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AN OUTLINE OF
MODERN OCCULTISM

By the same Author

THE INITIATE

THE INITIATE IN THE NEW WORLD

THE INITIATE IN THE DARK CYCLE

THE VISION OF THE NAZARENE

MUSIC: ITS SECRET INFLUENCE

ETC.

AN OUTLINE OF MODERN OCCULTISM

BY
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TO
J. B. P.

AND THOSE GROUPS OF SEEKERS WHO HAVE
GIVEN ME SO MUCH ENCOURAGEMENT
IN REGARD TO MY EARLIER BOOKS

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PART I
INTRODUCTORY

CHAPTER I

OCCULTISM AND OCCULTISTS

There is a principle which is a bar against all information, which is proof against all arguments, and which cannot fail to keep a man in everlasting ignorance—that principle is contempt prior to investigation.—HERBERT SPENCER.

As a man is sometimes said to be his own worst enemy, so can it sometimes be said of believers that they are the worst enemies of their own cause.

IN this book the author endeavours to present an outline of Occult Science divorced from all sectarianism and the differing opinions of the various schools.

It is written for the general public at a time when vast numbers of people are assailed with doubts and confronted with problems which appear to have no satisfactory solution. The Christian religion, as presented by the Churches, no longer satisfies the intelligentsia, it also fails to appeal to the sophisticated temperaments of certain sections of the younger generation. Some people have sought refuge in Spiritualism, others are repelled by the trivial nature of many of the messages transmitted, and hence are unwilling to separate the wheat of truth from the tares of triviality and fraudulent practices. Theosophy has recruited several thousand souls, but the general public fights shy of a cult which was founded by a Russian woman whom it still imagines to have been a charlatan and a

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fraud. Moreover, the Theosophical Society has been obliged to "live down" several scandals which have naturally served to lessen its prestige in the public eyes. Christian Science, on the other hand, which is a rapidly growing community, has fared better in this respect, at any rate as far as England is concerned, but owing to its apparently untenable assertions only appeals to a certain type of mind.

Thus for those many reflective persons who cannot accept orthodox religion nor yet any of the afore-mentioned cults, there remains only a type of quite sincere but disquieting agnosticism. It is not the self-complacent or even prideful agnosticism of last century which implied dogmatically: "We don't know, can't know,¹ and are quite satisfied not to know," but rather: "We don't know, and only wish we *could* know." In brief, after many centuries of mental "spoon-feeding" by priests and clergy, there has dawned an age of mental confusion combined with a strong desire for mental and spiritual satisfaction; an attitude which was practically unknown to the incarnates of the Victorian age. True, there are people to-day who are content to "lead their lives and ask no questions," but such people need not detain us, for to them Occult Science and its interpretation of life, religion and other phases of human activity are unlikely to appeal. It is to those who find orthodox religious creeds too illogical or sentimental, and materialism too unsatisfactory and negative that occult philosophy will prove acceptable,

¹ It was the followers of Darwin and Huxley who adopted this attitude, not those great scientists themselves.

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for it renders life vastly more interesting, more intriguing and more romantic. It shows cosmic life to be other than that mechanical "order of things" which the materialist postulates, and it shows personal life as the "adventure magnificent" which does not merely begin with the cradle and end with the grave. Furthermore, it shows the *raison d'être* for all religions worthy of the name, for cults, movements, philosophies, arts and sciences, their evolution and various phases. It explains the apparently unexplainable without making impossible demands upon faith, advocating *reason* as the most reliable stepping-stone to knowledge.

§

Yet in our survey of Occultism it is, to begin with, not only expedient but essential that we should honestly recognize and face facts, even if some of them are unpleasant ones. Moreover, an introduction which merely extols to the skies the subject it introduces, proves not only tedious reading but is likely to fill the reader with a perfectly justifiable distrust. Let us therefore admit quite frankly some of the reasons why Occultism has hitherto reaped a bad name with a large section of the public, explain the underlying cause as best we can, and leave the reader to judge for himself.

The very word *occult*, while it attracts some, repels others: it suggests mystery-mongering, secret societies and activities that are not "above board." It has, in addition, become associated with charlatans, tricksters, cheap fortune-tellers and other undesirable

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persons. But the cause of this does not lie in the nature of Occultism itself but in the nature of the public mind which, hearing only about the evil side of what is not even true but only pseudo occultism, imagines there is no good side to it at all. If the Higher Occultism were so widely disseminated as, say music, then the position would be very different.—The enormous popularity of inferior music can never delude the public into believing there is no such thing as high-class music, because knowledge, if not understanding, of music in all its aspects is so widely diffused. This being so, even inferior executants can never cause a depreciation in the intrinsic value of music as a fine art. In a word, Occultism in contradistinction to music is a mis-judged science because few people know enough about it to judge it at all. What sort of an opinion would a so-called heathen hold of the religion of Christ if he judged it solely by the behaviour of the Christian nations in 1914? It is the same old story; a discrepancy between the belief and its believers. As a man is sometimes said to be his own worst enemy, so can it sometimes be said of believers that they are the worst enemies of their own cause.

Thus let us not pretend that in Occultism is to be found an exception to this unfortunate peculiarity. Even the Higher Occultism—of which this book treats—is no *miraculous* panacea for human weaknesses; therefore it has naturally failed to cure many of its adherents of their shortcomings. On the contrary, because Occultism is among other things an intellectual cult, many members of its various schools and societies have become inflated with self-

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importance; they have wallowed in the immense satisfaction of considering themselves *advanced*. Others have placed far too much credence in occult teachings or phenomena merely because they *are* occult, instead of using those judicious critical faculties necessary to the weighing of all evidence. Worse than this, however, has been the opposite policy of rejecting all statements, books, doctrines, teaching, etc., unless they have emanated or been sanctioned by one particular leader or teacher. This policy is, of course, an aspect of that personality-worship which has often proved such a stumbling-block to progress. People who worship a person place undue credence in what he or she may teach, say or give out. Thus eventually the conviction is born that such and such a thing must be true merely because the leader has said so. But even leaders like ordinary mortals grow old and fail to move with the times. The result is a split in the school—a progressive party which believes in progress and a reactionary party which clings to its old leaders, their pronouncements and policies. There are those who think for themselves and those who let their leaders think *for* them. A further result of this is the forming of sects and the birth of sectarianism with its argumentations and emotional hostilities.

Yet the formation of sects is not always due to differing convictions. It may transpire that one or other of the leaders has not behaved as he should; his morals have perhaps been the cause of grave disappointment to his followers and a scandal ensues. The leader on the pedestal, having nowhere else to step but off the pedestal, descends, and the hearts of

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his worshippers descend with him. But not all. Again there is a split in the school; some of the students refuse to believe in his guilt or find arguments to excuse it, while others send in their resignation and start a new school, which may eventually have a less gifted leader, but at any rate perhaps a more moral one.

Now it should be emphasized that none of the foregoing remarks have been penned in an uncharitable spirit, but solely to rid the reader of certain misconceptions which the shortcomings of many occultists have produced. For let it be clearly understood that all of those shortcomings and their consequences are entirely at variance with the ideals, the tenets and the spirit of Occult Science itself. To begin with, wellnigh its whole scheme is based on progress—i.e. the evolution, moral, intellectual and spiritual of man. As man becomes more ready to receive, so then do the Master-occultists give out more and more of their knowledge. If there is any standing still, it is not Occult Science which stands still, but those occultists who may outwardly profess its teachings but are temperamentally too rigid to follow them save in the letter which killeth.

As to sectarianism, how can it be compatible with that which is, as will be shown later, a synthesis? That differences of opinion must arise as to the interpretations of certain teachings is both inevitable and fortunate, but if "splits" accrue as the result, then the true spirit of Occultism has not been realized. Unity in diversity is the ideal which the Master-occultists put forward. No religion, creed, school, mystical or occult society holds all knowledge; they

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are, every one, only stepping-stones to the realization of Truth. As one of the High Initiates said towards the end of last century: "We have only lifted a corner of the Veil."

On the comparatively harmless idiosyncrasies or peculiarities of some people who take up Occultism in one form or another, we need not enlarge. We may merely ask the reader not to confound cause and effect, and imagine that it is Occultism which produces such characteristics as a fanatical attitude towards sex or diet, peculiar clothes, solemn faces or other insignia of people who take themselves too seriously. Occultism is their excuse and not the cause. The one regrettable effect of such peculiarities is that they tend to put off more normal people who might find in Occult Science a much-needed philosophy of life. Far more regrettable are the moral delinquencies of leaders who may insistently advocate the highest ethical conduct and yet actually behave as if they considered themselves exceptions. Indeed hypocrisy and the ideals of Occultism are totally incompatible. This is not to say that all human failings should not be understood, sympathized with and pardoned; for practising occultists regard tolerance as one of the most essential virtues. But the public at large cannot be expected to adopt such an attitude towards the exponents of a Science about which it knows so little and in connection with which it has so frequently been misled.

The necessity for a clear exposition of Occultism minus those outcroppings which have acted as such deterrents, must therefore have become increasingly obvious. If the author's capacity to fulfil his task is

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equal to his aspiration so to do, then this book should constitute a vindication as well as a metaphorical signpost which will point the way to where more detailed knowledge may be found. Whether the reader will come to desire that knowledge depends on his or her temperament and type of mentality. The nature of Occultism is such that we gain *from* it in like measure as we bring *to* it. Even those who bring nothing more than an open mind will not go empty away. They may reflect : " I have neither the time nor the inclination to pursue the study of Occultism further, but at any rate it has enlarged my outlook on life and seems a very satisfying solution to many baffling problems." They may cease to flounder about in the waters of uncertainty, tormented by questions to which there seem to be no answers, and by the inner friction which such a state sets up in the subconscious, if not actually in the conscious mind. Aptly did a great Indian orator exclaim : " What is the use of any philosophy unless it brings us peace ? "

CHAPTER II

THE LIMITATIONS OF SCIENCE

Science does not mean contemplative rest in the possession of sure knowledge; it means untiring work and steadily advancing development towards an aim which we are able to imagine but never to reach intellectually.—MAX PLANCK, *Causality in Nature*.

OCCULTISM may be divided into two categories, the practical and the theoretical; the latter is concerned with the study of the evolution of life and form in general, the former concerns the practical application of that study to individual evolution. In other words, through practical Occult Science man is enabled to bring all his potential powers into actual manifestation. What those powers are will be gradually revealed in the course of these pages. Meanwhile a short exposition of the general tenets of Occult Science is expedient before we proceed to consider the details, to compare occult knowledge with scientific knowledge and religious beliefs, and to show the grounds on which that knowledge is based.

Firstly: The occultist holds that Man is in process of evolving from comparative imperfection to much higher states of physical and spiritual existence.

Secondly: That the evolutionary process in all its phases is directed by a Great Hierarchy of Intelligences who have themselves reached those higher states.

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Thirdly : That the world which is perceptible to normal sight is only a small portion of a much greater world which is perceptible to the trained occultist, and comprises the inner and higher planes of consciousness.

Fourthly : That the physical body is not the *generator* of consciousness, as many biologists assert, but only the densest vehicle of consciousness or a "garment" of the immortal soul.

Fifthly : That interpenetrating and surrounding the physical body are subtler bodies composed of rarified matter, which are also garments of the soul. These likewise are perceptible to the trained occultist.

Sixthly : That the whole Universe is an expression of energy, and that not only the elements, but all beings both embodied and disembodied are storehouses and transformers of energy.

Seventhly : That a Law of immutable justice and fundamental beneficence, *i.e.* the law of cause and effect, governs the entire Cosmos, both visible and invisible.

Such then are the tenets which the occultist holds, and that the doctrine of reincarnation is implied must, of course, be evident, since no man could be expected to reach a state of even comparative perfection during the span of one short life.

We have subsequently to consider how and whence the occultist derives his knowledge, and whether it is compatible with reason and with what Science has actually proven, and not merely denied. But we must first clear the ground by dealing with one of those denials.

The Limitations of Science

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The reader will have realized from the foregoing that unless consciousness can be shown to exist independently of physical organisms, practically the whole of Occult Science must be regarded as merely hypothetical and not based upon facts. Now certain biologists stoutly maintain that it is impossible to imagine life apart from matter, and that all life must have a material basis. But although Science always deserves the greatest respect, its conclusions are sometimes more plausible than true. This plausible conclusion is based on inductive logic, the weakness of which always lies in the possibility of its exponent having overlooked one or more facts which may cause the whole structure to collapse. Those upsetting facts have already come to light, but have been disposed of in what can only be called a most unscientific manner. The truth is that although scientists are scrupulously scientific when investigating their own subject, they may become at times highly unscientific when dealing with those of their opponents. Thus, for example, Sir Arthur Keith, after pointing out that he as a biologist, is fully satisfied that thought is solely a product of the brain, goes on to say that his friend Sir Oliver Lodge on the contrary postulates an entity which uses the brain as its instrument. Now bearing in mind the precise meaning of the word postulates, Sir Oliver Lodge does nothing of the kind. In true scientific fashion he has collected a number of facts and drawn his conclusions. Those conclusions are hostile to the materialistic biological standpoint not apparently because he

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cannot conceive of the brain as the actual generator of thought, but because he has actually contacted and communicated with those entities which, according to Sir Arthur Keith, he merely postulates.

Thus in view of such scientific lapses on the part of eminent men like Sir Arthur Keith, reflective persons are chary of putting too much credence, not so much in what Science asserts, but in what it denies. Sir Arthur himself admits that "biologists do not as yet know how life began; they have no explanation to offer of its inner significance and ultimate meaning. Their primary business is to observe happenings and give a truthful record of them." ¹ Precisely. But when Sir Oliver Lodge "observes happenings" which throw a considerable light on the "inner significance" and meaning of life, Sir Arthur dismisses them as negligible and still holds to the idea that man is a glorified self-running machine. Still it is not altogether unnatural that men who are so engrossed in investigating the evolution of the physical body should come to regard the soul as superfluous. Yet logically considered, as well might a piano-manufacturer become so engrossed in the mechanism of the piano as entirely to forget the essential factor—the pianist.

We will now consider a few more facts upsetting to biological materialism.

§

Already over thirty years ago an apparatus was invented by means of which certain doctors in Paris

¹ *Darwinism and What it Implies.* (The Forum Series.)

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were able to test the physical condition of patients in a deep state of hypnosis. By means of this instrument and certain devices which eliminated all possibility of fraud on the subject's part, they made some very conclusive observations. Having induced through hypnotic methods a condition of all but suspended animation, a condition in which the whole blood-stream was overcharged with the products of decomposition, they thus induced a state of coma which made all thought impossible as far as the brain was concerned : that is to say, the function of the brain was inhibited. But what was the result ? Patients who were normally not over intelligent—some even definitely stupid—exhibited the most astonishing reasoning faculties, performed astounding feats of memory, argued with the hypnotists on the most abstruse subjects and, in brief, showed prodigious mental capacities which in their normal state they did not possess. The inference to be drawn is obvious ; that although Thought is normally expressed through the brain, it can in certain conditions not only be expressed without using the brain, but the latter even restricts the mental capacities rather than enhances them. Numerous other experiments which have been made all point to the same conclusion. Under hypnosis subjects have spoken in foreign languages with which they were not conversant ; learnedly discoursed on matters about which in the normal state they knew nothing ; sung ancient songs which they had never learnt and exhibited the characteristics of personalities other than their own.¹

¹ See Pierre-Emile Cornellier. *The Survival of the Soul*. Kegan Paul.

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Have the biologists who deny that man is anything beyond his mere physical body taken these facts into consideration? In substantiation of this denial we read: "No court which enquires into the nature of man can be regarded as properly constituted which rejects the evidence of those best fitted to give it—medical men."¹ True; but it was medical men who made the experiments to which we have just alluded; so this argument is not very convincing.

Although for the purpose of this book, allusion must be made to such discrepancies, they are more or less inevitable at our present stage of evolution. Scientists *are* specialists and must be specialists to obtain their results.

We must not however, blame merely the gentlemen of Science for their limitations; as everyone knows, the Church has been even more guilty in this respect. Hence the conflict throughout the centuries not only between Religion and Science but between Religion and Philosophy as well. The reason for this is obvious: namely lack of co-operation. So far, instead of the scientists, psychologists, religionists and philosophers all having united in the attempt to discover Truth, they have all been working in their own separate departments, leaving Truth as a whole to take care of itself. That the various lines are all gradually converging is becoming more and more apparent, but as we have seen there is still a certain amount of conflict. With Occultism it is otherwise; it accepts all the genuinely proven assertions of Science and merely rejects its unproven negations;

¹ Sir Arthur Keith, *Darwinism and What It Implies*.

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it accepts the basic truths of all religions and again merely rejects their untenable dogmas and superstitions. In truth, the Higher Occultism is the synthesis of Science, Mysticism, Philosophy, Psychology and Religion in their purest forms.

CHAPTER III

WHAT ARE INITIATES OR MASTER-OCCULTISTS ?

An Initiate meant originally one to whom had been imparted instructions which enabled him to penetrate the region of super-physical concepts, which is hidden by a thin veil from the world of sense, and to distinguish between illusions and realities.

C. J. HARRISON, *The Transcendental Universe*.

There is something more delicate and more sensitive than the most sensitive instrument of precision and the most sensitive chemical, namely the living human body.—DR. C. W. HUFELAND, *Writings*.

THE next questions to consider are how, whence and from whom, occult knowledge is obtained.

Now the methods of the Master-occultist and the scientist are fundamentally similar, but whereas the latter is largely dependent on scientific instruments for his knowledge, the former, by a long process of training, has developed within himself perceptive faculties which render such instruments superfluous and which, indeed, transcend the most delicate instruments so far invented.

These perceptive faculties are latent in everyone, but only Master-occultists have brought them into perfect manifestation. Roughly they may be described as an extension and refinement of sense-perceptions coupled with intellectual and intuitive faculties of the highest degree.

In the olden days (long before Great Britain was civilized) Master-occultists were known in India by the names of Rishis, Maharishis or Great Yogis. In

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latter years, however, they have by Westerners come to be termed Adepts, Great Initiates, Mahatmas or Masters of Wisdom. The Theosophical Society is largely responsible for these latter designations, a fact which helped to spread abroad the popular fallacy that Mme. Blavatsky—its founder—not only invented these names but even the Mahatmas themselves! This latter assumption having since been disproved, we may for the present ignore it. Nevertheless Mahatma is not altogether a happy designation for an Initiate, since although it means literally "Great Soul," it has been applied as a courtesy-title to men who certainly cannot be regarded as High Initiates. Besides which, as several of these High Initiates are Europeans, to call them by an Indian title is something of an anomaly. For the purpose of this book, then, we will refer to them in general as Masters, even though they themselves in their modesty are content to be regarded as "Elder Brothers."

§

For a mere student to describe fully the characteristics and consciousness of a Master is wellnigh an impossible undertaking. Briefly stated, a Master is one who has attained a far higher stage of evolution than the ordinary individual. The word *attained* should be noted, for Occult Science admits of no deific favouritism, of no talent, faculty nor virtue gained without individual effort. As the result of long and sustained endeavour a Master has depured his character of those two most pain-bearing attributes

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of human nature, selfishness and vanity with all their concomitants and consequences. He has acquired an intense and unconditional love for Humanity, combined with that perfect tolerance and understanding which is part and parcel of the highest type of love. There is no human weakness that he does not understand, no human suffering for which he has not sympathy, for in the long course of his evolution he has experienced all these vicissitudes himself. Because of his love for Humanity and his love—artist-like—for work itself, he works neither for reward nor for public recognition. Having acquired an unconditional consciousness of joy, in that he knows how to tap the very fountain-head of Joy itself, he desires that others should share in that felicity which he also knows to be the ultimate heritage of all. Yet because he has attained perfect balance of all the attributes and beholds all things through the eyes of wisdom, he is free from every taint of fanaticism and the urge to impart to any man that for which he is not ready or to which as yet he does not aspire. To attempt to lead those who as yet do not seek, is both a presumption and a folly, but to guide the few who seek, hoping that others may follow in their wake if they be so inclined, is the benevolent deed of the true altruist. Let it be understood, therefore, that the Masters are guides and teachers—not dictators.

We have attempted in some measure to describe men who, as the sceptical reader may here interpolate, seem almost too perfect to be true. Indeed he may ask: "What proof have you that such men really exist, or are morally and spiritually as perfect

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as you assert ? ” This question is a legitimate one, and yet if it could be answered as briefly as it can be asked, there would be little object in writing certain parts of this book. Last century—so the story goes—a Chinaman on seeing a photographer disappear into his dark-room naïvely remarked : “ Why cannot you do the whole thing in broad daylight ? ” To answer that question the photographer had perforce to explain the whole process of photography. The occultist is often placed in much the same position by laymen who are either quite unacquainted with Occultism or have been misinformed by pseudo-learned ignoramuses or hostile critics. Briefly stated, advanced students of Occultism contact in certain conditions the Masters both physically and spiritually and are thus not only afforded ample proof of their existence, but of their moral and spiritual status.

This answer, however, requires considerable amplification and much qualifying. Spiritual contact is admittedly a vague term and allows of many interpretations, but its implied meaning will be brought to light in due course.

§

Although it is important for the student of Occultism to realize what are the spiritual attributes of a Master, it is also necessary for him conversely to realize what they are *not*, for many a seeker has been deluded on this point. He must realize that no true Master imparts spiritual truths for money ; that no true Master writes books, that no true Master

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appears in public as a leader or teacher or New Messiah:¹ therefore any man who advertises himself or allows others to advertise him as such cannot be a Master. High Initiates have more important work to do than speak from platforms, be interviewed by reporters and visited by the curious. Indeed, any man who enjoys publicity has in so far not acquired a perfect character; either he has traces of vanity or possesses love of power, that most insidious of all loves. We must here add, however, that many people who are not entirely free from these moral blemishes may be qualified to act as occult teachers. These are intermediaries or lower grade initiates, and cannot be expected to exhibit all the perfection of their superiors. But with these intermediaries, be it remembered, we are not now concerned but with the over-lords themselves. The reason why, from many points of view, their absolute integrity is essential will become increasingly obvious as we proceed. For one thing, just because Occult Science deals so largely with Nature's hidden or finer forces, much that they impart or indirectly give forth to the world, needs, at first at any rate, to be taken on trust. Faith, coupled with understanding, is therefore necessary. It is not that blind faith of the Churches, which has acquired such a bad reputation among rationalists, but that faith which is ever the first stepping-stone to knowledge personally acquired through direct experience. Even where tuition is associated with more mundane subjects—the Arts and Sciences—the teacher must possess at least certain necessary

¹ What would appear to be an exception occurs about once every two thousand years. See Chap. X.

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qualifications for the discerning pupil in order to inspire and retain his confidence. Granted that, say, an egotist may be a reasonably good professor of the piano and inspire a degree of faith in those who can smile at or ignore his egotism, where the synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy is concerned, where Nature's subtlest manifestations and high spiritual truths are involved, then reason demands that the teacher should be above all reproach.¹ The supermen of Nietzsche's dream really exist, but they are not the supermen of might, but of wisdom, power, knowledge and love, and in them it is logical to put our trust.

¹ Nevertheless it is worthy of note that the Masters themselves have said : " We are not perfect," thus showing their inherent modesty.

PART II
THE MORE FAMILIAR OCCULT
DOCTRINES

CHAPTER IV

EVOLUTION AND REINCARNATION

No account of the Universe is complete which does not give adequate reasons for the highest qualities in man.

A. S. EVE, D.Sc., F.R.S., *The Trend of Physics*.

Some may prefer to regard Nature as the inevitable outcome of chance happenings, to advocate the evolution of man from inert matter through simple cells and a chain of creatures up to his present mental development. We are thus asked to accept the most stupendous chance and the highest improbability; a miracle greater than any that has ever been conceived.

A. S. EVE, D.Sc., F.R.S., *The Trend of Physics*.

To expect the individual to achieve a measure of perfection in the span of one short life is to expect the miraculous.

THE most puzzling features of human life are its inequalities, and the reader will rightly say that a system of philosophy which cannot explain these in the first place is of little value to man. For this reason we may begin with a consideration of a doctrine which throws more light on this seemingly unsolvable problem than any which has emanated from Science or Western religious belief. Yet in examining the doctrine of reincarnation it is advisable for the sake of clarity to regard man's organism merely as soul and body, even though later on we must show that he is a far more complex being—more complex even than revealed to the physiologist despite all his knowledge and careful research.

The doctrine of reincarnation is regarded with mixed feelings by the thinking public, and not

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without reason. Firstly, the vanity of many of its Western adherents who hoodwink themselves into believing they were Cleopatra or other spectacular figures has covered the doctrine with ridicule. Secondly, the prospect of returning again and again to this world with its dilemmas and tribulations fills a large number of people with apprehension and distaste. Thirdly, orthodox Christians are fully persuaded that in the Bible no authoritative mention of this doctrine is made, seeing that it never became a dogma of the Church which preaches one earthly life and then—Eternity. Fourthly, people contend that if they had lived before, they would surely remember the fact.

None of these objections, however, can be called valid arguments as we shall see. To begin with, the theory of reincarnation being, despite its antiquity, for the West a comparatively new one, what more likely than that the vain and foolish should at first exploit it as an instrument of self-glorification? As to the prospect of repeated returns to this earth, is it more unengaging than that eternity of hymn-singing "above the bright blue sky," not to mention the other alternative, which appeared to hold such fascinations for our pious forefathers? As to the third objection, if people would read portions of the New Testament with minds unprejudiced by the inherited mediæval opinions of generations of priests and clergymen, they might find ample justification for believing in rebirth. Be that as it may, it seems superfluous to point out that it is evidence which removes the veiling from Truth and not individual beliefs, tastes and distastes.

Evolution and Reincarnation

The first question to be asked is: Who provides the genuine evidence for reincarnation? And the answer is: "Those who possess first-hand knowledge and are incorruptible"—the capacity to remember past lives being yet another of the perceptive faculties of the Masters. Advanced pupils also develop this capacity, but as they have not reached Masterhood are still liable on occasions to be deluded. Again, psychically gifted persons who have undergone no special occult training may sporadically remember past lives; and although a few of these alleged memories may be tricks of the subconscious or of the imagination,¹ others are genuine recollections.

But apart from these considerations there are philosophical arguments which cannot be ignored, and which we will approach by the way of comparison with scientific and religious conceptions.

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According to the materialistic-biological theory and also the orthodox Christian doctrine, every individual makes his entry into the world without having any say in the matter whatsoever. The biologists maintain that he is the result of procreation, and the orthodox Christians that he is the result of procreation plus the will of God, who endowed him with a soul. His characteristics are further, according to the biologists, solely a matter of heredity. He is, in short, the result of a combination of chance and natural laws. If the two individuals who became his parents had never met and

¹ See Appendix, Note 1.

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got married he would never have existed. If he chooses to go further into this philosophy of chance, he may come to the ungratifying conclusion that perhaps he is simply the indirect and fortuitous after-result of a sexually stimulating glass of wine or a *crème de menthe*. This reflection may sound flippant in a would-be serious book, but no flippancy is intended.

It seems superfluous to point out that in the materialistic-biological scheme Justice plays no part, or only in so far that if diseased parents procreate, they have to bear the consequences of rearing diseased or mentally deficient children. But where does Justice come in for the children themselves who, as the biologists imply, never asked to be born? . . .

And of the Christian scheme as implied by the churches, what may be said? Justice is assumed to find in it a place, but it is noticeably conspicuous by its absence. The fact that the Deity should elect to imprison one soul in the body of a pain-wracked cripple or a degenerate, another in that of a prospective millionaire and another in that of an ecstatic saint to be, is so palpably indicative of gross injustice that it seems almost too obvious to mention. Nor will it help matters to quote "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth," since that text implies that the Lord must love the cripple more than the saint, thus accusing the Deity of the most pronounced favouritism. Moreover, be it remembered that each individual is only given one chance on earth, in other words, one life in which to prepare himself for Heaven. If he should be a criminal type—the result

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of heredity—and get suddenly killed in an accident before he has had time to pray for forgiveness—what will be his fate? Last century the answer would have been “eternal punishment”; this century intelligent people find the idea both repugnant and illogical. Nevertheless, both the Church of England and the Non-conformists are not prepared to accept the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory even though it would extricate them from one, at least, of their dilemmas. But even supposing they granted that the soul according to Catholic tenets could be purged in that intermediate “place,” “state” or “plane,” the other dilemma still persists, *viz.*: that pertaining to the inequalities of man and the aspersions they cast upon God.

How then does the doctrine of Reincarnation dispose of these difficulties?

§

According to Occult Science: “The entire manifested Universe arises from Energy (and the co-factors substance and consciousness). All that is seen from the tiniest grain of sand to the widest sweep of starry heavens, from an African savage to a Buddha or a Christ, all are outgrowths of Energy. Matter is Energy in its densest and lowest form; spirit is this same Energy in its highest or most subtle form. So matter is spirit descending and debased, spirit is matter ascending and glorified.”¹ But although Spirit or LIFE is inherent in all matter, it also exists apart from matter—or at any rate from

¹ See A. A. Bailey, *The Soul and its Mechanism*.

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matter in its visible form. As we find poetically expressed in the *Indian Song Celestial*: "I established this Universe with a portion of Myself and I remain."

Thus all forms in Nature are ensouled by Life (the scientist admitting there is no *dead* matter), but not by Life in its totality. In other words the plant, the insect, the animal and finally the human being are in a sense the various garments of Life but not Life itself. Now as each little differentiation of Life functions through the various denser garments and gains experience, it becomes more and more differentiated and complex; it has, in fact, acquired a rudimentary species of individuality. Hence when the garment through which it functions wears out,¹ instead of being absorbed once again into the All-Life, it ensouls yet another form or garment suited to its capacities. Meanwhile it has also acquired a form of its own, albeit one composed of very rarified and pliable matter. In the course of æons it goes on evolving in this manner, taking and withdrawing from garment after garment until at length it reaches that stage in its evolution which necessitates the taking of its first human body—say that of a savage. Thus in the long course of evolution, that particular differentiation of life has at length become a human soul and functions through a physical body as a human being.

