioteer; Krishna himself is the one who conquers in the battle-field. "Work [selfish efforts] is far inferior to devotion. Seek for refuge in Me. Miserable are they whose motive is the fruit of their works. He who has become truly devout abandons both good and evil deeds; therefore, apply thyself to devotion" (ii. 49, 50).

Nowadays the heart-cry of hundreds of would-be occultists is: "O Lord! what must I do to turn myself into an Adept and become superior to the rest of mankind?" This is only a variation of the well-known heart-cry of thousands of professed Christians: "O Lord! let the whole world be damned if you choose to do so, but save, oh, save my person!" To this the *Bible* answers that, "flesh and blood [the terrestrial mind with its selfish desires—Kâma-Manas] cannot enter the kingdom of God [divine consciousness]," and that the mystery which is manifest to the *saints*, Christ in us, is the hope of glory in us, in whom every man may become perfect (*Colos.*, i. 27), and the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* testifies to the same truth: "Being one with Brahma, calm in

spirit, the devoted soul neither mourns nor desires, being the same to all things, it attains to supreme devotion, to Me. By this he knows Me truly, what I am and how great. Then having known Me truly, he enters into Me immediately" (xviii. 54, 55). All this is easy enough, for all we have to do for that purpose is to conquer our personal and illusive self, or, to speak more correctly, let it be conquered by the spirit of truth in us. It is neither Mr. Smith nor Mr. Brown that can be made into Adepts; but let them sacrifice and surrender their Smithship and Brown-hood, and Adeptship will become manifested in them. There is no Christ to redeem the personal man and make him immortal, but Christ in man redeems himself from man by overcoming the lower elements dominating his nature. This implies a continual lifelong battle in man between the elements of good and evil in him—a combat whose fierceness becomes realized only when the Christ spirit begins to make its presence felt in the heart of spiritually awakening man. This is the esoteric meaning of the words in which Christ is made to say: "I come not to bring peace, but a sword." There can be no peace gained without a combat, no victory without a struggle.

Thus the Christian religion is as full of esoteric teachings as any other, and they would require no external explanation if those who wished to understand them would seek for the solution—not in their brains, but in their own divine nature, in the essence of the divine being whose presence they may feel in their heart. There is no necessity for attempting to give anybody a natural history of the "Lord," whose name is so freely used by the thoughtless and ignorant. Let everyone become lord and master over his own sinful nature, and he will know who the Lord is and what are his qualities; but all information in regard to the "Lord" (Ishvara) will not make a man wiser or better if he does not attempt to attain mastery over himself.

It is surely a ludicrous, if not a pitiful, sight to see prayers thoughtlessly and parrot-like repeated as a mere matter of ceremony, without men feeling or knowing the meaning of the words they use; but it is not any more elevating to hear a person display his information in regard to divine mysteries, without realizing himself their importance or aspiring to entering himself into the spirit of divine truth. On the other hand, while all the knowledge possessed by the learned will be at the end useless to them if they do not employ it practically, a man may be intellectually uninformed and unlearned, yet if he only loves the truth in his heart and clings to it, the truth will cling to him and instruct him.

Esoteric teaching, or, to speak more correctly, the explanation of the esoteric meaning of exoteric doctrines, is exceedingly useful and necessary for all whose minds have become perverted by the dogmatism of a false system of theology or philosophy; but the object of these teachings is not the gratification of our curiosity, they are taught for

the purpose of aiding us in removing the obstacles which prevent us from walking ourselves upon the Path of Light. Those whose minds are pure, who have found the Path and entered into it, who never believed in error and have no misconceptions to remove, will not require any information from man. They feel the truth in their hearts, even if they make no attempts to analyze it critically. In regard to such pure, earnest and sincere minds, it will make little difference whether they express their feelings and aspirations in one form or in another—in mystic language, or in words comprehensible to the logician; he to whom their words are directed will understand the esoteric meaning of what they have to say, because he is no stranger to them, they know him and he knows his own. But such are few!

FRANZ HARTMANN, M.D.

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## Ssabians and Ssabianism.

*(Concluded from page 332.)*

A COMMUNITY of Ssabians, founded by Thâbit ben Qorra, existed in Bagdad while that city was still the residence of the Khâlifs. Thâbit, whose fame reached to Western Europe, was celebrated as an astronomer, astrologer, physician and author. He wrote over one hundred works in Arabic and sixteen in Syriac; also numberless translations, commentaries, and compendia on mathematics and logic, music, medicine and philosophy. He left Harrân on account of certain differences with his co-religionists. Besides the community of Ssabians in Bagdad he founded another in Irâq. He held posts of importance and trust under the Khâlif El Mo'tadhid and probably under El Most'lin, but biographers differ slightly as to dates. He had a number of scholars who made copies and translations of his works after his death; his direct descendants also were famed for over two hundred years in various departments of learning. Dr. Chwolsohn thinks it probable that Thâbit leaned to Neoplatonism, which is nothing (he says) but the rationalizing of heathenism. A writer who knew Thâbit well, A'hmed ben eth Thajjib, speaks of his belief in a great First Cause, a God who deposes the government of the world to his ministers, the lesser gods, and to whom tribute must not be offered. Masûdi, another famous writer of that period, speaks in the same strain. In Scharastâni's description of the religion of the Ssabians, is found the same philosophy as in Jamblichus, Proclus and others. But it is to be noted that this teaching was considered heterodox by the ordinary Ssabians, who insisted on the minutest attention to ritual, sacrifices and offerings as an essential part of their religion.



Chwolsohn remarks that much might be made, after the fashion of some present-day historians, of the inner meaning and symbolism of the Ssabian worship, but he considers that it would be in the highest degree unphilosophical to draw conclusions based on the small amount of knowledge we possess. It is certain that the Ssabians of Harrân were, according to the testimony of numerous writers, sincerely attached to their religion and its rites; for not only did they refuse to yield to Mohammedan persecution, but were known in many instances to have declined honours and high offices under their conquerors, lest any taint should rest upon them or any compromise be demanded. "It is our duty," said they, "to purify our souls from the soil of physical desires, to emancipate our nature from lust and anger, and so to cultivate it that we may attain to communion with spiritual beings, *i.e.*, the gods, in order that we may resort to them in our need. This purification can only be the result of our merits, by self-conquest and the deliverance of our souls from the lower passions, by means of our prayers for help from those spiritual beings. Such appeals for assistance must, however, at all times be accompanied by submission, by humble prayers, by copious almsgiving, by the offering of sacrifices, etc. Further," say they, "the peace, joy and prosperity which are granted to us are the rewards of our good deeds in a former life, and the sorrow, trouble and adversity which befall us are punishments for our bad deeds in the same.

"From the Godhead," they say finally, "nothing but good can come; what there is of good or pure, is so by intention of the Creator, and is due to Him; but all of evil, impure and unhappy, is the result of a necessity in nature . . . events due partly to accident, partly to the basis of matter, and to unfortunate combinations [of planets and elements]."<sup>1</sup>

The Ssabians had a high standard of morality. In the midst of a polygamous people, even in Bagdad itself, they kept strictly to their monogamy, and divorce was extremely rare. Intoxicating drinks were not allowed. In one of their sacred books, which they ascribed to the biblical Seth, and which treats of the virtues, they are enjoined to speak the truth, to exercise valour and hospitality; they are with equal emphasis warned against vices.

With regard to the origin of their religion, the Ssabians would at one time declare that they had been taught by Hermes, at another that they received it in a direct line from Abraham, but all this, says Chwolsohn, was only to blind the Mohammedans and to escape persecution.

According to Schahrastâni and other learned Arabic writers, the root-idea of Ssabianism is not star-worship, though this opinion is generally accepted in consequence of conclusions based on false ety-

<sup>1</sup> Schahrastâni's *Kitâb-el-Milel we-el Ne'hal*.

mology. Its chief tenets, besides the belief already mentioned in a First Cause removed far beyond the reach of this lower world, were the existence of a hierarchy of lesser gods who act as intermediaries, and the adoration of these beings in connection with the planets which they inhabit or preside over. In order to enter into relation with these planetary spirits, the Ssabians naturally made those planets the subject of minute study and observation. To this end their mathematical studies were directed and on this their religious ritual was based; the form of each temple, the very metal and other material of which each image was made, was regulated by its relation to the planet to which it was dedicated. Hence the varying shapes of their temples, some being four-square, others hexagonal, octagonal, and so on. The same held good in their talismans.

This part of the subject recalls a passage in *The Secret Doctrine*, from which the following lines are an extract:

He who believes in all this, has also to believe in the multiple combination of the seven planets of Occultism and of the Kabalah, with the twelve zodiacal signs; to attribute, as we do, to each planet and to each constellation an influence which in the words of Ely Star [a French Astrologer] is proper to it, beneficent or maleficent, and this, after the planetary spirit which rules it, who, in his turn, is capable of influencing men and things which are found in harmony with him, and with which he has any affinity.<sup>1</sup>

According to Dr. Chwolsohn, these "superstitions" were the consequence of the Ssabian ignorance of true science, as revealed later to the West through Aristotelian methods. He places what he calls their "dark mysticism" in unfavourable contrast to the bright and beautiful conceptions of the Greeks in their Olympian divinities, mixing in the affairs of men and deigning to walk with them on earth—often to an inconvenient extent, some of us may consider.

The more philosophical part of the Ssabian belief was confined to the learned few, such as Thâbit ben Qorra, and was akin to the views of the Neoplatonists and Gnostics. Plato, Plutarch, Apuleius, Jamblichus, Proclus, Porphyry—all agree in the same; therefore, concludes Dr. Chwolsohn, the later Ssabians must have derived it from these sources, for the people were certainly idolaters. They believed that not only was each planet directed by a special indwelling deity, but that every manifestation of nature has its presiding spirit. Everything in the heavens, in the air, or upon the earth, has an inner spiritual being. By means of these spiritual entities the transformations of matter take place, every species attains to its own perfection, and it is by means of this spiritual energy that tender plants force their way through the hardest rocks. These spiritual intelligences alike in man and matter emanate directly from the divine and are of the nature of the rays of light. They are pure abstract forms, of a light so ineffable that no

<sup>1</sup> *The Secret Doctrine*, i. 79, old ed.

sense can perceive them, no understanding conceive of them. Their condition is one of the purest joy, doing always the will of the Highest, and they are our intercessors with the Divine. All types and substances in the material world have their counterpart in the spiritual world, whence they have their origin.

Dr. Chwolsohn calls this conception of the Divine Being and the functions of the minor gods a purely Chaldæo-Neoplatonic one. The student of Theosophy will be grateful to this learned author for having traced out, through infinite mazes of Arabian and Syrian writings—the texts of which almost fill his second huge volume—these ancient beliefs so far as they were made known, and he will not be at all disconcerted by the amazement and incredulity with which Dr. Chwolsohn views his own discoveries. On the contrary, he will recognize under the thin veil which appears to the German investigator as a thick curtain, much of the teaching with which he is already familiar, and will know how to correlate the two and make them harmonize together.

It may, however, be reasonably supposed that Ssabianism, like all religions with an elaborate ritual, tended to become more and more exoteric, and this may have been the cause of the "religious differences" which induced Thâbit ben Qorrah to remove from Harrân, and found a new colony of Ssabians in Bagdad. The fact that he and other Ssabian thinkers held views in common with the Gnostics, does not prove that they learned from one another, but rather that their knowledge proceeded from a common source. The story of Abraham quoted at the end of this paper throws some light on the *Bible* record in connection with this part of the subject. (*Cf. Gen.*, xii. 4; *Josh.*, xxiv. 2.)

We will now glance at the account given of Maimonides, who was the first to make known the name of Ssabians to Europeans, and to whom Dr. Chwolsohn attributes many of the erroneous ideas current concerning this ancient people.

This great Rabbinical commentator was born in Cordova, of a learned Hebrew family, in 1139, and studied medicine and philosophy under Averroës. To escape Moslem persecution he went to Egypt, and afterwards became physician to Saladin. In every mention made of Ssabians in his writings he seems to have meant nearly all heathen peoples in Eastern lands, *i.e.*, all those neither Christian, Hebrew, nor Mohammedan. He even speaks of Turks and Hindûs as being the "remnants of those Ssabians who once filled the whole world and whose religion once prevailed universally." He speaks also of the Israelitish ancestors, who, living beyond the Euphrates, fell back into Ssabianism, becoming again mere heathen and planet-worshippers. It was to redeem an important subject from such erroneous treatment that Dr. Chwolsohn undertook his laborious task, and the student of comparative religions is specially indebted to him for supplying copious

extracts from the original texts whereby the student of Arabic may test and verify his conclusions.

There is, however, one important source made use of by Maimonides which will have a special interest for Theosophists, on account of various references to it in the works of H. P. Blavatsky. This is the Nabathean writings, or works by "heathen" Babylonians, having reference to their worship. The *Book of Nabathean Agriculture*, which was written in the Nabathean language, and was in nine volumes, was translated in the year A.D. 904 into Arabic by Abû-Bekr A'hmed ben 'Ali ben Wa'hschijah el Kâsdani, or the Chaldæan. He asserts with regard to it that it was compiled by three sages, namely, Ssagrit, Janbûschâd, and Qûtâma. The first-named, who flourished in the seventh thousand of the seven thousand years of Saturn (the seven-thousandth cycle of Saturn)—which is common to both Saturn and the moon—began it; the second, who flourished at the end of the same period, finished it; and the third, who appeared at the expiration of four thousand years of the seven-thousandth sun-cycle, edited the whole. He (Ibn Wa'hschijah) reckoned, that between the first and last-named was a period of more than 18,000 solar years. (Chwolsohn's *Ssabians*, etc., vol. ii. p. 705. See Arabic text.) Quatremère's treatise on the Nabatheans in the *Nouveau Journal Asiatique* shows that this people were not of Arabic but Aramaic origin, and therefore not descended from Nebajot, a son of Ishmael, as asserted by Diodorus, Strabo, Pliny, Josephus and others. Arabic writers deny that the Nabatheans were of their race, and say that they were the native population of southern Mesopotamia, or ancient Chaldæa and the surrounding countries; they also spoke of all the Aramean races, Canaanites included, as Nabatheans. Chwolsohn however, thinks this too sweeping, and that not *all* the dwellers in southern Mesopotamia were Nabatheans, but only the "relatively original and Semitic races among them," which do not include Chaldæans, who were not Semites. These *called themselves* Nabatheans only after the introduction of Islâm.

In a work by Ibn Chaldûn, one of the chapters is headed: "The history of the Nabathean and Syrian kings of Babylon." In another place the same writer speaks of the discovery of magic and of talismans, and remarks that this science is much studied by the Syrian and Chaldæan inhabitants of Babylon, by the Egyptians and others, who possess many works on the subject, such as the *Book of Nabathean Agriculture*, which belongs to Babylonian literature, and from which the people learned their magic arts.

On the second and third parts of this work, to be found in the Imperial Library in Paris (No. 913), Quatremère remarks:

An author named Sagrit, whose precise date is unknown, and who must therefore have lived in very remote times, wrote in verse a treatise on agriculture, a large work on medicine, and another on times and seasons. This last was said to

be a most able work, very comprehensive, undeniably useful, and for which he had had no model. The first-named, I mean the agricultural treatise, was divided into chapters, and each verse had a double rhyme, one at the beginning as well as the end. Each chapter contained an enumeration of plants peculiar to different countries. . . . Adam, it was said, had written one thousand folios, in which he enumerates the plants that thrive in one country and do not succeed in another, and enters into the details of their virtues and properties, whether useful or noxious. To him was attributed also a great work on the nature of soils, their different qualities and productions. A portion of these works was still extant when the author of *Nabathean Agriculture* was writing. . . . Noah was said to be the author of a great work, the inspiration for which came from the moon. Kou-louscha, who took the title of "Ambassador of the Sun," wrote a treatise on the mysteries. . . . To Tamiri was attributed an answer to the letter written to him by Noali to induce him to give up the worship of the planets and to adore only the one eternal God. . . . Finally Douiabi . . . who was entitled the "chief of philosophers," painted with his own hand a thousand pictures which he placed in a temple near Tyre, and under each of which was an inscription explaining its properties. He had also deposited in the same temple a work giving circumstantial details on the object he had in drawing these pictures, and *on the uses to which they might be put*. When the author of *Nabathean Agriculture* was writing, this work had perished, as well as a great number of the pictures; only one hundred and eighteen had been preserved, one of them representing a vine.

This extract shows, says Chwolsohn, that the book is not merely on agriculture, but is connected with religious worship and magical practices, the use of talismans, invocation of spirits, demons, etc. The Arabs generally seem to have looked upon the Nabatheans as magicians.

Furthermore, a work is mentioned entitled: *On the Magic Arts of the Nabatheans*, which was translated into Arabic by Ibn Wa'hschijah. These works are, however, not connected with our Harranian Ssabians, says Dr. Chwolsohn.

The last point of special interest among Ssabian beliefs is that of great recurring world-periods or cycles, each lasting 36,425 years. After each cataclysm the world was renewed, starting afresh with a single pair of every species of plant and animal, man included. Towards the end of the cycle natural propagation ceased. The soul of man, being of divine origin, was believed to be immortal, returning to earthly existence after each world-cycle, reaping his rewards and punishments due from the past life.

The identity of many of these beliefs with those taught by the ancient Wisdom-religion is so striking, that to comment thereon might seem to the readers of *LUCIFER* superfluous, not to say impertinent. I will, therefore, close this notice with a suggestive anecdote related by Maimonides as among the Ssabian traditions. "Whereas Abraham, who grew up in Kûth'â, had dissented from the ordinary faith and had given out that there was another Creator besides the sun; they [the Ssabians] set before him various arguments, among others the universal influence of the sun on all existing things. Abraham replied: You are right, but it is only like the axe in the hand of the carpenter. After

various objections raised and refuted, the king ordered Abraham to be sent to prison, but even there he continued to dispute and to combat their beliefs. The king, fearing that he might turn others from the faith, banished Abraham to a district in Syria, and confiscated all his possessions."<sup>1</sup>

E. KISLINGBURY.

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## A Dead Soul.

(Concluded from page 315.)

OF course, I could not stay away from Sasha altogether, and looked him up often enough. But our conversation never turned into the channel of his experiment. In fact, it was his wish that all such allusions should be forbidden ground on the occasions of my visits.

In my silly childish way I was only too glad to dismiss the subject entirely, and seeing my brother in good spirits, though thin and pale, I soon lost all apprehension. But one day, when I came to Sasha, with an appetite stirred up by a long, brisk walk, and asked for something to eat, he laughed uneasily and said:

"That, my dear fellow, is more than I can give you. Food cannot be kept in this room."

"But why?" I asked. "Surely you take your regular meals as usual? You don't mean to say——"

"No, I don't mean to say anything of the kind. I have no intention of starving myself. But lately I have been compelled to eat out of the house. The fact is, *he*" (nodding towards the hiding place of the head) "consumes more food than I can really afford."

"But why do you let him?" exclaimed I, with a very uncomfortable sensation in the region below my stomach, that I always experience when frightened.

"Why do I let him? My dear fellow, simply because I cannot help it. The baby is growing strong and wilful, and is in the habit of helping himself unasked to all the food he can get."

And, at these words, Sasha's face showed signs of genuine amusement. But it was only a pale shadow of his former good-natured boisterous mirth, and made my heart ache.

"It is some time," continued Sasha, "since I became aware of this

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<sup>1</sup> Some three years after the publication of his great work on the Ssabians, Dr. Chwolson wrote a treatise, *On the Remains of Old Babylonian Literature Preserved in Arabic Translations*. It was to combat the views therein put forward on the antiquity of these writings, and especially of the *Nabathean Agriculture*, that M. Renan published an essay on the *Age and Antiquity of the Book of Nabathean Agriculture*. This essay was translated into English and published in 1862. M. Renan considers from the internal evidence of the writings, "that the school to which they belong cannot be anterior to the third or fourth century of our era, and that the literary movement which they suggest as earlier, does not allow us to place it before Alexander." He thinks, however, that it may have "preserved to us many most ancient fragments, remodelled in the course of time in all sorts of ways."

trick of his. But whatever food I left in this room was sure to disappear in some mysterious way. It never actually changed its place or was moved from the cupboard, but somehow or other it got disintegrated in the air, and I knew it was absorbed by the suckling over there."

I must confess I was fairly disgusted at this statement of my brother's, which only seemed to give him genuine pleasure, and so I told him. But he smiled and said:

"Evidently we shall never be able to make a man of science out of you. You are too frightened by trifles and mere details; but I am not to be moved by anything. I have made up my mind, and I shall stick to my decision; and when my 'child' is able to reason and to speak, I shall exhibit him everywhere, taking him to the medical faculties in France, England and Germany. The doctors and scientists of the whole world shall see him, and then the world will hear of me. My name will become immortal, and my discovery benefit present humanity besides numberless millions of human beings who will be born hereafter in a brighter, happier era of our globe's life."

Sasha spoke like a prophet. Oh, the ringing, inspired sounds of his voice, the fire that burned in his eyes!

This was my last visit to him before my first examination. The day came and went, and with it passed my trepidation and feverish expectation. My examination was not a failure, as I had feared it would be, and in the evening I sat quietly alone in my chum's room enjoying to the full the rest after the strain. My friend himself was not to be found anywhere in the corridors of the University when I left. I knew the only place to find him would be at a certain little café, which provided refreshments and billiards on credit *ad libitum*. I knew he had very reluctantly abstained from visiting this scene of festivity for at least a fortnight; but now, when the hot haste and the spasmodic study of the cramming period were over, he naturally directed his steps to his familiar haunt.

I was all alone, and rather glad of it, lazily thinking of going to inform Sasha that I had got through all right, but too comfortable to move.

Suddenly I heard the door-bell ring, and before its tinkling fairly died away, I knew my brother was there, though I did not expect him. And Sasha it was. But, good God, in what a state! Never had I seen before such blank horror on anyone's face, such unreasoning panic. And on the face of Sasha, that manly, quiet, self-reliant face of his, it was doubly dreadful to see.

"What *is* the matter?" I exclaimed. "Are you faint? Shall I get a doctor? Have some brandy, old fellow?"

"Stay where you are," said Sasha, and for a moment his feeble voice assumed that tone of command which I had never resisted. "You

know I never take spirits, and a doctor is worse than useless in the case. Just let me alone until I get hold of myself."

We both sat silent, the stillness of the room disturbed only by the noise in the street. Sasha then drank some milk (he really looked almost starved) and began:

"When you came to me about ten days ago there was something I wanted to tell you, but I hoped to get over it, and so I said nothing. It was about that period I noticed a curious change in myself which alarmed and disgusted me. I have already told you that that creature was never satisfied with the food I gave him; and it struck me (now the very idea repels me, but then it seemed natural), that if I were to give him raw meat his appetite would be more easily satisfied. Now I know it was not my own idea, but came to me from without, but I had never suspected the possibility of an outside mysterious force influencing my inner life, though I now see clearly it did almost from the beginning. Well, I started by bringing in some pieces of raw beef, and then live chickens and ducks. And it was just then that my suspicions were aroused. Can you believe that it gave me a distinct feeling of pleasure to twist the necks of those wretched birds? I enjoyed the sensation of destroying life! Once I found myself actually smiling at the convulsive movements of a chicken I had just killed. Another time I was sitting reading quietly, when I noticed a mouse running across the floor. Before I knew what I was about I jumped at it, and crushed the head of the poor little creature under my heel. As soon as the life was squeezed out of the small body, it disintegrated in the usual way, and I immediately recognized the influence that had prompted me to act in such an extraordinary manner, unlike both to my natural inclinations and my usual habits of life. Nor is this all. I often found myself, when out, making conjectures as to what the face of this or that person I met would look like if I were suddenly to jump on him and strangle him. These were at first only passing sensations, and I could shake them off easily, and so at first felt no fear. I knew what the influence was, but thought I was certain of getting the better of it. Meanwhile I went on with my experiment, trying to awaken a mind in the being I had called to life. But nothing would do. Neither caresses nor words of endearment aroused the slightest sign of understanding in its face. It grew lively and animated only when being fed. It grinned and chuckled for joy at the sight of the meat I put before it. It sniffed at it, inhaling with evident delight the smell of fresh blood, and then looked at me with a conscious expression, which I, in my blindness, mistook for gratitude. But all the rest of the day it remained in a state of heavy drowsiness, from which it could only be aroused by fresh food. You cannot imagine the quantities of eatables that disintegrated themselves and entered the pores of this creature; giving it greater and greater physical strength, but no mental life. Only during



the few last days did I become certain that though I had given it a material body, I could not give it a living soul. I thought of destroying it, but my courage failed. It seemed to me that I should be almost committing murder. For the last two days I have not looked at it. The very sight of it enraged me. To-night, only an hour or two ago, our landlady came in to do the room. Whilst she was kneeling on the floor and sweeping the dust from under the bed, I again felt that dreadful sensation I had, so far, only experienced towards strangers I met in the street. I struggled against it for some time, but in vain. The impulse to rush at her and kill her grew so strong that it became irresistible. I felt that if I stayed a moment longer in the same room I should kill her. I rushed out of the room, down the stairs, out of the house.

"Every step cost me a supreme effort, it seemed to me as if my legs were weighted with lead, and I could hardly move them. Only when I turned the corner of our street did I feel myself again, remembered you, and so came here."

"And you still persist in maintaining that there is no positive evil in nature?" said I. "What is all this, pray, if not the outcome of dark and evil forces, which man can neither control nor explore?"

"There is no positive evil in nature," eagerly rejoined my brother. "You, a future doctor, ought to know that the worst poisons have healing powers, and produce beneficent results when used with a full knowledge of their properties. All that has happened to me is not the working of dark powers, as you seem to think; and the devil has no hand in it at all. It is only a temporary aspect of the one final Good and True, an aspect which, if properly studied and rightly understood, will ultimately reveal the radiant truth itself. I have an explanation for it all. I know I have evoked an energy to life which is without the discriminating and responsible elements of the Divine spark. I know I have called back to material life and its gross enjoyments one of those *dead souls* of which Gogol speaks in his great work. What more, pray, could remain of any human being after his death, if throughout his life he had never given a thought to anything but material existence?" . . .

I left a note for the friend with whom I was staying, saying that, as my brother was not well, I had arranged to go home with him.

We arrived about midnight. For an hour or two neither of us could settle down, but finally we both dropped off to sleep. I do not know how long I slept, but suddenly I awoke with a shudder. It was almost daylight when I opened my eyes, and to my horror saw the tall, lean form of my brother noiselessly creeping towards me, knife in hand.

In the dim light of early morning I also saw the hideous cause of his temporary alienation. I saw the head, whose will it was to slaughter merely to gratify its desire for life. There it lay on the table, a great white ball. Its nostrils quivered in expectation of the aroma of an

exquisite repast. Its eyes shone, following my brother's movements with an intense and lively interest.

For a moment I was paralyzed; my strength seemed to have abandoned me in face of this horror; I was left a mere helpless child, and I voiced the only words that come to a child in trouble, "Mother, mother, oh, mother!"

This cry, that burst from my very heart, startled my brother. But only for a second; and he immediately continued his somnambulant movements. Then he stopped, and shook from head to feet. The knife dropped from his hand. He stood still, as if not realizing his position. Slowly his human consciousness came back. Human light shone again in his eyes, that had but a moment before seemed dead and horrible.

He looked at me, then at the knife at his feet, and understood all.

"Ah!" he shouted, "this is what I was being driven to do. This is the result of the work to which I have devoted all my strength. Then die, you monster! Return into nothingness!"

Picking up the knife, with a single bound he was at the table, ready to slash to pieces the horrid white ball.

The head understood that its existence was threatened. It gave one long piercing yell, that shook the very walls of our room, rolled down on to the bed, hiding under the pillow, and peered from under it like a scared animal.

This strange and sudden movement produced a sobering effect on Sasha. He sent the knife flying across the room, saying almost composedly:

"No, this is not the way I must act. Weapons are useless!"

One, two, three . . . minutes of horrid silence. Sasha gazed steadily at the monster, which winced and blinked under his look.

Even to save my life, I could not have taken my eyes off my brother. How great, how noble he looked! How much above the rest of mortal kind!

Then I heard his commanding voice:

"I have called you to life, and I will destroy you. I order you to depart. Now go!"

The head gasped for breath as if in some desperate struggle. Then it collapsed and lay on its side, a convulsive movement sweeping over the face; and then a dark, thick, heavy vapour hid it from my sight. The vapour came out of the pores of the skin, emitting from time to time dull flames, or rather coloured spots. They were dark red, pink, and greenish in hue, as they grew paler and paler, and finally disappeared. Then the misty cloud round the head also faded, and, with intense relief, nay, with a shout of joy, I saw once again the ordinary harmless skull of a few months ago.

Thus ended my brother's dangerous experiment, but, unhappily, the effects of it did not die with the cause.

My brother's health was completely shattered; he was never again the same man.

A few days after the event I have described he spoke to me on the subject for the last time.

He was still in bed, after a serious attack, the nature of which no doctor in Kieff could define (and with good reason, too). I was sitting at the head of his bed reading to him aloud to help him sleep. But sleeping was a difficult achievement for him, and I was not astonished when he interrupted my reading by saying:

"Put down your book and listen to me. Somehow or other I feel sure that there will be an end of me, and, even were I to live, I should never be anything but a wreck, incapable of solid work. But you are a strong, healthy youth, and you will be a strong, healthy man. The slowness of your mind even will greatly help you. And so remember, I leave it to you to make my discovery known at some future time. I have sadly failed in bringing it to a successful issue. And the cause of failure lay in the weakness of my spiritual nature; my vitality was not pure enough, and carried the germs of my vices. What, indeed, could an imperfect man, like myself, produce, but a monster of greed, of vice, of bestiality? But some day there will live a purer, a better, a much greater man than I, who will pick up the thread of my researches, and prove to the world that man is not a mere animal that lives only for eating, sleeping, and gratifying his desires, generating other men as imperfect and useless as himself. He will show to a future humanity that man truly is the crown of this visible universe, a demi-god with divine potentialities and powers in his spiritual nature. . . . I shall never again refer to this subject were I to live a hundred years. And as the greatest proof of your brotherly affection I ask you to give me your solemn word of honour you will do your best to make my discovery known when I am dead."

Soon after Sasha recovered from his illness the Russo-Turkish war broke out. He and I, with thousands of other Russian doctors, left our posts, and enrolled ourselves in the army and in the Society of the Red Cross to nurse the wounded, the sick and the dying. Many a time Sasha attracted the attention of his chiefs by his untiring and self-forgetful activity. After the war there came a cessation to the strain of work, and we were all visited by an apathetic indifference and lack of energy. This natural reaction brought on dreadful epidemics, which carried off more people than the fiercest of battles. And Sasha, alas! was one of their first victims.

My bright, gifted brother is dead, whilst I, the dullard, still live to bear witness to the great mysteries nature sometimes discloses to mortal minds, and to the awful results which may befall a human being when once it has started on the downward path.

VERA JOHNSTON.

## Ibsen's Works in the Light of Theosophy.

(Concluded from p. 302.)

**J**UST after leaving troll-land Peer has a curious experience. On his way down the mountain in the dark, he meets an invisible obstacle in his path, a formless something, which proclaims its name as the Great Boyg. Peer tries to pass this invisible barrier, but in vain; go which way he will, after a few steps he is brought up short by striking his head against something hard. He struggles and struggles to no purpose; the empty air receives his blows, and all the time the Boyg keeps on telling him to go "round about." Peer is nearly exhausted. He screams, "Strike back at me, can't you?" The voice replies, "The Boyg isn't mad, . . . the Boyg strikes not." . . . Peer says, "Use force."

**THE VOICE.**—The Great Boyg conquers in all things without it, by easy-goingness.

The birds of prey gather round. Peer is almost done for, when suddenly his thoughts fly for help to Solveig, his wife, and by the thought of her he conquers the Boyg, who, shrinking up to nothing, says in a gasp, "He was too strong. There were women behind him."

What, then, is the inner meaning of this incident? Who was the Great Boyg, and why was Peer able to escape because there were women behind him? It seems to me that the Great Boyg is *Mâyâ* personified, with which let a man fight never so bravely, let him twist and turn and go "round about," he will always find his path blocked by this impalpable something, and sooner or later fall a victim to "illusion." His only possible path through *Mâyâ* lies within, let him but turn his gaze inward and not outward and round about, let him there fight his fight, seeking aid from his higher Manas, and he will find his way onward, and *Mâyâ* be powerless to stay him, and this may be what is meant by the Boyg saying "there were women behind him."

This leads me to say a word as to Solveig, Peer Gynt's wife. The name Solveig is an old Norwegian name, and is derived from the two words *söl* (in related languages *salu* and *salov*), and *veig*; the meaning of the word *söl* being "dark, obscure, or dim," and that of *veig* being "strength, power, or something which invigorates." Therefore the idea underlying this name seems to be "the obscure or occult power," or, in other words, the "spiritual power." Throughout the drama, as I read it, Solveig represents his soul or higher self; she is represented as

being pure, calm, patient, devout, and spiritual, and therefore when Peer, opposed by the Great Boyg, appeals to Solveig, he does really for a moment look within and appeal to his higher self for help. Solveig being regarded as Peer's spiritual spouse, the whole drama may, in a certain sense, be regarded as a portion of the story of the Ego's life-cycle, from its first fall into matter until it attains self-consciousness; and the various parts played by Peer Gynt may, in this manner, represent the experiences of the Ego in its various incarnations, for when, shortly before meeting Solveig again, after his years of wandering, he finds a wild onion growing in the woods, it strikes him that he, Peer Gynt, is nought but an onion after all. As he strips off layer after layer he recognizes each and names it after one of his personalities, and at last says:

What an enormous number of swathings.  
 Isn't the kernel soon coming to light? I'm blest if it is!  
 To the innermost centre it's nothing but swathings, each smaller and smaller.  
 Nature is witty!

Solveig, when Peer leaves her to roam the world in search of his Kaiserdom, tells him she will wait for him, and when, after years, old, wearied, and travel-worn, he suddenly comes upon his hut in the woods, he sees her sitting unchanged, still young as when he left her, singing:

Now all is ready for Whitsun Eve.  
 Dearest boy of mine, far away,  
     Comest thou soon?  
 Is thy burden heavy?  
 Take time, take time;  
 I will await thee;  
 I promised of old.

Then Peer, who has heard the song, says:

One that's remembered—and one that's forgot.  
 One that has squandered—and one that has saved.  
 Oh earnest! and never can the game be played o'er!  
 Oh dread! *Here was my Kaiserdom!*

"Here was my Kaiserdom!" In this one sentence we have the keynote of the main teaching of the drama, namely, that the one and only empire for man is that which lies within—empire over himself, not over any outside thing at all. "Man, know thyself," said the Oracle of old. Peer Gynt has wandered to and fro on the earth, searching for empire in vain; failure and disappointment have gone hand in hand with him; he is old and poor, driven to wander an out-cast in dark forests; when the thought strikes him: Is this to be the end of all human strivings? And then he consoles himself that even here he can be a Kaiser, a Kaiser of the animals. In other words, experience has at last taught him that what he has been seeking all along was the Kaiserdom, not of men, but of animals, and then he

hears the voice of Solveig singing to him. At the very end of the drama, when Peer at last (p. 277) returns to Solveig, he asks her where he has been since they parted, with his destiny's seal on his brow—been as in God's thought he first sprang forth:

Canst thou tell me,  
 . . . Where was I, as myself, as the whole man, the true man?  
 Where was I with God's sigil upon my brow?

Solveig replies:

In my faith, in my hope, in my love . . .  
 In nought hast thou sinned, oh, my own only boy.

Peer, after he has realized the nature of the kingdom he has been all along seeking, and the voice of Solveig has fallen upon his heart, wanders away again for a brief space terror-stricken. He is seen wandering on a heath with fir-trees over which a forest-fire has been raging; the charred tree trunks are seen stretching away for miles, fit emblems of his wasted personalities. He speaks and says:

Figments, dreams, and still-born knowledge  
 Lay the pyramid's foundation;  
 On them shall the work mount upwards,  
 With its step on step of falsehood. (*Listens.*)

. . . . .  
 What is this, like children weeping?  
 Weeping, but half-way to song—  
 Thread balls at my feet are rolling! (*Kicking at them.*)  
 Off with you! you block my path!

(*The thread-balls on the ground speak and say:*)

We are thoughts,  
 Thou shouldst have thought us;  
 Feet to run on  
 Thou shouldst have given us!

. . . . .  
 We should have soared up  
 Like clangorous voices,  
 And here we must trundle  
 As grey yarn thread-balls.

(*The withered leaves as they fly before the wind say:*)

We are a watchword,  
 Thou shouldst have proclaimed us!  
 See how thy dozing  
 Has woefully riddled us.  
 The worm has gnawed us  
 In every crevice;  
 We have never twined us  
 Like wreaths round fruitage.

(*A sighing in the air says to Peer:*)

We are songs,  
 Thou shouldst have sung us;

A thousand times over  
 Hast thou cowed and smothered us.  
 Down in thy heart's pit  
 We have lain and waited;  
 We were never called forth.

*(The dewdrops say:)*

We are *tears*  
 Unshed for ever.  
 Ice spears, sharp wounding,  
 We could have melted.

Our power is ended.

*(Broken straws as they fly past say:)*

We are *deeds*,  
 Thou shouldst have achieved us;  
 Doubt, the throttler,  
 Has crippled and riven us.

With regard to the scientific spirit of the age, which we are all commanded to fall down and worship, the following also from *Peer Gynt* is interesting. Peer is in Egypt, and, being at his wits' end what to do to become a Kaiser, so many things having failed him, suddenly decides to become a scientist. He is sitting before daybreak in front of Memnon's statue waiting for the dawn. Soliloquizing as to his new mission in life, he says:

To Assyria next I will bend my steps.  
 To begin right back at the world's creation  
 Would lead to nought but bewilderment.  
 I will go "*round about*" all the *Bible* history;  
 Its *secular* traces I'll always be coming on;  
 And to look, as the saying goes, into its seams,  
 Lies entirely outside both my plan and my powers.

When breakfast is over, I'll climb up the pyramid;  
 If *I've time*, I'll look through its interior afterwards.  
 Then I'll go round by the head of the Red Sea, by land;  
 Perhaps I may hit on King Potiphar's grave.  
 Next I'll turn Asiatic.

In Babylon I'll seek for  
 The far-renowned harlots and hanging gardens—  
 That's to say, the chief traces of civilization.

Then across to the glorious ancient Athens;

I will get up the works of the better philosophers,  
 Find the prison where Socrates suffered a martyr;  
 Oh, no, by-the-by—there's a war there at present.  
 Well, then, my Hellenism must even stand over.

*(The sun rises and Memnon's statue sings:)*

From the demigods' ashes then soar, youth renewing,

Birds ever singing.  
 Zeus the Omniscient  
 Shaped them contending.  
 Owls of wisdom,  
 My birds, where do they slumber?  
 Thou must die if thou read not  
 The song's enigma.

(Peer says:)

How strange now—I really fancied there came  
 From the statue a sound. . . .  
 I will register it, for the learned to ponder.

(Notes in his pocket book.)

The statue did sing—I heard the sound plainly,  
 But didn't quite follow the text of the song.  
 The whole thing, of course, was *hallucination*.  
 Nothing else of importance observed to-day.

So we see that in his *rôle* of scientist, the outside of things was still the main object of his quest. What the meaning of the statue's voice is matters little, but the fact that it spoke is of the highest scientific interest, and, having satisfied himself of that, he at once most scientifically explains the whole matter by describing it as hallucination.

The necessity of inward growth preceding outward results, which is brought so prominently forward in *Peer Gynt*, is also strongly emphasized in very many of Ibsen's other dramas—for instance, in *Rosmersholm*. Rosmer, born and brought up in an environment of conventionalities and dogmas in both social and religious life, has emancipated himself from their bonds, and, speaking to his old friend and neighbour, Pastor Kroll, says:

It is the work of emancipation I wish to help on.

KROLL.—Oh, yes, I know. That is what both the tempters and their victims call it. But do you think there is any emancipation to be expected from the spirit that is now poisoning our whole social life?