And yet its evolution is still far from complete. Although inhabiting an adult body, as a soul it is still in its infancy and has a long way to travel before it can reach its childhood, let alone its maturity. After many incarnations in lower-race bodies in

¹ Professor Bose has proved that even minerals die.

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which it will manifest a variety of characteristics, among them many undesirable ones, it will eventually reincarnate in a higher-race body. Even then it will still be a young soul lacking in those qualities, moral and otherwise, which we associate with culture and refinement, and only after many more incarnations will these be attained. As to how soon or how far hence will depend of course on the effort made, man being endowed with a measure of free will.

Now this evolutionary process from minute differentiations of life to the gradual "birth" of the soul, followed by its infancy, childhood and maturity, is one that is ever in progress, and it is just in this great law with certain concomitants to be considered anon that we find the solution to the inequalities of human beings.

§

It is instructive to observe that the growth of the soul, with the stages through which it passes, is analogous to the growth and development of an individual—with the difference, however, that the former is a question of æons while the latter is merely a question of years. This analogy is the more instructive for the following reasons which must be emphasized.

As the infant mortal cannot fend for itself but must needs be controlled, guided and clothed by the higher intelligences of its elders, so is it with the infant immortal or soul. Instead of being able to select its own "garments," the latter are selected for it by mighty Intelligences or their Agents who

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rule over the destinies of Man. Of free will it possesses as much *comparatively speaking* (note the italics) as an infant mortal, which is but a modicum. When, however, it reaches those stages corresponding successively to childhood and then to boy-or-girlhood, it possesses a greater degree of free will, not as regards the choice of its "garments," (or from henceforth better said, physical bodies) but as to how it will conduct itself whilst functioning through those bodies. If it chooses to be indolent and not progress, if it chooses to behave badly or rebelliously, it must face the consequences of using its portion of free will unwisely. When children play rough games that involve their clothes being all besmattered with mud, they are subsequently provided with the kind of clothes suited to such rough usage; not necessarily as a punishment but as a measure of economy. It is somewhat the same with young and unruly souls and the type of physical bodies allotted to them. And here we see a simple instance of that law of Action and Reaction known in Indian metaphysics as the doctrine of Karma: but with that we will deal later on.

§

When the soul, having "put away childish things" and decided to make progress, reaches maturity, it comes to possess a greater measure of free will as regards the choice of its physical bodies. This being so, it will often select its own parents *to be*, either because it possesses a "link" with them from the past, or because it sees the possibility of inheriting

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through their union certain qualities which it deems useful or desirable. Thus a trained clairvoyant will often see a soul, wishing to reincarnate, hovering in the vicinity of some wedded couple and waiting for the psychological moment to attach itself to the fœtus. Conversely where no soul is desirous of being or forced to be reborn into a particular family, we find that type of barrenness which is not due to physical causes and hence has proved so puzzling to medical men. And so, even barrenness may be accounted for by the doctrine of reincarnation.

It will be seen from the foregoing that in this great Law, not only does injustice find no place, but there is no real conflict with the scientific fact of evolution. Occult Science is not at variance with what the biologists have proven but only with what they have not proven, *viz.* : that there is no soul, and consequently that an individual comes into existence "without having any say in the matter at all."

We have shown, however, that souls having reached a measure of maturity do have a certain say as regards the family and environment in which they desire to be born. But the reader may argue: "True; yet what about immature souls and Justice?" The fact that immature souls are not granted free will in this connection, far from being incompatible with Justice, proves on reflection to be a policy both just and essential. Nobody would think to accuse a father of injustice because he did not allow his very young child to exercise undue free will, eat countless sweets, play with matches, with knives and so forth. To permit such things would only end in disaster for the child. The same

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applies to the child-soul : if it were given free will to incarnate where, how and when it desired, how could it evolve ? Evolution is not a matter of caprice but of law. That law in certain mystical philosophies is comprehensively termed the Divine Will and comprises both physical and spiritual evolution ; and to understand the full significance of this is to understand the rationale of Occultism. Indeed, the practice of Occultism is the means by which the individual accelerates his evolution and becomes in advance of the majority the Perfect Man.

Yet in one short span of life how were this possible? Even if we do not admit that the Superman exists, we have still to account for the infant prodigy and the genius. Only through the doctrine of reincarnation can genius, true saintship and other manifestations of greatness be explained. Without this doctrine man is forced back to the theory of deific favouritism or blind chance, both of which are repugnant to reasonable beings.

§

We have now to consider what would appear on the surface to be the most valid argument against reincarnation, namely the fact that people in general cannot remember their past lives. But firstly, as psycho-analysis has proved, there are numerous experiences relating to their present lives which people cannot even remember ; and secondly, we must not forget that memory is largely a question of brain-cells, and seeing that with every new incarnation a new brain is involved, how can that brain be

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expected to register impressions of events in which it was not concerned ?

But there are other reasons why the threads of memory are severed between incarnations. Where a previous life had been a specially happy or successful one there would be a tendency to hark back to that life and live in the past instead of "getting on with the job," as the phrase goes. Thus evolution would be retarded ; for each successive life affords an opportunity for gaining new experiences and profiting by what they have to impart. As it is, there is a tendency on the part of indolent souls unwittingly to hanker after the experiences of some particularly pleasant or peaceful former life. Men who have previously been monks get the feeling that they cannot cope with the world and all its worries, and long to retire to a cottage or even a monastery in the country where they can lead a quiet life. Or again, women who have been nuns experience a repugnance for marriage and all it entails. Both these men and women possess no actual recollection of their former lives *as such*, but in that they have during their monastic experiences practised a great deal of meditation, they have brought over a certain sensitiveness or psychicness which renders them particularly susceptible to impressions from the soul. Should any of these men or women give way to their longing to re-enact as far as possible their previous lives, they will have wasted their present incarnations and consequently made no progress. It seems superfluous to add that if even *impressions* can thus at times be instrumental in retarding progress, how much more retardive would be the effect of actual memory.

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It must not be supposed that during its long evolution the soul invariably reincarnates as the same sex. As a general tendency it takes several successive incarnations as a man and then several as a woman or vice versa, but even this statement can be only relative, seeing that where human development is concerned much depends on the type of experience it is necessary for each individual to gain at a particular stage. It stands to reason that certain lessons can only be learnt while functioning through a female body while others can only be learnt while functioning through that of a male. One of those lessons, whether for man or for woman, is perfect understanding, a quality which the soul, sooner or later, must acquire; and in order really to understand a woman one must have been a woman, and really to understand a man one must have been a man. Indeed, the perfect man possesses many feminine attributes and the perfect woman many masculine ones. In characters not yet adequately balanced, these attributes sometimes become over-accentuated with undesirable results. Yet if people accepted the doctrine of re-incarnation, they would better apprehend why so many ultra-feminine men and ultra-masculine women are to be seen. In many cases the *Mann-weib* (man-woman) as the Germans call her, is experiencing her first female incarnation after several successive male ones. She finds in fact great difficulty in accommodating herself to the female body after having functioned for so many lives as a member of the opposite sex. In short, she is still a man, feels and acts like a man, wears as far as possible masculine clothes and enjoys masculine

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sports and occupations. Moreover, her whole emotional organism is masculine, which accounts for the Lesbian tendencies which so many women of this type exhibit. Being by temperament a man, although she may like men as platonic friends, she is repelled by them as lovers; they are in a sense too similar to herself. We are, of course, aware that psycho-analysts may explain Lesbianism after their own manner, but they are largely dealing with effects and not with prime causes. If they succeed in curing women of Lesbian proclivities and men of homo-sexual ones—which frequently they do not—then it is probable that the reason for those proclivities lay in some forgotten incident in childhood or later, and not in any previous incarnation. Only through clairvoyant investigation could the truth in many obstinate cases be ascertained. There are both Lesbians and homo-sexuals who are not respectively over-masculine and over-feminine, in which case it is fairly safe to infer that their sex abnormalities have originated in their present lives. But even so we cannot be quite certain that such abnormalities are not partial effects rather than prime causes, for passionate friendships between the same sexes are often due to very strong links formed in the past, especially in Greece.

§

And this brings us, if indirectly, to one of the most familiar arguments in favour of reincarnation, *viz.* : the inability to account for sudden likings and irresistible attractions on any other grounds. How

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are we to explain that when two people meet for the first time they are not only instantly drawn to one another, but, as they often express it, feel they have known each other all their lives? To the reincarnationist the obvious answer is that they have met and been close friends or relations certainly in one and perhaps in many incarnations. In short, they are "old links" and although they cannot objectively remember their previous association, it is none the less registered on their soul-consciousness and manifests as a vivid impression. If these two persons, having re-met, are of the same sex, and have been born with Lesbian or homo-sexual tendencies, then a passionate relationship results; if they have no such tendencies then they become close platonic friends. Should they, on the other hand, be members of opposite sexes, then the ever puzzling phenomenon of "falling in love at first sight" is often the result. Indeed, except through the doctrine of reincarnation, how can this sudden and overwhelming emotional occurrence be explained? For love is not merely due to sex-appeal; if it were, every virile man might be said to be in love with every pretty woman he meets. That neither charm, outward appearance nor sex are primarily responsible for the *grande passion* is evident from the number of passionately devoted couples who provoke the remark "it's difficult to imagine what they see in each another." We are, of course, presuming this remark to be an expression of genuine bewilderment and not of so-called "cattiness." It is true that some biologists have tried to explain love on purely physiological grounds, but their attempts make infinitely more

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demands on our credulity than does the simple fact of reincarnation.

And yet if this doctrine engenders the comforting reflection that genuine love creates a link which is not severed through the ages, there is also the reverse and less pleasant aspect of this truth. People who take sudden and instinctive dislikes to one another on first meeting, have according to Occultism been old enemies doomed to re-meet through the impelling force of hatred. Hence did Christ, Buddha and other great Initiates admonish mankind to love their enemies, so that the disastrous attraction of hatred should be counteracted or never engendered. When we come to consider the doctrine of Karma or Cause and Effect, we shall see a deeper significance in this admonition, which is not merely a lofty sentiment, but has its basis in fundamental laws of being.

The occultist then explains both instant attractions and instant aversions through the workings of natural laws which if hidden from ordinary sight are nevertheless logical. And they are not merely logical but have been substantiated by clairvoyant investigations. Yet the doctrine of reincarnation does more than account for loves and hatreds, it also accounts among other things for many of the phobias which psycho-analysts have failed to cure. Clairvoyance has shown that these phobias are often due to subconscious memories of painful incidents in a past life—incidents frequently connected with tragic deaths; death by drowning, death by fire, suffocation or other fatal circumstances.¹ The

¹ See note p. 42.

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technique of psycho-analysis, however, is not here under discussion, and we have merely mentioned phobias as another spoke in the argument-wheel of reincarnation.

In concluding this chapter we may point out that although as a general rule only such people as have reached a high degree of spiritual evolution can remember their past lives, there are some notable exceptions.

There exist one or two well-authenticated cases of children who having died and been quickly re-born, were able to carry over memory from the one life to the next. These children described accurately their former parents as also their former homes which were situated several hundred miles distant, and which they could not possibly have seen and known about in any normal way. Investigation proved all their statements to have been entirely correct.¹ Such speedy rebirths, however, are unusual and denote a peculiar type of Karma, the doctrine of which we will now consider and which throws further light on the reason why Mankind in general is not permitted to remember the Past.

¹ Sceptics may exclaim: "Pure coincidence," but then sceptics are very credulous people. They place undue credence in their capacity to explain away that which they do not wish to believe.

CHAPTER V

EVOLUTION AND THE LAW OF ACTION AND REACTION

There are five fundamental meanings of the word Karma, and no single word in any European language will suffice to convey all that is meant by that one Sanscrit word. It denotes :

1. Act, or Activity.
2. The Law of Action, of Cause and Effect, or of Causation.
3. Retribution, as a result of Acts.
4. One's "store" of Merits and Demerits, or one's Deserts.
5. Character.

Active Karma, . . . is the Karma that we are now making by our thoughts, words, deeds, and our life in general, and the good and bad in it. This will produce what is to be the Passive Karma of the next life, that is to say, its *environments and conditions*. In like manner the active Karma of the past existence has produced the Passive Karma of this life.

"BROTHER ATISHA," *Exposition of the Doctrine of Karma.*

THE law of Karma ¹ is so closely interwoven with that of reincarnation that it is difficult to disassociate the two and consider them in separate chapters. We must do so, none the less, for the sake of clarity.

Karma is the law of Cause and Effect carried to its logical conclusion. In the Bible we find the text "As a man sows so shall he reap," and in Scotland there is a phrase "to dree his ane weird" which would perfectly express the law of Karma were it used in a less restricted sense. For Karma denotes that a man must suffer the consequences of his actions, whether those actions pertain to his present

¹ Pronounced Kurma.

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life or a past one. To use the word Fate as a synonym would be incorrect and give rise to misconceptions, for Fate pre-supposes an extra-cosmic Deity who imposes that fate, but Karma means the fate which each man has created for himself by his deeds. The word can be used both collectively and singly; one can talk of the Karma resulting from a single action, or of Karma collectively as the aggregate result of a number of actions. When we say it is a man's Karma to be born a hunchback, we mean that this particular type of deformity is the net result of misdeeds enacted in the past. But if we say humorously, "when a man is stupid enough to put his finger in the fire, his Karma is to have a burnt finger," we are using the term to denote the consequence of a single action, not in a past life but in a present one.

This example may, in addition, serve to emphasize the fact that Karma is the working of a Law and not the imposing of a punishment. The fire does not, so to say, wish either to burn or to punish the man who puts his finger in it. The very nature of fire being to burn, it obviously cannot make adaptations to the foolishness of any particular individual.

Thus, according to Occult Science there is no revengeful Jehovah who smites his enemies and doles out punishments to those who offend him. If punishment can be said to come into the matter at all, it is man who punishes himself by breaking the Occult Laws of Nature which cannot be altered just to suit his convenience. And we say advisedly *Occult*, because very subtle forces are involved of which ordinary mortals can only see the effects but not the laws in actual operation. Nevertheless it is

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possible to say what the law of Karma is, even if one cannot describe how it works.

Briefly stated, it is the great beneficent law of adjustment; it operates to adjust the balance of things. Moreover, it operates on all planes¹ save that of pure Spirit. To assume as the materialist does that the law of cause and effect works merely on the physical plane is to the occultist illogical. According to the latter every strongly felt emotion, every strongly felt desire, every well-enforced thought produces its effect, which is not the less potent merely because invisible to ordinary sight. This being so, it stands to reason that Karma must be of two kinds, good Karma and bad Karma; the quality of the deeds, emotions, desires and thoughts being the determining factor.

In the New Testament, which is a very occult book, there are frequent allusions to good deeds which will inevitably reap their reward, and this is but yet another way of expressing the doctrine of Karma. Moreover, the less the good deed is enacted for the sake of reward, the greater will be that reward in the shape of good Karma, for then not only the good karmic effect of the deed itself will accrue but also that of the unselfish thought or emotion which accompanied or prompted it.

We see then that the collective Karma of a man's life in one particular incarnation is more than merely the result of his *actions*, virtuous or evil; it is also the result of his thoughts, emotions and desires. Even a cripple, for instance, who was so incapacitated that he could not even, let us say, write a letter, would

¹ See Chap. VIII.

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still be in a position to generate good or bad Karma. If he entertained thoughts of affection for those around him, thoughts of gratitude towards those who nursed him, and cultivated the virtues of patience and resignation he would, undoubtedly, be making good Karma. But if, to the contrary, he perpetually rebelled against "fate," and engendered an atmosphere of gloom all around him, having no friendly nor grateful thoughts towards anyone, then not only would he fail to create good Karma but would actually be creating bad. Fortunately the majority of people have not incurred such heavy karmic debts as to warrant them being reborn as helpless cripples and, as is obvious from the most superficial study of mankind, their life-Karma is neither consistently good nor consistently bad, but varied according to their stage of evolution. It is interesting to study certain types of karmic debts, for in one sense it is a question of debt and payment, though to conceive of Karma merely as such would be erroneous.

We have just made allusion to the helpless cripple whose condition, as previously implied, must puzzle the brains of many a Christian who believes in a God of Love. Yet for him who can accept the doctrines of reincarnation and Karma, the cripple, although he may arouse compassion, arouses no very puzzling train of thought. His condition is the karmic result of persistent and deliberate cruelty. This vice is such a throw-back to the very worst aspect of barbarism and animalism and hence so at variance with human evolution, that it produces the heaviest self-punishment that man can inflict.

As there are, of course, various types of cruelty,

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the Karma produced is also varied both as regard duration and severity. The distressing and incurable disease known as *disseminated sclerosis* in which the limbs become twisted and unmanageable, is yet another result of cruelty. The hunchback should also be mentioned in this connection.

Of the Karma resulting from that dreadful blot on religious history, the Inquisition, much might be said, but a few sentences must suffice. Many Inquisitors have reincarnated within comparatively recent years to suffer "fate" commensurable with their past deeds. Some of them have died of cancer, some have been doomed to suffer from X-ray burns that refuse to heal, others have been the victims of injudicious medical advice and have undergone useless operations with agonizing and prolonged after-effects. It is a noteworthy fact that many of these victims have shown strong religious tendencies, although not necessarily of an orthodox nature.

Upon cancer and its apparent incurability the doctrines of Karma and reincarnation throw much light. That it should be the karmic result of cruelty is obvious, seeing that under the law, pain endured must inevitably be the outcome of pain inflicted. Nor does the fact that cancer is noticeably on the increase militate against this argument, it merely indicates that more souls are reborn at the present time with this particular Karma to be worked off. Indeed, from the occult standpoint progress and the payment of past debts are closely related. As debts prove a hindrance to man even in the world of commerce so do they also in the domain of spiritual evolution.

And this brings us to the very significant reason

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why a detailed memory of past lives is not permitted save to the few. A man who had committed horrible crimes in the past, had got rid of his enemies by foul play or other means, would be in the unenviable position of knowing that he must inevitably be murdered, meet some violent death, or suffer some agonizing disease as the resulting Karma. The memory of his past would thus cause him to live in a perpetual state of apprehension, *unless* he remained in ignorance of the law of Karma. Yet how were this possible unless he were deprived of his reasoning-powers? Reviewing several of his lives in succession he would see that the actions of one life had their reactions in a subsequent one, and by this means he would perceive the workings of Karma for himself.

But although it is inexpedient that man should, through actual memory, realize the workings of the law, it is nevertheless important that he should recognize the law as such. Therefore has the doctrine of Karma been disseminated in the West as an aid to evolution. When people realize that by making bad Karma they retard their evolution, they may reflect that it is better to make good Karma. If the beautiful woman who exploits her beauty to the detriment of other women realized that in a future life she would be reborn ugly, she might be wise enough to modify her tactics. If men and women who love power and employ it to browbeat others realized that in their next life *they*, while still loving power, might be the brow-beaten ones, such a prospect might act as a deterrent. These few examples will serve to illustrate the type of causes which tend to produce the corresponding type of

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effects. We say advisedly *tend to produce*, for the workings of Karma are of so intricate a nature, so replete with complexities and variations that it is wellnigh impossible for the finite mind of man to grasp them even approximately.

§

So far we have been mostly concerned with the great law as regards its bad aspects, some of its good and mixed ones must now claim our attention.

There is no more significant example of the laws of Karma and reincarnation than the born genius. This type of man is the finished product of life after life of effort. Whether genius manifests early in life as in the case of the *Wunderkind*, or later on, is immaterial; genius is the karmic result of long-sustained aspiration and application along one particular line. Yet geniuses have not been the happiest of mortals, nor yet the most successful. On the contrary, they have been the targets for hostile criticism, for the envy of "lesser lights," and have often suffered poverty and even starvation. Wiseacres say "such is the penalty of genius"; but it were more correct to say such is the penalty of one-sided development. In the forming of genius great enthusiasm and great concentration have been necessary, and these are apt to go hand in hand with a certain selfishness and egotism. Enthusiasts, like fanatics, will over-ride others to gain their object, and intense application often results in neglect of kith and kin. For this reason the Karma of a genius is usually mixed; in the very making of good Karma

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he has made some bad, and must suffer from its fruition. This bad Karma he can, none the less, turn to advantage, if he so wills, by learning to be philosophical through his difficulties and disappointments, an attitude which many men of genius in the past have not acquired, if their biographers are to be believed.

Now it stands to reason that men of genius are in a position to generate an abundance of very good Karma in view of their capacity to elevate, enlighten or give joy to vast multitudes of people. The more so if to the joyful labour of creating they add the fervent aspiration that their work may be of service to humanity. But against that, those who oppose them and refuse to accept their message, which they sneer at with the missiles of cheap criticism, are assuredly generating bad Karma. Moreover, if the masses pay undue attention to these sneers, a whole nation may generate a karmic effect which will rob it of a certain honour and glory it might be proud to feel. Let us say a great composer incarnates in a certain nation (we give this example merely because music makes so wide an appeal) and that he is rejected, then the karmic result will be that his subsequent rebirth will take place in another country. If we review the past we find that where great artists have been appreciated there they have incarnated. The wealth of great painters that were born in Italy in the past is highly significant in this connection. Because Italy was appreciative and grateful, it reaped the good Karma of its gratitude, and can now boast of its wonderful picture-galleries. Each nation is allotted its measure of great men according to its merits.

Thus we see that nations make Karma as well as

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individuals, and sometimes this Karma is of a very serious nature. Because of its conquest and barbarous treatment of the unoffending Aztecs and Incas, Spain was destined to become a third-rate Power, for the Karma of invasion and conquest cannot be eluded. History has shown that national aggrandizement is always followed sooner or later by national decline. Nor in this law is any injustice to the individual involved. He reincarnates into whatever nation he karmically deserves to reincarnate, so that he may assimilate certain of its characteristics. But apart from this it may be his Karma to be involved in the national Karma and to play his part, for instance, in a war. This was the fate of thousands of individuals born towards the end of last century. Let us, in fact, consider the Great War from the karmic standpoint, for, needless to say, a catastrophe of such magnitude has considerable bearing on the doctrine under discussion.

§

The World War—itsself the karmic result of national misdeeds—provided a heroic opportunity for individuals to pay off their bad Karmic debts in “a lump sum.” By the dreadful sufferings entailed, many were enabled to wipe out in a few years the collective Karma of several lives. Indeed, many of those who were killed will be reborn with so large a balance of good Karma engendered through their heroism, patriotism and determination to suffer their fate with cheerfulness and resignation, that their progress in the future will be considerably accelerated.

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True, there is no guarantee that they will not make fresh bad Karma to be dealt with, but let us not forget that as evolution advances the tendency is towards good rather than evil.

Yet although in the War the actual fighters worked off so much bad and made—with exceptions, of course—so much good Karma, it was otherwise with those who saw in that great upheaval merely an opportunity to fill their own pockets. In fact, the Karma of profiteering in such circumstances has proved so heavy that instead of the proverbial calm which follows the tempest, we have been beset by financial crises, trade depressions and wide-spread bad Karma in other forms. This is, of course, part of the general karmic aftermath of war itself, but it is not that alone. Had people during the War not given way to greed, and had the erstwhile belligerents after the War really forgiven one another and cancelled the war-debts, things would be very different from what they are now and are likely to be for some time. Yet, even so, as far as the individual is concerned, only those are really affected by the general depression who have what may roughly be termed money-Karma to wipe off. This latter, as should be readily inferred, is the karmic result of unfair business-dealing, of usury, of financial greed, of miserliness, extortion and shady transactions of all kinds. The heaviest Karma of this type is the financial crash, of which there have been many of late, and the lighter type consists of those minor deprivations which necessitate a certain economy but nothing more serious.

But here again in many cases bad Karma affords an opportunity for creating good. In adopting a philo-

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sophical attitude, in "making the best of things," as the phrase goes, people may build into their character qualities which will stand them in good stead and advance their evolution. Even now there are many who regard their reduced bank-balance with no great concern, for they have already overcome financial greed or have learned that to worship money is to put faith in false gods. With such people their good Karma has in so far neutralized their bad, for thus no actual suffering is involved. Such indeed is the felicitous karmic result of effort. As a writer has aptly said, it is not things that cause suffering but how we react to them that causes suffering. This is equivalent to saying that in *character* is to be found the eventual cure of all ills. He who is not envious does not suffer when others receive greater praise than himself, he who is not jealous does not suffer when others receive more love than himself. Thus, he who has built up a perfect character has created for himself immunity to the troubles of life, but what is more, he is in no danger of generating bad Karma, for the whole tendency of his nature is to generate good.

§

At the present stage of this globe's history the number of evolved individuals is greatly in the minority, and herein lies the reason why the uncultured classes preponderate over the cultured, and why they are the most prolific. The cultivation of refinement and its concomitants is not a matter of one life but of many, and is again the resultant good Karma of effort. But refinement does not always go

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hand in hand with ample means, because the resultant good Karma of altruism and charity is lacking. At one time culture was bought at the expense of the poorer classes, with the result that nowadays the tables are turned and we have the new but uncultured rich as opposed to the cultured but new poor. All that is attained, be it knowledge, wealth or culture through the suffering or discomfort of others, inevitably reaps its bad Karma. Conversely all attempts on the part of the more fortunate to improve conditions for the less fortunate are productive of very good Karma. The true philanthropist builds for himself a veritable mountain of karmic merit, and unearned wealth in the present is often the consequence of money generously given and wisely used in the past. It is also, of course, the result of effort made to acquire wealth. But whether happiness goes with its possession again depends on Karma. The desire for great possessions is deprecated in occult philosophy, one reason being that by the time the great possessions have materialized, the desire may have been sublimated or faded away, and thus the great possessions have turned into "white elephants." People who are left with houses and estates on their hands which they do not want yet have to keep up, are usually experiencing the Karma of misplaced desire. Again, pride of family or ancient lineage may often result in a somewhat similar type of Karma. Those who have ascribed undue importance to titles or have prided themselves on being members of a great clan, have been reborn into that clan or family even after it has become impoverished. The danger of this type of family-pride from an evolutionary

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point of view is that the individual reinherits at each fresh birth qualities and tendencies which may be highly detrimental to his progress. Instead of gaining more varied experiences and qualities—which is the object of being reincarnated into different families—he is restricted and becomes a laggard. A similar danger may accrue where pride of race or nationality is concerned. The insular type of Englishmen who regards all foreigners as inferiors, who compares all foreign customs unfavourably with those of England and constantly goes about thanking God he is a Britisher, will reap the Karma of his narrow-mindedness in a future incarnation, for such an attitude is not patriotism, it is merely conceit, and is the more dangerous because it can be exploited by politicians who want to make wars. National conceit is hostile to brotherhood which according to Occultism is not merely a sentimental ideal, but a fact in nature, as well as a law, the breaking of which always has resulted and always will result in disastrous Karma. All Nature works in unity, it is only man himself who refuses to work in unity but must needs pull separate ways. Thus the equilibrium is disturbed on a large scale.

But at this juncture an objection may arise which may be voiced as follows: “Surely it is unfair that a man should have to suffer for misdeeds he has long forgotten, and which he may have perpetrated in the remote past?”

This objection, however, arises through an insufficient knowledge of the true nature of man and of the soul.

CHAPTER VI

SOUL-MEMORY AND KARMA

The Law is Just, for it gives to each one precisely what is due of good or evil. No one will suffer more than he or she merits. No one will enjoy rewards that have not been won, and no one will be exalted at the expense of another.

Karma is not a blind Law, nor is it in any way undirected. There are Great Intelligences behind it, and must be so, especially for the direction of its numerous currents and in guiding the time and manner and place of rebirth.

“BROTHER ATISHA,” *Exposition of the Doctrine of Karma.*

It is essential to realize that with the majority of individuals self-consciousness only manifests *in part* through the physical body. Indeed, the soul possesses a consciousness altogether independent of the physical organism, and merely “puts through” a measure of that consciousness during incarnation. As the human hand is in a sense merely an implement used by man, but is not the man himself, so is it with the soul and the physical body.

Now we all know that man’s memory is far from perfect, and at times even extremely erratic. It is otherwise, however, with the memory of the soul; *the latter retains the recollection of all its experiences throughout all its incarnations.* How this is accomplished is difficult of comprehension for man at his present stage of development, but one point may be re-emphasized. Because memory is largely a matter of brain-cells, and because with each successive rebirth a new brain has to be formed, there is in

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consequence no real continuity. But with the soul this is not the case—there is no break in continuity whatever, and herein we find one of the reasons why it is possible for memory to remain intact.

Thus we see that although man, in his limited expression through the physical body, cannot remember his past actions but can only suffer the effects of them, the real being himself remembers everything: in a word, *he* knows. True, but the reader may pertinently ask: "Then why cannot he impress his knowledge on the brain, so that the limited physical man may also know?" The answer is that the soul is an organism of so ethereal a nature that unless man through long training has subtilized his mind, it can make but little impression. It can and does urge man to pursue a certain course of action, it warns him through the "still small voice" termed conscience that what he has wrongly done before it is foolish to do again, yet these are but crude and oftentimes distorted manifestations of the soul's inherent powers. Only when man has so reconstructed his mind and emotions that they become, as it were, untarnished reflectors, can he experience the full consciousness and knowledge of the soul. The latter *desideratum* is in part the *raison d'être* of all mystical and occult training.

Yet, even so, to talk of the process as one of reflection is somewhat to restrict our meaning. It is more a matter of identifying the little bodily self with the soul-self, so that man, while still in the body, may continuously experience the innate happiness of the soul.