ROSMER.—I am not in love with the spirit that is in the ascendant, nor with either of the contending parties. I will try and bring together men from both sides, as many as I can, and to unite them as closely as possible. . . . I want to awaken the democracy to its *true* task.

KROLL.—What task?

ROSMER.—That of making all the people of this country noble men.

KROLL.—By what means?

ROSMER.—By freeing their minds and purifying their wills. of course.

KROLL.— . . . Will you purify them?

ROSMER.—No, my dear friend, I will only try to arouse them to their task. They themselves must accomplish it.

KROLL.—By their own strength?

ROSMER.—Yes, precisely, by their *own strength*. There is *no other*.

Here let me refer you to the words of a Master, quoted on p. 78 from *Letters that have Helped Me*. It is there stated that "*one has to*



*dissipate and conquer the inner darkness before attempting to see into the darkness without."*

And again similar teaching from the same play in the case of a strange enthusiast named Ulric Brendel, a type of many in these days of progress, who are full of patent recipes for the progress of the race, which, when adopted, will at once restore the Golden Age, and are all based on material prosperity; who, looking without and not within, are blind to the fact that any progress which is to be of permanent benefit must rest on a foundation of mental, moral and spiritual growth, and who regard efforts directed to other than material ends as futile and "unpractical." Ulric Brendel, before waving his banner of the ideal, has never endeavoured within himself, in any degree, to realize that ideal. He appears and speaks fine words as to the magnificent work he is about to do for the world; the time is ripe and he will be the Saviour of Society. And, as if to lay stress on this absence of "inwardness" in the man, he is represented as borrowing money of Rosmer and spending it in getting drunk with boon companions. And what is the result of his offering up his splendid ideals on, to quote his own words, "the altar of emancipation"? Thus does he report of his mission and its result:

REBECCA WEST.—Did you deliver your lecture?

BRENDEL.—No, seductive lady. What do you think? Just as I am standing ready to pour forth the horn of plenty, I make the painful discovery that I am a bankrupt. . . . For five-and-twenty years I have sat, like a miser on his double-locked treasure-chest. And then yesterday when I opened it and want to display the treasure—there's none there. The teeth of time had ground it into dust. There was "nichts and nothing" in the whole concern.

But though he and his ideals and mission have failed together, yet his last words before leaving show that nevertheless he has learnt the lesson—that, for any real progress to be made, the path begins and ends in self-sacrifice and suffering *gladly* borne for the sake of others.

And now one word ere I end. Curiously enough in the September LUCIFER I came across a sentence in the letter from Melbourne, Australia, *à propos* of some article which had appeared in the local papers on the subject of Ibsen, and alluding to Theosophy in connection with his writings. These are the words: "What on earth Theosophy has in common with Ibsen we are all puzzled to understand." This encourages me to hope that perhaps the time may not have been wasted if, from what I have tried to say, some among those readers, to whom the same question doubtless presented itself, have been led to agree with me that after all there may be a very real connection between Ibsen and Theosophy. So full, indeed, of theosophic thought do I find all Ibsen's plays that my chief fear is lest you should conclude that in the few hints I have given, I have exhausted all the points of theosophic interest I could find therein. Let me assure you that I have at least

one claim to your gratitude, and that is for not having attempted anything of the kind; for, had I done so, I do not know when you would have heard the last of me. Seeing that the plays are in most cases evidently symbolical, and that, the more perfect the symbol, the more readily does it reflect the mind of the interpreter, it need not be a matter of surprise to us that so many see nothing in the plays except grossness, low motives, and debased ideals; in fact, it goes far towards convincing us that there is some lesson worth discovering when we reflect that, so far as experience goes, all teaching which has striven to instruct humanity in truths in advance of the age, has ever met with a similar reception from the all-wise critics of the time. It is of no manner of use appealing to the author to say what he means; he replies that he has said what he had to say, and those who can may find meaning in his words. So I ask you to accept what I have said of the meaning I find underlying some of the plays as merely a personal statement, free from any suggestion that it is the only meaning to be found. What Ibsen means, to me matters little, but what I can learn matters much; and if only I can help others to read therein some of the noble meanings I find, it will, to me, be more than all; for such teachings cannot but help them, and through them others, to meet the trials, the sorrows, in a word, the Karma of daily life, in a truly theosophic spirit, and strengthen and aid them in a work which lies straight before each one of us individually—namely, the spreading abroad of nobler ideas of man and his destiny, and truer knowledge of his powers for good or for evil; and above all in accomplishing the duty, which lies on each of us, of endeavouring to make these ideals real and these truths part and parcel of our individual lives.

OTWAY CUFFE.

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## True Self-Reliance.

A STUDY FROM CICERO AND THE UPANISHADS.

*Denm te igitur scito esse. Know then, that thou art God.*

*CICERO, Somnium Scipionis.*

*Om! Peace, peace, peace!*

WHAT am I! Whence came I? Whither do I journey? Verily, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, mourning, and not to be comforted either by the lifeless dogmas of an effete theology or the cold denials of a materialistic science! It is from the sages of old, from the wise of the past, that the answer comes. That art thou. From That didst thou come. Into That shalt thou return. Aye, That art thou! That is thy Self, none other. Such were the final words whispered into the ear of the disciple in the golden days of ancient Âryāvarta. True then, true countless ages before, true for the rest of the eternity.

Nowhere else is to be found true Self-reliance, nowhere else that peace which none can take away.

A cold creed! do I hear some one say? Nay, not cold. It is a truth that transcends enthusiasm, that surpasses all hope, that merges the highest ideal of love into an endless, boundless compassion for all that lives and breathes. For thus runs the Upanishad:

"Now will I tell thee the ancient mystery of the Highest. . . .

"That true Man, who wakes when we sleep, accomplishing every desire—that is called the Shining, the Highest, the Deathless. In that all the spheres are contained, and no one goes beyond. Aye, this [true Man] is That [the Universal Soul].

"As fire, though one, on entering into the world, [pervading] form after form, takes the form [of what it enters], so the Inner Self of all creatures, though one, takes on shape after shape, and yet [remains] apart.

"As air, though one, on entering into the world, [pervading] form after form, takes the form [of what it enters], so the Inner Self of all creatures, though one, takes on shape after shape, and yet [remains] apart.

"As the sun, the means by which the whole world sees, is not sullied by the outer impurities which our eyes behold, so the Inner Self of all creatures, being one, is not sullied by the misery of the world, but [remains] apart [from it].

"It is this Inner Self of all creatures, the Lord of the Will, who, though one, causes the one form to appear manifold. The wise who find this abiding in themselves, theirs is blessedness everlasting, and not others'.

"The eternal among the non-eternal, the conscious among the unconscious, who, though one, fulfils the desires of many. The wise who find this abiding in themselves, theirs is peace everlasting, and not others'.

"'This is That'—so runs the burthen of their thoughts—the transcendent bliss that beggars all description."<sup>1</sup>

The Upanishad then proceeds to explain that this Higher Self is self-luminous, and the cause, not only of the light on earth, but also of that in the heaven. The Self shines *by its own light*, it is *self-motive* within.

This is the secret of true Self-reliance; nowhere else is a lasting basis to be found, nowhere else unchanging certitude. In this self-motivity resides the essence of immortality and nowhere else; it is the one spark of divinity in man. A man must grow from within without, for such is the law. All other growth is artificial and unnatural, deceptive and illusory.

No one from without can give us peace and blessedness; these must perforce come from within, from the Inner Self of all creatures—our true Higher Self.

Even should a Master—a Jivanmukta, one who has attained union,

<sup>1</sup> *Kathopanishad, Adhyaya II, Valli v. 6-14.*

while still in the body, with that Higher Self—cast the mantle of his power round the disciple, should he wrap him in his aura, even then, it were to no profit, if the disciple is not ready to burst the veils of his Soul with *self-effort*.

If the nature of the disciple does not respond of its own will, and grow of its own energy, the artificial exaltation would be not only unprofitable but even injurious. For the instant the protecting wall were removed, the reaction would sweep the unprepared neophyte off his feet. The passions and desires that had been curbed and held back by the external power of the Teacher would fiercely spring forth, and the lassitude of the pupil's will, following the artificial stimulus, would be unable to check their wild career. And that is why it is so difficult even for a Master to interfere with the natural growth of the disciple. This is what is meant by saying that even Sages *dare* not interfere with the growth of karmic seeds. Nature must work on in her own way, and growth must proceed *from within without* and never from without within.

This applies to all of us, especially in the mental attitude we take up in Theosophy. The perfect fruit of nature is the birth of the true Man. It is no artificial creation, but a natural steady growth; a birth with pain and sorrow, with mighty throes suffered and joyfully endured. But to be perfect it must be *self-born*, it must be divine, and that which is born from another than the Self is other than divine, subject to death and decay.

We *must* work out our own salvation, wisely, humbly, nobly. There are no swaddling clothes for the Self, no apron-strings to tie the Soul to; from the very beginning it must walk of itself, of its own energy and force. There is no spoon-meat, no nursing, no whimperings to be hushed. It is a *Man*, no animal embryo. It strides forth as a giant from the egg that envelops it.

They who have conquered are Shepherds of Compassion, not sheep, are Lions of Mercy, not deer. They are the Christs and the Buddhas, and it is their will that all shall be like unto them, all be one with them.

Let us not, then, weakly repeat the words of others, and reflect the thoughts of others, but if the words are good and the thoughts wise, strive to develop in ourselves the spirit that dictated such words or induced such thoughts. The Lodge does not wish for the mere monkeydom of external imitation, or the parrot-like repetition of words. It requires Companions on whom reliance can be placed, because such Companions rely on that Self which is the Self of the Lodge.

The secret of the Self is that it is self-motive. As Cicero writes, repeating the noble doctrine of the Stoics and of the Mysteries:

“Strive on, with the assurance that it is not thou who art subject to death, but thy body. For that which is really thyself is not the being which thy bodily shape declares. But the real man is the

thinking principle of each, and not the form which can be pointed to with the finger. Of this, then, be sure, that thou art God; inasmuch as deity is that which has will, sense, memory, foresight; and rules, regulates and moves the body it has in charge, just as the Supreme Deity does the Universe. And like as Eternal Deity guides the Universe, which is in a certain degree subject to decay, so the sempiternal Soul moves the destructible body. Now that which is ever in motion is eternal. Whereas that which communicates motion to something else, and which is set in motion by an external cause, must necessarily cease to exist when its motion is exhausted."

And then (as Macrobius says), repeating the *Phædrus* of Plato, word by word, Tully continues:

"That, therefore, which has the principle of motion in itself, seeing that it can never fail itself, is the only eternal existence, and, moreover, is the source and causative principle of motion to all other bodies endowed with movement. The causative principle, however, can have no antecedent cause. For all things spring from this principle, which cannot, in the nature of things, be generated from anything else; for if it were so, it would cease to be the principal cause. And if this is without beginning, it can evidently have no end, for if the principle of causation were destroyed, it could not be re-born from anything else, nor give birth to anything out of itself, for all things must necessarily be generated from the causative principle. The principle of motion, therefore, comes from that which is endowed with self-movement; and this can suffer neither birth nor death; otherwise every heaven would collapse, and every nature necessarily come to a standstill, seeing that it could no longer obtain that force by which it was originally impelled.

"Since, therefore, it is evident that that only is eternal which is self-motive, who is there to deny that this is a rational attribute of souls? For everything that is set in motion by external impulse is destitute of the soul principle, whereas everything ensouled is energized by an interior and self-created motion; for this is the soul's proper nature and power. And if it alone of all things has the attribute of self-movement, it surely is not subject to birth but is eternal."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From *The Dream of Scipio*, in Cicero's *De Republica*, vi. In commenting on this passage, Macrobius (*Commentarius in Somnium Scipionis*, II. xlii) gives a number of syllogisms which may be useful to set down here.

1. The soul is self-motive: Whatever is self-motive is ever in motion: Therefore the soul is ever in motion.

2. The soul is ever in motion: Whatever is ever in motion is immortal: Therefore the soul is immortal.

3. The soul is self-motive: Whatever is self-motive is the principle of motion: Therefore the soul is the principle of motion.

4. The soul is the principle of motion: Whatever is the principle of motion is not subject to birth: Therefore the soul is not subject to birth.

5. The soul is not subject to birth: Whatever is not subject to birth is immortal: Therefore the soul is immortal.

6. The soul is self-motive: Whatever is self-motive is the principle of motion: Whatever is the principle of motion is not subject to birth: Whatever is not subject to birth is immortal: Therefore the soul is immortal. (Aurelii Macrobii *Quæ Exstant Omnia*, Patavii 1736.)

But there are those who rely on their intellect, on their strength, on their wealth, or position, their beauty, their relatives or their friends. This is not true Self-reliance, for all these pass away.

Intellect will fade in its turn, just as the body fades in its small cycle, for:

"Thou art [the "Om"]<sup>1</sup> the sheath of the Highest, [which in its turn] is enveloped in the intellect."<sup>2</sup>

Intellect is but an envelope, a veil to be removed, a garment to be purified, before the true Self shines forth.

Strength and wealth and position and beauty are even more impermanent; strength and beauty fade even before the body wears out, and wealth and position must be abandoned when Yama speaks the word.

Friends and relations, parents, husband, wife and children, are but weaklings like ourselves—to mourn and rejoice with—all subject to the sway of Death. There is but one place of peace, but one source of true reliance.

"That place [of peace] which all the sacred writings sing of, proclaimed by all who strive to purify their nature, for the sake of which men enter the service of the Highest, that place [of peace] will I in brief recount to thee. It is the 'Om.'

"Aye, that word is the Highest, that the Supreme. He who knows this, all that he longs for is his.

"That is the best on which to rely, that the most excellent. He who relies on that, waxes great in the heaven-world.

"He, the [harmonious] singer, is not born, he dies not. He [came] not any whence, nor any one was he. Unborn, eternal, everlasting, ancient—this is not slain when the body is slain.

"If the slayer thinks he slays, or if the slain thinks he is slain, both are deluded. *He* slays not, nor is slain.

"Smaller than small, greater than great, is the Self of a man, hidden in the secret chamber [of his heart].

"It is by the favour of the Lord [the Logos] that a man beholds the majesty of the Self, [but only when he is] without preconceived notions and free from distress.

"Sitting It goes far, resting It journeys everywhere. Who but myself can know that which rejoices and rejoices not.

"The wise man who regards the Self as bodiless, among bodies, as ever-abiding among the fleeting, as the mighty Sovereign, he grieves not.

"This Self is not to be obtained by much instruction, nor by intellectual study, nor by holy writ. Him whom It enfolds by him is It gained. The Self enfolds the very soul of the man.

"But he who has not turned his back on evil-doing, who is not at

<sup>1</sup> *Ātmā-Buddhi-Manas.*

<sup>2</sup> *Taittirīyakoṇishad, Vallī I. Anuvāka I. 1.*

peace, and not controlled, who is not of quiet mind, he, even with knowledge, cannot gain It."<sup>1</sup>

It is in the Self that we find the source of all moral sanction. It is the "still small voice"—"the voice of the silence"—the voice that grows into a roar of thunder if the Law is transgressed. Then it becomes the "Great Terror"—the one thing that the disciple fears, for it is by the Law of his higher nature that he *condemns himself*—to continued bondage in the meshes of the karmic net he has supplied threads for the weaving of by neglect of duty. As in the Great World so in the little world, as in the Universal Self so in the individual self, as in the Cosmos so in man. "That art thou!" As It emanated Itself, so dost thou emanate thyself, O little man! Thou canst give birth to Chaos or to the Son of Righteousness, as thou wilt. Therefore, choose. Transgression of the Law creates difference, and so a departure from the Self; union with the Law provides the conditions for the Self to show forth its glory. Learn, then, from what takes place in the Great World "unconsciously" what must be done in the little world by the *conscious will* of him who would be free.

"In the beginning this [manifested world] was non-existent. Thence, verily, the existent arose. That made its own self. Wherefore is it called the self-made. Now that self-made verily is essence, for only when a man attains to the essence is he filled with blessedness. For who could live, who could breathe, if that blessedness were not in the quintessence [of the heart]? For it is that which causes blessedness.

"For when a man finds fearless reliance in that which no eye can see, which transcends all selves, which cannot be defined, and which needs no support—then has he ceased from fear. Whereas, should a man make were it but a stomach<sup>2</sup> within It—then fear arises for him. This is ever a terror for him who knows and ponders upon it.

"For thus says the scripture: 'From terror of That the wind blows, from terror the sun rises.'"<sup>3</sup>

And again:

"The whole emanated universe trembles in Its Breath. That is the Great Terror, an upraised thunderbolt. They who know it, become immortal."<sup>4</sup>

For no man can flee from the Self, no man can escape from his conscience. The Law enfolds him in his own doings, from which there is no escape until he takes refuge with that Law. As the King-Psalmist says:

<sup>1</sup> *Kathopanishad*, Adhyāya I, Valli II, 15-24.

<sup>2</sup> This expression is given up by the commentators and translators. I would suggest that it may mean the most stupid organism, which modern science affirms to be little else than a sac or stomach. The trained seers and initiates of old were familiar with such primary organisms *astrally*.

<sup>3</sup> *Taittiriya-khupanishad*, Valli I, Anuvāka VIII, 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Kathopanishad*, Adhyāya II, Valli VI, 2.

"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

"If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there also."<sup>1</sup>

For:

"That which is down here in a man and that which is over there in the sun, both are one.

"He who thus knows, on leaving this sphere, first passes into the food-self, thence into the life-self, thence into the sense-self, thence into the mind-self, thence into the self of blessedness, and identifying himself with the spheres beyond, experiencing what he wills,<sup>2</sup> assuming whatsoever form he desires, he sings this hymn:

"Hâvu, hâvu, hâvu! Food am I, food am I, food am I! I am the food-eater, the food-eater, the food-eater! I blend them, I blend them, I blend them!<sup>3</sup> I am the First-born of Righteousness. Before the gods was I in the centre of the Immortal. He who gives me, verily he preserves me. I consume him as food, who consumes food.

"I have flooded the world, I the Golden Light. So even does he who thus knows."<sup>4</sup>

He who has thus conquered, who has become the First-born of Righteousness, who verily is a Twice-born (Dvija), a true Knower of the Highest (Brahma-vid), he verily is:

"The [true] Sun in the Highest—[for] thus stands the doctrine, and thus the exposition thereof.

"In the beginning this was non-existent. The non-existent then became existent. It developed. It turned into an Egg. It lay for the measure of a cycle. It broke in twain. The halves were one of silver, the other of gold. . . .

"Thence was born the Sun. When he was born shouts of joy arose."<sup>5</sup>

Here we have the whole story of the spiritual evolution in man. The darkness of the soul before it begins to long for final release, for true wisdom. The alchemical separation of the subtle from the fixed, of the higher from the lower, of Spirit from Matter, and the birth of the unclouded Mind, the Son of Righteousness. Only when the Master is born do all the Powers rejoice and a mighty shout of gladness rends the universe. Aye:

"In Him, heaven, earth and the interspace are woven, and the sensory with all the life-currents. Know Him alone as the Self; away with other words. He is the Bridge to Immortality.

<sup>1</sup> *Psalms*, cxxxix. 7, 8.

<sup>2</sup> Lit., "eating whatever food he desires."

<sup>3</sup> That is to say, I am object (food) and subject (food-eater) and I am the union of both object and subject, the one consciousness.

<sup>4</sup> *Taittiriyakopanishad*, Valli III, Anuvâka x. 4-6.

<sup>5</sup> *Chândogyaopanishad*, Prapâthaka III, Khanda I. 1-3.



"There [in the heart] where the currents (Nâdis) meet, like spokes in a nave, He moves about within, becoming manifold. Chanting the 'Om,' thus meditate on Him. May all blessing attend you to cross beyond the darkness!

"He the all-wise, the all-knowing, to whom is all the glory in the world. He is the Self, established in the shining city of the Highest, in the quintessence [in the heart].

"He is ensheathed within the sensory, is ruler of the envelope of the life-currents, and finally rests in [the outer sheath of] nutriment. It is by meditating on the heart, that the wise by their knowledge behold that Blessed Immortal Form which shines forth [to their sight].

"The knot in the heart is loosed, all doubts are solved, and all deeds (Karma) perish, when a man once sees the vision of that which is both high and low.

"In the highest golden envelope dwells the passionless, partless one, the Highest. He is the pure Light of all lights, and that they know who know the Self.

"In that [Light] no sun shines, nor the moon and the stars, nor shine those flashings over there, much less this earthly fire. It is because of the shining of this Self that all shines after it, by its shining that all this is so bright.

"This, the immortal Highest, is before, the Highest is behind, to the right hand and to the left, gone forth above and below. The Highest is verily all this. It is the best!"<sup>1</sup>

The doctrine is mystic and mysterious, the antipodes of the *apparent* clearness of modern scientific theories, "for the gods love mystery and hate familiarity," as Rishi Yâjnavalkya says in the *Brihadâraṇyaka*. And yet again more mysteriously than ever:

"There, in the quintessence, within the heart, dwells the [true] Man (Purusha), of the nature of mind, immortal, resplendent like gold.

"There, above the palate, like a breast-nipple it hangs—that is the Womb of Indra."<sup>2</sup>

"There, where the ends of the hair start, having passed through the skull, chanting 'Bhûh,' he is supported in Fire: chanting 'Bhuvah,' in Water; chanting 'Sûvah,' in the Sun; chanting 'Mahah,' in the Highest.

"He obtains kingship over himself, he obtains lordship over the mind. He becomes lord of speech, of sight, of hearing, of understanding.

"Thence he becomes that Highest whose body is quintessence, the true Self, that sports in life, of blissful mind, immortal, in perfect peace."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Mundakopanishad*, Mundaka II, Khanda II. 5-11.

<sup>2</sup> The "Astral" Fire.

<sup>3</sup> *Taittiriyaopanishad*, Valli I, Anuvâka VI. 1, 2.

And yet once again, to finally remind us of the nature of true Self-reliance, reliance on the Self—that Self which:

“Does not age with the age of the body, nor is it killed with the wounding of the body. That is the true city of the Highest. In it all desires are contained. It is the Self, sinless, ageless, deathless, griefless, hungerless and thirstless, willing the True, desiring the True.”<sup>1</sup>

G. R. S. MEAD.

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## The Riddle of the Universe.’

(Concluded from p. 248.)

WE have now to consider the new, constructive part of Mr. Fawcett’s work. Chapters I and II have been already alluded to. They clear the ground and lay bare the solid rock on which our Theory of the Universe must rest, by a trenchant and searching criticism of the current forms of materialism on the basis of their own assumptions. Under this analysis, materialism in all its phases shows itself even less capable of yielding a satisfactory *rationale* of our experience than either theism or idealism.

Having thus cleared the ground, we next confront one of the basic problems of philosophy, as well as of psychology—the question whether our actual, present experience, *as we know it*, does or does not imply the existence of an individual subject *distinct from states of consciousness*.

The points in question are two:

(a) As against Hume and his followers, the question is whether or no our actual experience can be explained as a mere *series* of states of consciousness, following each other in endless flux, but each distinct from its forerunner and its successor, and not implying a subject or knower *whose* these states are and in whom they arise and pass away.

(b) As against Hegel and the Germans, the question is whether this subject, *as revealed in our* actual experience, is universal or individual; *i.e.*, whether our experience, as known, implies a distinct individual subject for each human being (to confine our enquiry to man alone for the present); or whether a single universal subject, one for all men, is adequate as an explanation of our experience.

These problems are very thoroughly and convincingly dealt with by the author, who establishes as to (a) that our experience as we know it implies and involves a subject distinct from states of consciousness; and as to (b) that the subject as revealed is primarily individual.

As corollaries to this enquiry, he shows (a) that the subject as established is *spiritual, i.e.*, of the same essential nature as conscious-

<sup>1</sup> *Chhândogyanishad*, Prapâthaka viii, Khanda i. 5.

<sup>2</sup> By E. D. Fawcett; published by Edward Arnold, Bedford Street, Strand. Price 14s.

ness; (b) that as *prius* the subject is, *quoad nos*, "nothing," *i.e.*, it is *essentia* not *existentia*—a conclusion harmonizing thoroughly with the Eastern teachings.

For the details of the argument, the student must turn to the book itself, as space precludes more than a brief summary of results.

Chapter IV attacks the great crux of all idealist theories—External Perception. In other words, it attempts an answer to the questions: Whence come our perceptions of an external world? Why, seeing that these perceptions have been proved to be simply *states of our own subjects*, do we come to have them *in the order and fashion that they arise?*

So far the universe has only a subjective existence; all our experience, our sensations and perceptions, are no more than states of consciousness *in* and *for* the individual subject. We have thus far a pure subjective idealism; and as yet no ground has been shown for the "common-sense" belief in a universe independent of, and existing apart from, the *individual* subject. If we stop here, science and evolution are a dream; the universe begins abruptly in the consciousness of the individual. Yet, when once established in consciousness, the priority of the universe to the individual inevitably suggests itself. Astronomy, ecology, biology, all demand the existence of antecedents long before the appearance of the individual human consciousness, in which, as we have seen, the world hangs.

And, again, there is the problem of the organism—one object (*i.e.*, state of consciousness) among the crowd of other states which make up the object-side of my total consciousness. But that one, the organism, stands in closer relations with the maintenance and phases of my consciousness than any other. How comes this? If I fire a bullet through a box, I remain conscious; but if I drive one through my head, all the reality I know, head and *other objects*, together with all the "mental" side of my consciousness, disappears at once.

If I cut a loaf in two, the process may be interpreted as merely phenomenal sundering of what was itself merely a phenomenon. But if I cut the throat of the object I call Brown's body, an alien consciousness, to wit, Brown, is snuffed out, and the connection of this latter event with the phenomena taking place in my subject must receive quite special treatment.

Thus subjective idealism fails in these most important aspects to meet our demands; and while the objective idealism of Shankara and Hegel evades or solves most of the difficulties that have been raised, both alike fail to give a completely satisfactory solution of this problem of External Perception.

We start from this point: states of consciousness appear in my subject. But we all believe (and *act* on the belief) that, beyond the sphere of *my* subject, there are states of consciousness upheld in *other* subjects. How came I by this belief? How do I now justify it? We

obtained it by association furthered by heredity, and yielding its result without any need for voluntary inference. How do I justify the belief? By induction on the lines of Mill's Complete Method. But this belief, if valid, rests upon a basis which will carry us far. It involves *inference* from changes in *our own* states of consciousness to changes taking place *beyond* its sphere. In other words, the argument from causality is *transcendently* valid. And along this line of argument, we must at last reach the conclusion that the noumena of Kant, not a noumenon, but a *plurality* of noumena, are really proven. And to what does this lead?

Now we have already seen that the *noumena* which compose the world about us cannot be the "atoms" of "matter" of which modern science makes so much, nor even the ether, of which, according to some, those atoms really consist. Nor will any similar theory work, however much we etherealize or subtilize either "matter" or "atoms," so long as "matter" and "atoms" are regarded as *other* than, alien in essence to, *consciousness*. Nor can we rest content with an "unknowable," or any other form of noumenal *surd*, which, however regarded, will always land us in ceaseless contradictions.

Hence the only solution left open is a *monadology*. These; "noumena" composing the world about us, these "atoms," "ether," "matter," must consist of *monads*, *i.e.*, centres of *consciousness*, actual or potential.

And this is the solution advanced by Mr. Fawcett in Chapter V, in which a preliminary sketch of the theory is given, and many of the difficulties and problems in the way are most ably dealt with and cleared away. The metaphysical difficulties especially are admirably treated; but we cannot now enter into detail. Suffice to say, that in the author's hands, the doctrine of monads proves itself an adequate solution of the Riddle of the Universe.

Moreover, the student of the Secret Doctrine will find that this doctrine gives the only clue to much that is obscure and unintelligible in the metaphysics of that work.

And further, upon these lines we are forced to conclude that the individual subjects, the monads, are the manifestation of a universal subject, which, as *prins* of manifestation, is best termed the meta-conscious.

This part of the subject is elaborated in Chapters VI and VII, a preliminary classification of the various grades of subjectivity traversed by the monads in the process of their evolution or self-unfoldment being attempted in the latter. A discussion of these topics in detail would lead us too far; but the most striking feature of the exposition is the clearness with which it points to Occultism and the mystic schools as the direct and logical outcome of an adequate solution of the Riddle of the Universe.

Chapter VIII is devoted to a consideration of the problem of pessi-

mism, showing that the only possible answer to the terrible indictment which pessimism brings against the world-process lies in the persistence of the individual—a topic which is specially dealt with in Chapter IX.

All the materialist theories, of course, deny the persistence of the individual subject, as such, after the disintegration of the organism in association with which we have recognized its existence. But even the idealist systems are equally barren in this respect. But it is otherwise with a monadology such as Mr. Fawcett's. Palingenesis is then the universal law. Every monad is in its very nature eternal; its very existence implies its continued self-unfoldment; the entire world-process is naught but the life-history of the monadic host. And, as the subject, the individual subject in a man, is merely a monad in the self-conscious stage of unfoldment, it follows that man is essentially immortal as an individual.

Further, the human subject, like every other monad, evolves and has evolved through palingenesis. This gives us the doctrine of re-incarnation as a fundamental truth of this philosophy. That of karma follows as a corollary; for karma is merely the mode of action and reaction of the monads *inter se*.

And this doctrine of reïncarnation, having been shown valid deductively, is further strongly evidenced by inductive proofs, which are ably discussed in Chapter X.

Thus Mr. Fawcett's work has a very special importance for Theosophists, in that it formulates in systematic form a purely rational philosophy in which the three fundamental tenets of Theosophy stand out as main pillars and rest upon a sure foundation of philosophic analysis. For in his metaconscious we find the spiritual unity of all existence, while reïncarnation and karma follow as direct corollaries of his fundamental conceptions.

But what is the *meaning* of the universe? Why does it exist? The answer is suggested in the concluding chapter of the work. It may be shortly stated as the realization of the ideal of Deity as a synthesis of conscious interpenetrative individuals. Broadly this seems to me to coincide with the Eastern views. It is a standpoint which in connection with what has gone before enables us to synthesize in an organic unity the detached standpoints of atheism, pantheism, theism, and agnosticism alike. For the atheistic standpoint is identical with the view taken of the metaconscious as *prius* of all evolution. Pantheism fits in that of the Deity revealed in individuated monads, while theism is the view of the Absolute as result, the sublime Being, the *identity in difference* of the final goal, who completes the circle. Lastly agnosticism holds good of the metaconscious in so far as not yet revealed—of the unmanifested background when silence must reign supreme.

There is much more of great interest in Mr. Fawcett's book, of which a great deal might be said. But the limits of a mere review

have been almost passed already, so such points must be reserved for future discussion.

In conclusion, I may express a sincere hope that every real student of Theosophy will read and study this work and so familiarize himself with the philosophical basis upon which all our thinking must proceed. Not, it is true, that every earnest worker needs to be a metaphysician; but because the more thorough and clear we can each make our intellectual grasp, the better can we work for the good of all. Intellect is not our final goal, far from it; but intellect is a most effective tool to work with, especially in the present phase of human history. Hence my strong recommendation of the present work as exceedingly useful to the student, even with all the limitations imposed by its avowed scope and chosen standpoint.

B. K.

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## Science and the Esoteric Philosophy.

AN ENLIGHTENED VIEW OF EVOLUTION.

IN *The Contemporary Review* for December, 1893, is an article by Emma Marie Caillard, entitled, "Man in the Light of Evolution," which evinces a most refreshing freedom from bigotry both scientific and religious. The views held by evolutionists are distinguished into two classes, as follows: (1) Those who hold the position thus summarized by Wallace:

Although, perhaps, nowhere distinctly formulated, his [Darwin's] whole argument tends to the conclusion that man's entire nature, and all his faculties, whether moral, intellectual, or spiritual, have been derived from their rudiments in the lower animals, in the same manner and by the same general laws as his physical structure has been derived.

(2) Those who believe in man's physical derivation from lower forms of life, yet regard him as possessing faculties not thus to be accounted for—something superadded at some unknown stage of his career. It may be noted, in passing, that the physical body of man is in reality only that part of him which happens, for the moment, to be discernible by the two senses of sight and touch, all the rest of man's nature being regarded as ultra-physical. Such a distinction is obviously not appropriate to the question under discussion, and it is absurd to frame separate laws for portions of man's organism so unwarrantably divided. Our author, speaking of the strange relation between soul and body imagined by believers in the narrow ecclesiastical interpretation of *Genesis*, says:

Were it not for our fatal habit of endeavouring to reconcile the letter of Scripture with scientific facts by suggesting that the writers of the sacred books, and especially the writers of the *Old Testament*, really meant something quite different from what they said, . . . the first chapter of *Genesis* would lead us to a more reverent, a more elevating, and a more philosophical conception of the relation-

ship between body and soul—nay, between spirit and matter—than this. For what we there find represented is the fact of the spiritual evolution of the Universe, told in simple language indeed, and containing no scientific record of observed phenomena, but embodying clearly . . . the central and eternal truth that the power of constructive change, of self-development, through which cosmos grew out of chaos, was due to the communicated life of the Divine Spirit.

The universal presence of an intelligent and vital spirit is recognized in the following words:

Where all lives with a spiritual life, the soul of man is not the exemplification of a new life, or the appearance of a new agent, but a different and higher manifestation of the same life, and a more intense and personal activity of the same agent. And in an order where matter is the universal expression of spirit, man is not a "link" between what is already united, but a fuller and more complete expression of the one by the other than is afforded by inorganic, or by vegetable, or by animal (as distinguished from human) existence.

The author goes on to say that, in her theory, the spiritual life supposed by the second class of evolutionists above mentioned to be communicated to man at a particular stage in the growth of his animal form, "was the moulding power *from the beginning* of those 'lower forms,' which would ultimately become man." The Fall of Man and the Redemption are stated to be an expression of the fact that man's independent will and intelligence caused him to go wrong and subject himself to the power of the senses, which subsequently became his slave through the power of the divine will acting in him.

The goal of man's evolution, the perfect type of manhood, is Christ. He exists and has always existed potentially in the race and in the individual, equally before as after His visible Incarnation, equally in the millions of those who do not, as in the far fewer millions of those who do, bear His name.

#### THE SMALLER THE KNOWLEDGE, THE EXACTER THE SCIENCE.

Edward Carpenter, in his "Modern Science—a Criticism," discusses the singular circumstance that those departments of Nature, about which science professes to be most certain, are precisely those about which it knows least. The professed method of science is to first observe phenomena and then induce laws therefrom; but unfortunately these phenomena are, in all cases where they can be brought under close observation, far too complex and various to admit of such an induction being made. It is only in regions remote from observation, therefore, that the observed phenomena are few enough to allow themselves to be classified; and consequently it is in these regions that the most rigid law is found to prevail. For example, Astronomy is regarded as the most exact of the physical sciences, and upon it Carpenter remarks as follows:

Now, does it not seem curious that *Astronomy*—the study of the heavenly bodies, which are the most distant from us of all bodies, and most difficult to observe—should yet be the most perfect of the sciences? Yet the reason is obvious. Astronomy is the most perfect science, *because we know least about it*—because our ignorance of the actual phenomena is most profound. Situated, in fact, as we are,

on a speck in space, with our observations limited to periods of time which, compared with the stupendous flights of the stars, are merely momentary and evanescent, we are somewhat in the position of a mole surveying a railway track and the flight of locomotives.<sup>1</sup>

Then there is the familiar example of gases, liquids, and solids, about the first of which science is most certain, and most doubtful about the last. Gases are mostly invisible, and their physical conditions hard to study; hence any hypothesis about them is the less easily contradicted by facts. Solids, however, present to our observation a huge mass of phenomena, which refuse to be easily classified, and our position with regard to them therefore remains the more agnostic. Of gases we can take a bird's-eye view, and there appear no details to confuse our survey of the broad outlines. But the details are there all the same, and if we could see them they would contravene our sketchy generalizations just as effectually as they do in the case of solids. We should do well, in this connection (to misapply a familiar quotation), "to study the voidness of the seeming full, the fulness of the seeming void." This tendency to try and make facts conform to some easy generalization of our own is not confined to scientists. Many students of occult correspondences try to elaborate hard and fast schemes of classification, and fail ingloriously on account of some obstinate exception. Exactitude in such a scheme would be a proof of its falsity.

ANALYSIS OF PART III, VOL. I, OF "THE SECRET DOCTRINE"

(continued).

IV.—*Is Gravitation a Law?* (continued).

The latter half of this section is not easy to analyze, on account of the digressions it contains. The writer states that, in order that Occultists may gain their point (that natural forces in general, and in particular those concerned in gravitation, are the outcome of intelligent individualities acting through matter), it is necessary to examine the credentials of gravitation. Going back, for this purpose, to the origin of the theory, we find that it originated in views identical with those of Occultists. In *The Athenæum* for Jan. 26th, 1867, it is shown that Newton derived his knowledge of the subject from Böhme, who, according to *The Secret Doctrine*, was "the nursling of the Nirmānakāyas, who watched over and guided him"; and who, as *The Athenæum* writer says, dealt with the inner nature of gravitation and of other forces, such as electricity.

Thus the theory of gravitation was not materialistic in its origin, but has since become so in the minds of scientists who could not perceive Böhme's inner meaning. The day is approaching when an absolute reform will be demanded in the theories about gravitation, and the word "attraction" will have to be banished from scientific vocabularies. But no reform will be effectual that does not imply a

<sup>1</sup> *Civilization—its Cause and Cure*, p. 60.



recognition of the claims of Occultism and Alchemy, which study the perceiver as well as the perceived.

Thus, it is no use for scientists to revive Kepler's idea that the sun is a huge magnet, unless they also accept Kepler's more essential ideas as to the part played by "spirits" in the cosmical processes. These essential ideas are, however, the very ones they have made up their minds to reject, so they will find their theories insufficient. Newton himself found the necessity of postulating "an intelligent and all-powerful Being," to account for the imperfections of his theory; but there is no reason why such a Being, though intelligent, should be all-powerful. Laplace substituted for it "motion," but erred in making that motion a blind force, as do our modern scientists. The existence of intelligent Beings or "gods" should be granted, if reasoning in a vicious circle is to be avoided. Kepler admitted them, and his ideas, weeded from theology, are purely occult.

*V.—The Theories of Rotation in Science.*

Closely associated with the theory of gravitation, in its universal aspect, are the theories as to the origin of rotation in the sidereal bodies. In order to establish a right on behalf of Occultism to urge its own views on this subject, the writer of *The Secret Doctrine* proceeds to examine the views of her opponents, the scientists, which, as usual, are found to be characterized more by extreme multiplicity and diversity than by any other qualities. It is obvious that at the outset the same difficulty would arise here as in other problems of physics, with regard to the primary cause of motion in matter; for matter is, by definition, something inert and totally devoid of *vis viva*, and is, therefore, unable to generate motion of any kind by itself. The only alternative is to postulate an immaterial producer of motion. The writer claims to have counted in a few hours thirty-nine contradictory hypotheses as to the cause of rotation, some of which are given. She remarks:

The writer is no Astronomer, no Mathematician, no Scientist; but was obliged to examine these errors in defence of Occultism, in general, and what is still more important, in order to support the Occult Teachings concerning Astronomy and Cosmology. Occultists were threatened with terrible penalties for questioning scientific truths. But now they feel braver; Science is less secure in its "impregnable" position than they were led to expect, and many of its strongholds are built on very shifting sands.

So many are the deviations among the heavenly bodies from their strict theoretical programme, as proved by the confessions of astronomers themselves, of which samples are given in this chapter, that the writer may well say:

The law of gravity, however, seems to be becoming an obsolete law in starry heaven. At any rate, those long-haired sidereal Radicals, called comets, appear to be very poor respecters of the majesty of that law, and to beard it quite impudently. . . . A comet whose tail defies the law of gravity right in the Sun's face can hardly be credited with obeying that law.

H. T. E.

## India and the Theosophical Society.

[A Letter translated from the Hindi.]

**T**O W. Q. Judge and those that attempt to revive the much neglected and now forgotten Âryan religion. I salute and state as follows:

I have read with much delight and satisfaction the translation of your address, "To my Brâhman Friends in India," and thank you heartily for the same.