Now it is important to note that the soul itself is happy. Being an ethereal organism composed of

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highly rarified matter, it cannot be otherwise, for such is Nature's law. The more an organism approaches to pure Spirit, the happier it is; only where dense or comparatively dense matter is concerned does unhappiness or discord accrue. There are countless indolent souls, it is true, who make little effort to progress as we have implied more than once, but indolence in this particular sense is not to be confounded with unhappiness; indeed, these souls exist in a state of dreamful bliss. Nevertheless, despite this state, there is such a thing as "divine discontent," an aspect of the evolutionary law or the urge to advance. And it is just because of this, that the soul focuses a part of its consciousness into that trinity of body, mind and emotions known as man. Its object is to gain experience. A mere condition of dreamy happiness prolonged through an eternity does not suffice the soul impelled by the evolutionary urge; therefore with a portion of its consciousness it experiments in the arena of physical, mental and emotional life. The more venturesome it is, the more strength of purpose it possesses, the more it experiments with the view to translating the results into knowledge and capacity. In the process it makes mistakes, it indirectly works evil as well as good, but its very nature being happiness, it is not perturbed by its mistakes nor yet by its failures. It knows that through failure oftentimes more may be learnt than through success.

All the same whether a particular soul progresses quickly or slowly depends on its will-power and general calibre. As a general tendency the younger the soul the more indolent it is; the older, the more

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energetic. The reason for this, of course, is that the older the soul the more power, knowledge and experience it has acquired, and therefore the more capacity to impress, control and guide its mortal part, the physical-plane man. Instead of withdrawing its portion of consciousness from the body when things go wrong it stands by, at any rate for a while, to give a measure of strength and endurance and to inspire the will to persevere. The outward and visible sign of a noble character is the capacity to endure trials and tribulations with philosophic calm, but it is the soul which inspires this calm, as it illumines the mind with the light of its innate happiness.

§

There are two arguments which may arise regarding the happiness of the soul, and which require some consideration. The first is that it has no right to be happy; in a sense it seems like a man who sends forth into the world a number of representatives in succession, to battle with all sorts of difficulties and, what is more, to bear *the consequences*, while he sits in peaceful seclusion at home, directs their activities through telegraphic communications and enjoys himself, tabulating the results. Now this, of course, savours of injustice; but there is another side to the argument. Granted that a human soul is a portion or, better said, a differentiation of the one Life which through a long process of evolution has become individualized, who is primarily responsible for its existence as indeed for the whole Universe? The Divine Will, God, or whatever designation we

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may use. Yet unless the soul were primarily endowed with happiness, it would be only logical to accuse the Divine Will of cruelty rather than of Justice. To be responsible for the existence of an unhappy being is not the act of a beneficent God. How then is evil with its attendant unhappiness to be explained? Firstly, by free will, which enables man to choose the wise way resulting in good Karma or happiness, or the unwise way resulting in bad Karma or unhappiness. Secondly, by the aforementioned fact that man, or better said, *a* man, as here and generally understood, is not the soul itself but only an instrument as it were, in the hands of the soul. Yet because this instrument itself is endowed with free will (not absolute of course but relative) it often uses that free will unwisely and must needs bear the ensuing consequences in the form of bad Karma.

All the same it should be emphasized that even the as yet unevolved soul does not desire *per se* that its instrument, the man or the personality (as termed by the Theosophists) should act unwisely even though it may turn his unwisdom to good account. But just because it is as yet unevolved, it cannot adequately use, impress and control its instrument, man, just as a parent with little force of will or no sense of discipline can control his unruly child. Indeed, as frequently happens, the indolent soul, like the parent, gets tired of trying to influence its rebellious charge and leaves it for a time to its tantrums or mischief, meanwhile relapsing into happy dreamfulness on its own plane. The more evolved soul, on the contrary, is less ready to shirk its responsibilities and puts forth a correspondingly greater effort to control its

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“charge.” But it is, of course, only the very highly evolved soul who has brought this technique of control to a measure of perfection. By the training of body after body to respond to its subtler vibrations, there eventually comes into being that perfect interplay between the soul and the body which results in the highly developed man. Yet this interplay is susceptible of much variation and explains a number of seemingly unaccountable things in relation to human conduct—a matter to be dealt with anon.

§

Reviewing the doctrine of Karma in retrospect we find that the prime cause of all human unhappiness is the existence of free will, yet herein lies the difficulty. If there was no free will men would be automatons, always acting righteously, so that their very perfection would be an imperfection. We may deplore the fact that whereas the immortal man, the soul, is always happy, its instrument, agent or representative, mortal man, is capable of unhappiness; but even if the whole universe were reconstructed on different lines, an apparent “snag” would be lurking somewhere. As the Masters of Wisdom have pointed out, the Cosmic Scheme appears to us mortals as imperfect owing to the limitations of our vision; had we the power to see the Universe in its entirety we would perceive that it and its laws are perfect.

In any case, an understanding of the occult or more subtle manifestations of nature throws a considerable light upon much which may seem incomprehensible, and to these we will now turn our attention.

CHAPTER VII

THE TWO EVOLUTIONS : THE VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE

The sum of force, which is at work in infinite space and produces all phenomena, is unchangeable.

There is no such thing as empty space ; that part of space which is not occupied with ponderable atoms is filled with ether.

ERNST HAECKEL, *The Riddle of the Universe*.

. . . the whole method of evolution is simply that of adjusting the matter aspect to the Spirit aspect, so that the former proves entirely adequate as a body of expression for the latter.

A. A. BAILEY, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*.

In the universe, there are types of matter finer than those recognized by our senses, or ponderable by the most delicate of instruments. Many forms of energy, too, exist, of which but a few have as yet been discovered by man.—C. JINARAJADASA.

WHEN towards the end of last century Haeckel solved to his own satisfaction the Riddle of the Universe by positing One Substance of which all things in nature were differentiations, he made, as we have already implied, a pronouncement entirely in accordance with Occult Science. Nevertheless he made one great mistake ; he limited the differentiations of that One Substance to those which are cognizable by the five senses, because he was not in a position to do otherwise. He agreed that there is no such thing as dead matter, but overlooked the possibility that there may be states of matter ranging from the very gross to the infinitely ethereal. Indeed, according to Occultism this is not merely a possibility, it is a fact.

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The occultist maintains that not only is there physical but also mental matter, or what philosophers have called mind-stuff. Thus when we create mental images with our brain we are really forming them out of mind-stuff, just as a sculptor with his hands forms images out of clay or "physical stuff." In other words thought is not the product of the brain in the sense that Haeckel implied, but the brain is that part of our wonderful human mechanism which "manipulates" mental matter as the hand manipulates physical matter.

And that this is not a mere occult hypothesis is shown by the fact that thoughts or, more accurately said, thought-forms can be objectively seen in what has been termed the "mental space" by the trained clairvoyant. But of course their objectivity will much depend on how well they have been formed. Moreover, the stronger, clearer and better defined those thought-forms, the longer will they endure, for just as the law of cohesion pertains to physical matter so does it to mental matter. The thousands of instantaneous thoughts that merely flit through the brain have of course no cohesive element at all; like shapes moulded of dry sand they subside at once. On the other hand, thoughts reinforced by the will or the emotions may not only endure for varying periods, but may act as forces for good or evil, a fact which throws some light on the puzzling phenomenon of maledictions and their workings.

And so we find that the occultist is in one sense even more of a materialist than the self-confessed materialistic scientist, seeing that he admits of many more grades and varieties of matter than does his

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opponent. But that being so he also admits of many more varieties of beings. Haeckel only being cognisant of the material-world, recognized only one evolutionary scheme, but the occultist has very definite reasons for recognizing two such schemes, the one in the visible world of gross matter and yet another in the invisible world of rarified matter, the two running concurrently. But because the one is visible and the other invisible, that does not mean that there is no connection between the two. Seeing this statement, however, may make too much demand on the reader's credulity we would remind him that the most powerful forces in nature are often those unperceived by the five senses; the eyes can perceive their effects but not the forces themselves. We are accustomed to say for instance: "The train goes by steam," forgetting that it is the imperceptible force of which steam is but the perceptible manifestation which propels the engine. Latterly we have come to know that a variety of invisible rays flash through space, and that sound-waves exist of which we perceive nothing save their effects. This, apart from other evidence, shows that space is not the mere void which facile imagination pictures it to be, but the vast arena of all manner of rays, forces, currents and influences which all operate simultaneously without apparently interfering with each other. And it is not only in so-called empty space that they operate, but in space where are people, houses, trees and so forth.

Thus scientists have made these important discoveries, but long prior to modern Science, occultists made discoveries of equal importance, *viz.*: that

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space is peopled with countless hosts and varieties of sentient beings, who, according to their status, play a prodigious part in the evolutionary scheme. At one end of the scale are little intelligences who are concerned with the evolution of mineral, plant and insect life, at the other are beings of unimaginable beauty and radiance concerned with the carrying out of the great cosmic laws.¹ Thus the belief both in nature-spirits and "angels" is not without its justification; for the "fairies" of folklore and the "Principalities and Powers" of the Christian tradition are not solely the figments of man's imagination but are discernible to clairvoyant sight. This is not to say that the *devas*, as they are called in Occultism, are the human figures with wings which we find portrayed in Christian art, and that the nature-spirits behave as so charmingly depicted by Hans Andersen. But in this connection we may remember that where there is smoke there is also fire, and that many stories, legends and beliefs are often but distorted conceptions of actual facts.

There are then two evolutionary schemes. Broadly speaking the scheme as expounded by Darwin comprises the form-aspect of evolution, while the scheme alluded to above comprises the life or intelligence aspect; for whatever biologists may ask us to believe, our reason tells us that the former is incomplete without the latter; a fact already implied in a previous chapter. Yet if we admit of intelligence as opposed to mere mechanicalism it is only logical also to admit of *intelligences*, lesser and greater, all having their

¹ The reader may find considerable amplification of this subject in H. K. Challoner's *Watchers of the Seven Spheres*. Routledge.

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appointed work to perform according to their stage of evolution. But the point here to be emphasized is the rôle they play in the drama of existence. Among them are to be found those Great Ones who direct and adjust the mysterious workings of Karma and who decree the respective conditions under which the majority of individual souls shall incarnate in order to evolve. But be it ever remembered that they themselves are also the result of a long process of evolution and not creations of deific favouritism.

§

One may of course find difficulty in conceiving of another and invisible evolution which runs concurrently with our own, and of which portions are greatly in advance of our own. But this is largely due to the fact that we are accustomed to think in three-dimensional space. Certain mathematicians nevertheless maintain that it is not illogical to conceive of yet other dimensions of space. If there are three, why not four and even five? C. H. Hinton, writing on this subject, endeavoured to show by inference that in addition to length, height and breadth there was yet another dimension which we must clumsily express by the word "throughth." We may, in fact, obtain some idea of this latter by imagining an ordinary flower-pot of soil to which some water has been added. Owing to the particular attribute of soil it permits of water to interpenetrate it; thus both the soil and the water occupy the same space, and there is a condition of "throughth" or interpenetrativeness. Now as the occultist declares

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that all the more rarified types of matter invisible to normal sight possess this interpenetrative quality, and as the scientist declares that even the most solid bodies on the physical plane are not really solid, what is the inference? That the matter of which the invisible worlds or planes are composed may interpenetrate our physical world; and that being so it is quite logical to conceive of the two evolutions running concurrently. It is just because so-called dense matter appears other than it really is that Vedantic philosophers referred to it as illusory; not in the sense of non-existent but deceptive.

A point worthy of mention in this connection is the fact that whereas some psychic people see ghosts as composed of diaphanous substance, to the "ghosts" themselves it is we, despite our dense physical bodies, who appear diaphanous and unreal. In short, the rather humorous situation arises that each seems like a ghost to the other. This curious fact, apart from evidence provided by trained occultists, has been ascertained through spiritualistic communication.

Having prepared the way by considering the interpenetrative qualities of the more rarified types of matter, we are now in a position to study man's finer organisms and their relation to consciousness. For although for the sake of clarity it was expedient in our chapter on reincarnation to define man as soul and body, this definition is not entirely adequate, as we shall see.

CHAPTER VIII

MAN'S SUBTLER ORGANISMS AND THE HIGHER PLANES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

The inner man is the substantial reality ; while the other one is only an apparition.—PARACELsus.

It is an axiom in our modern conception of evolution that the more diverse the functions of which an organism is capable, the more complex is its structure. It is therefore in the order of things that man should have a complexity of structure not found in less developed organisms. But the complexity of the human organism revealed to us in anatomy and physiology is only a small part of the full complexity of man.

C. JINARAJADASA, *First Principles of Theosophy*.

As one of the many methods of arriving at a fair approximation of truth is by the way of comparison between two opposing standpoints, it is hardly necessary to apologize if we make somewhat frequent allusions to the materialistic conception of life.

Now this materialistic conception is based on an inadequate knowledge of man's constitution as a whole. Man is not merely what the physiologist with his limited vision quite logically infers, but a much more complicated being. He is, in his entirety, a combination of states of matter ranging from those of comparative density to those of extreme ethereality. He may, in fact, roughly be described as a duplex being ; the man who is visible to normal sight and also the man who is not visible to normal sight, but alone to the extended perception of the trained clairvoyant. To the latter he is re-

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vealed as a physical body plus several finer bodies, composed of highly rarified matter, which interpenetrate each other and also inpenetrate and surround the physical body. And it is just because these bodies are composed of such rarified matter that they cannot be perceived by normal sight, for their vibrations are too rapid to be registered by the physical eye.

But the following is the important point to note ; only when these finer bodies are conjoined to the physical body is the latter conscious, and as soon as they are withdrawn, as is the case temporarily in sleep and permanently at death, then physical consciousness is also withdrawn. And let us here interpolate the significant fact that although the physiologist has explained to his own satisfaction the cause of death he has so far never satisfactorily explained the phenomenon of sleep.¹

And yet is this conception of man compatible with that of evolution ? Certainly, for it merely adds another factor which the evolutionist is not in a position to apprehend. As the gross physical vehicles evolve, so do these subtler vehicles. The gross body of the reptile possesses also its finer body of a correspondingly rudimentary kind, which temporarily withdraws when it hibernates or goes to sleep. Thus when the biologist says : " If we postulate an immaterial essence to account for the life of man . . . how can we deny it to that of every living thing ? " The occultist answers (in accordance

¹ *Why do we fall asleep ?* This is a very difficult question and none of the answers that have been suggested can be said to command general assent. Professor Sir J. Arthur Thomson, *Scientific Riddles*.

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with what has already been stated) that we do not deny it but, on the contrary, affirm it as an undeniable fact.¹ But what the occultist does not affirm is that there is no "bridge," as it were, between the spirit as implied by the words "immaterial essence" and the dense physical body of man. To imply, as does the Christian creed, that he is a trinity of spirit, soul and body, is in a sense true but none the less only a partial definition. Man is more even than this trinity which omits three very important intervening factors, his soul, his mind and his emotions. As according to all mystical experience there are intermediate states between pure spiritual consciousness and ordinary physical consciousness, there must be and *are* intermediate *vehicles* of consciousness; a fact which St. Paul hinted at when he wrote: "There are celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial."

A further point must be considered; the question of vibration in conjunction with ethereality. The soul itself is an organism composed of such infinitely rarified substance with correspondingly rarified vibrations, that unless there were intervening bodies ranging from the very ethereal to the comparatively dense, there would be no media between the soul and the physical brain. As everyone is aware, the very subtle cannot directly be registered by the comparatively gross; the very subtle must first

¹ Animal lovers may be interested to learn that when they make pets of domestic animals they undoubtedly hasten on the evolution of these latter. Further, that as animals possess *finer bodies* they survive the disintegration of the physical and function on the next plane after death. Thus people may meet again the pets they have been fond of while on earth.

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affect the less subtle, that in its turn the still less subtle, and so on until finally the gross has been reached. The transmission may be practically instantaneous but that does not disprove the fact.

§

It is not our purpose to enter into elaborate descriptions of the finer bodies which, in conjunction, form that "luminous chromatic haze" known as the human aura.¹ But as a certain comprehension of them is necessary to the further understanding of Occult Science itself, they cannot merely be disposed of as facts to be accepted on faith. Moreover, regarding them an amount of that vague knowledge which often gives rise to misconceptions has been absorbed by people who now glibly talk of the *astral body*, for instance, without knowing what the term really connotes or involves. Thus it is necessary to state that these finer bodies are in reality organisms associated respectively with the emotions, the mental faculties, and those yet higher faculties pertaining to "things of the spirit." Just as a man develops his physical body by exercising it, so does a man develop his *emotional* or so-termed *astral body* by the exercise of his emotions and his *mental body* by the exercise of his mind. But, of course, we are so accustomed to think of our emotions and our thoughts as products of the physical organism, that unless clairvoyant investigation had brought these subtler bodies to light, we should have remained totally unaware of

¹ The denser aspects of the aura can nowadays be seen by means of the *Kilner Screens*.

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their existence. As it is, however, we find that they play a very important part in personal survival after death. Because the law of cause and effect does not merely pertain to the physical but also to the subtler planes, the length of time during which one or other of these *subtler bodies* will persist after the disintegration of the physical, entirely depends on how it has been developed during earthly life. As the *subtler bodies* are neither subject to accident, disease or putrefaction (vicissitudes alone pertaining to physical-plane matter) their power to persist is solely a question of how much vital force they possess.

Now Indian philosophers and poets have termed these *subtle bodies* "garments of the soul," and the phrase, which we have already used elsewhere, is especially helpful to our understanding of their functions in the after-death states. Although the simile is trite, the more and the heavier the garments a man requires to wear, the more restricted and encumbered does he feel, and conversely the more of those garments he can shed, the lighter and freer does he feel. Thus, in the language of comparison, the heaviest overcoat may represent the dense physical body, and hence it is important to note that the latter, instead of enhancing the consciousness of the respective subtler bodies, merely subdues it. Or otherwise expressed, as the light of the sun is proportionately obscured in accordance with the shades of coloured glass it may have to pass through, so it is with consciousness and the "garments of the soul." So long as the subtler bodies are conjoined to and therefore perforce function through the physical body, only a restricted measure of their

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consciousness can be experienced. But as soon as the dense physical body has been shed, the restricting factor has been withdrawn. And it is just this fact which accounts for the extraordinary sensation of lightness and freedom to which so many "spirits" testify, when they communicate via spiritualistic mediums with their friends on earth. Mystics and Yogis who have acquired the power of entering *Samadhi* or super-conscious trance also testify to similar states of freedom, exhilaration and super-earthly joy.

§

Now, as we all know, the first garment of the soul to be laid aside at death is the physical body, after which, according to Occult Science, man enjoys for periods of time, varying in length, the unrestricted consciousness of the *astral* or emotional body. His consciousness has thus been transferred to another world or plane which possesses its own inhabitants (among whom are such friends and relatives who have "passed over"), its characteristics and natural laws, just as does our physical plane. But being composed of finer matter its vibrations are much more rapid, its colouring more vivid and luminous, hence the somewhat misleading term "astral." But just as the material plane possesses its forms of matter varying in degrees of density, so also does the astral, of which again, according to Occultism, there are seven sub-planes. As certain individuals on earth may possess coarse and repellant physical bodies owing to gross habits and self-indulgence, so may they as a result possess coarse and repellant

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astral bodies. There is this difference, however, that whereas every type of individual inhabits one and the same earth, on the astral, each individual automatically gravitates to that particular sub-plane to which he is drawn by his characteristics. As in a certain sense the law of gravity obtains on the astral plane, if his *astral body* is weighted down by dense matter (always comparatively speaking, of course) matter corresponding to such undesirable emotions as greed, hatred or intemperance, then until these coarse astral atoms have gradually disintegrated, he will be "earth-bound," as the phrase goes, and unable to rise to the higher substrata, with their inherent felicities.¹ This condition is not an enviable one, for if we remember that consciousness is always more vivid in the *subtler bodies* when freed from the subduing envelope of the physical, we realize that the painful emotions will be correspondingly as painful as the felicitous ones will be felicitous.

We do not, however, propose to enlarge on a subject which has been elaborately expounded in occult textbooks, and must be content to refer the reader to the bibliography and more especially to *The Astral Body* by Lieut-Colonel Arthur E. Powell. Meanwhile we may pass on to consider the *mental body* and the part it plays in the post-mortem state.

§

As the emotions, unless of a high spiritual quality, are less subtle than the intellectual faculties, it is not

¹ We find in this statement a certain analogy with the Roman-Catholic idea of Purgatory.

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surprising that man's first sojourn in the worlds invisible to normal sight should be in his emotional body. When, however, all the vital force of the latter has been expended—which may be a question of few or many years—it then disintegrates, and man experiences the still more vivid consciousness of his *mental body*. Indeed, just as the physical body, while it lasted, had subdued the vividness of the *astral body*, so in turn had the astral subdued the vividness of the mental. Thus, in other words, man dies to the *astral plane* to live on the mental plane, with its greatly exceeding felicities: but for how long of course depends on the mental capacities of the individual in question.

It has been said, for instance that the *mental body* of some great philosopher possesses enough vital force to endure for hundreds of years; but seeing that hosts of people, far from being philosophers, hardly use their reason at all, such exceptions need not detain us. Fortunately, however, for the un-intellectual, mentality is not always associated with the power to reason out abstruse problems; therefore many people may enjoy long periods of comparative bliss on, at any rate, the lower *mental plane*, who have possessed but average mentalities during earth-life. Much depends on the type of thoughts they have been in the habit of thinking and also on their power of co-ordination, and furthermore, on their temperament. Life on the *mental plane* can be both subjective and objective, as to a certain extent it can be on the material plane. There are on earth, for example, more or less solitary people who are quite happy with their own thoughts and imaginings, and

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there are others who prefer to look around them and exchange thoughts with their fellows. But whereas on the earth-plane thoughts are but thoughts, on the *mental plane* thoughts are actualities. What a man thinks of, that he actually sees ; for on that plane, in a very specific sense, "thoughts are things." This plane is verily the Elysium of all creative minds, of those who while on earth have formed the habit of conceiving of "the good, the beautiful and the true." Here the artist, the poet and the musician can realize all their dreams, while the devotees of music and art have only to listen and to behold. Thus a man can either create his own thought-images or watch the thought-images of others as he feels inclined, so that his entire life is a perpetual feast of elevated enjoyment.

But this is not to imply that the *mental plane* does not also possess its objective characteristics, laws of being and inhabitants. Apart from those who have once dwelt on earth, there are *devas* of unimaginable beauty to be seen, devic music of exquisite subtlety to be heard, and other enchantments eluding the meagre power of verbal description. Indeed, on this plane words are no longer necessary, for thoughts may be perceived in terms of pictures ; also the differentiated five senses are no longer necessary, for they are all unified in one all-comprehensive sense of perception.

The *mental plane* has in certain schools been termed the Heaven-world, because it is on this plane that man takes, as it were, his celestial holiday between his incarnations. But as there are those of the lower species of humanity who while on earth have

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developed no *mental body*, their "heaven-world" must necessarily be the *astral-plane*, for they respond to nothing higher. And yet even the *mental plane* is not the highest to which it is possible for man to respond.

As there are types of thoughts which produce images or forms, there are also abstract or formless types; hence in occult philosophy we find planes of consciousness technically termed *formless* because their characteristics are so subtle as to approximate to the purely spiritual. The ecstasy of these planes, however, which is in reality soul-consciousness, is only experienced for any great length of time by the highest mystics, yogis and philosophers, the average man experiencing it only for a very brief while. In some schools these planes are regarded as higher substrata of the *mental plane*, in others they have been designated by Sanscrit terms which would only tend to confuse the reader.

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We come now to a very important point in Occult Science which shows how greatly its conceptions differ from those of exoteric Christianity. According to the latter, man having died and his soul having gone to Paradise, there he will wait till the day of Resurrection, after which, if he has led while on earth, a moral and upright life or repented of his sins, he will "sit at the Right Hand of the Father" for the rest of Eternity. But although this prospect may be pleasing to some, it is less pleasing to others. And indeed, the point is not whether it is pleasing or

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otherwise, but whether as a conception it is true and based upon a tenable assumption. That the earth should have been created—not to mention the whole Universe—in order that individual souls should be “tried out” for the space of seventy years or less in physical bodies, seems an insignificant result for so great an expenditure of deific labour and force. Furthermore, in the Christian conception no account has been taken of the law of cause and effect, and the dynamic force of desire. And although we have already dealt with both these points in our chapter on Karma, we must here examine them from another angle.

Now, in accordance with the immutable law of cause and effect, all desires whether good or evil, wise or unwise, are sooner or later inevitably fulfilled, but of course they can only be fulfilled on that plane on which they have been formulated. Nor would anyone wish it to be otherwise. The man, for instance, who wants wealth, does not want it in some hypothetical after-world, but on the physical plane. But although there are countless desires which can be immediately fulfilled, or in a comparatively short space of time, there are countless others which are not possible to fulfil during a life-time. Nevertheless such desires are in themselves causes which must ultimately have their effects; in other words, they have set forces in motion which cannot be arrested, although for a time they may become latent. Moreover, as with numberless people the fulfilment of one desire only leads to others and more ambitious ones, the forces set in motion become in the aggregate exceedingly potent. In addition to what may be

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termed incidental desires, there is the one basic desire for physical life itself. What then is the effect of this, as of all lesser desire-forces, in relation to the higher planes? That as soon as the vital force of the *mental body* has been expended and it disintegrates, unless there has been some genuine aspiration towards a yet higher state, that of soul-consciousness, man is irresistibly drawn back to the physical plane by the pull of these erstwhile desires, or by his ambitions, which are but desires in another form. A man, for example, may be free of the desire for possessions, yet none the less ardently aspire to excel in one department or other of human endeavour. He may have wished to be a great statesman, artist or poet, yet have been for one reason or another, unable to realize his ambition. Thus he is impelled back to earth after his sojourn in the heaven-worlds. It will be seen from the foregoing that the richer a man's mental life while in the physical body—the more he responds to beauty, whether in art, literature, music or religious conceptions—the richer will be that sojourn, for the causes he has generated will surely have their appropriate effects on the higher planes.

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Before concluding this chapter, a few words must be said about the *subtler bodies* in relation to practical Occultism.

There are certain schools of Occult Science which teach the pupil how to dissociate these bodies from the physical and to function in one or other of them

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at will. Many people have already heard the expression "to project the astral," which simply means that a man can transfer his consciousness from the physical body to the *astral body* and "travel" in the latter to whatever place he may wish to go. And it is because the Masters of Wisdom possess this capacity that they are free from those paradoxically termed limitations of space which hamper the activities of ordinary mortals. The Master who wishes to impart certain knowledge to one or other of his pupils, can appear to him in his *subtle body*, while his own physical body may be thousands of miles away. The pupil, if clairvoyant, will of course see the Master, or rather, as implied, his *subtle body*, and be able to converse with him as if he were actually there in the flesh. In cases where the pupil is not clairvoyant, other methods of imparting knowledge are employed by the Masters, as we shall see now that we come to consider the great Hierarchy and the part it plays in the Spiritual Evolution of Man.

PART III
THE INNER GOVERNMENT OF THE
WORLD AND ITS WORK

CHAPTER IX

THE THREE GREAT OFFICIALS OF THE HIERARCHY

THE Masters are members of the Great White Lodge or Hierarchy of Adepts which constitutes the inner government of our world. One might, of course, be tempted to remark : " Then it is a pity they do not govern better, seeing the state of chaos into which the world is almost chronically plunged." But then once again we have to take into account the existence of free will, and the wrong use of it on man's part. With this free will the Masters are not permitted to interfere ; they only guide, advise and suggest, but never coerce. They work to further the Evolutionary Plan, and are concerned with the details of that Plan, the lesser plans within the greater Plan.

To those accustomed to think of the world as governed by mechanical laws the idea that human beings can qualify to become members of a world-government may seem too strange to be believed. Yet the evidence for those who are in a position to seek for it is incontrovertible ; and apart from this, much may be logically inferred through the law of correspondences or similarities. Even in commerce, every Company must perforce have its board of directors, every factory its head and overseers. In the life of nations every country must have its government and its governmental departments with

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their respective heads, chief officials and so on. Is it therefore illogical to infer that what applies to the lesser should also be applicable to the greater—namely, the world itself? There is, of course, the attitude of the Christian who believes that God and His angels are the only beings capable of governing a creation of such magnitude as the world, and that no mortal could possibly qualify for such an office; but the Christian does not take spiritual evolution into account and therefore his reasoning is based on insufficient knowledge. It is just because a Master has evolved far beyond the ordinary human being that he is in a position to fill the office and perform the work that he selflessly undertakes.

Although some of the Masters move about the world, visiting their pupils for purposes of instruction, most of their work is done on the inner planes in the meditative state. As the Master has acquired that faculty, already mentioned, of transporting himself in one of his subtler bodies to any place to which he may elect to go, or again of directing his consciousness to any given locality or person, he naturally works with considerable economy of valuable time. If, for example, he wants to impress a particular individual with an idea, he can project it into his or her brain in the form of a suggestion which he or she may then adopt and elaborate. This, of course, necessitates a certain sensitiveness,¹ a certain receptivity on the part of the individual in question, and hence the Masters cannot use as their mediums persons with rigid and narrow mentalities. If we consider, however, the qualities closely associated with talent,

See Chapter XIX.

Three Officials of the Hierarchy

genius or capacity in whatever field of human endeavour, we find that receptivity or the power to be inspired by ideas is one of them. The poet, the writer, the artist, the musician, the orator, the inventor, the philosopher, the scientist all manifest this power in varying degree. For example, Philo declared: "Sometimes when I come to my work empty, I have suddenly become full; ideas being in an invisible manner showered upon me, and implanted in me from on high." Again, we find Raphael declaring: "That when one paints, one should think of nothing; everything then becomes better." Both these confessions are significant, and suggest invisible help when the writer or artist has instinctively placed himself in a receptive mood; he receives that which is telepathetically communicated to him.