After being thoroughly acquainted with the objects and the rules of the Theosophical Society, I have come to the conclusion that the Society has girded up its loins to revive the Great Brahma Vidyâ, by virtue of which this Bharata Varsha was always considered to be the best and most sacred of all lands, and by virtue of which the Rishis and Munis became the Knowers of all Times (the present, past, and future) and Space, and the authors of many philosophies—the Vidyâ, by the practice of which different powers appear of their own accord on the way, but are not earnestly or eagerly sought for.

It is this Brahma Vidyâ that imparted spiritual strength to the Brâhmans, force of arms to the Kshatriyas. It is this Vidyâ that enabled the persons of old to survey the whole world, nay, the Great Cosmos itself, without the aid of material telescope or magnifying glass. If there is any "tree of all gifts" (Kalpa Vriksha), then it is the Vidyâ. It is the diamond with seven facets of compound colours, and it is (Kâma Dhuk) the "cow that fulfils all desires."

With the neglect of this Vidyâ, spiritual power, muscular strength, beauty and splendour, nobleness of mind, toleration, age and good fortune, have also disappeared—and that, in spite of the existence of this Knowledge and other Shâstras accessory to it.

It would be egregious flattery to say that the people of Hindûstân are merely wanting in animation. In truth the state of India looks more dismal and heartrending than the funeral fields covered with piles of lifeless corpses. It is daily and gradually sinking deeper and deeper beneath the water of oblivion. The power of my voice falls short and my tongue fails in chanting the continual praise of those Rishis and Mahâtmâs by whose unbounded kindness and unlimited compassion for suffering humanity and degenerated and degraded India, the seed of Brahma Jñânânam has once more been sown within the beds of the Theosophical flower garden. It is within the power of this Society

alone to regenerate India from its present hopeless condition. It is also sincerely hoped that with the spread of the Theosophical knowledge in India, this sacred land will once more attain its former grandeur. And this it assuredly will do if the Brâhmans and other twice-born races devote their life and souls to carrying out the Theosophical work; if they teach their sons that Brahma Vidyâ alone can fructify the Mantra Shâstras and Astrology, without the knowledge of which physical science in all its branches becomes simply useful for material purposes.

They should sow the seed of Brahma Vidyâ in the hearts of their children, for this alone is able to revive the knowledge of the much esteemed Shâstras of Mantra Vidyâ and Jyotisha, so that these may come into their proper use. People ignorant of this secret do not believe in our Shâstras, and call them false and useless.

Can the holy and sacred Mantrams express their sublime occult influence in hearts not purified by the fires of initiation and not lightened by the flame of Brahma Vidyâ? No, ten thousand times no. If it is considered without any prejudice then it will be found that the Gupta Vidyâ alone is able to impart success, because everything exists now as it did before, except the Gupta Vidyâ.

The same sun, the same moon, the same stars, nay, the same elements, exist as before, but it is only Brahma Vidyâ that has disappeared under the veil of ignorance. In proof whereof look at the state the country and its people have come to.

The Theosophical Society will rescue the Science from danger and make it comprehensible to those who deserve it. May its unselfish desire bear fruits to the utmost extent, and may Bharata Varsha gain the prosperity that it had once before—such is my humble and constant prayer.

It is quite a mistake to fancy that the object of the Theosophical Society is to spread Buddhism in India. All doubts on such points can at once be removed by correspondence with the Society.

Your best friend and devoted well wisher,

(Pandit) ATMARAM VEDÂNTIN.

## The Norse Gods.

[A Paper read before the Blavatsky Lodge, T. S.]

**B**EFORE the Christian religion had succeeded in covering the face of the western world, there reigned a religion in the north which is known now by the name of the Asa faith—for the Gods who were revered then were called the *Æsir*. This faith is in many ways analogous to the Hindû religious system; or, rather, the cosmogony and anthropogony of both bear close resemblance to one

another. The record of these Norse Gods has been preserved for us principally in Icelandic literature, in poem and song, formerly orally transmitted, and latterly written. The writing of the myths and mysteries seems to have been resorted to only when the knowledge was fading out of the minds of the people and there was danger of the traditions being altogether lost and the people falling into savagery. It is therefore from the two Eddas that we get the bulk of our information concerning the Gods of the Norsemen. Their religion seems to have been a purely indigenous faith, not an importation, nor the religion of conquerors imposed on the conquered. Apparently there was no artificial boundary between the most wise king and the most simple warrior, except the natural difference of superior power of mind and body. Their bond of union seems to have been that kind of fellowship which exists amongst men of one clan; and the Gods were not—in the earlier days at least—regarded as existing entirely apart from men as beings to be feared and worshipped, but rather as friends to be loved and revered. Indeed, in the beginnings of the race the god-folk walked the earth, and the great leaders of the people were direct descendants of the Gods. Thus we find mention made of those who were of the god-folk and those who were of the king-folk and those who were of the men-folk; distinctions being thus made between various stages of development in the same race.

The Norse Gods were neither omnipotent nor eternal; for though Odin, Honir and Lodur created men, yet they were themselves created and doomed in time to pass away when the great day Ragnarok, the *Götterdämmerung*, the Twilight of the Gods, should come.

First came the creation or evolution of the universe and worlds, just as in the most ancient Hindû scripture, the *Rig Veda*, it is said:

Who knows from whence this manifold creation sprang? The Gods themselves came later into being.

In the beginning there were two worlds, regions or Lokas. In the south was hot, fiery Muspel, and in the north cold, dark Niflheim, with the fountain Hvergelmir in its midst, where the Dragon Nidhögg dwells. Between these two worlds was the yawning chasm, Ginungagap, void and still as the windless air. Out of the north, from its hidden fountain, flowed ice-cold venom-streams. Out of the south came sparks from Muspel; and the heat of the sparks met the frozen stream in Ginungagap. Then the frost drops were quickened by the heat of Muspel sparks, and Jötun Ymir came into being, which produced from itself a race of evil Jötuns or Giants. With Ymir came to life the Cow Audhumla, who nourished him with her milk. Then the cow licked the salt rime-clumps, and there came forth Buri, mighty and beautiful. Buri's son was Bör, and Bör was the father of Odin, Vili and Ve. And Odin is the father of the bright and beautiful Æsir, the Gods of heaven and earth.

Then the sons of Bør slew the giant Ymir, and all the race of giants was drowned in his blood except one, from whom a new race of giants sprang. The sons of Bør now appear as creators, and began their work by making the earth and the sea and the sky and the clouds from the dead body of the Jötun Ymir. Around about the earth they made the deep sea to flow, and upon its utmost strand they suffered the new race of Jötuns to take up their dwelling, that being apparently the limit of the sway of the Æsir. Then in the centre of the earth they placed Midgard, while the Æsir or Gods dwelt in Asgard. From earth to heaven, from Man-home to God-home, there stretched one solitary path. This was the bridge Bifröst, the Trembling Way. But above the heaven of the Æsir is a higher heaven, and in the highest stands the imperishable gold-roofed hall, Gimli, brighter than the sun.

Then they say that the flesh of the dead Ymir bred maggots, and the Gods gave them the form and understanding of men, and made them to dwell within the earth and the rocks. These were the dwarfs. Four of them they appointed to hold up the sky. At the northern extremity sat the great Jötun Hræsnelgur in the guise of an eagle.

The most prominent character, and the one best known among the Gods, is Odin, the All-father. The epithets applied to him are very numerous. We shall, then, do well to consider a little what is meant by Odin. First we see him born from a Jötun mother and from a father who is, if not self-born, at least a direct emanation from the parentless Bør, who is called into being by the tongue and breath of the Cow Audhumla. Now in Hindû mythology this cow is Vâch and signifies Speech or Sound. In the *Gospel of John* also we have the Logos or Word as first existing in that which is there called the Archê. And while the Jötun Ymir is nourished by the milk of the Cow, the beautiful Bør is born of her breath. Thus we have the same scheme as that which is pointed out to us in *The Secret Doctrine*, of the two opposing principles called Spirit and Matter producing two lines of evolution, or, as it were, two classes of beings, which are eventually linked by a third in which both play their part and each strives for mastery. This third race is that of the man-folk. For, in this system of the Norsemen, as in *The Secret Doctrine*, we find that before man existed, there was produced by Nature alone a kind of foundation or vehicle which could only develop into man by the action of the Gods. The story is told in its naïve simplicity and obvious imagery, somewhat as follows:

When the sun first shone on the "Stones of the Hall" the vegetative force united with the matter of the primeval giant Ymir, who was filled with the seed of life from Audhumla's milk, and then the ground was overgrown with green herbs.

Thus at this stage there is developed (1) an earthly material body, (2) a formative vegetative force. And these two qualities are all that

compose the nature and form of Ask and Embla, who are growing "like trees," when the three Gods, Odin, Lodur, and Honir, find them. The Gods propose to make man, and so Lodur endows Ask and Embla with his first gift, (3) La or Læti, or blood, which converts the plant into an animal being with voluntary motion. Lodur is thus said to fructify the embryo growing upon the World Tree. He then gives his second gift, (4) Litr Goda, Prosôpon (Πρόσωπον), the likeness of the Gods, an inner body which causes the outer body to take its appearance. The Litr is the real body, the outer being its shell. It is this Litr or astral body which goes into Hades, and is then the vehicle of the man, the other three remaining on earth. It is material, but not of the same kind of matter as that which we know with our five senses.

Then Honir gives his gift (5) Odr, the Latin Mens, the Greek Nous (νοῦς), the Ego. This Honir is called the Mire King, Long Leg, etc., and all epithets that apply to the stork who walks in the ooze, the mud of chaos. He also corresponds to the Spirit of God moving on the face of the Waters, for when the fruit (germ) grown on the World Tree matures and drops into the mythic pond, it is then brought by the winged messenger of the Gods, and, *mentally* fructified by Honir, born into the maternal lap. It is then ready for the next gift, (6) which is Odin's, and this is the Önd, Spirit, and it is this which returns to Odin at death. Thus, at death, we have the three lower principles left on earth, (1) the material body, (2) the vegetative force, (3) the animal force; while the three higher pass into Hades, into the abode of Hel, who claims the Litr, and when the second death takes place the spirit ascends to its place with Odin.

From this sketch of the creation, or, rather, development of man from the vegetable to the human stage, we can gather some idea of the nature of the powers that were symbolized by these three Gods, who were most active in the first production of humanity. They seem to represent the regents of the three worlds, Astral, Psychic, and Spiritual; the Material being the product of Jötuns and not of the Gods or Æsir. Thus, in his struggle for progress, man is himself the battle field wherein the Æsir and the Jötuns fight continually for supremacy. And if a human being, during his earth-life, strives well to attain to a knowledge of the Gods and to do according to the nature of the God within him, then he passes to the Hall of Odin as one of his comrades and fellow warriors, to fight for the Gods in the last day of Ragnarok, when the final battle shall take place between the opposing forces. Then all barriers are broken down, all chains are loosed and the Fenris Wolf, whose open jaws fill the space between heaven and earth, runs loose. The Midgard serpent writhes in Jötun rage, and Surtur, surrounded by flames, rides out at the head of Muspel's hosts. Heimdal, the guardian of the bridge Bifröst, blows on his great horn, the mighty Gjallar horn, summoning all the Gods to the last fight. And Gods

and Jötuns meet and slay each other. The world is burnt up and all vanishes. But ever the seed of the future races and worlds remains, and, unmoved above it all, stands the imperishable gold-roofed hall Gimli. And though the worlds and the makers of them are destroyed, they are again reborn, and so the mind of man in every land and every race finds that the limitations of thought are the limitations of the Gods; and as in thought one can neither think of an absolute beginning nor end, neither can one think of endless eternity. The nearest approach to expression of the truth seems to be given in similar forms of evolution by in-breathing and out-breathing, in the many myths of the many world religions.

But to return to Odin. Sometimes he stands for the Logos, or Brahmâ, for the two other aspects of the trinity of Odin, Vili and Ve, seem to disappear, and Odin appears alone, just as we have Brahmâ, Vishnu and Shiva the three aspects of the great Brahman, or the later Christian trinity. Odin, Vili and Ve are translated as Spirit, Will, and Holiness, and correspond exactly to Brahmâ, Vishnu and Shiva, the Creator, the Preserver and the Destroyer, for Spirit quickens, Will arranges and Holiness destroys evil and error.

The trinity only appear prominently in the period of creation; in the later days it is Odin alone who stands as the All-father. But besides this exalted aspect, there are other views of Odin as a God somewhat like the Jewish Jehovah, with fierce and violent characteristics; though there is no record that Odin was ever represented in as black colours as Jehovah in the Scriptures of the Jews. This is probably because the Asa faith was supplanted by Christianity before the people had become so corrupt as the Jews were apparently from the beginning, for truly man makes his gods in his own image, and a people naturally credits its God with the qualities it most respects.

It seems likely that besides the cosmic power symbolized under this name, there may have been also a great adept who, in that land, was known by that name. In *The Secret Doctrine* (ii. 423) Madame Blavatsky speaks of Odin as one of the thirty-five great Buddhas of Confession. "One of the earliest, indeed; for the continent to which he and his race belonged is also one of the earliest." She tells us that he and his race belong to the time when the ice-bound region of the north was a tropical land, and a continent extended where now the sea holds sway. That this is no wild dream may be at least suggested by the actual discovery at the present day of fossil remains of tropical vegetation in Iceland and thereabouts.

This light thrown by H. P. Blavatsky on the antiquity of the Asa faith, perhaps helps us to understand why there is so much freshness and vigour and joy and youth in these old legends, for they tell of a race in its youth and vigour, full of life and hope. And this is not in any way opposed to the idea that they had of fate. The three Norns

who sit by the fountain Urdar in Midgard dispense the fates of men, and their decrees cannot be changed; they are Urthur, Verthandi and Skuld, the Past, the Present and the Future, and correspond to the three kinds of Karma, Kriyamâna, Sanchita and Prârabdha, that being created, that being stored, and that being matured; or the sowing of the seed, the germination of the grain and the ripening of the harvest. But this is not simply blind fatalism, and is well expressed in the words spoken by Brynhild the Valkyrie to Sigurd, when he has ridden through the circle of fire on the peak of Hindfell, and waked her from her long sleep of ages.

Know thou, most mighty of men, that the Norns shall order all,  
And yet without thine helping shall no whit of their will befall.

Man is thus the agent through whom the will of the Master is done, and his right action is necessary to the perfect action of destiny, and when he fails the world falls back into confusion and chaos.

The Norns nourish the great World Tree Ygdrasil with water from the Urdar fountain, which is at one of its roots. Another root is in Jötunheim, where is another fountain, Hvergelmir. Here sits the wise Jötun Mimer, and here is kept the eye of Odin, which he pledged when he drank at the fountain of knowledge, and which is guarded by Mimer. The name Mimer signifies the knowing, and is cognate with the Latin root of our word "memory." So it seems that Mimer typifies the knowledge of the Past, Present, and Future, and the Norns are more nearly connected with the Jötun than with the Asa. They also hold the knowledge of all events and destinies. But, though they have knowledge they have not power of choice nor any hope. They must act according to the law, they cannot start new causes nor alter the causes that have been set in motion; they are the Karmic Lipika, and are more cold and relentless (because helpless) than any Sphinx. So, too, in *The Secret Doctrine* we are told that Man alone can set new causes at work, and here we find the man-making Æsir creating and fashioning, fighting and upholding their creation, while behind them is ever the Great Fire-God Surtur, whose home is Muspelheim. Above all is Gimli, the imperishable.

What is the meaning of this Mimer who sits by the Well of Knowledge, and these terrible Norns so dreaded by the timid, and simply respected, but not feared, by the God-born? Is it that the scheme of fate is woven from the beginning to the end and is unchangeable to the last day of Ragnarok? It may be so, but when we look upon all these forces, man included, as integral parts of one whole, then we can see that what man in his condition of universal mind thinks, that shall man in his bodies of flesh act out. But there is no trace to be found in the early stories of feeble submission which paralyzes action, but rather a bold reliance on the simple justice of a fate that cannot be



evaded or turned aside; and this, too, that though a man must bow his body to the will of the Norns, because it is the unchangeable fate, yet his spirit is free and can rise above his destiny and claim his place with All-father Odin, on the strength of his own courage and virtue. It seems to be the highest wisdom to act from the highest motive known and leave the consequences in the hands of the Norns, who fashion all. And what better can we learn to-day?

R. MACHELL.

(To be concluded.)

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## Practical Proof of Re-Embodiment.

THEOSOPHICAL writers have frequently called attention to the great good that would result by the world's acceptance of the tenet of reïncarnation. If reïncarnation is a fact, as so many Theosophists believe, every thinker must admit the beneficent effect that such a conviction would exert upon a people should they accept it in their thoughts and acts. The only sure basis for ethics as a groundwork for society is a true conception as to life itself; and if reïncarnation be the rule for humanity, the western peoples, in their ignorance of the fact, possess no such basis. To prove that reïncarnation is the rule, then, is the Theosophist's self-imposed duty; but in this materialistic age there is need for a more practical demonstration of its truth than mere inference or argumentative proof, which is frequently considered by enquirers as mere speculation or sophistry. For instance, we may say that if reïncarnation be true it will explain, as no other system can, the equity of the great differences in social station, mental equipment, etc. among men; why frequently a virtuous man ekes out a miserable existence in a hovel, while the *débauché* goes through life surrounded by every luxury and comfort; but such *à priori* argument may be considered as only a "working hypothesis," leaving the question to recur: What direct evidences have you of its truth? In answer to this challenge, the best thing we can do is to appeal to human experience to furnish satisfactory evidence for reïncarnation. First, we may say that all advanced Occultists remember their past lives, for we read in Patanjali's *Yoga Aphorisms* (Aph. 39, Book ii):

When non-covetousness is established there is knowledge of all [former] states of existence.

Unfortunately, however, for us—though doubtless the contrary for them—these advanced Occultists are not members of our civilization. They are not here to be placed in the witness-box; and as we ourselves have not yet become devoid of covetousness, we have yet not reached Samma Sambuddha. Nevertheless, there are other persons who, for

some cause (such as reïncarnating in the same astral body, the previous embodiment having been brought to a close prematurely), have retained memory of their preceding earth-life, and it is well that such cases, whenever they come to notice, should be recorded in our magazines. Some children have said that they remembered having other parents, but their statements were treated by their relatives as mere childhood's fancies, and ere long the children themselves fell into the materialistic ruts of the age.

One case in point was that of a boy five years old, living at Omaha, Nebraska, who persisted in saying: "Once I was a boy, and then grew up to be a man, and now I am a boy again." So little attention was paid to his odd saying, however, that by this he has probably himself forgotten about it.

A Connecticut youth, now in the T. S., on one occasion, when a small boy, remarked: "I knew before I was born that it was dangerous to throw scissors," and the rod was not spared and the child spoiled as far as past births were concerned. These are but two of the many instances where children have been discouraged by their sapient elders from confiding such "childish fancies."

But one of the most remarkable cases of the kind that has come to my notice was that of Miss Nettie Davis, of Litchfield, Illinois. I can do no better than quote a portion of a letter from an old friend of the Davis family, Mrs. Sara C. Scovell, F.T.S. (87, South Morgan Street, Chicago, Illinois):

This story I have from the lips of Nettie's mother. Although I had heard of it at the time it occurred, I had not paid much attention to it, being then young and not much interested in such phenomena; but nine years ago, while on a visit to Mrs. Davis at Carthage, Missouri, their present home, she became much interested in Spiritualistic phenomena, and during our conversations upon the subject related all the details of her daughter's strange "hallucinations." When yet a tiny baby, *only three months old*—of course long before the normal age for talking—Nettie was being admired by a Mrs. Southworth, who had just called to see them. She had taken the baby up in her arms, and everyone present was astounded at hearing the little thing say, as she stroked the fur of the lady's cape:

"Is it a kitty?"