But telepathic powers are only a few among many others which the Masters exercise; they manipulate Occult forces, control magnetic currents, press the *devas* into their service and altogether employ methods for carrying out their altruistic work which would be difficult for the layman to comprehend. As we have mentioned earlier, we, on our plane, can only conceive of activities in three-dimensional space, but if we try to realize that the Masters have acquired the faculty of operating in four or even five-dimensional space, our difficulties of comprehension may be somewhat lessened.

We may here add that they have also acquired the knowledge how to retain their physical bodies far beyond the usually allotted span. Indeed, many of them are so old that to mention even their approximate ages would only be to put too much strain on

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the reader's credulity. This power to prolong their lives enables them to hold their offices for a very considerable number of years, a fact which should be borne in mind in view of what follows.

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It is not advisable in this book to overburden our pages with the names of all the various Masters and the Offices they hold. Suffice it here to mention three great Officials known respectively as the *Manu*, the World-Teacher and the Mahachohan. The first is at the head of each Root Race and is concerned with the details of its evolution and racial characteristics; the second is concerned with Religion and Evolution, and the third with the various higher aspects of culture, the growth and decline of civilizations during a given period.

Of the *Manu*, much indeed might be written, but as the average reader is unlikely to be interested in anthropology even from the occult standpoint, we must confine ourselves to one or two points bearing on the present day.

It is first necessary to realize that the human race has by no means reached the zenith of its evolution. We may be inclined to look back upon the savage and, comparing ourselves with him, imagine that we are so immeasurably superior that any idea of further evolution does not enter our minds. Yet, physically, emotionally and mentally, we are so far from satisfactory that hundreds of years must elapse before we even reach a measure of perfection, let alone perfection itself. Thus the great modelling powers

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of the Manu's mind are constantly operative on the inner planes to bring about those gradual changes necessary to our further racial development. As within, so without; as above, so below; this is an ancient Occult maxim. All that is to come into eventual manifestation on the outer planes is first conceived by the Great Ones on the inner planes or "World of Ideas." One of the manifestations of special interest to us of to-day is the beginning in America, Australia and elsewhere of the sixth sub-race of our Aryan race. So marked are its characteristics that Captain Pape in an address delivered to the British Association referred to it as the Austral-American Race. Among other things in his description he said: "The psychology of the new-race child manifests as a rapid response to sympathy . . . power to comprehend principles easily, quick intuitions, thoroughness, sensitiveness, sense of justice . . . eagerness to help others. The children of the new race also show a dislike of coarse food. . . . In other respects they are normal . . . but specially need sympathy and understanding teachers."

If we compare the peculiarities of the children here described with those of the children in the Victorian era we will notice a marked improvement in character. Into the bodies of this race, in fact, more advanced souls are incarnating, a circumstance which demands newer types of education, of religion and of training suited to their needs. The work of inspiring these is undertaken by certain of the other Masters who specialize in this department, at the head of which is the World-Teacher—the second of the Great Officials we previously mentioned.

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Whereas the Manu occupies a Chinese body, the World-Teacher occupies a Celtic body. They both reside, as do several of the other Brothers of the Hierarchy, in the Himalayan Mountains.

That great Soul who now holds the office of World-Teacher appeared in the plains of India as Krishna, and as Christ in Palestine. In the latter manifestation he overshadowed for the space of three years the Initiate known to the world as Jesus of Nazareth.¹ But the phenomenon of over-shadowing—it were well to add—should not be confounded with trance-mediumship; it is more of the nature of inspiration, achieved through the actual but spiritual presence of the one who inspires. It is a spiritual power superimposed, not the controlling by a disembodied entity of a physical body in an induced state of temporary unconsciousness. Jesus of Nazareth was fully aware that he was being overshadowed by the Christ. He was a willing medium in the higher sense of that word, and had undergone long and rigorous training to prepare himself for the mission he was destined to undertake: namely, to be the founder of a new religion suited to Western needs.

Yet as everyone knows it was Saul of Tarsus, known as St. Paul—that great propagandist—who was afterwards responsible for disseminating the Christian doctrines in the West. But he too was another Initiate inspired by the World-Teacher, as those who read the Bible may easily infer.

¹ See *The Vision of The Nazarene*, by the Author of *The Initiate*.

CHAPTER X

THE OCCULT SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRISTIANITY

Religions are not an end in themselves but merely a means to an end. When they have served their purpose, like civilizations, they decline.

Is the World-Teacher, since He works in perfect co-operation with the Manu and the Mahachohan, was perfectly aware of the type of body, emotions and mentality, in brief, of the type of people destined to inhabit Europe including the British Isles, he realized that the metaphysical subtleties which obtain in Eastern religions would be quite unsuited to their temperaments. He had previously inspired Mahavera in India, Mithra in Persia, Confucius and Laotse in China and Pythagoras in Greece, but how were the bulk of the comparatively primitive people of the middle ages to understand such philosophic subtleties as propounded by these great thinkers? Therefore he stressed one particular element in these religions, selfless love, and ordained that it should be the keynote of the Christian religion. "God is love," "Love thy neighbour as thyself," "If ye love Me, keep my commandments"; these are the precepts which He spoke through the mouth of his Pupil and Medium, Jesus of Nazareth. As the peoples of the West, unlike those of the East, were destined to be an active and not a contemplative race, this insistence on love as the ideal was essential

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to preserve a measure of harmony between them. Unless action is motivated by love, unless the principles of brotherhood obtain, action is liable to result in "might over right."

One may, of course, object and maintain that the Christian religion is far from having fulfilled the object: and this is lamentably true. But on the other hand, how very much worse conditions might have been had this religion of love never exercised the least some restraining power! Granted that the lesson which the World-Teacher set some two thousand years ago has been very imperfectly learnt, it does not follow that it may not be learnt in the future when freed from those "excrescences" which have so grievously marred the ideal it upholds. These have been created in part by ignorance and in part by love of power and the wielding of that most devastating implement in the hands of the unscrupulous. Although St. Augustine wrote: "The identical thing we now call the Christian religion existed among the ancients," the priests, to achieve their own ends, denounced all other religions as the machinations of the devil, and made belief in the Church and her dogmas the one prophylactic against damnation. The irony of this reprehensible policy can only be appreciated by those who know that all the higher religions are inspired by the World-Teacher who responds to his devotees whether they think of him as Krishna, the Christ, the Bodhisattva or the Inman Madhi.

Yet apart from love of power there were other evils. It requires no occultist to point out that human

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nature being what it is, every religion is bound to go through dark periods in which it becomes a plea for the most flagrant abuses. But, when this occurs, the Masters endeavour to inaugurate some movement which will as far as possible adjust the balance, and to this end they inspire individuals who possess qualifications which make such inspiration possible. Martin Luther was one of these; there were others concerned with the Reformation, but he stands out as the most spectacular figure. Because of his utter fearlessness, his intellectual honesty, his oratorical and literary powers he was to become a very forceful instrument in the Masters' hands. Through his intense desire for truth, through his rigorous monastic training and self-discipline, he had made himself, however unconsciously, receptive to their influence. It is significant that his fasts, vigils and meditations had exactly the opposite effect from what might have been expected. Instead of bringing him nearer to the type of truth he sought, they merely induced in him a state of melancholy. This is also significant when regarded from the occult standpoint. A deep sadness sometimes results when the aspirations of the soul and the desires of the "personality" or mortal self are not at one. Luther desired to attain peace by becoming a monk, but if we read his life in the light of occult knowledge, it becomes obvious that his soul had other aims in view. He was later on to realize that the very Church in the arms of which he had expected to find salvation was far from what he imagined it to be, and his truth-loving nature revolted. How he subsequently exposed and combated the degrading hypocrisy of the priests is

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familiar to all, therefore we need not here enlarge upon the subject of the Reformation.

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We must now briefly revert to the early days of Christianity.

It is obvious that a religion which is to make its mark in the world must contain an element of simplicity which the man in the street can easily grasp. But the intellectuals, even if there were but few at the beginning of the Christian era, had, none the less, to be considered. There were also those with mystical and philosophic tendencies. Thus the World-Teacher inaugurated certain esoteric movements, partly along Christian lines, which were destined to run concurrently with Christianity itself. First of all attempts were made to provide the Christian religion with something in the nature of a philosophy. The instruments in the hands of the Masters were Clement of Alexandria, Origen and St. Augustine who reverted to the Idealism of Ancient Greece — either directly or indirectly through Neoplatonism¹—and incorporated it in part into the Christian teachings. Later on we find a large number of secret orders and societies which, although in part Christian, incorporated many esoteric teachings brought over from the Egyptian and Greek mysteries. We also find the much misinterpreted science of Alchemy, which, except in the hands of the uninitiated, was but a cloak for Occult-

¹ See *Mysticism Throughout the Ages*, Chap. VIII. Ed. Gall, Rider & Co.

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ism, when such a cloak was a necessary safeguard against the persecutions of the Church. There was also Freemasonry which, in its original state, contained a great many esoteric doctrines brought over from Egypt.

Approaching closer to the present day, we find Spiritualism, Christian Science with its sister cults, New Thought and Mental Science, and also Theosophy, which although it emphasizes two very important tenets of Eastern philosophy, is far from being anti-Christian in spirit, seeing that it advocates the fundamental unity of all religions. An off-shoot of the Theosophical Society is the Anthroposophical Society founded by Dr. Rudolf Steiner.

Yet although the wisdom and power of the World-Teacher was at the back of all these movements in the West, at the same time He was occupied with various phases of religious belief in the East which, however, need not be discussed as they are not pertinent to a book written for occidental readers.

The task of guiding many mystical and occult orders, especially those concerned with ceremonial, has been undertaken by a High Initiate now known as the Hungarian Master. In a previous incarnation he was the Neoplatonic philosopher Proclus. After one or two intermediate lives he reincarnated as a great English statesman and philosopher, and later on appeared as that mysterious figure the Comte de St. Germain who endeavoured to persuade the ill-fated Marie Antoinette to escape from France just prior to the French Revolution. The Hungarian Master lives in Europe, but travels much and occasionally comes to London, where, however, he is

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only recognized by his pupils as the High Initiate he is. Possessing the faculties pertaining to Masterhood, he is, of course, in perfect telepathic communication with the other members of the Hierarchy, and especially with his over-lord, the World-Teacher.

But naturally the outstanding spiritual figure next to that of the Christ or World-Teacher, is, as far as Christianity is concerned, the Master Jesus, who now occupies a Syrian body and, although he travels a good deal, lives in the Hills of Lebanon. Before he appeared as Jesus of Nazareth he was Joshua the son of Nun, and later on Yeshua, born in the times of Ezra. Although in the days of his ministry in Palestine he was still a pupil, albeit an Initiate, he reached Masterhood ¹ in his next incarnation.

In the Gospel stories, the portrayal of this great man who was destined to play such a prominent part in religious history is not very accurate; moreover, many of the dogmas which have arisen around his personality are both untenable and unwarranted. The catch-phrase that he "died to save sinners" is particularly unfortunate, as we have pointed out in our book *The Vision of the Nazarene*. He was used by the World-Teacher to "point the way" to spiritual emancipation, and his crucifixion was the fate he incurred as the result of his revolutionary teachings and the machinations of his enemies. He *lived* to "save sinners," but he certainly did not die to save them. His crucifixion was associated with his personal evolution. By means of that tragic event he paid off his last remaining Karmic debt prior to reaching Masterhood. It is true that had

¹ See Chap. XIX.

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he not been crucified he might have subsequently been a less prominent figure in the religious world and endeared himself less to his countless devotees. But even so it is erroneous to suppose that his or any other great Teacher's death can vicariously absolve individuals from paying off their respective Karma.

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We are not, however, here so much concerned with refuting yet another Christian tenet, but with the part Master Jesus plays in the religion which, through him, the Christ founded. He is, so to say, "the focal point of the energy that flows through the various Churches. He works especially with masses more than with individuals although he has quite a numerous body of pupils. . . . To Him is given the problem of steering the thought of the occident out of the present state of unrest into the peaceful waters of certitude and knowledge. . . . No one so wisely as He knows the problems of the West, no one is so closely in touch with the people who stand for all that is best in Christian teachings. . . . He is distinctively the Great Leader and the wise "Executive."¹ In appearance he is very different from the weak and sickly figures so often portrayed by the Italian painters, nor does he correspond to the "gentle Jesus meek and mild" of the Victorian hymn. Although he can be exceedingly gentle at times, he is more of the martial type and a man of iron will, yet at the same time he radiates that atmosphere of intense selfless love which is a

¹ See A. A. Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*.

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characteristic of all the Masters. Apart from his other activities he has much to do with the healing art ; a significant fact in view of the cures he effected as Jesus of Nazareth.

Such then is the Master Jesus to whom the devotion and prayers of countless Christians ascend. Yet although contrary to their belief he is not " the Son of God dwelling with His Father in Heaven but a living man on earth, he none the less receives and responds to their devotion so that they in turn receive according to their own capacity to receive. But if much devotion thus flows out towards this great Initiate who taught and suffered in Palestine, even more ascends to the World-Teacher Himself, seeing that his devotees are not Christians alone but those of other religions as well.

There are many who await His second coming into the outer world, and some of them assume that He will come with a new message for mankind which will resolve the discord of turmoil into the concord of Peace. Yet that message will not and cannot be a new one, for the precepts He uttered two thousand years ago remain true and unalterable for all time. Through cults and fraternities new details pertaining to the spiritual life have been and will yet be given out, but none of these will ever change the Golden Rule which the World-Teacher uttered for the guiding of Man out of universal chaos to universal harmony. When Man has really learned to love his neighbour as himself, then and there only will the Millennium have dawned.

CHAPTER XI

THE OCCULT SIGNIFICANCE OF SPIRITUALISM

Science is a system of empirical description, based on observation and experiment, couched in the simplest and tersest terms, and verifiable by all normally constituted minds who can use the methods. But the moment we ask such a question as . . . "Can personality survive bodily death?" we are *beyond science*, though not necessarily off the pathway to Reality or off the way to Truth.

Prof. Sir J. ARTHUR THOMSON, M.A., LL.D., *Scientific Riddles*.

IN Occultism in its broadest sense is to be found a path for all types of temperament. Christianity, as the reader will have inferred from the foregoing, was largely conceived for those who temperamentally are of the devotional type. Yet there are those who, although they have strong religious tendencies and much devotion in their general character, require a religion which possesses an element of the scientific : thus they are drawn to Spiritualism.

The task of watching over and, as far as possible, guiding this ever-growing cult was undertaken by yet another Official of the Hierarchy who in one of his previous incarnations was St. Paul, and who is at present occupying a Cretan body. This Master is principally concerned with the psychic faculties and their development in certain types of people. He is also adept at inspiring literary work of an occult-poetical significance and has on many occasions used the minds of poets and writers to "put across" ideas of high philosophical import. But his most

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spectacular charge is none the less Spiritualism which is still, so to say, in its childhood, and hence exhibits several of the drawbacks incidental to the early stages of many a cult. Over-credulity and over-enthusiasm, with their resulting lack of the critical faculty, may be excusable in its devotees, but tend to antagonize more reflective mentalities. Nevertheless Spiritualism, despite its enemies, is destined to become a popular religion. Meanwhile its technique is still in process of evolving both on the physical and super-physical planes. To assume that as yet it is an easy matter for "spirits" on the higher planes to communicate accurately via a medium with their friends on earth, is a fallacy.

This was certainly not realized in the earlier days of Spiritualism, and served indirectly to bring it into ridicule. We found, for instance, two people making a pact that whoever died first should communicate with the survivor; but the result was unsuccessful because both were in ignorance of the difficulties involved. Such pacts were occasionally made by men of intellect, which, far from making the possibility of communication easier, only made it more difficult. The reason, for occultists, is not far to seek. The intellectual type of man is very often the unemotional, so that when he dies his stay on the *astral plane* is very brief: probably too brief for him, as a spirit, to acquire the technique for communication. Thus he quickly passes on to the *mental plane*, and if he wishes to communicate must learn to do so from that plane instead. But as in the earliest days of Spiritualism the majority of mediums could not directly transmit messages except from the *astral*

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plane, his communications would need to be relayed so that by the time they reached the sitter they were often so distorted as to border on the nonsensical. The net result for Spiritualism has not been fortunate; people have remembered the failures and jumped to the conclusion that Spiritualists without exception are a body of innocent and defrauded persons. The sceptics, however, are unaware of the existence of the various planes of consciousness and of the characteristics of the lower *astral plane*, and hence think because many of the messages are trivial and even ludicrous they must have been invented by the mediums. This assumption is to be expected, but it is none the less erroneous. If sceptics had studied Occultism they would have realized the following facts. This *lower astral plane*—which the majority of spiritualists contact—is to a great extent peopled with entities of but meagre intelligence and little spirituality. Indeed, some of them are definitely mischievous and delight to impersonate celebrities such as Shakespeare, Napoleon and who not, either for a joke or to gratify their vanity. The results, of course, are those fatuous messages purporting to come from great men. Moreover, there are numerous cases in which, when the medium is “off colour,” the power exhausted, or the conditions are otherwise unfavourable, these undesirable entities have impelled him or her to resort to fraud, although in normal consciousness he or she may be perfectly honest. But apart from communications which undoubtedly emanate from the *lower astral*, there are others which, although they proceed from a

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higher substratum of that plane, are also unsatisfactory. They often consist of spiritual platitudes uttered perhaps with a good deal of bombast which lead the sitters to suppose they come from some very high spirit. The sitters forget that a love of preaching is a weakness exhibited by many people while still on earth, and by no means indicates an advanced soul. What more natural than that such people should continue their preaching habits when they get to the "other side" and see a golden opportunity for really creating an impression? Moreover, such souls are usually attracted by the hymn-singing so often considered a fitting prelude to a spiritualistic *séance*. Yet can one imagine the spirit of Beethoven or Wagner, not to mention Aristotle or Dante, being irresistibly drawn by the sounds of a Moody and Sankey hymn-tune, let alone the accompanying words?

There is another point that should be mentioned and which the unreflecting are apt to forget. Merely because a spirit has passed into the Beyond he does not on that account become possessed of all knowledge. An Englishman may go to a small village in a remote part of Africa and learn many things about its inhabitants, their customs, their beliefs and opinions, but that does not mean he will suddenly acquire all knowledge, scientific and otherwise of the whole continent of Africa. It is the same with spirits; by passing on to one of the planes after death they do not acquire the knowledge of all planes or necessarily of such philosophical truths as Karma and reincarnation. "In my Father's house are many mansions" is the statement of an occult

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fact. A Plymouth Brother, for instance, would after death gravitate towards a "mansion" created by the thought-forms of that very circumscribed sect, and would remain there for an appreciable time under the assumption that he and his fellow brethren alone were saved. Such a thought-form-produced mansion, of which there are many on the *astral plane*, might be termed a mansion within a mansion, since the *astral plane* itself constitutes one of the mansions. People do not change their outlook and lose their prejudices or narrowness merely because they die, and the karmic penalty of being convinced that they alone are right and everybody else wrong, is a pronounced restrictedness of vision on the next plane. What, however, must be the result when people with such restricted vision communicate with their friends on earth? They naturally give an entirely false impression of the after-life and lead them into believing things which are but very relatively true.

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All this being so, the Master in charge of Spiritualism is gradually endeavouring to develop a technique in its practitioners which will enable them to communicate with the *mental plane* rather than the *astral*, which is so imbued with emotionalism and deceptiveness. To this end it is desirable that a medium should be a man or woman of culture, and of wide knowledge. (As women usually make the best mediums we will henceforth use the female pronoun for the sake of convenience.) For one thing she will thus attract a higher type of entity, and for another,

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as a general rule spirits or guides have much less difficulty in getting across material of which there is already, so to speak, a certain stock in the medium's brain. A man might be a fine pianist, but he would find it difficult to give of his best if a lot of notes on the piano were defective. Something similar is the case with a guide and his medium. If, for example, he wants to discourse on scientific subjects, and the medium's vocabulary is limited, his difficulties will be increased ; if he wants to put through some new medical facts, the same may apply, for it is not always a mere question of a spirit temporarily occupying a living body and doing whatever he desires with it ; much that he may wish to say may be coloured by the medium's own prejudices, limited by her limitations, and so forth.

There undoubtedly are mediums, as implied earlier in this book, who can be so completely controlled that all their inadequacies are surmounted by their guides. These mediums can even speak in languages with which they are not normally conversant. But the depth of trance requisite for such absolute control is not unattended with certain psychic risks. Moreover, such trances are extremely fatiguing and apt to prove deleterious to health in the long run.

But there are further considerations. The atmosphere most conducive to communication with the *mental plane* should be created prior to the sitting. A type of music should be played which will tend to harmonize and tranquilize the emotional bodies of the sitters, so that there may be no uncontrolled emotionality to attract entities from the *astral plane*.

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We will not, however, enlarge on the technique of spiritualistic communication, as it does not come into the scope of this book. Suffice to say that as Spiritualism evolves under the guidance of the Cretan Master, its practitioners will begin to feel intuitively how to provide the essential conditions for the more illuminating type of *séance*.

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In concluding this brief survey of a cult, in which even great scientists are interested, we should state the occult reasons for its inception and development. Firstly, it was evolved to counteract in some measure the growing agnosticism of last century, which threatened to get out of hand and overdo what the Masters had intended it should do, *i.e.* in its turn counteract the harsh religiosity of the Victorian era. (We shall allude to this again later when dealing with Theosophy.) The truth is that had those who called themselves agnostics been literally agnostic, which merely implies *the inability to know*, then the movement would not have been in danger of going wrong. But with many people agnosticism degenerated into a strong conviction that there was neither a God, a soul nor a life after death. From the occult standpoint such strong convictions have very undesirable results when the physical body has been shed.

In cases where people have vehemently denied all possibility of an after-life, they go to sleep in a self-created shell or thought-form, and are cut off from the consciousness of the soul as well as of their

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surroundings until that thought-form disintegrates. Such is the Karma of obstinate conviction.¹ As the number of dogmatic materialists of this type was at one time decidedly on the increase, here was yet another reason from the Masters' point of view why the growth of Spiritualism was desirable. To waste years in useless sleep is distinctly to retard progress, and as many who had brought this condition upon themselves were by no means unevolved souls and could be very useful on the higher planes, such a contingency was as far as possible to be avoided. If people must be obstinate it is preferable they should be obstinate about something which may help rather than something that may hinder. Materialism will never help the individual nor the race towards happiness or progress, but Spiritualism may do both.

But apart from its counteractive influences where materialism and agnosticism were concerned, the World-Teacher, having foreseen the eventuality of the Great War, was desirous of inaugurating a movement which might bring consolation to the bereaved in a manner which Christianity had failed to do. Although priests and parsons may have learnedly discoursed about heaven and the possibilities of ultimate reunion, not one of them had been there and come back to give first-hand evidence and substantiate his assertions. Under the stress of such an unprecedented catastrophe as the World War, people no longer satisfied with vague promises, thirsted after tangible proof, and the possibility of communicating

¹ This species of negation is frequently the karmic effect of occult knowledge abused in the past.

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with their loved ones there and then. There were also the thousands of bereaved persons to whom orthodox religion did not appeal ; they too had to be considered, hence the number of books dealing with survival from a non-religious point of view. In many countries such books appeared, either immediately prior to or during the War. In England the most notable one was *Raymond* by Sir Oliver Lodge. Many found this book convincing, and if others were bewildered and a little disappointed at learning that the after-life was apparently so similar to life on earth,¹ it at least gave them to think and inclined them towards deeper investigation. Others, however, were if anything relieved to know that life beyond the grave was not too dissimilar from that of the physical plane, so that each type of mentality was given some measure of consolation.

In fine, it is not extravagant to say that Spiritualism has brought solace to many thousands of people, and the day is not far hence when much valuable knowledge will be imparted from the higher planes through spiritualistic methods.

¹ Certain substrata of the *Astral Plane* bear considerable resemblance to the earth-plane, hence "Raymond's" assertions.

CHAPTER XII

THE OCCULT ASPECTS OF MENTAL THERAPEUTICS AND CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

The whole principle of "Mental Science" is summed up in the Biblical text: *Those things that ye would receive, think that ye have received them and ye shall receive them.*

BEFORE the famous Anton Mesmer died in 1815 he wrote: "Just as the properties of the magnet may by certain processes be called into action in iron and steel, and be so strengthened that they are able to represent a true magnet, so have I *discovered* the means of strengthening the actual magnetism of any individual being to such a degree, that phenomena are produced analogous to those of the magnet." This statement would have been occultly more correct if Mesmer had written re-discovered instead of discovered, for "animal magnetism," as Mesmer himself called it, was known to the ancients, and indeed he had already in a previous incarnation employed it in the treatment of disease.

Not long after Mesmer's death, the Americans, ever receptive to new ideas, became much interested in this (to them) new art of healing, and in 1837 a man with the unusual name of Phineas Parkhurst Quimby discovered that he possessed mesmeric gifts. He had a most selfless and altruistic character, and was a fitting instrument in the hands of the Masters to put forth ideas which were later on to be

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exploited for the forming of that movement we know as Christian Science, and for those kindred movements, Mental Science and so-termed New Thought.

Although Quimby began his healing career by using mesmeric passes, he subsequently made a discovery which led him to the conclusion that they were unnecessary. Disease could be treated by mental processes alone ; he finally even reached the conclusion that the presence of the patient was not indispensable ; he could give "absent treatment," *i.e.* cure disease from a distance. He had come to believe that the cause of illness is a mental one ; change the patient's belief from sickness to health and the patient is cured. But the point was how to change that belief ? To this end he evolved a philosophical argument or system founded upon certain Christian and metaphysical ideas. He postulated a "natural man" and his higher counterpart, a "spiritual man." He maintained that the former "deceived by his physical senses, holds all manner of erroneous beliefs including that of physical disease." The "spiritual man," on the other hand, "attains to the divine principle of Wisdom and knows that there is no such thing as physical disease." This knowledge of the essentially spiritual nature of man and reality Quimby called "Truth," or "Science," or "Christian Science."¹ Quimby left behind him a large collection of manuscripts, which during his life he had lent to his patients, permitting them to make copies of such portions as might be useful to their particular needs. Since his death

¹ See *Mary Baker Eddy*, by Bates and Dittmore. (Routledge.) Also *Mrs. Eddy*, by E. F. Dakin.

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these manuscripts have been edited and published by Horatio Dresser, and prove once and for all the source from which emanated Christian Science, despite the denials of Mrs. Eddy and her adherents.

And yet, this being so, why is Mrs. Eddy alleged to be the founder of Christian Science? It is here that Occultism throws light on the subject.

Although Quimby had the sincere desire to formulate a belief that would be of service to humanity, he did not possess the necessary elements in his character. He was far too preoccupied with healing the sick to think of publicity, far too modest to set himself up as a New Messiah or hint that he was such. He never even published his articles, and in lending them to his patients, took no trouble to ensure that they should not be plagiarized. To the allurements of wealth and fame he was indifferent; and just because he was so fine a character, so ardent to serve Mankind without hope of reward, he was given the power to serve, and the ideas which were later on to be incorporated in a new Religious Movement. Indeed it is an occult fact that the Masters always help anyone who selflessly and ardently desires to serve Mankind—provided his Karma permits—and although he may be quite unconscious of their help, the fact remains. For the Masters are not concerned with making their presence known to their agents in the world, since they ask neither for recognition nor gratitude. Only where it is necessary—and of course it often is so—that the pupil should see and recognize them do they reveal themselves.

In the case of Quimby and his work this was not

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necessary. But if some should think it unjust that he has not been fully acclaimed as the true originator of Christian Science, let them not forget the abundance of good Karma he was enabled to make through the service he rendered to his fellows and to the Master who saw the need of establishing a new sect.

§

We now come to the prodigious part that Mrs. Eddy played in the history of Christian Science. It is a significant fact that as soon as she heard of Quimby she felt impelled to journey to the distant town in which he was effecting his miraculous cures, and place herself under his care. There were grave difficulties in the way; she was in deplorable health and lacking in means. Yet all obstacles were eventually surmounted, and as everyone knows who has read the more accurate biographies, he not only cured her, even if only temporarily, but she became one of his most ardent disciples. She copied his manuscripts, spread abroad his gospels, wrote glowing accounts of him and his achievements in letters which have been preserved and have since found their way into print. And yet, although the entire basic philosophy to be found in her book *Science and Health* is a reflection of Quimby's gospel, with unaccountable ingratitude she came later on to repudiate her debt to him and even to assert that his influence over her had been a deleterious one. Nevertheless, she was used by the Master who is concerned with the various cults of Mental Therapeutics, of which Christian Science is

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the most renowned. This, to many, may seem surprising; but let us here point out that whereas Quimby's good qualities stood in the way of his founding a religion, certain of Mrs. Eddy's undesirable attributes were extremely useful for this particular purpose. A brief survey of her history and character will throw much light on this superficially cryptic statement.

§

Those who are interested in Mrs. Eddy from the biographical rather than from the Christian Scientific standpoint, will know that there are two Mrs. Eddys : the idealized one of the authorized biography, and the actual one derived from letters, documents, and reliable evidence. The one portrays her as the God-intoxicated saintly woman possessed of wonderful healing powers ; the other as a character in some respects so paradoxical, in others, so little pleasant, that it is difficult in describing her accurately to avoid appearing uncharitable. Yet the reader whilst being reminded of the unpleasant side of her character, should recognize the extenuating circumstances of Karma ; for that Mrs. Eddy had brought over a most unfortunate Karma from the past is obvious.

To begin with her childhood. Although she inherited strong religious tendencies from her mother, from a tyrannical father she inherited a violent temper and a dominating spirit. The latter was to become a useful asset in launching a new religion with herself at the head, and if the violent temper was rather deplorable, it served to put the fear of God into

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the more sensitive and adoring of her satellites. At an early age she showed decided literary inclinations, but with a predilection for long words and a love of moralizing which to our ears of to-day give the unfortunate impression of priggishness, or at least of a disagreeable precocity. But although she never mastered the technique of writing,¹ her fluency with the pen was another very powerful asset for the rôle she was destined to play.