From that time onwards she talked, without ever having been taught—so far as her present incarnation is concerned. As she grew older she would frequently go into a trance, upon recovery cry to go "home," saying that hers were not her real home nor parents, but that she had just seen her real ones. She described her "home" and its surroundings, which were of a different kind from anything known to her family; and the toys she spoke of as having been hers were unlike anything for sale in that part of the world. Although Mr. Davis was moderately wealthy and had always furnished every necessary comfort to his family, yet this other "home" Nettie saw in trance seemed to her her only real one, and for a while after each vision it was almost impossible to reconcile her to the home her parents, brothers and sisters knew to be hers in fact. While attending school her play-mates, learning that her trances (thought by them to be fainting-fits) did not require the attention of a physician, left her to awaken undisturbed. Later on the

trances became fewer, and it was during my visit there, nine years ago, that she had, so far as I know, her last one. Her folks—members of the Methodist Church—were much worried and at a loss for any explanation of it.

And now for another remarkable case.

The following is cut from the *Milwaukee Sentinel* of Sept. 25th, 1892, but appeared shortly before in the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*:

HER SECOND LIFE ON EARTH.

"I see that someone has been telling the *Globe-Democrat* that he remembers a previous life on this earth," said Isaac G. Foster. "I have met several people who profess shadowy memories of a previous existence, but the most remarkable case I know is that of my daughter.

"Twelve years ago I resided in Effingham county, Ill. I there buried a daughter named Maria, who was just budding into womanhood. The next year I removed to Dakota where I have since resided. Nine years ago another daughter was born, whom we christened Nellie, but who has always persisted in calling herself Maria. She says the name belongs to her, as we used to call her Maria. Some time since I returned to Effingham county to settle up some business, and took Nellie with me. She not only recognized the old home, but many people she had never seen, but whom my first daughter knew very well. A mile from the old home was a school-house where Maria had gone to school. Nellie had never seen the school-house, yet she described it accurately. She expressed a desire to visit it. I took her there, and she marched straight up to the desk her sister had occupied, saying: 'This is mine.' It seems like the dead come back from the grave, but her mother will not have it so. She says that if that is true she has but one child and that God gave her two. I do not try to explain it."

Had Mrs. Foster been a Theosophist she would, perhaps, on the contrary, have felt highly pleased that, owing to the good environment furnished by her household, her daughter should have persisted in being born there a second time. The case of being reborn within so short a time in the same family is peculiar, and I have heard of but one other instance.

As will be observed, both the above cases are presumably those of rebirth without intervening Devachan, for, in the first instance, Nettie Davis' former parents, provided she had really seen them clairvoyantly or visited them astrally, are shown to have been still living; while the period of time given in the last case, that of Nellie Foster, would not have allowed more than three years from time of death till rebirth. Undoubtedly Miss Foster has now the identical astral body she possessed when she was called Maria, and this fact would account for so vivid a remembrance of her former life. Incidentally it might be said that in the three cases given above the individuals remained of the same sex as in the preceding incarnation, and in all other cases of which I have heard it is the same. This seems to destroy the theory advanced by some speculations in *The Forum*, that there is a law of alternation in sex. According to another student who knows maybe still less about it, the highest number of incarnations successively in the same sex is seven.

If Mr. Foster here tells the truth, and there is certainly no reason why he should do otherwise, it is a demonstration of the fact of re-incarnation, for, unlike most cases of this character, there is external evidence corroborating the child's testimony, similar to that admissible in courts of law.

A demonstration of the fact of reïncarnation means the proven falsity of the Materialist's theory that death is life's ending, and of the Christian's that it is the beginning of endless bliss or torment. Thus the two great systems which strive for mastery in the West are shown to be false, while even such believers as the Spiritualists must revise their theories. Among the vast hordes of the Western world but a small handful—the Theosophists—is thus shown to have a right conception as to life; and without this the structure of society must rest upon an untrue and insecure foundation.

We need more of this sort of proof, and members everywhere should be on the alert to collect it.

JOHN M. PRYSE.

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## The Unconscious Tendency of Modern Thought in the Direction of Theosophy.

THE mind of a careful and unprejudiced observer, who, in any degree, strives to keep abreast of modern thought, whether of the "orthodox religious," or scientific schools, can hardly fail to be struck by the fact that, despite the innumerable creeds and codes, the main teachings, whether ethical or otherwise, are slowly but surely converging towards a common point.

The principal divines—whether of the Anglican or Broad Church schools, the scientists, the positivists, the pursuers of Psychical Research, the spiritualists, the hypnotists, the supporters of the germ theory in medical schools—would all be profoundly shocked were they informed that their ethical teachings, or their scientific investigations, were one and all tending towards Theosophy—"to the Jews a stumbling-block, to the Greeks foolishness"; yet the writer ventures to affirm that few impartial critics, giving the necessary time and study to this much maligned philosophy, and then carefully comparing the same with the growing tendency of nearly every other school of thought, can fail to be struck by the fact, that while none of their theories can disprove the Esoteric Philosophy, very many can be pointed out as directly supporting it.

A famous preacher of the Anglican school urges from the pulpit that no forgiveness of sins can eradicate the stain of an evil deed; such a deed may be, he asserts, pardoned, but its consequences remain. The soul is scarred permanently by the action, it cannot be wiped

away by forgiveness, and upon this he insists also in the case of an evil thought. What is this but theosophic teaching?

Broad churchmen and unitarians, positivists, and agnostics preach the doctrine of love and universal brotherhood; a well-known and eloquent unitarian minister preaches spiritual evolution after physical life on this planet is ended.

An essay contributed by Mr. F. W. Myers to *The Nineteenth Century* for January, 1893, the subject the late Lord Tennyson, is remarkable not only as showing the tendency of the mind of the Laureate, but as being contributed by the pen of a gentleman who is one of the most avowed opponents of Theosophy.

Professor Lodge, in a paper read before the Psychical Society at a recent meeting, confirmed, possibly unconsciously, a very large number of theosophic theories; he discussed the probability of the existence of a cosmic picture-gallery containing the pictures of incidents past and future, and mooted the suggestion that it was possible for a clairvoyant to read events to come by studying these prophetic thought-forms.

Let the student note the fact that the theory of the existence of the "cosmic picture-gallery" is worthy of attention by the scientist. But thought-forms in the astral light? Perish the notion! It is theosophic!

The same gentleman in the course of an exceedingly interesting account of his experiments in America with Mrs. Piper, the trance medium, discussed the question as to whether it was the medium's "subliminal consciousness" or external intelligences which produced the phenomena; he apparently inclined to the theory that some, at least, were produced by an outside consciousness, at the same time affirming that while he thought it probable that beings existed under different conditions of life from those with which we are conversant on the physical plane, he saw no reason for supposing that these were necessarily disembodied human souls; and if the writer's memory serves, Mr. Myers at a less recent meeting supported the theory of the existence and occasional communication of lower and rudimentary "spirits." If this is not the well-known theosophic doctrine of elementals—what is it?

The daily advancing "germ theory" of the medical schools supports the theosophic teaching of the "lives." Hypnotists bear united testimony to the thought-forms producible by the mesmerist for the delusion of the mesmerized.

The possibility of external visualization is an article of faith with those engaged in the study of crystal gazing. Psychometry supports the theory of the practical indestructibility of thought, and of the results of action. Ancient superstitions are being proved by modern investigation to have a substratum of truth. The annihilation of

physical pain by forcing the consciousness to act upon another plane is being proved to be practicable; and, indeed, the unscientific mother, who, by the hasty display of "something pretty," causes baby to hush his cries, and forget the smart of bruised knees after a tumble, practises this little piece of sorcery daily.

*Phantasms of the Living* contains multiplied and carefully certified instances of the appearance of the astral form; and the collective testimony of students of the "spook" goes to support the fact that these apparitions are assuredly very dissimilar from the original entities, in their habits as they lived. Nearly all are deficient in intelligence, nearly all are untruthful, many are absolutely dumb and unintelligent. It is almost unknown that a "ghost" should behave in the reasonable, intelligent and considerate manner in which the embodied soul was in the habit of behaving; and no impartial student having once convinced himself of the appearance of such apparitions, can surely fail to perceive how entirely their behaviour coincides with the theosophic theory of kâma-lokic shells (elementaries) and elementals.

Theosophy alone is prepared with a decisive and reasonable response, when the candid enquirer, who can no longer be blind to the existence of occult phenomena, demands: "What are they? Whence are they? Whither do they tend?"

Those who will honestly study the far more vital side of Theosophy—viz., the ethical teaching—must admit that no purer code of morals was ever offered to struggling humanity; the ethics taught by every great teacher, at their best and purest, are the ethics of Theosophy, the Wisdom Religion does not claim to be a "new faith"; and that it is not so, and moreover that it is not exclusively the embodiment of the teaching of any one man or woman, any impartial investigator can prove for himself.

A genuine exponent of the theosophic life, who would be inexpressibly grieved and shocked could she dream that she was being so classified, lately directed the writer's attention to a little book, entitled, *The Practice of the Presence of God*, by a seventeenth-century monk of great piety. It contains an exposition of the theosophic doctrine of the possibility of the communion of the soul with the Divine Ego; and in the modern preface to the recent edition the conviction is expressed that "truth and piety are of every country and religion"; this opinion, proffered by a member of the Anglican communion, the growing tendency of all schools of thought towards the theosophic teachings, the gradually awakening spirituality of the age, and the assistance given by that somewhat belligerent handmaid of the T. S., the Society for Psychical Research, inspires the writer with the hope that the night is far spent, the day at hand, and that ere long a wider circle of our sad, suffering humanity may find light and peace in the rays of the Wisdom Religion.

I. P. H.

## Friedrich Nietzsche and his Zarathushtra Gospel.

A MAN whose ideas are spreading widely in Germany, and of whom one of his disciples<sup>1</sup> writes as follows: "A great longing came over me; I longed for a new God, and found him—in Friedrich Nietzsche"—such a man and his teachings cannot be unworthy of our consideration.

Friedrich Nietzsche's life is told in a few words. He was born in 1844, and, his studies completed, had an honourable call to the University at Bâle, where he taught philosophy; but later on he gave up his position so as to be able to devote himself entirely to his own philosophical ideas, and to live according to his own views. A small number of enthusiastic disciples had begun to collect around him, when a great misfortune befell him. His brain gave way, and since 1889 Nietzsche has been hopelessly lost to the world.

Friedrich Nietzsche has no real system of philosophy, no new conception of what this world is, to offer us, and he openly declares that he despises every known system as useless metaphysical dreams. He writes mostly in brilliant, sarcastic aphorisms, masterly in style, in which he shows himself an implacable enemy of our present civilization, which he attacks on every side, and with as little compunction as Tolstoi himself, although from a totally different standpoint. Whereas Tolstoi's aim is to bring back humanity to a life led in accordance with the real teachings of Christ, Nietzsche dreams of elevating a few elect to the heights of old Hellenic wisdom and Dionysian ecstasy.

Looking down, with his own intellectual strength and power of mind, from these dreams of greatness, upon the civilization, religions and ideals of the humanity of to-day, Nietzsche pronounces them all worthless, utter failures, because they are imbued with the spirit of meekness, pity and renunciation, to which he ascribes the demoralizing effect which has brought mankind to be what it is—"a despicable herd of obedient slaves." According to him to act against one's instinct, as slaves do, who obey when they would like to command, is a sign of decline, and only when man's activity is in harmony with his instincts is he on his way upwards.

It would lead us too far to follow Nietzsche step by step in his own

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Max Zerbat in a pamphlet entitled *No and Yes*.

writings; it would also be most difficult to give in that way a clear idea of his teaching. In order, therefore, to do him justice, I prefer setting forth his ideas, or, so to say, his "Way of Salvation," by means of the preface of his most important work, *Thus spake Zarathushtra*, written by his friend and follower, Peter Gast. In this manner we shall best do justice to a man who, although his opponents may call him a "radical cynic," and an "incarnation of selfishness," and his ideas be diametrically opposed to our own, was nevertheless moved by the sincere wish to raise humanity, and deserves all our compassion for his sad end.

*Thus spake Zarathushtra* is the "Nietzsche Gospel," and is written in a touching, prophetic form. Needless to say, Zarathushtra is Nietzsche himself. Peter Gast, the St. Paul of this new gospel, tells us that Nietzsche's aim is:

To create a class of men above the common herd; men full of spiritual power—of soul power, so that their existence alone would suffice to stamp the insipid hopeless spirit of our time with the mark of its degrading triviality—a governing class of men who would not look for life's meaning in the perfection of its comforts, nor for life's ideal amongst the learned, but seek them only in the highest intensity of will and spiritual power; in short, a heroic class of men—a new aristocracy.

Zarathushtra Nietzsche calls these creations of his imagination "Higher Beings," but this expression is:

A symbol susceptible of many different interpretations, as much so as the word God. Man as an individual can form only a part of this Higher Being, he cannot become a Higher Being himself.

What is the aim of your lives, what the purposes of your culture? [asks Zarathushtra.] No one explains it clearly, and least of all your teachers of social science, who are busy working for the welfare of the lower classes only, and for the more equal distribution of earthly riches; and who fill up the gap which the disappearance of religion has left with newspaper reading, popular science, concerts, theatres and other amusements. The schools do not teach it either; the Church alone has at least kept intact that innermost feeling in which this aim can still be seen, and from which it can spring forth anew. Genius alone knows fully of this aim, and it is genius because it lived up to this aim, or better still, it lived up to this aim because it was genius.

This aim, Nietzsche then teaches us, is not after the final goal of humanity, but after its highest type.

That the highest possible type of mankind may appear and live amongst you, *this* is the explanation of all your earthly troubles, this must be the prize for which you live; only the appearance of such Beings justifies your existing at all. Without them your existence is useless; but their existence also, without a soaring upward of kindred spirits, is almost equally worthless.

Nietzsche's repeated warnings against pity, are naturally only addressed to his equals.

Pity, self-sacrifice, would be for superior Beings as much of a crime, an undervaluing of their own rare qualities, as they are virtues for inferior mortals. Genius works for the well-being and enrichment of mankind at large; therefore it cannot



sacrifice itself for its next neighbour, but devotes itself to the Whole and its future development. Geniuses, Zarathushtra-men, work for the higher training of mankind, and for the destruction of disease, degeneration, and parasitism, so that at last the Hellenic, divine, Dionysian life may once more exist in this world.

Nietzsche is the first who has understood Christianity and Democracy rightly. Both sprung from an unhealthy, impoverished soil, phenomena of a degenerate development; for the Christian democratic morals are slave-morals.

To the Dionysian life which is struggling upwards Nietzsche says, "Well" and "good"; to the Christian life which is dragging us down, "No" and "bad."

Peter Gast deplores the fact that so few are able to follow the "Master" on his giddy heights. "Who," he says, "like him has such a high conception of the Divine that he can say with Zarathushtra:"

If there were Gods, how could I bear not to be a God myself! . . . Therefore there are no Gods. This conclusion is mine, it is true, but now it is drawing me onwards. . . . To create, therein lies the deliverance from pain and life's light-heartedness. . . . But what would there be to create . . . if there were Gods!

Those who do not know these ecstasies of a higher nature, adds Peter Gast, cannot understand Nietzsche, but he himself does not wish to be understood by the common people, and to that end calls himself the "most immoral," to show that he counts himself an enemy of what is called to-day morality. His own idea of the moral is taught us in *Thus spake Zarathushtra*, that "Bible for Exceptional Beings."

It does not teach that stealing, untruthfulness, and murder are allowed; it does not occupy itself with that minor part of morals which even a dog [!] is easily taught.

The Zarathushtra ethic has higher concerns.

It addresses itself to the noblest of mankind, to those who have inherited souls with sure instincts, to those reverent ones, whose mind is free from all those deadly errors and prejudices which are transmitted to us from the past, and are gradually passing on into the future.

Zarathushtra wishes to prevent these superior men from losing themselves in the bustle of everyday life. For the present they ought to live apart from political parties, out of reach of the spirit of to-day, outside the democratic morality which knows nothing about the feelings of "Great Souls," but goes on teaching that man must become very humble in order to be looked upon as "moral." He shows us how a high-minded man can find his own Self and develop it. Self-education of this kind is deliverance from all those commonplace opinions which since his youth have been at work to destroy his greatness and originality; therefore this self-education is called the "assertion of self," and is a living antithesis of the doctrine of abnegation of self.

This is the cardinal point of Nietzsche's Zarathushtrism. Having read so far, it will perhaps astonish everyone to hear that Nietzsche's first teacher should have been Schopenhauer; for Schopenhauer's philosophy, which considers this world as *Mâyâ*, and proclaims renun-

ciation the only way of deliverance from it, is exactly that which rouses Nietzsche's anger, and which he calls "slave's morals." But if we look closer we find that however greatly Nietzsche may have repudiated metaphysics, and founded his ethics on a Dionysian basis, still he has not escaped entirely from its bondage. For instance, with regard to his description of the "Higher Beings," which are a "symbol," and of which we are told that "one man alone can form only a part of one, but cannot become a Higher Being himself," we ask, What is this if not metaphysics, and metaphysics of a very obscure kind? Further, in *Thus spake Zarathushtra* there is a passage which reminds one strongly of Schopenhauer's teaching on reincarnation. It is a fragment of a conversation between Zarathushtra and a dwarf, which runs thus:

"Let us stop, dwarf," said I. "Either thou or I! I am the stronger of the two. Thou knowest not my unfathomable thoughts! They would be unbearable to thee."

Then happened that which made me feel more at ease; the dwarf, that inquisitive dwarf, had jumped from my shoulder and squatted upon a stone in front of me. And look! there was a doorway just where we had stopped.

"Behold this doorway, dwarf," I continued, "it has two faces. Two roads meet here; no mortal ever followed them to their end.

"This long road behind us stretches out endlessly, and yonder long road in front of us is equally endless.

"These two roads, they contradict each other, they are at cross purposes.

"And here at this doorway is the point where they meet. The name of the doorway is written above it, 'Present Moment.'

"And if one should follow one of these two roads further and still further, thinkest thou, dwarf, that these two roads would eternally be at cross-purposes?"

"Everything straight is a lie," murmured the dwarf, disdainfully; "truth is crooked, time itself is a circle."

"O thou spirit of heaviness," said I, wrathfully, "take it not too easily, or I shall leave thee to squat where thou art squatted, lamefoot! Oh, that I should have carried thee so high!

"Consider," continued I, "this present moment. From this doorway, 'Present Moment,' runs backward a road without end; behind us lies an eternity.

"Dost thou not think that whatever has life must already have passed this way? Must not whatever can happen have already happened, have been acted have passed this way?

"And if everything has already happened, what thinkest thou, dwarf, of this 'Present Moment'? Must not this doorway also have already existed?

"And are not thus all things so closely bound up one in another, that this 'Present Moment' doth draw everything after it, and therefore itself likewise?

"For whatever can pass through this long road must pass through it a second time.

"And this spider which is creeping slowly in the moonlight, and this moonlight itself, and thou and I whispering in this doorway—whispering of things eternal—have we not all been here before, and come again into that road which stretches out before us, into that long and awful road?

"Must we not return thither again and again?"

This I spake in low tones, for I was afraid of my own thoughts and after-thoughts.

Surely this sounds rather like metaphysics; let us see what explanation we can find about it. Peter Gast writes:

Nietzsche, like the Asiatic founders of religion, thought he was an incarnation of the *Will to elevate Mankind*, and he was, in fact, a true incarnation thereof.

I, for my part, do not know what to call this "Will to elevate Mankind," of which Friedrich Nietzsche is an "incarnation," if not a metaphysical conception—however much it may displease the devoted disciple of this most unfortunate and erring genius. I quote Peter Gast once more on the subject of the dualism of man. He writes:

The pure biological, monistic explanation of the phenomenon *Man*, which declares that body and soul are neither divided nor susceptible of division, nor contained within one another; but that the soul is only a function of the body and corresponds to the same as an effect to its cause, rising and falling with the body and obeying every smallest organic change of the brain—this monistic conception of the phenomenon *Man* is happily spreading more and more, but it is not yet acknowledged officially. Officially the dual conception is still preached: that the soul is not dependent on the body, that the body is secondary and deserves no attention, that the soul lives only a short time in the body, that it is the soul that guides and directs the body, and all those errors which physiology condemned long ago. This false teaching we owe to the founder of a religion who thought of man only as a moral phenomenon, and was therefore one-sided. The whole intellectual life of those higher mortals, the Greeks of old, was non-existent for him. . . . He had no idea of such revelling in the highest soul ecstasies, as the Pindaric odes or the Dionysian choruses in *Antigone* describe to us.