The history of her early womanhood and her ventures in matrimony need not detain us, but it is important to note that she suffered from very bad general health, attended with frequent attacks of severe pain and hysteria (?); also that she was highly mediumistic and, despite her denials, had at one time dabbled in Spiritualism and even gone into trances. Indeed, taking this fact into consideration, we realize that she was undoubtedly open to obsessions which accounted for her attacks, lamely diagnosed as hysteria, during which she would really behave like "one possessed." All the same her mediumistic tendencies proved of value to the Master whose purpose she was destined to serve; for although at times they laid her open to bad influences, they also made her receptive to good, as later we shall see.

It was not till around her fiftieth year that she met Quimby, absorbed his philosophy and was taught his particular methods of healing. Thereafter she started to write her book *Science and Health* and to interpret the Bible in a novel manner. She also

¹ The whole of her book *Science and Health* had to be as far as possible put into correct English by the Rev. H. W. Wiggins, whom she employed for the purpose, and who also edited her journal.

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started teaching, and gathered around her a number of pupils whom she charged heavily for tuition. Of her own healing powers she wrote much, but was quite unable to cure herself from the attacks of pain and "hysteria" which reappeared after her severance from Quimby, neither could she cure her third husband who prematurely died of heart disease. Occultly speaking, it was not her Karma to be cured, but of this she knew nothing, and had perforce to fall back on the supposition that hostile persons were directing "malicious animal magnetism" against her. This ingenious explanation took such a hold on her mentality that it developed into a persecution-complex from which she suffered till the end of her incarnation.

Meanwhile her talent for self-advertisement, organization and making propaganda for her book showed itself in various ways. Suffering from self-aggrandizement she gave out that God had revealed the great Truths of *Science and Health* to her, and as several of her pupils had set up as healers and were effecting remarkable cures, many people were prepared to believe her. Thus her self-aggrandizement was yet another factor in the forming of this new Creed. Nevertheless, she was always altering her book and issuing new editions, for apparently it did not strike her as strange that God in the first place should not have known His own mind. Nor did this apparently strike her followers either, for when commanded to lay aside the old editions and buy the new, they obediently complied. This was also good propaganda, because it could be given out that thousands of copies of *Science and Health* had been

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sold. Nevertheless, in the Bates Dittmore biography we find the following significant passage: "To suppose that the success of Christian Science was in any great degree due to *Science and Health* is a mistake. The book did not make the movement, but the movement made the book. On its first appearance and for many years thereafter . . . it enjoyed no vogue whatever, its later wide sale and enormous influence followed as the result of the publicity given it by the growing Church."¹ And yet the Church itself was assuredly the result of Mrs. Eddy's driving power. Inspired by the conviction that "she had written a work almost equal in significance to the Bible," was it not her duty to establish a Church and immortalize herself and her teachings? Orthodox Christianity had established its Churches, *her* Christianity should do likewise.

§

Despite those disagreeable elements in Mrs. Eddy's character—which were, as implied, none the less useful in founding a new religion—there is no doubt that at moments she was receptive to inspiration from the higher planes. As Mr. Dittmore aptly remarks: "The mystical strain, though by no means dominant, was considerably stronger than has generally been recognized. At times she was genuinely God-intoxicated, rapt in a vision of supernatural goodness, love and wisdom. . . . At such times she conceived of God and man in a higher fashion than was common to the religious orthodoxies

¹ *Mary Baker Eddy*. Bates & Dittmore. (Routledge.)

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of the day. Then she could write in rolling periods of God as the supreme reality of man's own being in a way that recalls the philosophy of the Vedanta." He then goes on to say: "In such moments she seemed to herself inspired, as if some hand not her own guided the pen." This admission in view of her mediumistic proclivities is highly significant. Had she possessed enough occult knowledge to have differentiated between the higher influences and the promptings of her lower self, *Science and Health* would have been a very different book from what it is. In Mr. Dittmore's words she "put all of herself, the best and the worst, into her book. The best was her intense consciousness of God, the worst her at least equally intense consciousness of herself." Nobody can deny the loftiness and power of the following example taken from the first edition of *Science and Health*: "I am the spirit of man that giveth understanding, beauty and omnipotence, full of unutterable perfections, height upon height of holiness, the wonder of being, imperishable glory, for I am God, grasping and gathering in all bliss, for I am love, giving immortality to man, for I am Truth, without beginning, and without end, for I am Life, supreme over all, for I am Intelligence, and the Substance of all, because I AM."

But as against that we find passages which, far from conducing to a better comprehension of God are merely conducive to a better comprehension of Mrs. Eddy. At one moment she glorifies God, at the next she glorifies herself. At one moment she presents her reader with a fine example of inspirational writing, at the next she informs him with

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entirely defective arguments that the daily ablutions of infants are neither natural nor necessary.

But the most glaring defects in *Science and Health* arise from her ambition to be a great philosopher when she lacked the necessary mental equipment. For instance, she would try to prove her statements by laws which were by no means always applicable. Thus it may sound imposing to say: "There is no pain in Truth and no Truth in pain . . . we prove the same by the rule of inversion." But as the *New York Times* pertinently commented: "The rule of inversion is anything but infallible, for while all elephants are quadrupeds, all quadrupeds are not elephants." The fact is Mrs. Eddy's book makes an emotional appeal and not an intellectual one; hence its popularity with certain types of temperament. Just as devout Churchmen are unaware of the discrepancies in the orthodox Christian philosophy, so are devout Christian Scientists unaware of the discrepancies in that of *Science and Health*. Those who point out these discrepancies are simply informed that they lack understanding and have only to study further in order to attain it; an argument which is, of course, unanswerable.¹ And yet do the defects in Christian Science militate against its serving a useful purpose? This we shall see as we examine its more specifically occult aspects.

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The Master who has Christian Science (and its kindred movements) under his charge, resides in

¹ *Ibid.*

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America and occupies an Irish body. His object is to teach people to wield mental substance, to realize the power of the mind to create and to prove the supremacy of mind over matter. And there is no denying that healers have proved this in innumerable cases to their own satisfaction and to those of their patients. Nevertheless the Master in question has said that Christian Science has to a certain extent swerved from the path he originally intended it should follow, since Mrs. Eddy was not a perfect instrument in his hands. Partly because in uninspired moments she was continually altering her book and introducing all manner of illogical, extraneous and redundant material, Christian Science has become tainted with elements of dogmatism, materialism and even sheer folly. Originally it was intended that its philosophy should bear a close affinity with the Vedantic doctrine of *Maya*, which, rightly interpreted, is a tenet of Occultism, and which we shall consider more fully later on when we see how Christian Science operates. The Master wished to clothe this doctrine in a form suitable to the practical American mind and to amalgamate it with Christian ideas. Both Quimby and Mrs. Eddy were largely used for this purpose.

In this doctrine of *Maya* the idea is put forward that matter is "unreal" in the philosophic sense of something that is not absolutely permanent and unchanging. This idea Mrs. Eddy absorbed, but unfortunately misinterpreted, and through her system of syllogisms made it imply that matter was non-existent. Thus "Mind is all; matter is not mind; matter is unreal therefore matter does not exist."

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This fallacy is nevertheless accepted by Christian Scientists who assert it with strong conviction. Nor does it hinder them from effecting cures. The reason is obvious ; for Christian Science is for the most part a method of inducing intense faith through a process of argumentation. The fact that some of the arguments are fallacious is no hindrance as long as the practitioners themselves do not realize their fallaciousness . Just as an innocent pilgrim was once cured of a disease by bathing in a river he *imagined* to be the sacred Ganges, so devotees of Christian Science may be cured by faith-inducing arguments which they *imagine* to be true.

§

The miraculous cures and conversely the “unmiraculous” failures of this cult have proved very puzzling to the layman, but less so to the occultist who perforce believes in Karma. Yet the Master concerned with the Christian Science movement showed great wisdom in not including this doctrine in its philosophy. If its practitioners believed in Karma they might also believe that it was not always the patient’s Karma (or fate, if you will) to be cured, and that idea would tend to diminish their own faith in their *power* to cure. For although the patient need not at any rate consciously have faith, it is absolutely essential on the part of the healer in order to achieve results.

Now faith when coupled with considerable concentration and directed towards a particular individual makes an impression on his subconsciousness

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which tends to counteract a previous impression. For instance, when people are afraid of tunnels, thunderstorms or other things which are not reasonable causes for alarm, such alarm may arise from an impression at one time created on the subconscious. Thus the healer by silently concentrating on what he calls Truth, creates a counter-impression which ousts the first impression, with the result that the patient is cured.

Physical maladies may frequently be cured by the same process; *viz.*; by injecting the thought of health into the subconscious where previously the thought of disease held sway. This was Quimby's *modus operandi* as we learn from his own words: "I deny disease as a truth," he said, "but admit it as a deception . . . my way of curing convinces (the patient) that he has been deceived." Mrs. Eddy later on exploited this method of healing with her elaborate if often fallacious arguments, as we have already seen.

One may, of course, say that the whole process is merely a matter of suggestion; but there is a marked difference. If, for example, we suggest to a sick man that he is well, we are suggesting an untruth both from his and our own standpoint, as far as his physical body is concerned; but if we raise our minds to a higher plane and contemplate him from the standpoint of soul instead of body, we can assert with truth that he is well, for the soul is not susceptible of disease. We can even go a step higher and regard him from the standpoint of the One life, Brahman or the "Self" of Vedantic Mysticism; although relatively speaking he is diseased and imperfect,

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absolutely speaking he is well and perfect, for he is not his physical body which is but a garment, but that eternal self, Life Absolute, which had neither a beginning nor will ever have an end. As a rich man who has gone mad may think himself to be a beggar whereas in reality he is all the time a rich man, so according to the Vedantin does the unenlightened man think himself to be his physical body when in reality he is an immortal soul and one with Life Itself. Thus we see that in essence the confused philosophy of Mrs. Eddy is a variant of Vedanta, the Divine Mind of Christian Science corresponding to the "Self," and "mortal mind" to Maya, the relative, impermanent and illusory.

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Apart from merely affecting the subconscious mind, Christian Science in the hands of very efficient healers may also operate on the soul or higher self. The healer by his concentrated mental efforts or "realization of truth," may galvanize an indolent or weak soul into putting down more of its consciousness into the lower self with the intent to heal. If the soul, however, is not an indolent but a progressive one—a fact which the non-clairvoyant healer is unable to perceive—then for karmic reasons it may be averse to a cure being effected, in which case one of the numerous and undeniable failures will result. The reason is that there is so much bad Karma to be worked off through physical suffering in one form or another that really advanced souls prefer to go through with it and get it over. The very fact that the

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individual concerned has tried everything, including Christian Science, and suffered disappointment after disappointment, serves in itself to work off a certain amount of Karma. If on the other hand, he has previously tried everything *but* Christian Science and then is "miraculously" cured by the latter, it simply means that a portion of his bad Karma is from that moment paid off. Thereafter he may in consequence become such a Christian Science enthusiast that its philosophy becomes the ruling principle in his life. He, or more probably, she, may say: "Since I took up Christian Science my whole life and circumstances are changed; I'm never ill and I'm always happy." But, as a Master has pointed out, in such a case the soul, not being of a progressive type, has evidently resolved that no more karmic debts shall be liquidated for the time being. This is no intended slur on Christian Science for, although a man or woman may not pay off any more bad Karma, that does not mean that he or she may not make good Karma either through helping others along Christian Science lines or through learning to work with mental matter. It is part of the Plan that sooner or later all people shall learn this technique, though of course it need not be associated with Christian Science dogmas. Instead of man getting out of the body in trance condition to experience soul-consciousness—which after all is but a form of escape—the *desideratum* will be to bring soul-consciousness into greater alignment with the body; thus making the latter a better instrument for the soul. When this eventuates men will no longer need to resort to drugs, serums and other undesirable curative methods. Indeed, the desirability of wean-

ing him from these deleterious measures, is a further reason why the Master saw fit to sponsor the Christian Science movement. Drugs and serums are undoubtedly injurious to the race in the long run and the sooner they can be dispensed with the better for mankind.

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There is one other point that should be mentioned before we conclude this chapter. The Christian Scientist maintains that he not only cures diseases, moral and physical, but he also alters by treatment, absent or present, the actual circumstances of life. Yet if this be true, how is it possible ?

On the subtler planes there is a substance known to occultists as *elemental essence*. By concentrated thought or desire enforced by the will, a so-termed *elemental* is created out of this substance. Just as on the physical plane a man can take clay and mould it into various shapes, so on the higher planes can he mould this essence into *elementals*. The difference, however, is that whereas clay is but inert matter, *elemental essence* is a *living* substance. In other words, by a combination of thought and will, man can temporarily create living entities which will do his bidding, and although invisible to ordinary sight, are perceptible to the trained clairvoyant.

We have previously alluded to forms created by thought or desire which endure or disintegrate according to how much force has been put into them by their creator. Yet although an *elemental* is in one sense a thought-form, it is something more potent because, we would emphasize, it has been reinforced by the will.

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Yet the Christian Scientist maintains that the will plays no part in his treatment. But this is a fallacy, for how, otherwise, could he concentrate his mind at all? And again, does he not concentrate or "treat" with a definite intention or purpose in view? If a man is, let us say, short of money and proceeds to "hold the thought" that in a divine world the supply is always equal to the demand or some such argument, surely he holds that thought with the definite intention of receiving money, and for no more elevated purpose? Thus if he is proficient at thought-holding, he creates an *elemental* which sets to work in one way or another to procure for him what he needs. In the end he will receive that money, always provided, of course, that bad Karma does not prove an insurmountable obstacle, in which case all attempts on the part of the *elemental* will be abortive. In some cases the soul may be induced to act, as it were, the part of an *elemental* and to busy itself with mundane affairs. But then it is more likely that the man will be put in the way of *earning* money instead of receiving it in the form of a legacy or a gift; for it must not be forgotten that the soul is, as a rule, averse from making it easy for the personality, seeing that the former always aims at progress and experience to be gained.

It seems superfluous to point out that any non-Christian-Scientist can also create *elementals* if he possesses the requisite power to concentrate on or visualize the object he has in view. Needless to say, this power if used for evil purposes comes into the category of black magic and results in terrible karmic retribution.¹ To associate thought-power as in

¹ See H. K. Challoner, *The Flaming Wheel*.

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Christian Science with religion and religious precepts was, therefore, highly expedient so as to minimize the danger of its abuse. Even so, although we are not implying that Christian Scientists actually employ it to work evil, regarded from the occult standpoint, some of them do focus their attention too much on material well-being rather than on spiritual evolution. Moreover, because they regard poverty and suffering, whether mental or physical, as "error," some of them tend in consequence to be "superior" and unsympathetic. Should these tendencies increase, then like certain other movements and religions, Christian Science will materially fall short of the purpose for which it was inaugurated by the Master.

CHAPTER XIII

THE OCCULT SIGNIFICANCE OF THEOSOPHY

There is no religion higher than Truth.

Motto of Theosophical Society.

Towards the close of last century two Masters occupying Indian bodies and living in the Himalayas, decided that a portion of the Ancient Wisdom should be re-given to the world. One Master had been, among his many incarnations, Pythagoras ; the other had been Akbar, a great and wise king in India. The chief instrument chosen to carry out their project was Helen Petrovna Blavatsky, a Russian woman of good birth, and of great literary ability and psychic power. She was by no means a perfect instrument, as they both admitted, but she possessed qualifications which were indispensable for the mission she had to perform. These were an unassailable devotion to her Masters and a very forceful personality. All this is familiar to the Theosophists whose Society, with the aid of Col. Olcott she founded, but it is less familiar to the general public for whom Mme. Blavatsky is just a name associated with charlatanism and occult trickery.

Mme. Blavatsky had been clairvoyant since girlhood and had psychically seen her Masters before she was destined to meet them in the flesh. On the occasion of Queen Victoria's Jubilee these Masters both came to London, and it was then that a memor-

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able interview took place on the banks of the Serpentine in Hyde Park, in the course of which she was told the nature of the very difficult task she was requested to undertake

To appreciate all that it involved the reader should be reminded of the general religious outlook in the Victorian era. It was intensely narrow-minded, puritanical, gloomy and frightening. The idea of eternal damnation held sway over large masses of people who believed that the world was literally created in six days and that the story of Adam and Eve was no allegory, but a fact, disbelief in which was inevitably to incur the wrath of God. Indeed, the God of Victorian imagination, although alleged to be a God of love, and of course of an omnipotence commensurable with His capacity to create an entire Universe, was at the same time credited with being so vain and intensely small-minded that, unless appeased by a constant deluge of flattery, He would show vengeance on His people. This alarming eventuality was substantiated by texts from the Old Testament which in point of fact merely applied to Jehovah, a tribal God of the Jews, but whom the Victorians innocently believed, to be the one God or Absolute.

It is true that, as a corrective to this unfortunate state of religious affairs, one or more of the Masters especially concerned with Science had, through the writings of Huxley and other eminent men of the period, inspired the Agnostic Movement, but in common with many other movements it had got out of hand and led to atheism and materialism. Many people were so relieved to be excused from their

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allegiance to the alarming and vengeful Jehovah, and to obtain scientific proofs that he was a myth, that they embraced Agnosticism with open arms, jumping to the conclusion that as Jehovah was not God, there was no God at all.

Thus the Theosophical Society was really inaugurated to put two bodies of people wise. It was designed to show that religion in its higher sense as opposed to superstition, is not incompatible with Science, and vice versa, provided that both are rightly understood. But to achieve this end it became necessary to destroy as well as to construct. The Victorians were volcanically to be shocked out of the cocoon of their religious assurance or their agnostic smugness, and who more adept at the process than Mme. Blavatsky? With her Russian excitability, her incessant cigarette-smoking, her swearing, her mischievous and none too refined jokes, she created a sensation which surely, if indirectly, drew attention to Theosophy itself. Moreover, being a remarkable medium, with the help of the Masters she produced phenomena which became the talk of all London and elsewhere. People might disbelieve, but at any rate they talked, and that is what the Masters desired as a means of bringing Theosophy before the public. Christian Science in America performed its "healing miracles" and gained recruits, Theosophy, like Spiritualism was also to have its "miracles," albeit of a different nature, for exactly the same purpose. As little children love "signs and wonders" so likewise do grown-up children.

Yet there were limits ; the Masters were not pre-

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pared to accede to the suggestion of the journalist Mr. A. P. Sinnett and convince people by a huge demonstration in a public hall; such a waste of valuable time and force was gently but firmly deprecated in the letters they wrote to the worthy man in question. Signs and wonders may act as good preliminary advertisement but they prove nothing. The Masters were quite willing to provide Mr. Sinnett with material for books and to show him and his friends some phenomena, but certainly not in public halls.

Meanwhile, Mme. Blavatsky had been tearing Victorian Christianity to shreds in her voluminous writings. Incessantly she sat at her desk, took no exercise, became extremely corpulent and a prey to miserable health. But, undaunted, she wrote on and on. She showed that the Christian religion was a composite religion, that the Immaculate Conception, the Crucifixion, the Last Supper, the Holy Trinity had all been taken from older religions. She showed that the early Christian manuscripts had been deliberately tampered with and that much to be found in the Christian creed was the result of pious fraud! She quoted texts in the New Testament substantiating the doctrine of reincarnation, she quoted hundreds of passages from ancient books in proof of this and in negation of that, and showed an immensity of knowledge which was staggering to the bewildered reader. Over the scientific conceit of the nineteenth century she poured her sarcasm, showing that the ancients knew far more about the mysteries of the Cosmos than did the "moderns." And all this, according to her associate and constant com-

panion, Col. Olcott, with only a few books of reference. How this prodigious task was achieved may be read in *Old Diary Leaves*,¹ by Col. Olcott himself. Suffice it here to say that being the medium she was, she frequently vacated her body which was then controlled by one or other of the Masters who were willing to contribute to her monumental work. But she also possessed the power to read the "Akashic Records" or Memory of Nature. She occasionally made mistakes, drew erroneous or exaggerated conclusions, was sometimes a little careless of details, but as she was not infallible and never pretended to be, the complete absence of such minor blemishes was not to be expected in a work of such magnitude.

In the service of her Masters, Mme. Blavatsky travelled much; now she was in America, now in England, now on the Continent, now in India. There, together with Col. Olcott, she founded the Indian Branch, later to become Headquarters of the Theosophical Society. Phenomena were produced, there was a stir in the newspapers, the Society was soon to become a force which could not be ignored.

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But this did not at all suit the Christian missionaries. In their Madras Magazine they fought Theosophy with an astonishingly unchristian virulence. They did more; with the connivance of a French couple named Coulomb, who bore a grudge against Mme. Blavatsky, they published, while the

¹ Putnam & Sons.

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latter was in England, a series of letters purporting to be from the illustrious "old lady" to Mme. Coulomb. Parts of these letters were genuine, but the incriminating portions, sometimes pages long, had been forged by Mme. Coulomb. They gave minute instructions for materializations in Mme. Blavatsky's absence; they were intended to convince the sceptical that the phenomena were not dependent on her presence.¹ Mme. Coulomb had often hinted that one day she would "get even" with Mme. Blavatsky, and in this ingenious manner she carried out her threat.

Yet, this was not all. Just after the publication of the Coulomb letters, a young Cambridge man, Richard Hodgson, arrived in Adyar. He had been appointed by the Society for Psychical Research to go and make investigations. At the Theosophical Headquarters there used to be a black lacquer cabinet or "shrine," which contained various mementos from the Masters. This cabinet had been invested with an air of mystery and magic by the all-too-imaginative minds of the Indian disciples; more especially as on so many occasions it had served as a focus for the production of phenomena. When Hodgson arrived this cabinet had mysteriously vanished: the hysterical disciples in true Indian fashion lied and prevaricated, but it finally transpired that in a panic they had burnt it. Mr. Hodgson was delighted; he was more delighted still when he found incriminating structural alterations near the place where the cabinet had stood. Monsieur Coulomb was a carpenter and had plied

¹ J. M. Williams, *The Passionate Pilgrim*.

his craft to the downfall of Mme. Blavatsky.¹ In the end, the unsuspecting yet prejudiced Mr. Hodgson pronounced her as "one of the most accomplished, ingenious and interesting imposters in history."

And this conception of her still holds sway to a large extent in the public mind. The fact that when it was too late Mr. Hodgson admitted that he had been unduly prejudiced, has made but little impression. Mme. Blavatsky having once been pronounced an "imposter," who, save occultists themselves will trouble to search for the true facts of the case?

The "exposure" of Mme. Blavatsky was, however, not allowed to put an end to the Theosophical Movement itself. The Society was destined to prosper in the end despite the Hodgson report. If the "old lady" could write such an erudite and fascinating work (two large volumes) as *Isis Unveiled*, she could be no imposter; and her friends, disciples and admirers dismissed the whole report for the little it was worth. Every great Teacher who upsets prevailing notions is destined to be slandered and discredited. Paracelsus, who, by the way, Mme. Blavatsky had been in a former incarnation, was "downed" by envious physicians; she herself had been brought low by Christian missionaries.

At the same time as the Hodgson report her great work, *The Secret Doctrine*, appeared. It was the most massive and erudite work that a woman had ever penned. Ordinary book-reviewers were non-

¹ Mme. Blavatsky admitted having seen clairvoyantly that the Coulobms were undesirable characters, but knowing that she had made bad Karma with them in the past which required to be paid off, she decided not to sever her connection with them.

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plussed and refused to tackle it. The woman who had written this work had just been pronounced an imposter, but if imposter she was, why go to the immense trouble of writing some three thousand pages of small print when a few conjuring-tricks would have sufficed ?

It was ostensibly because book-reviewers found themselves in this dilemma that Mrs. Annie Besant, prominent leader in the cause of Rationalism and Socialism, became a Theosophist, and afterwards President of the Society ; she herself eventually reviewed the book and was both fascinated and convinced.

But the two Masters had long had their spiritual eye on Mrs. Besant. Mme. Blavatsky, whose pupil she became, was suffering more and more from a variety of ailments. At one time her condition had been so serious that the Masters had offered to release her from her work and let her pass over, the alternative being that they would patch up her tortured body until the work was completed. It says much for one who at times had experienced the freedom and happiness of the higher planes, that she chose the latter alternative. But even so she could not live very long, and two years after accepting Mrs. Besant as her pupil, she died.

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Biographers have advanced psychological reasons for Mrs. Besant's conversion to Theosophy. " She was at what has been called the dangerous age. Some women turn to gigolos, others to religion ;

Mrs. Besant was to choose the latter. By temperament she was susceptible to religion.”¹ Thus wrote one biographer. Journalists have harped on the same note, the implication being that there must have been some underlying reason why a woman of her intelligence should have been won over by an “imposter” like Mme. Blavatsky! Yet for the occultist the underlying reason was not to be found in the “dangerous age” but in far ulterior causes.

For the promulgation of Theosophy the Masters needed a great orator and found one in Mrs. Besant. Mme. Blavatsky had been a great writer, a fascinating talker, a compelling personality and a wonder-worker, but there her accomplishments ended. Mrs. Besant possessed the power to sway large audiences and to be “spoken through” by her Master. Those endowed with clairvoyance could often see him standing in his *subtle body* beside her when she lectured; but of this the general public naturally knew nothing.

The reader must not suppose, however, that Masters set about to requisition the services of given persons without their consent, in other words that they subtly engineered Mrs. Besant into taking up Theosophy without her having any say in the matter. Although on the physical plane she became a convert because Theosophy appealed to her sense of logic, on the higher planes she was already in touch with the Masters, had not only consented to work in their service, but had gratefully accepted the honour conferred. As long ago as the days of Pythagoras she had been closely linked with one of

¹ *Ibid.*

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her Masters. Later on she was reborn as Hypatia, later still as Giordano Bruno, and finally she had had an Indian incarnation in which she was linked to her other Master by the tie of relationship. This accounted for her passionate love of India itself, which in some degree manifested before she (as Mrs. Besant) had ever been there or had embraced Theosophy. It was, moreover, in her later life to become a hindrance to some of the Masters, who confessed that her pre-occupation with Indian politics made it difficult for them to inspire her in regard to weightier matters.

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The personalities of Mrs. Besant and Mme. Blavatsky were widely divergent. The former was imbued with a profound sense of reverence, the latter had none, and was known to make jokes even about her "beloved Mahatmas." All Mrs. Besant's lectures and books were characterized by a note of profound seriousness and tolerance; unlike her illustrious predecessor she indulged in no sarcasm, no witticisms, no iconoclism. With her compelling eloquence she explained the doctrines of reincarnation and Karma, and the esoteric truths of all religions including Christianity. She presented the gist of many of Mme. Blavatsky's teachings in a simplified form suited to the type of intelligence with which she had to deal. She emphasized the necessity for brotherhood and the recognition that there was no fundamental difference between one religion and another. She admonished people so to

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regulate and purify their lives that they might prepare themselves eventually to become pupils of the Masters. For members of the esoteric section she advocated continence,¹ complete abstention from meat, alcohol and tobacco; the second largely on humanitarian grounds, the third and fourth because they tend to coarsen and poison both the physical and subtler bodies. In brief, the keynote of her teaching was "be good." Devotion to the Masters and to the Cause was the ideal she set before all Theosophists, admonishing them first and foremost to cultivate the spirit of service when "all things would be added unto them."

In this policy she was sustained by her associate and co-leader Mr. C. W. Leadbeater. He had been a parson whom the forcible personality of Mme. Blavatsky had won over to Theosophy. The Masters had dropped the hint that if he was prepared to make certain sacrifices he might later on receive some of the more arcane knowledge. Mr. Leadbeater took the hint, and after certain tests had been imposed, was initiated into the secrets of psychic development. As a result he became the most renowned psychic who has ever come before the public. In wellnigh every direction he turned his psychic eye, and hundreds of pages of print have appeared in consequence of his experiences and researches. He focused his clairvoyant sight on the so-termed heaven worlds or higher planes of consciousness and described their scenery, inhabitants and general conditions. He examined the hidden side of Nature, the hidden side of ceremonies and

¹ See Appendix, Note 3.

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ritual, the effects of Roman Catholic High Mass, of the Protestant Holy Communion, of Festivals and Revivalist Meetings. He watched the effects produced by music, by lectures, by crowds, by processions. He had no artistic perception as such, no special liking for music, no imagination ; he merely scrutinized all these things from the psychic standpoint with the cold observant eye of a scientist.

This was the particular work that the Masters desired he should perform. It was time that people should be given the opportunity of knowing the inner truth about the countless differentiations of the One Life. Mr. Leadbeater, like Mrs. Besant, had been a pupil of the Masters in more than one previous incarnation, therefore he was no novice at Occultism ; it was merely a question of bringing his talent for psychic perception once more into manifestation. No blind chance or accident had brought him into touch with Mme. Blavatsky ; she and he were old links and they were destined to re-meet for the purpose the Masters had in view. But he and Mrs. Besant were also old links, and although some biographers have called him her " evil genius " for more reasons than one, there is no doubt that the combination of the two personalities was in a large measure essential to their mission. Although Mrs. Besant possessed enough psychic sensitiveness to be " impressed " by her Masters while lecturing and writing, she had by no means the extensive clairvoyance of her associate. Their two names may have appeared on a few books as joint authors, but most of the " sensing " was done by Mr. Leadbeater. In fact he became so indispensable to her that when circumstances of an

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unsavoury nature arose, which resulted in his leaving the Society, she eventually reinstated him, much to the disapproval of a number of members, who proceeded to send in their resignations.

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One of Mr. Leadbeater's most valuable contributions to Theosophical literature deals with the Christian Creed, and in particular with the hidden effects of Christian ritual. As the result of his clairvoyant investigations along these lines, many interesting facts were brought to light; for ceremonial, if properly enacted, creates very definite effects on the unseen planes, and is in reality a form of magic.

The ceremony of the Mass itself long ante-dates Christianity and was brought over from the Egyptian Mysteries. It had primarily nothing to do with the Last Supper nor with the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, it acts as a channel through which the Master Jesus and the World Teacher can pour their spiritual power. Furthermore, with its music and mantramistic ¹ vibrations, it evokes a very powerful *Deva* known as the Angel of the Presence. It also builds a powerful if temporary thought-form in subtle matter which closely resembles the big fane in Constantinople. This applies, we must emphasize, to the Mass, but less so to the Holy Communion of the Protestant Churches. Although great devotion on the part of the officiants and

¹ A Mantram is a word or sentence producing certain vibrations which affect the *subtle bodies*.

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communicants undeniably gains a response from the Christ, the actual ceremony is far less potent than that of the Mass, because for one thing the Anglicized version does not possess the same mantramistic value as the Latin, and for another, the ceremony itself is founded on less scientifically occult principles.

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Mr. Leadbeater was not the only Theosophical leader to reveal the occult aspects of the Christian religion, for in addition to his book *The Christian Creed*, Mrs. Besant contributed an illuminating volume entitled *Esoteric Christianity*. She, who in her younger days had been associated with Charles Bradlaugh and the cause of so-termed Rationalism and Freethinking, was destined to perceive in a new light the very religion she had previously opposed. She proved from the Bible texts themselves that there was a hidden side to the Christian Faith, and that Jesus had imparted many esoteric truths to his disciples which he could not reveal to the multitude. She even put forward a theory explaining why the doctrine of reincarnation—in which the early Church Fathers believed—had never become a tenet of the Catholic Creed. She maintained that if the type of people who lived in the early days of Christianity had been permitted to know the Truth it might have retarded their evolution. The idea that they were given but one life in which to attain salvation, although untrue in itself, none the less spurred them on to make an effort, if only to avoid the possibility

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of perdition. Thus, Mrs. Besant, by such arguments, constructed an apologia for the Church, and at the same time proved that Theosophy was not anti-Christian. Indeed, she extolled Christianity, showing how it had been indirectly responsible for great paintings and great architecture; what could be more beautiful than some of the Italian Madonnas, what more imposing than some of the Christian Cathedrals? A religion which had inspired such masterpieces of art and architecture could not be summarily disposed of by secularists who only saw the outer shell and not the kernal of Truth hidden within. Thus did Mrs. Besant argue in favour of the religion she had in her earlier days denounced; for she had come to see that all religions are but aspects of the one Truth, and to emphasize this fact was Theosophy given to the world.

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Glancing back over many years at the activities of the Theosophical Society one sees that its mission has been a highly important one from the standpoint of Occultism. Apart from spreading abroad in Europe and America the doctrines of reincarnation and Karma, it has drawn attention to the existence of the Masters and the Hierarchy of which they are members. Hitherto their existence had only been known to Initiates in occult brotherhoods in the West, and to the higher-grade Yogis in the East. Hints had been given by novelists—notably Bulwer Lytton in *Zanoni*, Marion Crawford in *Mr. Isaacs*—that mysterious beings with remarkable powers

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might in exceptional circumstances be contacted, but the public regarded them, more or less, as the creations of fiction and hence did not take them seriously. Nor, for that matter, does the general public take them seriously to-day; but at any rate the Theosophical leaders have done the "spade work" and prepared the ground for their wider recognition. Even the scandals which the Society has had to face have indirectly added their quota to this desideratum, in that they have served to draw attention to Theosophy itself. For certain types of mentalities the Society may have lost prestige, but none the less, one or two of its doctrines are tacitly accepted by a growing number of people who now speak of reincarnation as almost a philosophical commonplace.

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Yet what may be said of the scandals themselves? In many respects they were, of course, regrettable, but regarded from the occult point of view they are instructive.

In most unorthodox communities there are members who have joined for the mere sake of being thought "advanced," or because they like to toy with something new and progressive, or for reasons other than those of conviction and sincerity. When a scandal occurs these are the first to resign, indignant that their own names should be sullied by association with a Society that has contrived to earn an evil reputation. Thus, from the Masters' standpoint, a scandal serves to test both the sincerity and

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moral courage of the would-be occult student. Those who will not brave the sneers or ridicule of their acquaintances will make but poor occultists, while those on the contrary who learn to do so with patience and good humour will certainly hasten on their spiritual evolution.

As for those whose conduct has been responsible for the scandal, they, needless to say, have not passed the tests imposed, whatever the nature of such tests may have been. That occultists should be required to pass tests at all, may perhaps appear strange to the lay mind, but considering that even in mundane affairs responsibilities are only given to such as show themselves competent to hold them, why in Occultism should there be exceptions? On the contrary, before the highest occult knowledge with its attendant powers can be imparted, the prospective pupil must have proved his complete trustworthiness in every way. He must be entirely free from self-delusion, from all fanaticism, from love of power and spiritual pride, his emotional nature should be controlled, and he should possess a pronounced love of humanity as a whole, in spite of all its failings and vices. These qualifications in theory seem difficult enough of achievement, and when it comes to applying them to all circumstances and eventualities, the difficulty is naturally increased. Just because spiritual development is frequently one-sided instead of all round, as soon as the pupil thinks he has successfully conquered a particular weakness he may find it cropping up in a different form. Or, having really conquered it, he may merely find himself confronted with yet another.

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Thus his life becomes one continual struggle towards self-improvement. As he gets older and his forces decline, he may relax his efforts, which would not be of so much consequence in the case of an obscure individual, but disastrous in the case of a leader or Teacher. The very nature of the position he holds, the fact that he is a target for adulation and personality-worship, that he is subject to temptations which more ordinary mortals escape, automatically render the tests he has to pass the more severe. But although he may fail, in Occultism there is no complete failure for those who have once set their feet upon the path : and so even those who fail in one incarnation will ultimately succeed : for even through apparent failure lies the road to success.

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Before we pass on to other considerations, a few final words may be said regarding communities.

The difficulty with religio-philosophical societies, however tolerant their members may be in theory, is to avoid that undercurrent of dogmatism which proves such an obstacle to progress. Many ardent Christian Scientists, for example, are fully persuaded that Christian Science contains the whole truth and that all other cults are based upon *error*. Mrs. Eddy denounced Theosophy, and admonished her disciples not to read any scientific books, thus encouraging this attitude. Doubtless it helps to inspire faith, but is, of course, regrettable from other points of view. As regards Theosophy, there were at one time many Theosophists who were fully

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persuaded that any approach to the Masters could alone be gained *via* the Theosophical Society and its two leaders. This, of course, is but a parallel of the assumption that salvation can only be reached, say, through the Roman Catholic Church and in no other way. Now it is important that the reader should realize that all such notions indicate a restricted knowledge of Occultism in general, which—to re-emphasize the fact—is in one of its aspects the science of the gradual unfoldment of the latent powers in Man. Therefore, Societies which cling to the idea that the last word as regards occult truth has been said, give a false impression, and some of them undoubtedly lessen their utility in the eyes of the Hierarchy until such time as they contrive to alter their policy. Societies, as we have shown, have been essential as media for the giving out of certain aspects of Truth, and apart from that, they are valuable for the purposes of study to the type of person who requires as a stimulus contact with other persons thinking along the same lines; but it should be noted that the joining of this, that or the other society is by no means essential for the would-be occult student, who can now gain all the theoretical knowledge he requires from the vast collection of occult books which have been written during the last seventy years.

CHAPTER XIV

THE WORK OF ISOLATED WRITERS

APART from efforts made by the various fraternities to disseminate religio-philosophic knowledge, we find that throughout the centuries isolated individuals have been inspired to promulgate, by means of the pen alone, certain mystical and occult truths. As students of Mysticism are aware, such individuals appeared in many countries, and although they may have gathered several disciples around them, few, if any of them, aimed at being great leaders or prominent figures in the domain of religion. Their mission was of a different nature. They corresponded somewhat to the eastern *Guru*, who having attained Realization himself, step by step leads the aspirant towards the same goal. Such a man was Ruysbroeck in the fourteenth century, later on we find Jacob Boehme (born 1575) whose writings run into many volumes. It is significant that while he was yet a small boy, a mysterious stranger visited him, "looked at him with a kindly, earnest, deep, soul-piercing gaze, and said: "Jacob, thou art as yet but little, but the time will come when thou shalt be great . . . and the world shall marvel at thee." Then again, after giving him some advice, and telling him that he would have to face poverty, misery and persecution, the stranger disappeared. Who was this stranger who could so accurately

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foretell the future, since every detail of his prophecy came true? The student of Occultism has not far to seek for the answer.

We of the present age are apt to regard Boehme as a mere God-intoxicated mystic, who, possessing but scanty literary knowledge, endeavoured to describe his experiences in a flow of language so obscure as to be hardly comprehensible. Yet to understand the full significance of Boehme one must recollect the times in which he lived. He was destined by his example to show those who had eyes to see that spiritual ecstasy was not the special prerogative of those who led the monastic life and who rigorously adhered to the doctrines of Catholicism. Boehme was a Lutheran, and a married man with children, therefore, although his life may have been, as his chroniclers tell us, extremely simple, he cannot be regarded as an ascetic. He fulfilled his duty to the State, conscientiously plied his trade, yet at the same time experienced the joy-consciousness of the spiritual planes. Indeed, in order to experience that consciousness it was not necessary for him to enter into super-conscious trance, he could experience it in ordinary waking state. We read, for example, that while he was working for an employer he experienced a state of blessed peace, a Sabbath of the Soul which lasted for seven days, during which he was, as it were, inwardly surrounded by a divine light. Boehme had obviously succeeded in bringing body and soul into that perfect alignment which is the aim of the highest Occultism, and by means of his writings he pointed the way for others to follow.

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When a man of Science turns his attention to the unseen worlds his word carries a certain weight ; thus, when Emanuel Swedenborg around the age of fifty gave up material Science for Occult Science and published his observations, people were both surprised and impressed. Swedenborg was one of the most famous men of his time, esteemed alike for his learning and blameless morals ; yet, about 1740, he renounced all wordly intercourse, lived solely on bread, milk and coffee and devoted himself entirely to developing clairvoyance. That he contacted the inner planes, the *astral* and *mental*, and communed with *devas*, there can be no doubt, but in his endeavours to interpret the mysteries of the Bible, his clairvoyance often became coloured by his personal beliefs. Nevertheless, he was undoubtedly used by the Masters to draw attention to the reality of the invisible realms, and to emphasize many aspects of spiritual truth. Some of his pronouncements are similar to those of certain schools of Eastern mysticism. For instance : " God, as Love, does not stand alone, because love does not embrace itself, but others ; therefore He made creatures. From love He created the world by His wisdom ; directly through the spiritual sun and indirectly through the natural sun, which is the vehicle of the first." It says much for the nobility of Swedenborg's character that he never aimed at founding a sect, yet since the World Teacher can foresee the needs of all aspirants, he was indirectly destined to do so. Through Swedenborgianism many have found

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the type of enlightenment suited to their temperament and stage of evolution.

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We will now draw attention to a contemporary writer of considerable importance in the domain of modern Occultism—Mrs. Alice A. Bailey. An Englishwoman, born in Lancashire, but having spent many years in America, Mrs. Bailey acts as psychic amanuensis to an Initiate who modestly calls himself “the Thibetan,” since he occupies a Thibetan body. To a marked degree she possesses that particular faculty known as clairaudience, by means of which she is enabled to write her books largely to “the Thibetan’s” dictation. The fact that he is in Thibet and she in England or America, may appear less strange in these days of wireless than it undoubtedly would have done last century. We have said elsewhere that no Master writes books; this statement, intended as a warning to the unknowledgeable, was necessary, since books have appeared by persons professing to be Masters, who on the face of it, can be nothing of the kind. Yet it is one thing for Masters telepathically to dictate books or portions thereof, and another for them actually to wield the pen and publish the fruits of their labours. Moreover, “the Thibetan” has never admitted to being a Master,¹ pointing out that it will profit no one to be apprised of who or what he is. Therefore, whatever the present writer may have ascertained, it is not for him to give any so-called “inside

¹ See *Treatise on White Magic*.

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information." Let it suffice for the books to speak for themselves.

These books are particularly suited to the present age, since they are devoid of that emotionalism which is repellent to people who demand clear facts, and not, if the expression be pardoned, goody-goody precepts, or vague dreamings. To those who, on the contrary, think to find in Occultism an outlet for emotionality, these books will not appeal. This is not to say that those who tread the path of devotion cannot be occult students, far from it, for to some temperaments that path is the least thorny of all. But as we have previously said, the Masters seek to fulfil the requirements of every type of mind and temperament, and as there have been a sufficiency of the more or less devotional species of books put out by the Theosophical Society and other cults, another species was necessary.

It is, of course, impossible to compress into a short study all that "the Thibetan" has given out through Mrs. Bailey—nor would it be in any sense advisable. But one point should be emphasized, namely, his insistence on the necessity for Brotherhood, not as a sentimental conception but as a scientific fact.

How is this ideal to be achieved? "The Thibetan" has outlined the *modus operandi* in the books in question. Through the instrumentality of esoteric groups, thinking along specifically constructive lines, the thought-plane will be saturated with certain ideas and ideals; these will filter through to the material plane and eventually become objectified. Thought is contagious; the majority absorb other people's thoughts; truly original thinkers are few

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and far between ; the Hierarchy take advantage of this contagiousness and utilize it for good. In the field of politics the goal will be the development and establishment of an *international consciousness*, and we might add, an *international conscience* ; in the religious domain the establishment of " a universal understanding of the nature of reality and the growth of the spiritual consciousness ; in the scientific domain the expansion of man's consciousness and the widening of his horizon so that a synthesis of the tangible and the intangible may take place. Finally, the fact of God will be established ; God who is neither a Christian, Hindu nor Buddhist Deity, but a Deity of *essential life*, the sum-total of all energies, the energy of Life itself, of Love, of Intelligence, of active experience, and of that which produces the interplay between the (normally) seen and the unseen. This Deity will be recognized both as transcendent and yet immanent." ¹

Such then is the Plan which the Hierarchy has in view for Man to carry out ; but, of course, *how long* it will take to materialize depends on man himself. Nevertheless, signs are already apparent : the League of Nations, the prevalence of Trusts and Combines in commerce, the study of Comparative Religion, and so on, are all activities tending towards unification and are an earnest of what is to follow.

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Prognostications as regards the future, however, are only a small portion of the material to be found

¹ *The Next Three Years*, by Alice A. Bailey.

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in Mrs. Bailey's literary output. Indeed "the Thibetan" warns his readers that such prognostications are of secondary importance. Of prime importance are the methods put forward showing how each individual may co-operate with his fellow-aspirants and with the Hierarchy in bringing the Great Plan into actuality. By such co-operation he will likewise, of course, hasten on his own evolution.

Mrs. Bailey also deals in a most lucid manner with the art of meditation, so essential to the bringing of the *subtler bodies* into alignment with the physical. She emphasizes the necessity for rendering the physical body a fitting instrument for the soul, and so indirectly counteracts some misconceptions which have arisen in the West through the influx of Indian books on Yoga advocating methods unsuited to Occidentals. Certain of these books teach man through meditation and breathing-exercises how to get out of his body and enjoy the consciousness of the higher planes. This is well enough for Yogis who can retire to the jungle and live a life of seclusion without any obligations; but let us here point out that most of these Yogis will have to reincarnate in the West to proceed with and perfect their evolution. Thus "the Thibetan" has found it necessary to impart knowledge by means of which man, instead of seeking to escape from his obligations, may bring the consciousness of the higher planes *down into* his body, thus rendering it more efficient for any work that his Karma requires he should perform. We shall have more to say regarding this later on. Meanwhile, in concluding this very brief and inadequate survey of Mrs. Bailey's work, an allusion should be

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made to the fact that "the Thibetan" has also seen fit to give out through her "a compact and skeleton outline of a scheme of cosmology,¹ philosophy and psychology . . . to serve as a scaffolding upon which more detailed instruction may later be built." In the foreword she points out that "The teaching in this book should tend to an expansion of consciousness . . . and (also) should bring about a reaction in favour of a system of philosophy which will link both spirit and matter, and demonstrate the essential unity of the scientific and religious idea."

To understand this profound book, however, a certain preliminary knowledge is essential, and the student would do well to read H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine* before attempting to tackle it. Indeed, all Mrs. Bailey's works require very careful study; they do not constitute "short cuts" to occult knowledge. There is, in fact, no short cut, for there is no end to occult knowledge, hence its fascination for the venturesome. Very apt are Browning's words in this connection :

"Truth successively takes shape,
One grade above its last presentment. . . ."

¹ See *Treatise on Cosmic Fire*.

CHAPTER XV

SOME OCCULT ASPECTS OF THE ARTS

We must learn from artists to see things in the right way ; and yet we must be more wise than they. For we will to be the poets of our life, and that above all in the smallest daily things.

Oh, that the poets would again be such as they were wont to be, seers foretelling us something of our possible future !—NIETZSCHE.

WE have already pointed out that the Masters have at times used the minds of great poets to put across ideas helpful to man's evolution. This is not to imply that all inspiration emanates from the Masters ; sometimes it comes from the soul or " higher self " of the individual writer, sometimes from the *Devas*, according to its type. There are *Devas* on the Higher Mental Plane who, under certain conditions, take delight in inspiring both musicians and poets. Poetry that is very luxuriant and musical is usually deva-inspired ; the most marked example of this type is that of Swinburne.

Roughly speaking, poetry may be brought under three headings : that which imparts wisdom, that which is prophetic and that which inspires a greater appreciation of beauty. To these three ends have great poets been used by the Masters, or by the *devas* or by both. But it should be emphasized that in the highest poetry there is something besides the expression of wisdom, prophecy or beauty ; something so subtle that it is difficult to define ; we only know it is produced by a combination of words,

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melodiousness and rhythm. According to Occult Science such a combination—if the words be rightly chosen—produces a *mantram* or spell; a fact to which we have previously alluded. Such *mantrams* by reason of their sound and rhythm affect the *subtler bodies*, and hence it is correct to say that they actually possess a magical power. Now there is undoubtedly a *mantramistic* element in many types of the finest poetry, hence its so pronounced, yet so undefinable, appeal. To say, therefore, that poetry possesses an occult aspect is no literary extravagance but a fact. We do not propose, however, to elaborate this subject, we would merely say that the more poets have been able to manifest this occult aspect and combine it with lofty thought in their work, the greater has been their utility from the evolutionary standpoint.

§

As regards fiction, we have already said elsewhere that the Masters sometimes impress ideas upon the minds of writers, but a few words may here be added and also a note of warning. A none too careful reader on learning that Members of the Hierarchy concern themselves with every department of human activity, including the domain of fiction, may jump to either of the following conclusions: that the present author has “a bee in his bonnet,” as the phrase goes, and must needs advance an occult explanation for everything; or else that there is no such thing as individual initiative, and all who create, be they poets, novelists, or artists, are mere puppets

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in the hands of higher powers. And yet, surely if in ordinary life one man adopts a suggestion from another and proceeds to work it out in his own way, it is not correct to assert that the first man is a mere puppet in the hands of the second. Now there are hundreds of novels, plays and films put out which certainly do not incorporate any suggestions from the Masters and for which no occult explanation is warranted. On the other hand there are plays and novels of which portions have been definitely inspired for some particular purpose which the Masters had in view. Again, there are instances where a particular Master has endeavoured at times to use some great literary talent for an altruistic object and has not succeeded. For example, a Master once, while explaining the methods employed, admitted that last century he had endeavoured to inspire the famous French authoress George Sand, but had failed because she was "too pre-occupied with matters of sex." Yet even if she had been sensitive enough to receive his suggestions, it does not necessarily follow that she would have reacted to them. Thousands of ideas flit through the minds of novelists which they reject; they only use those they wish to use. It is true that when a Master impresses on the mind of a writer a particular idea, the recipient usually realizes its value and is only too glad to utilize it. But even so, he has perfect free will in the matter and therefore it would be erroneous to assume that he is manipulated against his own inclinations.

Apart from telepathetically impressing writers with ideas, the Masters or their pupils sometimes

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create thought-forms, which novelists or playwrights unwittingly contact and then utilize in their own individual manner. This accounts for the fact that occasionally two writers hit upon the self-same idea for a play or a novel, in which case an unintentional plagiarism results.¹

Because the reading public is nowadays so vast, it stands to reason that novelists can wield a considerable power in the world if they be so minded and possess the essential capacity. The finest type of novelist is, of course, an artist, and in Nietzsche's words: "What does all art do? Does it not praise, does it not glorify, does it not select, does it not bring into prominence?" These questions he puts in refutation of the catch-phrase *l'art pour l'art*, which implies that art is purposeless. It is true that although a novel written with a purpose may be sometimes associated with inferior art, yet in most of the finest novels there is a purpose concealed. The greatest novelists have not necessarily been those who have conceived the most thrilling plots, but those who have conduced to a greater understanding of life and humanity. Novelists have also drawn attention to prevailing abuses, absurd customs and so forth, and have assisted in abolishing them. There is further the psychological novel which forces people to face up to a variety of problems too apt to be ignored, and which conduces, if understandingly read, either to self-analysis or a better comprehension of mind and motive.

¹ Unintended plagiarisms may arise in other ways. When a writer makes, while working, a very powerful thought-form, it is sometimes contacted by another writer.

§

As regards the drama, a moment's reflection will show that in former times a play was largely a framework and a plea for fine poetry, rhetoric, oratory and wise utterance. Written in blank verse it possessed a *mantramistic* value which not only produced a certain occult effect on the *subtler bodies* of the audience but also on the memory. Who would remember the countless wise utterances of Shakespeare had they merely been expressed in prose? Clothed in blank verse they are readily retained in the mind and their wisdom absorbed. But, of course, changing times require changing methods. We live in an age when artificialities are no longer tolerated and plays must perforce be written in prose. Thus they have lost some of their occult value, but still retain other values. We all know that the finest plays are not merely dramatic; they deal with problems. They may be conducive to what we describe as "feeling with" and "feeling for"; they may expose the follies of man and extol the virtues, indeed a whole philosophy of life may be presented in a play. In comedy, wit may be the cloak of wisdom and satire the cloak of censure. And to-day we have in addition the cinema with its vast appeal. True, countless plays that are filmed are trivial, demoralizing to the uncultured, and pander solely to sensationalism; but apart from these regrettable attributes the educative possibilities of the cinema cannot be over-estimated. Moreover, it tends to bring mankind a step nearer to unity through mutual understanding. It familiarizes

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the people of one country with the manners and customs and characteristics of another. By depicting their home-life, their trials, sorrows and difficulties, it makes them more real and also more lovable. This is a tremendous step towards brotherhood and consequently towards universal peace.

§

To pass from the drama to the pictorial arts, certain types of painting have undoubtedly been used for evolutionary purposes. In periods when the mentalities of the people were such that they could only evolve by means of religious sentiment, scores of great artists were inspired to paint religious pictures in order that the combination of beauty and religion might achieve what religion could not achieve alone.

But apart from any religious considerations, the function of true art, as every cultured person knows, is to "put something into nature which is not there," or at any rate which is not usually perceived. Yet what every cultured person does not necessarily know is that the more elevated the art, the more it portrays as far as is possible certain of the characteristics of the higher planes. When the artist idealizes a landscape he is in reality putting into it elements from those planes, or even painting to some extent its replica as seen by those to whom it is perceptible. There is, for example, a spiritual element, an atmosphere of intense peacefulness in many paintings by the old masters which can only be described as celestial. This element, however,

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can seldom be found in paintings of to-day, the fact being that much modern art is influenced by the characteristics of the lower sub-stratum of the *astral plane*. The muddy colouring, the distorted drawing, the intentional ugliness, all these are features pertaining to that plane of consciousness to which the lowest types of humanity are drawn after death. But this phase of art is but a passing one. As the Venetian Master (formerly Paul Veronese) has said: "Art, once the hand-maiden of religion, but in this materialistic age completely divorced from it, will again fulfil its highest function, that of inspiring reverence in the beholder. It will have worked out its karmic descent into the abyss, and will once more be on its upward ascent towards the light."¹

§

Of all the arts, music is from the occult standpoint, by far the most potent; so potent indeed that it has been instrumental in moulding thought and morals, influencing its sister arts and even to some extent history itself.

The prevalent idea is that certain types of music have been the outcome of the characteristics of the age in which they have appeared, but, astonishing though the statement may seem, the reverse is the truth; many of the characteristics that have *first* appeared in music, have later on appeared in life. This was so well known to the ancient Greek

¹ See *Through the Eyes of the Masters*, by David Anrias. Routledge & Co

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philosophers that they classified the various types of emotions that resulted from the various scales or modes, as they are called. Plato went so far as to say that styles of music could not be altered without, as a result, upsetting the most important political institutions. Yet if this assertion applied to the comparatively simple music of ancient Greece, how much more must it apply to our present-day music with its large orchestras, huge choruses and general increase in power? The subject is such a vast and intricate one, however, that any attempt to do it justice in a single chapter is totally impossible. We must therefore refer the reader to our book *Music, its Secret Influence Throughout the Ages*,¹ the material for which was given by the Master who is especially concerned with the tonal art and with philosophy. We have already mentioned him in connection with Theosophy, and the fact that he was Pythagoras in a former incarnation is significant in view of that great philosopher's association with music. But what is especially pertinent to the present volume is the fact that practically each great composer has been definitely used to bring about certain effects in the domain of thought and morals, and consequently as a factor in the furthering of the evolutionary Plan. As every one knows who is conversant with the better class of music, each famous composer possessed his own individual style. That style with its definite characteristics was gradually impressed upon him by the Master, or the *devas* working under that Master, who used him as a medium. Thus Handel, Bach, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Chopin,

¹ By Cyril Scott. Rider & Co.

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Wagner and others have been instrumental in creating or enhancing certain qualities in human character.

Before very long music will be used in a specific manner to heal diseases through special combinations of sounds ; this also is an item in the great Plan for the future. Certain musicians will be gifted with a type of clairvoyance by means of which they will have the power to see the *etheric body*,¹ to perceive what is wrong, and intuitively to know the exact sound-vibrations necessary to effect a cure. But apart from healing individuals, some of the composers of the future will be perceptive enough to realize the exact type of music required to bring about certain beneficent effects on mankind in general. At present the majority of composers are working entirely in the dark and are even unaware that their music produces any occult effects at all. They would be much astonished if they could see the colours and thought-forms created by it on the super-physical planes ; some of the more eminent and elevated would be not only astonished but delighted at perceiving the magnificent *devas* which their compositions invoke. Others again who pride themselves on being as harsh and discordant as possible, might be less delighted at what they saw—but these need not detain us.

In concluding these brief considerations of the creative side of music, we cannot do better than quote verbatim what we have previously written, and which sums up the whole contention :

Music affects the minds and emotions of mankind.

¹ See Chap. XVI.

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It affects them through the medium of suggestion and reiteration.

It affects them either directly, indirectly, or both. Hence, as in music, so in life.¹

§

A few words may now be added with regard to executants and conductors, and their capacity to be used and inspired. Every music student knows or ought to know that the qualities essential to a fine conductor are not merely those of musicianship and musical knowledge. Our greatest conductors are highly magnetic personalities, or become so the moment they start to conduct an orchestra. They do not merely wield the baton, but galvanize the orchestral players into giving of their very best. This on the surface may appear to be nothing more than the exercise of discipline combined with the power to enthuse. But looked at with clairvoyant vision, a really great conductor is revealed as a medium through whom powerful *devic* forces play, or who is actually controlled by those *devas* especially concerned with music. He might even be likened to a diminutive power-station from which streams of energy flow forth under his will and direction to the various units; but instead of generating that energy himself, it comes from the *devas* who take delight in serving him.

As regards executants, sometimes they derive their inspiration from their Higher Self, sometimes from the *devas* or even from the "spirits," to use

¹ *Ibid.*, Chap. VI.

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the language of Spiritualism, of celebrated executants who have "passed over" yet wish to help their *confrères* still on the earth. It sometimes happens that a Master wishes to use an executant as his medium, and although it were inadvisable to mention names, there is a world-famous violinist who is often controlled by the Great Initiate who was once Pythagoras. He has been clairvoyantly seen, in his *subtle body*, standing beside this violinist and "inspiring" him. It is significant that as soon as this Master ceases to over-shadow him—having to withdraw for more important activities—there is a noticeable difference in his playing, which becomes "less inspired." This is not invariably the case, however; when he is especially receptive and in good form, as the phrase goes, then the inspiration remains for a while, after the Master has withdrawn.

CHAPTER XVI

SOME OCCULT SIDELIGHTS ON SCIENCE AND THERAPEUTICS

That which is perceptible to the senses may be seen by everybody who is not a physician ; but a physician should be able to see things that not everybody can see. There are natural physicians and there are artificially made physicians. The former see things which the latter cannot see, but the others dispute the existence of such things because they cannot see them. They see the exterior of things, but the true physicians see the interior.—PARACELSUS.

The true physician is the perfect combination of the artist, the scientist and the altruist.

A MASTER has said that if mankind had no more Karma to work off and lived in accordance with Nature's laws, the average span of life would be 250 years. If this statement sounds extravagant the reader is reminded that so far only a limited number of Nature's laws have been discovered. As yet the human race is far too selfish to be entrusted with certain kinds of knowledge, for as soon as scientists make discoveries which lead to important inventions, the latter are liable to be used for evil purposes. No sooner had aeroplanes been invented than they were employed for purposes of destruction. Then, one may ask, why did the Inner Government of the World permit them to be invented ? Because man requires to learn that what *may* be used for evil ends must solely be used for good. Furthermore, if the Higher Powers placed too great restrictions on man, he could not evolve. We do not refuse our children,

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say, cricket-bats and tennis-racquets in case they lose their temper and strike each other over the head with them ; they have to learn to use them as they are intended to be used, or suffer the consequences. But even so, there are limits—we do not entrust our offspring with firearms and gunpowder.