Most true! I doubt, indeed, whether either Christ or Gautama Buddha ever had such experiences, and I bow to the infallibility of physiology and to the Dionysian ecstasies; but nevertheless the monistic doctrine disagrees most decidedly, according to my lights, with the "Will to elevate Mankind," of which we are told that Friedrich Nietzsche is an "incarnation."  
G. H.

## Notes and Queries.

UNDER this heading we propose to insert monthly notes and questions that may help students in their work, references to quotations bearing on Theosophical doctrines, and other matters of interest. Readers would much help us if they would send us passages they meet with in their own studies, copying the passage and giving *exact* reference—name of book, volume, page, and date of edition. All useful references will be classified, and entered up in a book under their several heads, and a mass of matter useful to students will be thus accumulated. Questions will be numbered, and the number must be given in sending an answer.

### ANSWERS.

A. 6.—I think it might safely be affirmed that every great thinker has at some period of his life come into contact with the belief in Metempsychosis or Reincarnation; but it is often difficult to trace such a phase of thought. In Goethe we have only a slight indication of it in a piece of poetry he wrote at Weimar in 1776, at the beginning of the deep friendship that united him with Frau von Stein. It runs thus:

Tell me, what has Fate in store for us, and why bound she us so close together? Ah! thou wert in times long gone my sister or my wife. Thou knewest every trait in my nature, and didst spy how my finest nerve responds; couldst read me at a glance, me whom mortal eye could scarce fathom. . . . And of all this there hovers but a memory o'er my doubting heart, a memory of the ancient truth ever present within, which ill befits our present circumstances. And, meseems, we are but half ensouled, and brightest day but dawns on us. Happy that the Fate which torments us avails not to change us.

There is only so much, nothing more, no hints in the letter which accompanied the poem of any preceding conversation on this subject. The only light we can throw on it is taken from a memorial discourse pronounced in Zwickau (Saxony) in 1892, by Professor Keller—on the occasion of the 150th birthday of Frau von Stein—and runs as follows:

Frau von Stein, Goethe's friend, considered life as a school into which the human spirit enters, coming from its heavenly home. Laden therein with weakness, sin and doubts, after having overcome this difficult ordeal, grown in knowledge, and been purified, it enters again through the gates of death, its spiritual home, and continues thus in different forms of existence, which are always renewing themselves.—G. H.

#### QUERIES.

Q. 8.—Alchemical, Hermetic, and Kabbalistic literature is being pushed to the front with a good deal of energy nowadays, and it is implied that all this is practically identical with Theosophy. Being ignorant of these things, I should like to ask if any of your readers can refer me to any of the writings of these schools, prior to the date of the Theosophical movement, wherein anyone, without Theosophical study, could learn, say, of the seven principles of man, of Karma, and Reincarnation.—“HES.”

Q. 9.—A footnote in Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. iii, runs as follows:

The preëxistence of human souls, so far at least as that doctrine is compatible with religion, was adopted by many of the Greek and Latin fathers.—Beausobre, *Hist. du Manichéisme*, l. vi, c. 4.

Will some one please verify?—C. J.

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## Review.

### THE STORY OF THE NEW GOSPEL OF INTERPRETATION.<sup>1</sup>

THIS book purports to be a more particular account of the genesis of those writings known as the New Gospel of Interpretation, and gives the experiences, mental and psychic, of both the co-workers, the late Dr. Anna Kingsford and Mr. Edward Maitland. The experiences are very interesting, both as examples of courageous effort in the quest of truth, and as records of psychic faculties in our own times; but we question whether they will add in any way to the credit of the teachings received through their agency. We have a very high opinion of the works of Mr. Maitland and Dr. Kingsford, and regard them as quite able to stand on their own merits. *The Perfect Way* and *Clothed with the Sun* are very valuable as interpretations of the Christian scriptures, and as treatises on mysticism in one of its aspects; but we think the details as to the manner of their production should have been kept for private circulation.

The teachings of the earlier works are here recapitulated, and we can refer readers to them. Mr. Maitland somewhat spoils the value of these writings by claiming too much for them. For instance, on p. 118, he says:

<sup>1</sup> By Edward Maitland. London: Lamby and Co. 1893. Price 3s. 6d.

The results of the investigations thus begun, and afterwards continued in the library of the British Museum, proved satisfactory and gratifying beyond all that we could have anticipated. For while it was made clear to us that there had never been a time when there were not some in the world who had witness to the truth in themselves, and this one and the same truth, it was also made clear that whereas others had received it in limitation, and beheld it "as through a glass darkly," we were receiving it in plenitude and "face to face," to the realization of the high anticipations of the sages, saints, seers, prophets, redeemers, and Christs of all time; and this, too, at the period, in the manner, and under the conditions declared by them as to mark and make the "time of the end."

H. T. E.

## Theosophical Activities.

### ANNIE BESANT'S INDIAN TOUR.

Every mail is now bringing news of the enthusiastic reception given to Annie Besant both in Ceylon and Southern India, and of the splendid work that is being done by her. Space would fail us to give all the interesting details sent by the Countess Wachtmeister of the ubiquitous "triumphal arches," unceasing "garlanding," and incessant "rose-water-besprinkling" that our travellers have had at every opportunity.

The Countess writes that on landing at Colombo "crowds were lining the streets, standing before every door . . . with eager eyes and kindly faces." At the Headquarters of the T. S. the boys from the Buddhist English school, and the head master, Mr. Buultjens, met them, the boys singing the *Jaya Mangala* (Hymn of Praise); addresses of welcome were responded to by Annie Besant. They next proceeded to the Sangamitta Girls' School and were enthusiastically greeted by Mrs. Higgins and her band of workers; from thence by train to Kandy, where the first public lecture was to be given. At the station crowds again, with bouquets of flowers, and greetings. Night had fallen and the whole place was illuminated and decorated. A procession was formed, with "temple-dancers," courteously sent by the priests, at the head—twelve strange figures turning and whirling, twisting and contorting their limbs in quaintest fashion. Annie Besant was cordially cheered when she stepped on the platform of the Town Hall. The upturned faces showed the most intense interest as she expounded to the Buddhists their own faith, bringing out one by one the hidden gems, and showing how to apply these truths to daily life. "It was just splendid, she spoke from her heart, and her words welled up with a force and power that thrilled through all, and many were heard to say that could they only hear their priests preach thus, Buddhism would be rekindled with a living fire." Next day, after distributing prizes at the Buddhist school and delivering addresses, Annie Besant, Colonel Olcott and Countess Wachtmeister returned to Colombo, where Annie Besant lectured at the Town Hall on the *Law of Karma* to an immense audience, including the Governor of Ceylon, and most of the English colony. "After the lecture there was a roar of applause, crowds surrounding the lecturer, telling her they had never heard such eloquence before." Visitors came in numbers to discuss Theosophy.

Next morning they started for Galle, to be the guests of Mr. de Silva, and were greeted in the same enthusiastic way. There they visited Mahinda College, over which Dr. Bowles Daly presides, and where Annie Besant lectured, and Colonel Olcott, Countess Wachtmeister, and Mrs. Higgins also addressed the students. It was here that the party saw the "devil-dance," of which a description has appeared in *The Daily Chronicle* of Dec. 6th, from the pen of Annie Besant; this was followed by fire-works in their honour.

The next start was for Ambalangoda and Panadura, where Annie

Besant lectured on *The Progress of Buddhism in the West*, by special request. The usual garlanding and sprinkling, with enthusiastic greetings, took place.

The following day Annie Besant and Colonel Olcott again lectured at another college. Of the educational progress in the island Countess Wachtmeister writes: "Seventy-seven Buddhist schools have been founded through the agency of the T. S., where children can be educated in their own faith, and not forced to accept strange dogmas. The seed sown by H. P. B. and Colonel Olcott is growing fast, and it is to be hoped that soon in every village there will be a Buddhist school. The members of the T. S. are working earnestly for the cause of free education, and we in the West must extend to them our good wishes and sympathy."

The schools at Panadura are "Pattiya Boys' School (97); Pattiya Girls' School (79); Walana (Boys, 110); Wehada (Mixed, 135); Arukgoda (Boys, 60). All these schools are registered and receiving Government grants. "Between Colombo and Galle are the following: Wellawatte (Girls, 120); Kirilanapon (Boys, 80); Nugagoda (Boys, 200); Galkisse (Boys, 140); Balapitrya (Mixed, 300); at Ambalangoda two boys' and two girls' schools, numbering 400 scholars."

On returning to Colombo Annie Besant lectured on *Reincarnation* in the Oriental Hotel; the lecture was, as usual, crowded, and resulted in many visitors coming to make enquiries.

The foundation stone of the new building for the Sangamitta Girls' School was laid by Annie Besant the following morning, Mr. Peter de Abrew having most generously donated a piece of ground for that purpose to the T. S. The school at present rents the premises—a yearly burden to Mrs. Higgins, the manager. More than 3,000 rupees have been collected for the new building. The travellers next went to visit the venerable Sumangala, Chief Abbot of the Sangha in the island, who had expressed a wish to see Mrs. Besant. Our colleague asked him various questions on the points of difference between the Hindû and Buddhist faiths, but time did not allow of an exhaustive enquiry.

After a farewell visit to the Sangamitta Schools the travellers left by boat for Tuticorin. Mrs. Besant writes: "Everything has gone without a hitch; the kindness of the people was something extraordinary. The educational work is just splendid, and all due to the T. S.—H. P. B. and Colonel Olcott having started it when they came to the island in 1881."

On Nov. 16th Annie Besant first set foot on Indian soil, where she and her companions were enthusiastically received, and again wreathed with flowers. At the railway station the first speeches were made, and all loudly cheered our colleague as she came forward. Tinnevely was the first stop. A procession, as usual, conducted them to the bungalow, with tom-toms and other native music. The subject of the first lecture was *Life after Death*.

The Countess writes enthusiastically as follows: "The hall and corridors were packed. Annie Besant spoke as I have never heard her speak before. Those who really wish to hear her at her best, must come and listen to her in the East. She spoke with a force and depth of feeling which seizes hold of one like a whirlwind. . . . The lecture was followed by loud applause, and all the Hindûs were surprised to find what knowledge she possessed of their own scriptures."

Crowds of Brâhman visitors arrived unceasingly, and the visitors were enthusiastically "sandal-wooded and rose-watered" at every place and on every opportunity. The next day they visited Shiva's Temple, and the temple elephant greeted them "by throwing up his trunk three times," and then led the way followed by players of various sorts and two singing girls. In this way they made the circuit of the temple, and among other things saw "the Covenant tree brought

from Ceylon and planted by H. P. B. and Colonel Olcott in 1881 as a sign of amity between Hindûs and Buddhists."

One outcome of the lectures and endless conversations was the accession of twelve members to the Society. As the Countess writes: "Every hour brought visitors, most animated conversations ensued; the power of thought and intellect of the Brâhmans is surprising, and it needs a mind like Annie Besant's to grapple with the metaphysical subtleties they bring forward. In the evening the lecture hall was even more crowded to listen to her on the *Inadequacy of Materialism*. It was magnificent."

From thence to Madura, where they found themselves installed in grand style in the Mahârâjah's palace, and the High Priest of the world-famous temple came in state to greet them. Here Annie Besant gave three lectures to packed and most enthusiastic audiences. Endless receptions, a Branch meeting and a Brâhman breakfast terminated the Madura visit.

Through floods and tremendous rains they reached Trichinopoly, where again every lecture was crowded to excess, in spite of the elements. On the morning of Nov. 20th Colonel Olcott lectured to one thousand boys, and afterwards Annie Besant spoke. An Âryan League was formed by the boys, who pledged themselves to stand by their religion and ancient customs.

Onward to Tanjore, where three lectures were given in the Durbar Hall of the palace. Here the Mahârânee sent word to say that she was anxious to see Annie Besant and would attend the lecture in person. On arriving at the hall they found "a band and soldiers, and a big cloth-of-gold curtain cutting off one end of the building." Annie Besant and the Countess were conducted behind the curtain to pay their respects to the "widowed Rânees, who put wreaths and shawls" on them. "They expressed their surprise and delight that Europeans should come and help the Hindû religion. The lectures had bigger crowds than ever, and all interstices of time were filled up by visitors."

Thence, on Nov. 28th, our travellers went to Kumbakonam, where Annie Besant was interviewed by a "palmist" who is thought a good deal of; he studied her hand and looked at her in a puzzled way, and then called over some of his folk, to whom he pointed out marks he had not seen before, but knew from pictures as those of Sarasvati. Then he chanted a number of Shlokas, but as the visitors were pressed for time, he was asked to write them down. The next day the translations were brought. Annie Besant says: "They gave a very accurate sketch of my life, with one or two details never printed—and then went on to the future, with reasons for future taken from events in past births." He said that she was to be a great religious teacher, besides other nice things. The afternoon lecture was on *Adepts*, and made a very deep impression, especially the explanation of the Path of Renunciation. Mrs. Besant writes: "They felt the beauty of such an ideal, and I was glad, as the Hindûs have sought only the Path of Liberation for so long that the other idea has faded away. I was so glad they responded to it."

The next morning our colleague lectured again; in the afternoon in the Sarangapani Temple to an immense audience, and explained Hindû symbols in the light of the Upanishads and of Theosophy.

On leaving Trichinopoly for Coimbatore the journey was more eventful owing to the floods which had made great breaches in the railway line. Would-be passengers were left to transport themselves as best they might to the spot at which the traffic recommenced. "But as good angels watch over us, the railway superintendent offered us trollies, such as the engineers use, and we went merrily on these where the rails had been replaced and walked where they were missing. The super-

intendent himself came to see us through and planted us triumphantly in the train on the other side." This enabled our lecturer to keep her engagements at Coimbatore, where on arriving the travellers walked in procession with wreaths round their necks and tom-toms beating in front from the station to the bungalow. This Branch is exceedingly active "having held 300 meetings during the year, also twenty-five public meetings, and has had a class for boys to teach them Sanskrit and the Hindû religion. They also issue Tamil translations (of Theosophic works) and are a capital set of hard workers. There was a tremendous crowd at the lecture in the evening, about one-sixth of which got in, and the rest surged about outside. Next morning there was a lecture at 8 a.m. and a stream of visitors and endless questions till we left."

Bangalore was reached the next morning, Dec. 4th. The first lecture as usual was a dense pack, and the next day Annie Besant lectured in a compound, from a prettily-constructed platform decorated with flowers and with a sacred bull on guard at each side!

Our latest news is from Bellary and Hyderabad. Annie Besant writes: "Bangalore, from which I last wrote, developed into a fever of excitement. The Government gave us a big place to meet in, closed the public offices early that every one might go to the last lecture, the Prime Minister came from Mysore, and we had some three thousand people. Next morning, the Minister came with some of the high Indian officials, and discussed the method of education in the Government schools, and especially the best methods for the girls' schools; we discussed also other questions and the way of initiating reforms."

The Brâhmins asked our colleague to lead a national Hindû movement, the reforms to be on the lines of the Hindû religion, as the enthusiasm aroused by her has been so extraordinary. One point of great importance is the interest taken in the work by women; they go in shoals to call on Mrs. Besant, and the wives of some of our members are joining the T. S. For the first time native ladies will attend the Convention at Adyar, where a part of the hall has been reserved for them. This is a great innovation, as women in India do not as a rule attend assemblies, and for Brâhman women to take such a step shows that strong leaven indeed is working.

At Bellary there was the usual excitement and more native ladies than ever! Three lectures, the forming of a boys' Âryan Society by Colonel Olcott, and a meeting at the Sanmârگا Samâj, which was approached through a crowd who made a lane for the visitors to pass along and pelted them with flowers.

At the next place, Hyderabad, on Dec. 12th, the party were lodged in a palace, and were the guests of the ex-Prime Minister. "It is very magnificent," says a letter, "and we are having the funniest up and down life, one day in a palace, the next in a little traveller's bungalow, where all the superabundant animal life is strongly manifested."

[The "Indian Letter" from our correspondent adds the following information to the above.]

At Bangalore some twenty new members joined the T. S.

Bellary was reached on the 8th, and a regular triumphal procession was given the party. Three lectures were delivered and some ten gentlemen and four ladies were admitted to the Society. The party left for Hyderabad on the 11th. From Hyderabad they go to Rajamundry and reach Madras on the morning of the 20th. On the evening of the 21st Mrs. Besant is going to deliver her first lecture to the Madras public on *The Dangers of Materialism*. So far Mrs. Besant's tour has been a complete success.

Since I wrote last two branches, one in Prodattur and another in Penukonda, have been formed.

[The "Ceylon Letter" adds no fresh details to the above account.]



## EUROPEAN SECTION.

The Manchester City Lodge announces a successful lecturing month, Bro. C. Harvey's paper on *Hypnotism* being reported in *The Manchester Guardian*.

The Bournemouth Lodge held the first annual meeting on Dec. 13th, when the President congratulated the members on the harmony and success of their work. Three members had joined and none left; a satisfactory balance-sheet was shown and fees considerably reduced. The Lodge will continue to meet every Wednesday.

The Birmingham Lodge announces the loss of two important members who have left the town.

The Bow Club has decided, on account of the increased distress in the East End, to give a tea and a Christmas tree to 150 children on Jan. 26th. Contributions are appealed for, both in money and kind, and there is an especial lack in clothing for little boys; all should be sent to the matron, 193, Bow Road, E.

Gifts of toys, Christmas cards, and warm garments for the children have been received from Mr. and Mrs. Rushton, Mrs. Staples, Mrs. Kirk, "A. M.," "E. J.," Mrs. Morgan, and from the Lotus Circle.

The North London Lodge, which has lately been formed out of the Islington Centre, had a most successful first meeting on Dec. 17th, when Miss Stabler and Bro. Collings lectured to 150 people. Another meeting is being arranged for Jan. 14th, and a good syllabus of lectures is announced, which may be found in *The Vahan*.

The League of Theosophical Workers announces the meetings of the Sewing Circle in the library of the Lotus Club, 41, Henry Street, N.W., on Mondays, at 2.30. The work is enlivened by reading aloud, and tea is provided at minimum cost.

The H. P. B. Home and Clare Crèche acknowledge donations and gifts of clothing, and announce the readiness of two new rooms for inmates.

The North of England Federation T. S. announces its third quarterly conference at Manchester on Feb. 3rd at the Memorial Hall, Albert Square. All F. T. S.'s are cordially invited.

The Bradford Lodge has had steady success and good press notices.

The Liverpool Lodge has resuscitated its branch of the League of Theosophical Workers.

The Yarm-on-Tees Centre has been established, and enquirers should write to W. A. Bulmer, Eaglescliffe, Yarm-on-Tees.

The Leeds Lodge has formed a branch of the League of Theosophical Workers.

The Ramsgate and Margate Centre meets fortnightly, and information may be obtained from Miss Helen Hunter, 6, Newington Terrace, St. Lawrence, Isle of Thanet.

The Southport Lodge has weekly meetings with an attendance of fifteen, at which books are studied. The library has been increased, and the work is described as healthy.

The Dutch-Belgian Lodge reports increase in propaganda, crowded meetings, and press support from *The Tribune*, which, besides publishing the contents of the Theosophical monthly, has asked for regular contributions. A children's meeting is held weekly, and is attended regularly by forty-four children.

[For the rest of the Activities of the European Section see *The Vahan*.]

## AMERICAN SECTION.

144, Madison Avenue.—The past month has been well taken up with Theosophical activities. The public mind seems now to be open-

ing to the truths of Theosophy more and more every day, events occurring that were practically impossible a few years ago. Within the last fortnight, the remarkable fact of the opening of four Christian pulpits to Theosophical lecturers has received wide notice in the newspapers. Mr. Burcham Harding lectured from the pulpit of May Memorial Church (Unitarian), Syracuse, N.Y., both on Sunday morning and evening, and again, in the Unitarian Church, in Jamestown, N.Y., on Sunday morning and evening; Mr. Claude F. Wright spoke in the pulpit of a Universalist Church in Columbus, O., and Mr. William Q. Judge in the Unitarian Church at Ithaca, N.Y. Attendance was very good in every case, intense interest being manifested.