Now from the standpoint of the Masters who have in the words of St. Paul “ put away childish things,” the human race is still very childish,¹ and if mortals had been entrusted with the knowledge enabling them to live far beyond the usual span, it would have involved other knowledge for which morally they were, and are still, not ripe.

There is also Karma to be considered. Because, as we have shown, disease is one means by which karmic debts are liquidated, the complete knowledge how to cure and prevent all disease could not and cannot as yet be imparted to Mankind. Only by degrees is such knowledge given out. Even so, the measures which the Masters inspire to meet certain contingencies are apt to be misused and be carried to illogical conclusions. For instance, a Master told one of his pupils that the idea of vaccination as a prophylactic against small-pox had been put through by a Member of the Hierarchy. But what has been the result ? Unwise physicians advocate serums for all manner of diseases which do not warrant their use, and to which many patients react adversely. Serum administering has in certain quarters become a medical dogma. This is the more regrettable since the Master in question admitted that even vaccina-

¹ See *Childishness. A Study in Adult Conduct.* Cyril Scott. (John Bale, Sons & Danielsson Ltd.)

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tion against small-pox was only a temporary measure, and that the day would come when it would be regarded almost as a barbarity. Yet, of course, at one time, vaccination was necessary (and still is in some countries), because thousands were dying of small-pox and had died of it since remote times. Should one be tempted to ask, "in that case, why was it not discovered sooner?" the answer is, if even nowadays serums are injudiciously employed, albeit with no evil intention, in former days, when man was less scrupulous, they would have been grossly and fatally misused. But apart from that, it was not man's Karma that small-pox should die out, any more than at present it is man's Karma that cancer should die out. When it is, cancer researchers will, for one thing, give up searching for a germ which obviously does not exist.

Now although we have implied that Jenner was used by the Masters, we do not assert that no eminent man has ever made a valuable discovery on his own part. On the other hand we have reasons for maintaining that there have been cases in which men have been on the point of making momentous discoveries and have been prevented by the Higher Powers from making them, or else have failed to make use of them. Such a case, well known to occultists, is that of J. W. Keely of Philadelphia, who last century unwittingly re-discovered a sidereal force known to the High Initiates and mentioned by name in certain occult books. In Bulwer Lytton's *Coming Race* it is fictitiously called Vril. This vibratory force concentrated and directed at an army would annihilate 100,000 men. Keely contrived to

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harness this force (which under certain conditions could also cure as well as kill), and invented a machine which worked perfectly as long as he operated it himself or touched anyone else who operated it, *but not otherwise*. A company was formed called the "Keely Motor Company," long articles appeared in the papers about the genius who had discovered a new motive-force; but, of course, in the circumstances his marvellous discovery proved of no practical value whatever. Mme. Blavatsky had much to say in elucidation of this mystery in her *Secret Doctrine*. Of course, when man has evolved sufficiently to warrant his being entrusted with such a force, it will be re-discovered. Meanwhile, knowledge of less potent and hence less dangerous occult forces is gradually coming to light; much of which is associated with Therapeutics, the laws of radiation and magnetic currents.

§

For centuries occultists have maintained that in addition to man's physical *astral* and *mental bodies* he possesses what is termed an *etheric body*. This latter we have not dealt with hitherto because it is so intimately connected with the physical body, disintegrates with it after death and hence plays no part in continued existence on the higher planes. It is none the less of paramount importance, because it is the receiver, the assimilator and the transmitter of solar energy. The curative value of sunlight is now generally recognized and sun-ray lamps are much in vogue; yet their efficacy would be greatly

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enhanced if physicians or electrical therapeuticians could perceive the *etheric body* and understand its nature and characteristics. Although they are actually working with light they are metaphorically working in the dark, and how much or how little sunlight to give is largely a matter of guess-work. The results achieved by those few rare healers who possess so-termed "etheric sight" are very different from those achieved by the ordinary practitioner who has to gauge results by the appearance of the physical body—notably the skin, instead of by that of the *etheric body*. As this book, however, is not a manual on occult healing we cannot go deeper into the matter, but would merely add that in the not far-distant future clairvoyant healers will be noticeably on the increase. They will diagnose disease by the appearance of the *etheric body*—which among other things proves to be a clear indicator of diseased conditions—and will then proceed to employ such curative methods as may be warranted. Meanwhile we may draw the reader's attention to what are called the *Kilner Screens*, which render the *etheric body* visible to ordinary sight and which have gone to prove once and for all that this organism, the grossest, comparatively speaking, of man's *subtler bodies*, is not a mere figment of the occultist's imagination.¹

Nevertheless, a few words must be said as regards certain other aspects of the *etheric body* in regard to clairvoyance itself.

In this body are certain centres of force which, when stimulated into a specific kind of activity,

¹ See Appendix, Note 4.

induce various kinds of psychic faculties including clairaudience, clairvoyance and psychometry in accordance with which particular centre has been stimulated. The exercises for their stimulation, however, may not be given to the general public as they can only be safely practised under the supervision of a competent teacher. These centres of force are intimately connected with the endocrine glands which of recent years have claimed the attention of the medical faculty. Dr. Louis Berman speaking of these glands, observes that their "secretions contain the hormones or chemical messengers of the organism which excite some of the most marvellous reactions known in physiology. In fact, it has been stated that hormones are to physiology what radium is to chemistry." ¹ These glands, like the *etheric body*, have been known to Master-occultists for centuries, but until lately have been dismissed by the physiologists as useless or atrophied organs; always a plausible explanation for that which is not understood. The appendix, be it noted, has still got this reputation. Occultists have also known that "man's spiritual as well as his physical possibilities depend very largely upon the secretions of the ductless glands. At present these glands are not completely co-ordinated, but will be later on when man reaches a higher stage of evolution. Their co-ordination is a matter closely associated with the *etheric body*."

We may here mention that the present policy of administering animal-gland extracts is highly regrettable from the occult standpoint, and will in the

¹ See *The Glands Regulating Personality*.

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not far distant future be regarded as reprehensible—as Mr. David Anrias points out in his *Adepts of the Five Elements*. Since even non-occultists are recognizing the fact that the glands have much to do with behaviour and personality, one would think that the inadvisability of introducing secretions from the lower animals into the human body would be obvious. But whether obvious or not, such secretions tend to render the physical organism a less fitting instrument for the soul, owing, as esoterically expressed, “to the rate of vibration that separates man from the beast.”¹ The subject, however, is too deeply occult to be elaborated in this book and we will pass on to less abstruse considerations regarding the *etheric body*.

§

If the latter were better understood, many people would be less ready to dismiss homeopathy as a species of faith-cure suited merely to credulous patients. They would know that the infinitesimal doses administered by homeopaths affect the *etheric body*. If homeopathy were really a faith-cure, as its opponents maintain, then how is it that it proves effective with animals? For instance, colchicum, in its 200th potency, is an excellent remedy for the bloating of cows due to their having eaten too much green clover. Are we asked to believe that cows possess faith, or, as regards the following example, that silver coins also possess faith? A patient was given one dose of sulphur in its 1,000,000th potency,

¹ See *Adepts of the Five Elements*, p. 80. Routledge.

after which the silver coins in his pocket, together with his silver pencil-case and watch, all turned black. Writing to his doctor after having observed this strange phenomenon, he said, "If I did not know to the contrary, I should most assuredly have to come to the conclusion that you had given me a powerfully endorific dose of sulphur."¹

This case not only goes to show the power of the infinitely small, but also that homeopathy operates in a deeply occult (in the sense of hidden) manner. We perceive its effects but cannot understand its workings. The researches of the Curies and other investigators regarding the phenomena of radioactivity should none the less have made it somewhat easier to conceive of the powers inherent in infinitesimal quantities. But even so, homeopathy is looked down upon by the orthodox medical man. We find, for instance, Dr. H. W. Haggard, Associate Professor of Yale University attributing the "brief vogue" of homeopathy to the fact that the small doses used by homeopaths did no harm even though they did no good.² This remark, however, has some bearing on the fact that when homeopathy was first discovered by Hahneman, the allopaths were giving excessively large doses of poisonous drugs, and with disastrous effects. Indeed, summing up the distinction between the two schools, a wag remarked that "the patients of the homeopaths died of the disease and the patients of the allopaths died of the cure." Yet the first part of this witticism is hardly just, for there is no doubt whatever that

¹ See J. Ellis Barker, *Miracles of Healing*.

² See H. W. Haggard, M.D., *Devils, Drugs and Doctors*.

homeopathy in competent hands has worked what might almost be termed miracles: but such is prejudice, that many people still fight shy of homeopathic methods.

§

Now Hahneman (born in 1755) being a man of immense moral courage and unswerving devotion to truth, was definitely used to propagate homeopathy in an age when, as implied above, the allopaths were doing positive harm. And strange to say, homeopathy is one of the few measures put forward to help mankind that neither through ignorance, fanaticism or greed has gone wrong. On the other hand, it has, in one sense, never gone right, for it has met with such pronounced opposition. Unostentatiously it has worked its proportion of wonderful cures far in excess of allopathy, but even so has not yet acquired the reputation it deserves. Nevertheless, it is at length coming more and more into its own, and even its opponents are making use of its principles whether they admit it or not. "It can hardly have escaped the notice of intelligent observers," wrote Dr. J. H. Clarke, "that treatment of diseases by serums and vaccines is a species of homeopathy—of likes curing likes."

But long ago Hahneman himself had fully recognized the value of making viruses of diseases in order to effect cures, yet he possessed the insight to realize that they were far more efficacious in high potencies—*viz.* in infinitesimal doses rather than in allopathic ones, which so often do harm.

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The principle upon which homeopathy is based—that of like curing like—is a highly occult law of Nature, on the subject of which, so far, little has been given out. We only know that it is a matter of vibration. We find the same principle in *Abrams Electronic Reactions*, that *mystery-box*, as the gentlemen of the press contemptuously called it when it first made its appearance. By means of this apparatus, the particular rate of vibration of a given disease is gauged and a similar rate applied to effect a cure. The foregoing is, of course, a very rough and ready exposition of the *modus operandi*, but may suffice for our purpose. It is significant that when this apparatus is employed by those possessing *etheric sight*, who can thus perceive its effects on the *etheric body*, its curative efficacy is greatly enhanced. Moreover, it is so sensitive that one practitioner informed me he obtained much better results from it in one locality than in another.

But apart from its therapeutical value this appliance is of deep interest to the student of Occultism because of its psychometrical powers. It is really a species of “mechanical psychometrist”; it can diagnose conditions not merely from a drop of blood, but has been known to diagnose them even from a scrap of handwriting. Now psychometry is one of those psychic powers which has been both recognized and practised by certain types of occultists for centuries, and now we find a mechanical apparatus which can reproduce, if to a limited extent, the same faculty; thus eliminating any possibility of fraud.

§

Let us now turn to what has been termed Extra-Retinal Vision and the Paroptic Sense.

Not long ago M. Jules Romains wrote a book on how to see with the skin. This enterprising man taught a number of blind people to use the skin for purposes of vision in lieu of the eyes. He also, after some practice, acquired this remarkable faculty himself. He had apparently no knowledge of the *etheric body*, but it is obvious that what he really did was to teach himself and his subjects to see with that body, which as the occultist knows is a distinct possibility. The occultist even goes a step further and maintains that it would be possible with practice to *hear* with the *etheric body*. His reasons are based on the following occult fact, which also serves to explain the rationale of this "eyeless sight"—namely, that the *etheric body* is in reality the "sensation body," since only when it is conjoined with the physical is there any sensation in the latter. Indeed, as soon as chloroform or gas are administered, and anæsthesia results, it is temporarily forced out of the physical. Of this medical men in general are unaware, but clairvoyant observation has shown it to be true. But sensation is not the sole faculty inherent in the *etheric*; it also possesses those of vision and hearing. This is known as the result of experience; for it is possible, though dangerous for the uninitiated, to project the *etheric body* out of the physical by a combination of will and knowledge. When this has been achieved, the practitioner finds himself in perfect possession of all his faculties, despite the fact that

he is temporarily free of his gross physical sheath. Moreover, and this is important, he finds that the faculty to see and hear is not merely centred in certain parts of the *etheric*, but is all-pervasive. In other words, he can see and hear with the whole of his *etheric*, just as one can *feel* with the entire surface of the physical body when interpenetrated by the former. The connection between what we have just stated and the faculty of *Extra-retinal Vision* or *Eyeless Sight*¹ should be obvious; it is, as implied, the visual faculty of the *etheric* operating through the physical as the result of special exercises.

Needless to say this discovery of M. Romaines should prove an inestimable boon to the blind, and it is hoped that it may also lead to similar experiments with the aural faculty pertaining to the *etheric*, so that the deaf may be enabled to hear. But apart from these considerations, his discovery should be of particular interest to those students of Occultism who specialize in psychic healing and the study of etheric phenomena.

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If members of the medical profession had possessed a knowledge of the *etheric body*, or better still, the actual capacity to perceive it, they would have been less tardy in recognizing the value of osteopathy as a curative science. They would have seen that the dislocations, subluxations and "osteopathic lesions" which so often escape the notice of ordinary physicians are registered in the *etheric body* and show disturbances in the latter which disappear after

¹ See *Eyeless Sight*, by Jules Romaines.

proper osteopathic treatment. It is of interest to note that bone-setting, as it was formally called, was originally a species of psychic faculty. Many "bone-setters" were so constituted that they could be used by the *healing devas*. Thus a number of individuals without any medical knowledge, found themselves possessed of this peculiar gift of setting bones and correcting malposition. As Dr. H. W. Haggard wrote in 1929: "The practice of bone-setting has come down from antiquity; its practitioners have claimed that the malposition of the bones interferes with the flow of vital forces."¹ And their claims happened to be correct; but this he repudiates.

Last century bone-setting was reduced to a science by Dr. Andrew Still of Kansas, U.S.A., who named it osteopathy. He had a somewhat mystical trait in his character and made the remark: "God is the Father of Osteopathy and I am not ashamed of the child of His mind." Dr. Still maintained that many maladies are due to a partial dislocation of the spine; the vertebrae, if ever so slightly displaced, press upon the nerves connected with the spine and disease accrues as the result of an obstruction to the "flow of life forces through the nerves." This statement, as implied above, is in perfect accordance with facts known to occultists, yet Still's theory was of course not allowed to go unchallenged, and Dr. Haggard summed up the attitude adopted towards osteopathy by the medical profession when he wrote: "There are no grounds for the theory that disease is caused by dislocated vertebrae pressing on nerves." All the same, the opponents of osteopathy were not destined

¹ See *Drugs, Devils and Doctors*.

to annihilate this curative science, the value of which is being increasingly recognized by the public. Indeed, what we would emphasize in this connection is that as man evolves, his physical organism becomes increasingly refined and sensitive, therefore curative measures are inspired by the Masters and adapted to his needs. Slight dislocations may have caused our beef-gorging and port-drinking ancestors, with their comparatively gross bodies, no great inconvenience, but it is otherwise with the more sensitive individuals of to-day. If the spinal vertebrae are not in perfect alignment, an interference with the functions of the *subtler bodies* accrues which renders the physical body a less fitting instrument for the soul. Certain "osteopathic lesions," until corrected, undoubtedly interfere with the working of the mind and tend to inhibit ideation. We are fully aware that many orthodox physicians explain away the beneficial results achieved by osteopathy, or attribute them to faith or other causes, but these explanations need not detain us, being of more interest to the medical profession than to students of Occultism.

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And this brings us to the question of diet and evolution.

About thirty years ago noticeable attempts were made to bring about reforms in diet, since when we have heard much about vitamins, inorganic salts, "roughage" and "bulk." It had become apparent that doctors knew deplorably little about dietetics, and it fell to the lot of laymen like Eustace Miles to act

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as pioneers along this line of thought. True, Dr. Haig had drawn attention to the prevalence of *uric acid* resulting from improper nutrition, notably excessive meat-eating, but he, together with one or two others looked upon as cranks, were exceptions; the majority of doctors were content to ignore diet as a powerful factor making either for health or disease.

Now what we have said in connection with osteopathy has a further bearing on this question of diet. As the race grows more sensitive, it not only requires a more perfectly adjusted anatomical structure, but also a diet suited to its evolutionary stage. Seeing that the Masters were unable to impress the medical men with the essential ideas, they were obliged first to utilize the lay mind that the doctors might eventually come into line. A similar policy has often been adopted before in regard to the medical profession; laymen having brought to its notice many valuable curative agents. As Oliver Wendell Holmes observed: "It learned from a monk how to use antimony, from a Jesuit how to cure ague, from a friar how to cut for stone . . . from a sailor how to keep off scurvy, from a post-master how to sound the Eustachian tube . . . from an old market-woman how to catch the itch insect. It borrowed acupuncture and the moxa from the Japanese heathen, and was taught the use of lobelia by the American savage." Thus we see that when the time is ripe for a particular curative agent to be given to mankind there are divers ways in which it may be introduced, and some of them the most unexpected.

We repeat then that laymen were used to stress the paramount importance of diet ; after which, as we know, the doctors busied themselves with discovering the reason of its importance, finally enriching the medical vocabulary with the word *vitamins*. This word sounds imposing and has galvanized a certain section of the public into eating what Dame Nature intended all along that man should eat, namely, natural vital food with its inorganic salts intact. This is not to say that meat-eating *per se* should be looked upon as the cause of most human ills—an attitude which some rigid vegetarians adopt—for paradoxical though the statement may sound, ill-health arises more from what people do not eat than from what they do eat. Because they fail to take those foods rich in the twelve inorganic salts which are necessary to health, they suffer accordingly.¹ The cure is therefore not to be found in the mere abstinence from meat (otherwise vegetarians would be magnificent specimens of perfect health, which many of them are not) but in a judicious selection of vital unfired foods similar to those adopted by their sister cult, the fruitarians. We would point out, however, that wise occultists—for needless to say, there are also unwise ones—deprecate any fanaticism in regard to diet, as they deprecate it in other fields.

The intention of the Hierarchy in inspiring food-reform was naturally not that meat should suddenly and totally be abolished as an article of diet, but that man should come to understand the laws of scientific nutrition, so that his body and mind might be better attuned to the vibrations of the higher planes.

¹ See Appendix, Note 5.

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Indeed, far from encouraging a fanatical attitude regarding the consumption of flesh-foods, a Master has said in effect that at the present stage of evolution there are many whose Karma does not permit of abstention from meat altogether, for they are not entitled to the type of body which makes such abstention advisable. Nevertheless, he went on to say, "scientific vegetarianism is the diet we envisage for the future."

The reasons are as follows and should be emphasized: that meat-eating tends not only to poison the physical, but also to coarsen the *etheric* and *astral bodies*. This being so, the higher type of souls desirous of re-incarnating have difficulty in finding untainted bodies suitable to their stage of evolution. Further there is, of course, the humanitarian aspect to be taken into account: for naturally the Lords of Compassion, as the Masters are often and aptly called, deprecate the killing of animals. Indeed, the day is not very far hence when the slaughter and eating of "our younger brothers in evolution" will be regarded as one of the barbaric customs of a less enlightened age. Meanwhile those individuals whose physical equipment permits of their eliminating meat altogether from their dietary are assuredly making good Karma, and by their self-discipline and example are drawing attention to the ideal which the Masters have set before us.

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And here it may not be out of place to consider the sidelight which Occultism throws upon the most

dreaded disease of the age. Firstly, the fruits of occult investigation do not endorse the contention of some vegetarians that cancer is due to meat-eating *per se*. Dr. Forbes Ross was far nearer the truth when he wrote that cancer was caused by a deficiency of certain of those inorganic salts which we have previously mentioned. He pointed out that a diet which consisted wholly of meat, boiled vegetables (of which all the valuable salts were thrown away in the water) white bread and tea, was not only conducive to constipation and hence toxemia, but was highly deficient in potash, the particular salt most essential to the maintenance of healthy cell-life. All the cancer patients who consulted him had lived on such a diet. The meat item was not responsible for the disease, but the fact that they ate no raw fruit—of which apples are the most important because rich in potash—no salads, no whole-meal bread. Dr. Forbes Ross opposed the medical dogma that cancer was an incurable disease, and had good reasons for so doing, since he contrived to cure a certain number of patients by administering potash and correcting their diet. Dr. Bell also opposed this dogma, and maintained that cancer was caused by an *unnatural* nutrition. Homeopaths have many cures of cancer patients to their credit,¹ the practitioners of Abrams Electronic Reactions have also a certain number. Last century L. Kuhne in Leipsic cured cases of cancer by means of diet and a particular type of hydropathy.

We have no wish to be uncharitable, but for the

¹ See J. Ellis Barker, *Miracles of Healing*. Also his books, *Cancer and Cancer: The Surgeon and the Researcher*.

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sake of truth it should be noted that the dogma as regards the incurability of cancer (unless by the knife) prevails simply because it cannot be cured by the orthodox profession. Moreover this dogma is harmful, because it induces an attitude of utter hopelessness in the patient, which militates against a possible cure.

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And now what light can Occultism throw on malignancy? We have already referred to cancer in connection with Karma, but in this chapter dealing with Therapeutics we may be more explicit, and also consider the more occult aspects of the disease itself.

Strictly speaking, cancer is not, as clairvoyant investigation has shown, an exclusively physical disease. In all cases of malignancy, a crab-like parasite composed of subtle matter may be seen by those who possess the necessary faculties. This parasite is an "elemental" which the patient has created in a previous life, either deliberately, if he practised black magic, to harm his fellows, or else as the result of powerful cruelty-impregnated emotions. Having once been created, it persists and eventually attaches itself to the *etheric body* of its creator, whose Karma it becomes to absorb it and transmute it through suffering. After the patient's death it disintegrates with the physical and *etheric bodies*, but should he die before it has been absorbed and transmuted, then it sometimes lingers on in the house where he has suffered. This is the occult cause of so termed "cancer-houses," for it subse-

quently attacks those whose Karma it is to die of the same dread disease. It should be noted that in cases of non-malignant growths, this parasite is not observable. It should further be noted that cases of cancer have yielded to certain forms of "spiritual treatment," the reason being that by spiritual means the parasitic elemental can sometimes be disintegrated. And although physicians to their own satisfaction have explained the cure away by the usual catch-phrase "a wrong diagnosis," occultists have good reasons for disagreeing with them. If the cause of a disease is partly a non-physical one, it is quite logical to treat it by non-physical means. If physical means are employed as well, *viz.* : diet and other treatments calculated to eliminate toxins from the system, so much the better, as we have already implied. Indeed, no cancer parasite can attach itself to a perfectly healthy organism, but only to one vitiated by chronic constipation,¹ wrong feeding, syphilitic taint, or the persistent harbouring of the worst type of emotions. And in saying this there is no contradiction involved. To maintain that if people lived in reasonable accordance with Nature's laws they could avoid the dreaded scourge, is to maintain nothing incompatible with the doctrine of Karma. The very fact that multitudes of people are ignorant of Nature's laws is a karmic effect in itself. Nevertheless all persons who break these laws are not destined to die of a malignant disease, for the simple reason that all persons have not incurred that specific Karma, or have already paid it off in some previous life.

¹ See *Cancer*, by J. Ellis Barker.

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It is a fact known to occultists that long ago the Masters decided that during the last quarter of each century certain phases of knowledge, scientific or occult, should be given out to Mankind. Thus we note that Theosophy, Christian Science and Spiritualism all had their inception during the last quarter of the previous century. But among these was also Psycho-Analysis. As man evolves it becomes increasingly essential for him to follow the requirements of that ancient maxim "know thyself"; he must behold himself as he really is in all his moral nakedness; and largely for this reason the science of Psycho-Analysis was inaugurated. Its value as a therapeutical agent is undeniable, but we are here more concerned with the change of outlook it has effected. It has for one thing been instrumental in creating a much wider tolerance towards sex-relations and consequently in dispelling that attitude of intense hypocrisy which prevailed in the Victorian and post-Victorian era. It has shown that sex cannot merely be disposed of as something "inherently sinful and impure" as the Victorians imagined, but that it is a powerful force which requires to be analysed and fully comprehended, and which if merely suppressed or tabooed instead of honestly confronted, may lead, directly or indirectly, to serious pathological conditions. This fact, with consummate moral courage, clearly and forcibly, yet without the least bombast, Professor Freud presented to his horrified medical colleagues. Horrified, because, be it remembered, so completely

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was any discussion of sex tabooed in those days, that mothers even refrained from enlightening their daughters as to what marriage entailed. The result, as people are well aware, was that many a bride received a shock on her marriage night which not only made sexual relations repellent to her for the rest of her life, but, in many cases aroused an active dislike of her husband. As, among other things, this state of affairs had by some means to be counteracted, this new branch of therapeutics was put forward, which would substitute truth for hypocrisy and self-delusion. That much lauded yet fatal "innocence" of so-termed "nice" women had henceforth unblushingly to be called ignorance and had to be dispelled; while members of both sexes who suffered from lesbian or homosexual proclivities had thereafter not to be regarded as "depraved lovers of vice," but as patients to be treated and, when possible, cured.

And yet, as on the relative plane there is no good without a certain amount of evil, self-indulgent people are prone to exploit certain of these psycho-analytical ideas as an excuse for promiscuity. They are so obsessed by the notion that they must "have no repressions," that the virtue of moderation is persistently ignored. This from the occult standpoint is to be deprecated. Persons who go so far as to make a hobby of sexuality, waste an amount of force which can be employed to render the body and mind better instruments for the soul. It is not a question of ethics but of conserving energy; a fact which those who aim at speeding up their evolution should bear in mind.

Yet Psycho-Analysis has of course done more than teach a purblind section of the human race to see sex in its true perspective ; its tabulation and exposure of certain undesirable attributes in human character will materially if gradually help towards their eradication. If, for example, offensively domineering men or women who pride themselves on their force of personality, come to know that they are merely suffering from a *power-complex*, the wound to their vanity may prove painful enough to galvanize them into endeavouring to overcome it. Whatever we may have thought to the contrary, there is a certain magic in a name which, if the mixed metaphor be excused, hits the nail exactly on the head. Certain persons may surreptitiously enjoy suffering from a physical disease with a grandiloquent medical name because it serves to draw attention to themselves, but on the other hand they are chary of suffering from a moral disease which tends to make them look ridiculous. It is hardly too much to say that the invention of the term *power-complex* was a stroke of genius, seeing that love of power is one of the most insidious failings, as also one of the greatest stumbling blocks to spiritual evolution.

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In spite of what Psycho-Analysis has achieved, it is still none the less a young science, and its practice not unfraught with certain dangers. Its practitioners not being endowed with psychic vision—although of course there may be exceptions—they are to a certain extent working in the dark. There, is for

instance, the danger of probing so deeply into the patient's subconscious that memories pertaining to past lives, which were best left dormant, are brought to the surface. The result may have a deleterious effect on the patient's mind or emotional organism. There is such a thing as being over-psycho-analysed, an eventuality that would not occur if the analyst were clairvoyant enough to perceive when the patient had had as much as he or she could stand. In any case the analyst can only do a certain amount for the analysand, the rest involves upon the analysand himself. To put it tersely, the analyst can analyse but the patient alone can synthesize. When the various streams of energy, so to express it, have been let loose, *i.e.* when the repressions have been liberated, then, unless the patient is endowed with the essential force of character to utilize that energy, or in psycho-analytical terms, to sublimate it, undesirable results may accrue. But in the light of Occultism one thing is certain; only when the patient's Karma permits can he or she be cured by psycho-analysis or any other means.

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A few words may be added in regard to the future. A Master has said that "when the subconscious mind has yielded up all its secrets and is *entirely* under the control of the *will*," then all those functions of the physical body which now work subconsciously will also come under voluntary control. For example, man will consciously be able to control his digestion, his heart-beats and so forth, just as certain Indian

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Yogis, though by somewhat different methods, are able to do at the present time. If there is not enough vital force in one part of the body, a man will know how to supply it by an effort of will. The advantages of such a power are obvious, seeing that they will reduce the ravages of disease to a minimum. Many maladies are due to congestion, and the latter is furthermore a symptom of many maladies as physicians are aware. Congestion obstructs the flow of the vital forces, and therapeutical measures have to be employed to reduce it ; but when all parts of the body are brought under control of the will, congestion will be prevented.

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A word may here be added with regard to the value of astrology in connection with healing. We do not propose to deal extensively with this vast subject which is the key to so many mysteries of human character and destiny. Suffice it here to say that to the perceptive astrologer, the horoscope of an individual gives clear indications as to the type of disease from which he is liable to suffer and the type of cure most likely to be efficacious. With regard to Psycho-Analysis in particular, the position of the planets and the signs in which they are placed, would show whether the analysand would be likely to benefit from the process, whether, that is to say, he possessed the requisite power to " sublimate " or not. When it is more generally recognized that the science of astrology can shed light upon even the most abstruse medical problems, and it is used with that

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end in view, the percentage of cures in all domains will be materially increased. That this, however, is a development of the future rather than of the present day, should be obvious from our previous dissertation on the subject of personal Karma with regard to disease.

CHAPTER XVII

THE "LORD OF CIVILIZATION" AND HIS WORK

AT the beginning of this section we mentioned the three great Officials who stand at the head of the Inner Government of our world—the Manu, the World-Teacher and the Mahachohan, who is called the "Lord of Civilization." The first is concerned with racial evolution, the second with religions, the third with the rise and fall of nations. "His work," as summed up by Mrs. Bailey, "concerns itself with the fostering and strengthening of that relation between spirit and matter, life and form, the self and the not-self, which results in what we call civilization."¹ As the World-Teacher deals mostly with the Love-Wisdom aspect of Life, the Mahachohan may be said to deal mostly with the Mind aspect, as typified by science and metaphysical knowledge. But He who holds the position of Mahachohan is also the great "Keeper of the Records" relating to the evolutionary processes of our earth; moreover all the activities of the other members of the Hierarchy come under his direction and supervision.