In America, Theosophy has now three "apostles" in the field. Mr. Claude F. Wright is making a tour of the west and south-west. On November 29th he reached Toledo, where he addressed a special meeting of the members assembled on Sunday evening. The branch at Toledo has secured one of the best small halls in the city for its regular meetings. The following Friday Mr. Wright lectured on Theosophy in the Art School hall, every seat being occupied. On Sunday afternoon, Dec. 3rd, in addition to the services in the Universalist Church, Mr. Wright lectured in Oddfellows' Hall upon H. P. Blavatsky. Monday he left for Cincinnati, staying there two days, thence to Memphis, Tenn., and from there to Vicksburg, Miss., New Orleans, and Macon, Ga.

Mr. Harding has been doing most excellent work in New York state. From Chicago he travelled to Syracuse, N.Y., where he stayed for some time lecturing from the pulpit of a church in the course of his work, as stated. From thence to Elmira, Ithaca, and Jamestown, he being at the latter place at present, intending later to travel eastward to Westerly, R.I., and thence, perhaps, to Boston. His work is very thorough, and he has formed many friends in the cities he has visited.

Dr. Griffiths in the west is as earnestly at work as heretofore, the results of his labours being shown in the new branches being formed in that portion of the country.

By special invitation of the Rev. J. M. Scott, F.T.S., of Ithaca, N.Y., Mr. William Q. Judge, General Secretary American Section, visited that city, in which is situated Cornell University, and lectured there twice on Sunday, Dec. 10th, upon Theosophy. Reaching there on the 9th, he met several enquirers, spending some time both hearing and answering questions. The following morning he addressed the congregation of the Unitarian Church upon *Reincarnation*. After the close of the meeting, there was formed a class for the discussion of Theosophy under the direction of Burcham Harding, who was also present. In the evening an audience of about 500 listened to an address by Mr. Judge upon *The Sevenfold Nature of Man, Karma, and Ethics*. Those present evinced deep interest in the speaker's remarks, an hour of "question and reply" following.

At New York the interest is as strong as before, attendance at the Branch meetings is excellent, the demand for literature remaining as great as could be asked. A table, containing the most popular books and tracts, has been placed in the halls, an F.T.S. being installed behind it, and literature is thus placed in the reach of those unable to purchase during the day at *The Path* office.

The Áryan Conversazione was a success in every respect, attendance being good, an excellent programme was provided, not the least interesting among the numbers being an address in modern Greek by a Mr. Ghikas, an F.T.S. of Corfu, and his subsequent rendering of several Greek selections on the guitar.

The Áryan and "H. P. B." Branch Lotus Circles have combined,

meetings now being held in the Aryan Hall, 144, Madison Avenue; on Sunday, the 10th, was held the first meeting under this arrangement, with an attendance of about forty-five.

G. D. O. Y.

#### THEOSOPHY IN PRISON.

A few weeks ago some of the prisoners in the gaol at Boise City, Idaho, wrote asking for literature. An old copy of the *Gitá*, and five manuals, *Reincarnation*, *Seven Principles*, etc., were sent, and our unfortunate brethren answered not long since, desiring to start a Branch in prison. This was not thought advisable, and they were told to work out their present Karma first, and when once again free to lead the proper life and then apply.

#### AUSTRALASIA.

Melbourne, Nov. 27th, 1893.—The proof of the design for the cover of the forthcoming *Austral Theosophist* is now to hand, and everyone who has seen it is charmed with it. It is printed in very dark blue ink on orange paper. The title of the magazine is printed across the mystic word "Aum" in monogram, on a background illustrative of the Aurora Australis. The first letter *A* is covered with triangles; the *U* is covered with squares; and the *M* with circles, inside which are the signs of the Zodiac, the ansated cross, and the Svastika; branching off from the lower corners of the *M* are the double triangle and the five-pointed star; the motto of our Society is printed round the lower curve of the *U*. The edge of the cover is outlined by water, drawn in the Egyptian style, out of which spring lotus flowers, which at the corners blossom into three spreading over four, symbolizing the Higher Triad triumphing over the Lower Quaternary. From this imperfect description I hope you will be able to gather some idea of the beauty and completeness of Mr. Sinclair's design. The cover will serve as a very good illustrative guide to the greater part of the symbology described in *The Secret Doctrine*. Theosophists may fairly be recommended to procure a copy of the magazine if only for the sake of the cover. The magazine itself will be with you in a little over a month, and you will then be able to judge at first-hand.

As regards other matters there is little to state. Quiet study is going on in both branches, the members steadily preparing themselves for Mrs. Besant's visit next year.

A capital debate was held a week ago on vegetarianism; the attendance was the largest we have had and the discussion was most spirited. The following day it was interesting to note that *The Herald* came out with a long article showing up the unhealthy conditions under which the slaughtering of animals for human consumption is conducted at the Melbourne City abattoirs. This led to a thorough examination by the City Council, and has aroused so much public feeling that it is hoped that there will in future be proper examinations by competent medical men of all meat sent to the shops, so that those who still continue to eat meat may be less liable to disease than heretofore.

I hear from Adelaide that Mrs. Pickett, though too ill to spend more than a couple of hours daily at the office, has just completed a series of lectures on *The Antiquity of Man*, the success of which has emboldened her to propose a second series beginning in a couple of days, the subject to be *Symbology*.

The weather is now beginning to get hot, and I fear that this and the next three or four letters will be somewhat dull and void of news; people live out of doors here in the summer rather than in the lecture room or study.

MABEL BESANT-SCOTT.

## Our Budget.

### BOW CLUB.

	<i>£</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Anon - - - - -	0	10	0
Mrs. Collard - - - - -	1	0	0
Friend of above - - - - -	1	0	0
Miss Eveline Wright - - - - -	8	0	0
Proceeds of Jumble - - - - -	8	10	0
W. Mather - - - - -	5	0	0
Miss E. Rawson - - - - -	1	1	0
Mrs. Laura McLaren - - - - -	1	1	0
Mrs. H. Crossley (subs.) - - - - -	1	1	0
Brighton Lodge (quarterly subs.) - - - - -	0	10	0
Collected in Boarding House at Eastbourne, per Miss Kate Bishop - - - - -	0	15	0
John W. H. Mackenzie - - - - -	0	10	0
Miss C. M. Johnston - - - - -	0	10	0
Dublin Lodge (quarterly subs.) - - - - -	0	17	0
Pandit Purushri - - - - -	0	2	6
	<u>£30</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>

### SOUP FUND FOR THE STARVING AND DESTITUTE.

	<i>£</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Previously acknowledged - - - - -	1	10	6
Mrs. Collard - - - - -	1	0	0
Mrs. Day - - - - -	0	2	6
Mr. Herbert Moss - - - - -	0	10	0
Mr. Brook - - - - -	0	5	0
Mr. H. J. Perrett - - - - -	0	5	0
	<u>£3</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>0</u>

### FUND FOR CHRISTMAS TREE FOR 150 RAGGED CHILDREN.

	<i>£</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Mrs. Jacob Bright - - - - -	1	0	0
Mrs. Staples - - - - -	0	5	0
Jack Raphael - - - - -	0	2	6
Miss Cameron and Friends - - - - -	0	12	6
Mr. H. Swinburn Ward - - - - -	0	5	0
Mr. Faulding - - - - -	0	5	0
	<u>£2</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>0</u>

### ADYAR DEFICIT.

	<i>£</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Previously acknowledged - - - - -	251	15	0
"P." - - - - -	0	7	6
The Countess Wachtmeister (whose name is added to the guarantors) - - - - -	20	0	0
	<u>£272</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>

## Theosophical AND Mystic Publications.

### THE THEOSOPHIST (*Madras*).

Vol. XV, No. 3:—"Old Diary Leaves" continue to deal with the peculiar form of mediumship of the late Stainton Moses. They are particularly interesting as showing how instinctively he at one time turned to H. P. Blavatsky for guidance and direction in occult matters. "The Truth of Astrology," by J. S. Gadgil; "Idealism," reprinted from *Light*; "Modern Indian Magic and Magicians," are all of moderate interest. N. D. K.'s contribution to the recent discussion as to "The Globes of the Earth-Chain," contains much sound argument, but comes rather late in the day after what has already been written on the subject. "Krishna's Journey to Mount Kailás," and "The Esoteric Significance of the Ten Avatárs," are perhaps of greater interest than any of the above. S. V. Edge writes on "Theosophists and Indian Social Reform"; and "Reviews," "Theosophy in all Lands," "Cuttings and Comments," and a "Supplement," with various official notices, conclude a fairly representative number.

### THE PATH (*New York City, U.S.A.*).

Vol. VIII, No. 9:—W. Q. Judge continues his interesting series on "Occult Arts," taking "Disintegration—Reintegration," as his immediate subject. This is dealt with from the common-sense standpoint, and the difference between the western view of "gravity" and the more scientific and yet occult teaching of the *force of cohesion* is clearly and simply explained. Mrs. Besant's note on "Mars and the Earth," is given as in LUCIFER. "India between Two Fires," by "A Bráhmán," tells how the modern Hindú can, if he will, still take refuge in

ancient Theosophy from both the scientific and religious bigotry of modern times. "Faces of Friends" gives that of our Sinhalese brother, H. Dharmapála; it is a good portrait and one that will be welcomed by all those who met him in England and America. "Immense Antiquity of America," by John M. Pryse, sets out to prove that the aborigines of America were not an Indian product, this being the writer's view of the teaching of *The Secret Doctrine*. More on the subject is to follow, and the series may be useful to students of ethnology. "Two Spiritualistic Prophecies," "The Key-Note," and the month's "Correspondence," are of general interest, and the number is concluded with an unusually large instalment of "Literary Notes" and the "Mirror of the Movement." We note that over 320 dollars have been collected by the General Secretary of the American Section, and forwarded to Col. Olcott for the Adyar Deficit Fund.

### THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM (*New York City, U.S.A.*).

No. 54:—Some elementary questions are replied to simply and clearly. Why rebirth if desire to live be dead? "Spirit" manifestations; the use of the terms "plane" and "principle"; Karma as retaliation and otherwise, and the source of conscience—such are the subjects treated of in the issue before us. Answers are for the most part by the Editor and W. Q. J., and are consequently good. Claude F. Wright says with reason that "when one says he desires annihilation, it is frequently merely a way of saying that he would give a good deal for some kind of change." Who can conceive of annihilation? Who can therefore desire it?

THE VĀHAN (*London*).

Vol. III, No. 6:—One of our Hindū contributors, K. P. Mukherji, comments interestingly on the answers made to Question CLVIII, and gives his view of the Sanātana Dharma (the Eternal Law) in relation to the teachings of Gautama Buddha. "The Enquirer" is much better treated than has lately been the case so far as the space allotted to him is concerned, though the replies made to his appeals for enlightenment show even less care for the most part than usual. Answers are evidently dashed off at lightning speed, without research of any sort worth mentioning. Karmic payment through a divine substitute; pre-Christian Gnosticism; failures in Nature; the significance of such terms as Samhitā, Sūtra, etc.; Egos as related to dead infants; and finally the planet Neptunc—all give rise to questions which are answered for the most part by the Editor. "P." is sadly missed. The "Lecture List" is a welcome and eminently useful innovation.

THEOSOPHICAL SIFTINGS (*London*).

Vol. VI, Nos. 13, 14:—These two numbers contain a remarkably lucid exposition of "The Zodiac," by S. G. P. Coryn, with a diagram; "Pundari," reprinted from *The New Californian*; and a *verbatim* report of a lecture delivered by Mrs. Besant on board the *Kaisar-i-Hind*, entitled, "A Word on Man, his Nature, and his Powers." The latter will be useful as a pamphlet for enquirers.

LE LOTUS BLEU (*Paris*).

Vol. IV, No. 9:—"Ce que doit être notre Fraternité," by Mitra; "Deux Lois Psychologiques," by L. d'Ervioux; and "Phénomènes d'Apparitions," by Guymiot, are good and short articles that form with Dr. Pascal's outline of the *Secret Doctrine* and E. J. Coulomb's continuation of "Les Cycles" a well-balanced number. There has always been a tendency in this magazine to place metaphysics first and the rest a very bad second—a state of affairs that can produce but little benefit to its readers—but this tendency is no longer so conspicuous as formerly, and the departure is a welcome one. We hear with much pleasure that a radical change for the better is to take

place in the printing and get-up of our French contemporary.

THE NEW CALIFORNIAN (*Los Angeles, U.S.A.*).

Vol. III, No. 6:—"An Appeal to our Readers," with which this number opens, shows that more support must be given to this magazine if it is to continue its career. It has been for long carried on in the cause we have so strongly at heart at great personal sacrifice and cost to those who are responsible for its publication. Whilst it is possible that there are at present almost too many monthly journals issued by Theosophists for Theosophists, it would be a matter for lament to witness the failure of one which has in its time done good service both in America and elsewhere. Those whose duty it is to support it should see that they do not abandon that duty in time of need. The Editor's "Keynotes"; "Justice," by H. E. Crosswell; "Evolution, Agnosticism, and Theosophy," are especially good. "Some Problems in the Evolution of Mollusca," by Mrs. Burton Williamson, shows an intimate knowledge of the subject treated. Other articles are of interest, such as Carl Burell's "Astral Light as a Vehicle for the Transmission of Thought Waves." The "poetry" is as usual.

THE NORTHERN THEOSOPHIST (*Middlesbrough*).

Vol. I, No. 2:—The second issue of this new venture of our enterprising northern members continues to promise as well for the future as it speaks for the present. "The Editor's Remarks" deal both with local topics and those of more widespread interest. They are brief and to the point. "A Conversation about the Mahātmās" is reprinted from *The Path*; a series is commenced on "Reincarnation"; "What shall we Teach the Children?" by A Nurse, gives the experience of one who has suffered under the cross-examination of infant logicians in regard to orthodox Christianity; "Hindūs and Animals" and "Jottings from a Theosophist's Note-Book" conclude an excellent penny-worth.

THE BUDDHIST (*Colombo*).

Vol. V, Nos. 43-45:—A. E. Buultjens does good service by transliterating and

translating the *Cakka Suttam*. Short reports are given of Mrs. Besant's lectures delivered in Ceylon, and in the Editor's "Reflections on the General Results" of her tour, he says that "the remark was general among all who listened to her that one could learn more of the principles of Buddhism from her in one lecture than from the generality of the monks." Extracts are given from the English local Padri press, which are as unfavourable as could be expected. The "Pancakkhandā" will prove of considerable value to students of Buddhist psychology, as giving a better summary of these "aggregates of sentient life" than can be found in either Oldenberg, Childers, or Rhys Davids separately.

JOURNAL OF THE MAHĀ-BODHI SOCIETY (*Calcutta*).

Vol. II, Nos. 6, 7:—These numbers are almost entirely taken up with reprints from American newspapers, giving accounts of H. Dharmapāla's work in the United States, with comments upon the prospects of Buddhist propaganda in that country. The only original article is "Samsāra Chakra, or the Buddhist World Cycle." The following is taken from a long extract from the Journal of the R. A. S., entitled, "Ashva Ghosha on Brāhmanical Caste": "Oh! Yudhisthira, formerly in this world of ours there was but one caste. The division into four castes originated with diversity of rites and avocations. All men were born of women in like manner. All are subject to the same physical necessities, and have the same organs and senses. But *he whose conduct is uniformly good is a Brāhman*; and if it be otherwise he is a Shūdra; aye, lower than a Shūdra. The Śrūdra who, on the other hand, possesses these virtues, is a Brāhman."

THE PACIFIC THEOSOPHIST (*San Francisco, Calif., U.S.A.*).

Vol. IV, No. 5:—The Rev. W. E. Copeland interprets "The Lord's Prayer" theosophically. The interpretation is a useful one, but we cannot agree with the writer that "two views of Jesus are permissible; one that he was a Nirṁānakāya, the other that he was a Mahātmā." There are at least other possibilities, even probabilities. "Kāma Loka," by the

"H. P. B. Training Class," is clearly put; "The Path to Spiritual Progress" and "An Astral Experience" are both readable. "Among the Coast Branches" is a very satisfactory record of activities.

LOTUS BLÜTHEN (*Leipzig*).

Vol. II, No. 16:—A publisher's announcement calls on readers to help Theosophical propaganda by sending him addresses. A familiar portrait of H. P. B. forms the frontispiece, and is accompanied by a short notice. The editorial promises readers selections from oriental sacred books; for in the East they get their religion direct, instead of tramping all over Palestine to find the saviour in their own hearts. The *Diwān-i-Hāfiz* is translated from the *Oriental Department*. Emanuel writes a long article on the true Masonry, and portions of *Magic, White and Black* is given, and the "Letter-box" concludes a very good number.

SPHINX (*Braunschweig*).

Vol. XVIII, No. 95:—We are glad to see Annie Besant's article on "Gurus and Chelās" from the October LUCIFER; the opening sentences have been adapted so as to eliminate the controversy with E. T. Sturdy. Hübbe-Schleiden has a dialogue between a Churchman and a Mystic on the seeking of the Lord; Peter Knauer writes on the Zuḥis; Dr. Paul Deussen's views on the Vedānta are explained, other articles follow, and the number concludes with "Correspondence" and "Occasional Notes."

THE THEOSOPHIC THINKER

(*Bellary*).

Vol. I, Nos. 38-40:—This excellent weekly continues to do credit to our Bellary members. K. Narāyanaswāmy Aiyar writes learnedly on "Asuras and Devas." "The Doctrine of Māyā and the Hindū Scriptures" is given as a Supplement; the translation of *Seeta Ramānjaneya Samvedam* is continued with good annotations; "Truth"; "Faith, Reason and Intuition"; "India's Theosophists and their Mission," and "The Students' Column" are all well up to the standard of these pages, and are calculated to do good service along their particular lines. This short notice contains a forecaste of the future work in India: "Our Preach-

ers' Class. Three new students were admitted during the week to be trained as Theosophical Preachers, and eventually to be sent out to the villages." What magnificent work might be done along these lines by India's own offspring! Europeans can greatly help in giving the original impetus, in starting some new current, but not until the Hindûs themselves become fired with the fierce devotion which will cause them to go forth and carry abroad the message of Theosophy, will India's salvation be anything but a dream of a splendid possibility.

THE THEOSOPHIC GLEANER  
(Bombay).

Vol. III, No. 4:—This number opens with an original article by H. T., entitled "Mental Shadows." D. D. Jussawalla is responsible for the remaining original matter—"The Magnetic Light and Human Aura." Both of these are as good and even better than the reprints and translations otherwise given. The latter consist of "Man," "Is the Theosophical Society opposed to Churches?" "Vegetarianism in the Early Christian Church" (hardly of value to Indian students), and "Karma and Astrology," from *The Theosophist*. "Notes and News," are very brief.

TRANSACTIONS OF THE LONDON  
LODGE, T. S.

The title is *The Pyramids and Stonehenge*. Members of the Blavatsky Lodge, at any rate, who had the opportunity of

hearing in brief that which Mr. A. P. Sinnett has enlarged upon in this pamphlet, will welcome its issue as the nineteenth Transaction of the London Lodge. The history of early Egyptian civilization and the origin of the Pyramids and Stonehenge are briefly touched on, and the information given on the subject in the letters in *Esoteric Buddhism*, and by Mme. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine*, is supplemented to some extent by psychometric investigation carried on under the direction of Mr. Sinnett. The result is very interesting, and will prove attractive to all who make ethnology their special study.

We have also received the following, though want of space forbids any detailed review: *The Sphinx*, No. 94; *Theosophia*, Vol. II, No. 20—as good as it always is under its able direction; *The Sanmârگا Bodhint*, Nos. 44-47, continuing the translation of *The Key to Theosophy* and much other equally good work; *The Oriental Department*, No. 14, of the American Section, consisting of a translation of the *Mahâ-Parinibbâna Sutta*; *La Haute Science*, Vol. I, No. 12, principally noticeable on account of a scholarly and exhaustive introduction to a translation of the Ethiopian *Ergala Isayyds* (The Ascension of Isaiah); and lastly, *From a False Christianity, Through Theism and Theosophy to a Truer Christianity*, by W. H. Cotton. The latter pamphlet does the author credit and will no doubt do good.

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As the ocean water is unfit to drink until it is given back to us by the cloud, so the real meaning of the Scriptures cannot be understood by us until explained by a living Guru.—From a Tamil work, *The Thiruk Kalithu Padiyar*.



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