The present Mahachohan, who occupies a Southern Indian body, has filled the office for several hundred years, and He has aptly been described as "He to whose insight the future lies like an open page," to

¹ See A. A. Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solari*.

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which should be added " so likewise does the past." Bearing in mind that the Mahachohan is called the " Lord of Civilization," a cursory backward glance over the special characteristics of certain by-gone civilizations may be instructive in this connection.

If we turn to the Ancient Aryan civilization and culture, we find the most significant and immortal products of the latter were those subtle metaphysical systems of Indian philosophy which, even though certain of their aspects are unsuited to the Occident, have never been surpassed. Later on we come to the Egyptian civilization with its specific characteristics. As the Ancient Aryans had cultivated subtle metaphysical thought, the Egyptians cultivated magic. Occultly considered, whereas the Indians had, so to say, explored the high spiritual planes, the Egyptians explored the *astral plane*. In their Mysteries the neophyte learned how to leave his body and experience *astral* consciousness. Thus the Egyptians may be termed practical occultists in contradistinction to mystics. But towards the decline of their civilization their magic deteriorated and, becoming tainted with superstition, was often employed for evil ends. Numerous souls incarnated to-day are paying off bad Karma which they generated in Egypt through the improper use of magic.¹ We may mention *en passant* that so many ancient Egyptian objects are " unlucky " because impregnated with the evil magnetism resulting from such practices.

In the Greek civilization which followed that of Egypt, we find the cultivation and appreciation of Beauty as its chief characteristic. Thus, regarding

¹ See H. K. Challoner, *The Flaming Wheel*.

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these great civilizations in retrospect, we note that the two former ones were more concerned with the super-physical planes than with the material, while the latter was largely concerned with the æsthetic aspects of the physical plane.

It was left for European civilization to achieve what has been termed "the conquest of matter." As men "cannot live on bread alone," neither can they live alone on "things of the spirit," on magic and on Beauty. All these phases were necessary to man in his evolution through the ages, but all of them possessed certain limitations and drawbacks. But so also does over pre-occupation with the physical plane, in a word, materialism. We have conquered matter, but we have metaphorically murdered the Goddess of Beauty. Some of our industrial towns are infernos on earth, and materialistic science has robbed thousands even of the idea of a prospective heaven. Nevertheless the conquest of matter was expedient to bring about that all-round development which is essential to the perfecting of man. And the next and most important step is for him to correlate spirit and matter.

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And now to consider the present, and the activities of the Mahachohan as regards national development and national Karma.

We have arrived at a very important stage in evolution when the world as a whole is passing from one age to another. Astrologically stated, we are passing from the Pisces Age, which has lasted some

. *“ The Lord of Civilization ”*

two thousand years, to that of the Aquarian, with its own particular characteristics. These characteristics, which require to be recognized, naturally involve certain adaptations political and religious on the part of Mankind. For instance, attempts to continue, or worse still, to revive say, religious methods suited to previous centuries, can only prove abortive in the long run. Religious ideas, ceremonial, political ideas making for narrow nationalism instead of internationalism, all require to be adjusted to the new era. This we already implied when dealing with the prognostications of “ The Thibetan ” ; but we may here be more explicit and consider our own country, England, in this connection. For undoubtedly England is now at a turning-point when her racial life-forces are undergoing a distinct process of re-polarization. Her period of expansion, and hence colonization is now ended, and her karmic obligations demand that Home Rule be given to one country after another which has previously been under her dominion.

All this was of course foreseen by the Mahachohan, and hence we find that in England a new type of individual has of late been incarnating with a much greater capacity than his forbears to turn inwards and comprehend subjective problems associated with the higher planes. Such individuals are watched over by the English Masters who work under the instructions of the Mahachohan and who are especially in charge of our nation. These Masters themselves have had perforce to make certain adaptations to the changing conditions. Indeed, one whose line of activity was more suited to the passing Age is

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transferring his attention to other work, while his Brother, whose consciousness is more attuned to the cycle of the immediate future, is as far as possible guiding those of the younger generation who are sufficiently sensitive to benefit thereby. But it should be noted that the task of inspiring and guiding the advance-guard of the race is all in preparation for a special mission which England is destined to fulfil in the future. This mission, however, could not materialize until she had wiped out karmic debts by freely permitting self-government to those countries she had dominated. Looked at from the materialistic point of view, such a policy may arouse criticism, but regarded from the occult standpoint it is a gesture which will have far-reaching spiritual consequences.

PART IV
PRACTICAL OCCULTISM

CHAPTER XVIII

CLAIRVOYANCE CRITICALLY CONSIDERED

It is not . . . difficult for us to grasp the possibility of a steady and progressive extension of our senses, so that both by sight and by hearing we may be able to appreciate vibrations far higher and far lower than those which are ordinarily recognized.

We are constantly assured . . . that . . . these higher faculties are presently to be the heritage of mankind in general—that the capacity of clairvoyance, for example, lies latent in every one, and that those in whom it already manifests itself are simply in that one particular a little in advance of the rest of us.

The average man has so little real will that he is very much the creature of circumstances; his action in previous lives places him amid certain surroundings, and their influence upon him is so very much the most important factor in his life-history that his future course may be predicted with almost mathematical certainty. With the developed man the case is different; for him also the main events of life are arranged by his past actions, but the way in which he will allow them to affect him, the methods by which he will deal with them and perhaps triumph over them—these are all his own, and they cannot be foreseen . . . except as probabilities.

C. W. LEADBEATER, *Clairvoyance*.

WE have frequently made allusion to clairvoyant investigation. We have also pointed out in the earlier pages of this book that a judicious use of the critical faculty is expedient where Occultism is concerned, just as it is expedient in relation to other branches of knowledge. This being so, it is advisable to examine the faculty of clairvoyance in a scientific spirit, that we may be able to differentiate the higher types from the lower and the more reliable from the less reliable.

Now the faculty of clairvoyance as such depends

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upon the stimulation of certain centres in the *etheric body*, which are in turn co-related to the pituitary body and the pineal gland.

The lowest type is that with which most people are familiar ; it usually consists in foretelling the future and is commonly known as "second sight." Owing to its unreliability it has served, in the eyes of complete sceptics, to bring all psychic faculties into disrepute, especially if exercised as a profession. And even those who do not dismiss it as beneath consideration, are frequently puzzled by its curious admixture of accuracy and inaccuracy.

Yet to the student of Higher Occultism these features are less puzzling than to the layman ; for there is a very definite reason why at this stage of evolution individual man is not permitted *accurately* to foresee or foreknow the future. In the words of one of the Masters, "it would render him too negative." As man evolves through making efforts and may learn to acquire such useful qualities as patience and a philosophical attitude if those efforts prove abortive, it would be most inexpedient for him to possess certitude as regards coming events. Who would work towards a given end if he knew it was foredoomed to failure ? But this is one of those very obvious things so often overlooked because it is so obvious. People visit clairvoyants in the hope of hearing something pleasant and then complain if their prophecies do not come true. Nevertheless the more high-minded types of professional clairvoyants who genuinely desire to help their clients should not merely be dismissed as "cheap fortune tellers." There have been occasions when their

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advice and prognostications have proved very useful. Even the Masters themselves in exceptional circumstances have been known to use them as a mouth-piece to give advice or suggest a course of action to prospective pupils not sensitive enough to receive such suggestions direct.

We have given the prime reason why an accurate foretelling of the future of individuals is not permitted, but this does not explain to the lay reader one or two points familiar and obvious to occultists. For instance, why do some prognostications prove correct and others entirely false? The best way to understand this is by means of a simple analogy. Let us imagine an aviator in a low-flying aeroplane. Beneath him he can see four roads which all come together at what is termed the crossroads. Now from his vantage point he can estimate fairly accurately when the various pedestrians walking towards the cross-roads will meet. This, of course, he gauges from the speed at which they are moving. Now let us suppose that he could shout down to one of those pedestrians telling him that in a given space of time he would meet another pedestrian who from a different direction was also heading for the crossroads, and then having described him, flew away from the scene altogether. What would be likely to happen? His prognostication would prove correct, provided nothing unforeseen occurred to prevent its fulfilment. But the second pedestrian might take it into his head to leave the high road and wander across the fields, or he might sit down for a rest, in which case either they would never meet at all or their meeting would be delayed because the one had

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lingered on the road. And again, supposing that the aviator's prognostication involved several persons, it might prove correct in part but not in its entirety. One of those persons might linger to pick flowers, another might stop at a way-side inn, and so forth ; eventualities on which our hypothetical aviator had not reckoned. The foregoing illustration is trite and can only be an approximate one, but it may serve to show that " second sight " is simply a form of more comprehensive vision which, so to say, commands an unusually extensive view of *probabilities*. For probabilities they are, and not certainties. Indeed how could they be, seeing that man is endowed with a measure of free will ? Moreover, the further evolved the soul, the more free will does he possess, which explains the reason—not generally known—why clairvoyants can more accurately foretell the future of some individuals than of others. The life-plan of the average soul is fairly straightforward, but it is otherwise with advanced ones. For instance, a pupil of one of the Masters who suffered, owing to a karmic debt, from a debilitating malady, was told by a clairvoyant that because he had an important piece of work to perform in conjunction with some other persons, he would be cured. These persons, however, defaulted, the work never materialized, neither was he cured. What the clairvoyant saw was the plan as it originally stood. The pupil was afterwards told by his Master that because his prospective co-workers had defaulted and consequently the work could not be accomplished, his higher self had taken the opportunity to work off more bad Karma through the continuance of ill-health.

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Before passing on to other considerations, we may add that in attempting to foretell events, one of the main difficulties is that of distinguishing between what is subjective and what is objective; in other words what is merely a thought-form in contradistinction to a prospective event. For example, people visit clairvoyants in the hope of discovering how a given situation will turn out; they are often amazed and delighted at the accuracy with which that situation is described, and still more delighted or depressed when its outcome is foreseen as being more or less that which was hoped or feared. Nevertheless, the actual course of events proves the prophecy to have been fallacious. The reason is obvious. The client had created strong thought-images of the situation, which enabled the clairvoyant to describe it correctly; other powerful thought-forms of desire or fear had also been created, and, as often happens in the case of psychics lacking in the requisite training and discrimination, were misinterpreted as those "coming events," which, in accordance with the well-known quotation "cast their shadows before them."

We see then that this type of clairvoyance is beset with snares and delusions, and it here should be noted that largely for this reason the Masters do not encourage its development in their pupils. It is a species of psychic faculty usually inherited, rather than one acquired through special training. Indeed, many who possess it are not interested in Occultism *per se*, and some of them take no steps to improve its

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quality and render it more accurate. They are somewhat analogous to certain amateur musicians who can play the piano by ear, but will not take the trouble to learn their notes. Their playing may give a degree of pleasure, but is almost invariably inaccurate.

§

The power to see Auras is another aspect of clairvoyance either inherited or acquired by training. The human aura which we have mentioned elsewhere, is indicative both of health and character. There may be sceptics who try to explain away its more occult significance by claiming that it is merely an emanation from the physical body. This assumption, however, is erroneous on the face of it, for why should a body composed of blood, bone and tissue emanate all the colours of the rainbow? Why should yellow preponderate in the aura of an intellectual man or woman, blue in that of the devotional type, a lurid muddy red in that of the sensual type, and so forth? These questions the sceptic does not attempt to answer.

The capacity to read the aura correctly, requires much training, because for one reason, the more evolved the soul the more complex the character. As in palmistry the significance of one line may modify that of another—indeed some hands appear to be a mass of contradictions—so may it be with the interpretation of the aura and its colours. To be a perfect seer, it is not merely essential to be a good clairvoyant, but also a good psychologist, and

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it is perhaps because many clairvoyantly gifted persons rely too much on their clairvoyance alone that they often prove to be such *bad* psychologists. Sometimes, however, their mistakes are due to an innate kindness of heart, which renders them mistrustful of their own faculties where people of whom they are fond are concerned. They may see certain unpleasant characteristics in a given person's aura, but because he has other characteristics which charm them, they prefer to think their own clairvoyance at fault, rather than admit what they do not wish to admit. Moreover, persons with histrionic powers temporarily and automatically change their auras and so delude the unwary clairvoyant. To read character perfectly it is essential to possess that more exalted type of clairvoyance which enables the seer to perceive the higher self.

The power to see auras often goes hand in hand with the capacity to perceive the little nature-spirits, such as the fairies, gnomes and undines; but apart from the testimony which this power gives regarding their existence and the evolution of which they form a part, it is of no special significance. We shall allude to this again, if briefly, in another connection.

§

As implied in a previous chapter, a clairvoyant may focus his vision on the *astral plane* and perceive its characteristics and inhabitants, including the *astral bodies* of those who have passed over. This, of course, is an advantage, but as against it, there are

on the lower substrata of the *astral plane* a number of unpleasant elementals and thought-forms which may prove alarming and even harmful to weak-willed clairvoyants who do not know how to protect themselves. This shows, by the way, yet another reason why all-round development is desirable. But the unreliability of certain types of communication, which may emanate from entities on the *astral plane*, is the chief disadvantage connected with this type of psychism. Because *astral* matter is so fluidic, entities on that plane can appear in any form they like to assume. This being so, they will sometimes delude the unwary into believing they are great souls when they are very much the reverse. Possessed of a power-complex, they sometimes impart entirely false occult knowledge or give injudicious advice. Sometimes they even masquerade as Masters, the more to impress the uninitiated clairvoyant who goes by their appearance only, and has not acquired the higher faculty of differentiating between inherently spiritual vibrations and merely *astral* ones. This capacity indeed requires long training and is not necessarily associated with psychic vision at all, though vision is usually added to it later. It is a process of stilling and raising the mind to a high plane above the *astral*, and then holding oneself receptive to impressions which may emanate from the higher self, the more exalted type of *devas*, or from one or other of the Masters themselves.¹ By this means the vibrations of lesser-evolved entities cannot impinge on the mind.

¹ See David Anrias, *Through the Eyes of the Masters*. Introduction.

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And now let us briefly consider what is the perfect type of clairvoyance: it is the power to perceive and comprehend all the subtler planes of Nature (not simultaneously, of course) plus the capacity to discriminate between the actual and the illusory.

Now there are quite a number of clairvoyants possessing *etheric*, *astral* and *mental* clairvoyance, whose vision is perfectly reliable as long as they are using it as an instrument of scientific investigation, but as soon as any personal element intrudes, they not infrequently go astray. Clairvoyance is so subtle a faculty that unless its practitioners are, at any rate, temporarily quite impersonal, their vision may become coloured by their personal beliefs¹ and inclinations. As this has occasionally happened in the case of occult societies, a certain confusion has arisen between the teachings of one society and those of another. To obviate this in the future, the tendency among those occultists who possess a genuine desire to impart accurate knowledge will be to form themselves into groups, however small, that in accordance with true scientific methods the various members may check the results of each others' investigations. Such groups will be purely private; there will be no president nor leader nor anything of an official nature among them. As they will have no desire to draw attention to themselves as groups, some of their members will write under pseudonyms, others not,

¹ This we noticed in the case of Swedenborg, who despite his clairvoyance omitted the factor of reincarnation in his teachings.

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according to the wishes of the Masters. In any case, members of the outside world who may read their respective books will have no idea that their authors are in any way linked together, and there will be no object in publishing the fact.

One such group is already in existence and the present author deals with some of the knowledge which it has been enabled him to obtain from the Masters, and which its various members have checked so as to obviate any inaccuracies in the transmission. Since, however, it is an outline of Occultism, much of its material is, of course, already familiar to and accepted by students belonging to Theosophical and other schools. The foregoing, however, is merely mentioned to emphasize the fact that clairvoyance and scientific methods, far from being incompatible, are essential to the promulgation of occult truth.

§

There is further that type of clairvoyance known as reading the "memory of Nature," a faculty we mentioned in reference to Mme. Blavatsky. This power undoubtedly exists, but is very difficult to explain, for it is associated with a plane so remote from the material that physical-plane language is totally inadequate to describe it. We can, however, deal with its lower and more easily comprehensible aspects.

Every object or form possesses an *astral* counterpart, which persists for a long time after the form itself has fallen into decay. For instance, the *astral* counterpart of a castle which may now be in ruins is

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a perfect replica of the castle in its original state. Or again the *astral* counterpart of a bridge which no longer exists is still perceptible in *astral* matter. We may here mention that a clairvoyant friend of the author's who once visited Rome greatly astounded the guide of the party by describing certain parts of that great city as they formerly were instead of as they now are. He remarked on her phenomenal knowledge of Roman history; yet in point of fact she possessed none; she merely saw the astral counterparts of buildings, bridges and arches that no longer exist on the physical plane.

Psychometry is sometimes associated with the power to read the "Memory of Nature." By holding some ancient relic or object in the hands, proficient psychometrists may clairvoyantly behold scenes enacted hundreds of years ago. But although the existence of this faculty is now recognized by many scientists, no reasonable explanation of it has been put forward. Moreover, when students of Occultism have sought for enlightenment on the subject the Masters have implied that it is not possible for any but High Initiates to comprehend it at our present stage of evolution.

Yet if this power to contact the remote past is bewildering; is not that of beholding the far-distant future much more so?

§

We stated in our last chapter that before the eyes of the Lord of Civilization "the future lies like an open page," but to explain the rationale of such

absolute prevision is quite impossible. Moreover, the question at once arises : " How is it compatible with free will ? " And yet in putting such a question we must always remember that free will is only partial. Let us say, for example, that a man of his own free will elects to sail from Liverpool to New York on a pleasure trip. Now in mid-ocean he naturally cannot go to the captain and say : " I have changed my mind, kindly steam back to England." Having once made a choice, albeit of his own free will, he has to abide by the consequences of his choice and its attendant restrictions. That choice may enable him to pass his time in a variety of pleasant ways on the liner and so use his free will within limitations, but he cannot leave the liner itself.

And now let us consider this analogy, not in connection with human will but with the Supreme Being and His Plan.

As we have implied throughout this book, the Divine Will has conceived a Plan of evolution, and those who assist in carrying it out on our earth are the High Initiates whom we call Masters. Now it stands to reason that they who thus assist must know, at any rate, those portions of that Plan with which they are specially concerned. Thus, why should not the very Highest among them be cognisant of the Plan in its entirety ? If we admit this possibility, then the absolute prevision of the Mahachohan is partly explained. We say partly, since although the foregoing may offer a reason *why* he may know the Great Plan, it does not explain *how* he may know it ; and although there do exist certain occult

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explanations, they are too recondite to be put forward in these pages.

It will be readily conceded that a Plan of such enormous magnitude offers wellnigh infinite possibilities for the play of individual free will without frustrating the Plan as a whole. Its fulfilment is a question of Time. Because individuals possess a measure of free will they are in a position either ignorantly or wilfully to oppose this Plan, but such opposition can only react unfavourably on themselves and not intrinsically affect the Plan itself. For instance, should the hypothetical traveller we mentioned be foolish enough to try and interfere with the orderly management of the ship, on which of his own free will he has elected to sail, he would merely be overpowered and have to suffer the penalty. With the rest of the passengers he would, of course, ultimately reach his destination, but in the meantime his passage would not be a pleasant one. Now, as one individual cannot materially interfere with a small plan as typified by the sailing of a ship from one port to another, neither in proportion can numbers of individuals interfere with the Great Plan, for they have neither the knowledge nor the power. But they can oppose to a limited extent or delay the carrying out of certain details of that plan, in which case the consequences are foreseen by the Mahachohan and adjustments made under His direction and guidance. We see then, the absolute necessity for the type of Prevision with which He is endowed, even if we utterly fail to understand it.

§

Before concluding this chapter on clairvoyance, or psychic perception, a few words may be added in relation to the future.

Although the Intuition does not usually come under the heading of psychic perception, it is in a sense a kindred faculty and one of a high order. The development of this faculty will be one of the features in a subsidiary part of the Plan which the Masters have envisaged. Although it will, of course, take centuries before the bulk of humanity can perfect this power, a number of souls advanced enough to incarnate in the new sub-race now in process of being formed, will be pronouncedly intuitive. The use of the intuition will not only mean a great saving of time, but will enable man to gain knowledge of those "things of the spirit," which can never be reasoned about, but only *known*.

Yet this is but one of the developments which the Masters have outlined for the future of our civilization. Mankind is destined to evolve a composite faculty which, although it comprises clairvoyance, is best described as a more pronounced state of "awareness." At present the ordinary individual is only aware of the physical plane and of his thoughts and emotions. Eventually he is to become aware of the super-physical planes as well. He will, for example, not only see the landscape he happens to be contemplating, but its replica on the *astral plane*, together with the *devas* on the mountains, the undines in the waterfalls or rivers and the various nature-spirits in the trees and flowers.

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And as regards sleep. To-day only the highly trained occultist can accurately *remember* his experiences on the higher planes when he returns to his body in the morning. For normal individuals there appears to be a complete cessation of consciousness between night and dawn. The reason is for one thing, that they have not learnt to leave and return to their body through the head-centre *where the brain is*, and consequently the memory does not come into play between the higher planes and the physical. Thus it is not really a question of loss of consciousness, but simply of loss of memory. As during the last few hundred years mankind, or at any rate a portion of it, have been learning to function during sleep in their *astral bodies*, in future they will learn to bring the memory of their experiences through to the waking state. This will dispel the illusion that sleep is a condition of unconsciousness, and, what is more, will rob death of its terrors and bereavement of its sorrows. In point of fact there will be no such thing as bereavement any more, for people will only require to fall asleep in order to reach that plane to which their loved ones have passed after death. Many people as implied, are able during sleep to do this even now, but as they cannot *remember*, death is still associated with the painful idea of separation. Although an ever increasing number of individuals actually lead a life in two worlds—one during the day in their physical body and another during the night in their *subtle* body—they are totally unaware of the fact unless some student of Occultism has enlightened them; in which case they may believe, but do not

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actually *know*. This direct knowledge they will acquire in the future. The simile is trite, but just as a business-man leads two sorts of existence, one in his office and one with his family at home, yet his memory of each remains intact, so in a higher sense will it be with the individual and his two kinds of existence in the future. Nor does the simile end here. As the business-man although while in his office may get into telephonic communication with his home and family, so the individual of the future while on the physical plane will be able to get into telepathic communication with his loved ones on the higher planes.

But we may add that long prior to the time when these faculties will have become part of man's general equipment, an apparatus will have been invented of so delicate a nature that entities on the "Other Side" will be able to employ it to communicate with their friends on earth. Thus at long last the bridging of the gulf between the world of the embodied and the disembodied will have been scientifically achieved.

CHAPTER XIX

THE PATHWAY TOWARDS ATTAINMENT

As gold or silver, first covered with earth, and then burned and washed, shines full of light, so the embodied man seeing the truth of the Supreme Soul as one, attains the goal and becomes sorrowless.

SVETASVATARA UPANISHAD.

To bring this outline of Occultism to its conclusion without giving the reader some ideas in regard to the *practice* of Occultism would be to leave our task incomplete. We may have succeeded in persuading him that the Masters of Wisdom exist as definite realities, but so far we have not been explicit as to the *modus operandi* essential to contact them *consciously*. For, that many people working along various cultural lines contact them *unconsciously* we have pointed out in numerous passages of this book. True, as we implied in the introductory chapters, there may be many readers who will be content merely to regard Occult Science, with its doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation as a plausible philosophy of life, and whilst accepting it as such, may have no desire actually to tread the Path, with all the effort involved. On the other hand, the more venturesome may not be content with theory and may possess a laudable thirst for first-hand knowledge. To these the material in this concluding chapter is addressed. Such readers will constitute themselves students of Occultism and will be considered as such together with the present writer who in no sense

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regards himself in any higher light. His qualifications for writing this book are merely obvious ones, viz. : that he has spent thirty years studying many branches of Occultism including Indian Yoga, and consequently that he has had more time to acquire a certain amount of knowledge than one who, without any unflattering aspersion, may be termed a novice. The fact that he is a musician may, it is true, cause some people who still regard Occult Science as a form of mystery-mongering, to think he has been side-tracked by "its very doubtful allurements," but these people, on the face of it, are unaware that Occultism is compatible with any profession and vice versa ; a fact we have implied in the previous pages. And especially is this the case with music, the most occult of all the arts. Thus whatever other apologies the writer has to make, he does not apologize for combining the pursuit of Occultism with that of musical composition ; for the right study of Occult Science undoubtedly assists the creative faculty.

§

Let us first clearly understand that the goal of practical Occultism is an expansion of consciousness with its essential concomitant, unconditional *happiness*. Now we are aware that puritanical souls exist who repudiate the idea that happiness *in this world* should be the aim of humanity. But these people delude themselves, for however we may try to get round the fact "*the incentive to all action is the pursuit of happiness.*" The merchant who slaves all his life

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to acquire wealth, does so either because he finds happiness in endeavouring to make money or thinks to find it in the possession of money itself. The profligate, the drug-fiend, the idler, the incessant worker, all are pursuing happiness in their own way. The miser who clutches at his money is pursuing happiness, and the spendthrift who wastes his money is pursuing happiness. The proud woman who is hard and unyielding is pursuing happiness through pride, and the woman who longs to have every man at her feet is pursuing happiness through her vanity. Indeed, even those people who enjoy being miserable are pursuing happiness in a perverted way. And if we reverse the statement and say that many people are merely seeking to avoid unhappiness, that does not contradict the fundamental truth. The man who chooses to become a clerk and sit in an office all day may do so to avoid having to become a labourer, but even in attempting to avoid such a contingency he is pursuing happiness, although together with countless others, he may not succeed in finding it.

This being so, the occultist maintains that all that energy and misdirected effort to find happiness by wrong methods might be employed to find it by right ones, and what is more, to find not the conditional transient form of happiness which the majority pursue, but that Unconditional Happiness which is the birthright of every human being, and is coincident with an alteration and expansion of consciousness. For whereas conditioned happiness is an emotion which must sooner or later subside when those external circumstances change which

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called it forth, Unconditional Happiness is a state of consciousness, the attainment of which depends entirely on man himself, and his own individual efforts. This does not imply, of course, that external guidance is unnecessary—in a word that the Masters are superfluous, as some teachers and writers have asserted. Their contention may be true in the abstract, but does not prove so in practice. For although he who wishes to look at the view from a mountain-top can and *must* climb the mountain himself, he can none the less climb it more easily and the sooner with the help of a guide.

§

Thus we come to the all important question ; how are these guides to be contacted ? The first prerequisite is a change of *attitude* towards life itself. The foolish waste much energy either in trying to alter others with whom they are associated or in complaining that others cannot be altered ; but the wise endeavour to alter themselves, they change their attitude towards that which cannot be obviated. This is one piece of wisdom which the student requires to learn. But he must also learn to realize in a very definite sense that he is not an isolated unit living for himself alone and for a few individuals he may love, but that he is a living factor in the great Evolutionary Scheme. The realization of this will in itself transform his attitude from one of comparative selfishness to one of unselfishness, the degree of the latter being dependent on the intensity of that realization.

Now there are so many misconceptions regarding

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the word unselfishness that the very sight of it in print is enough to antagonize some people and cause them to infer that the writer is "preaching at them." They look upon unselfishness as something connected with the doing of things inherently unpleasant, for the benefit of others. Let us emphasize, therefore, that unselfishness as here understood is first and foremost that attitude of mind we have previously stressed. It does not necessarily imply a change in mode of living at all, and certainly does not imply self-martyrdom. The honest business-man in this sense can be as unselfish in his own way as the "earnest worker" who spends all his time in philanthropic endeavour. He has merely to realize that as commerce is a necessary factor in the evolutionary scheme and contributes to its working and fulfilment he, in his turn, is a necessary factor in commerce and he aspires to contribute to the good and orderly working of commerce as a whole. This change of attitude is compatible with all walks of life. The artist who paints his pictures solely for art's sake may paint them with the added idea of contributing to the general beauty of life in its entirety. The singer who appears on the platform, instead of worrying as to how much her performance will add to her reputation, may aspire to be used by the higher powers to elevate her audience. In countless ways this change of attitude can be applied by the student of Occultism, no matter what his or her profession or line of activity. Briefly stated, it is the "spirit of service" and is exhibited by all on the Path from the most modest aspirant to the very Highest Initiate.

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In certain occult and mystical works this change of mental attitude has been termed the "purification of Desire," but individuals with a genius for misinterpretation have taken it to mean the suppression of sexual desire, and much confusion and some harm has resulted. And yet even the spirit of service and all it involves must be tempered with wisdom. Without the latter, fanaticism may result. People may think they are rendering service by imposing their unwanted and unasked-for ideas on others. In plain English, the student must learn to mind his own business and not to meddle in other people's affairs. Although he aspires that his activities, along whatever line they happen to be, may contribute to the general good, he must not complain if his efforts prove abortive. He must acquire a detached and philosophical attitude, remembering always that although one *can* alter oneself, it may be utterly beyond one's power, as also beyond one's province, to alter others. He must also remember that by altering himself he is *per se* contributing to the general good and hence to the Evolutionary Scheme; for if the units are perfect the whole must be perfect.

§

Now it is important to note that through the "purification of desire" certain marked effects are produced in the *subtler bodies*: they become more luminous and are as "lights which shine in the surrounding darkness." These "lights" are perceived by the Masters and attract their attention. They may emanate from persons, who, although not

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at all interested in Occultism as such, possess a marked desire to help humanity, either through philanthropy, politics, art, science, healing or religion. But through whatever means, once they have attracted the attention of the Masters a link has been formed, and they will be helped and guided along their own particular line of endeavour. But to what degree—and this is important—depends on themselves and also to some extent on their Karma. If they are too self-opiniated, too fanatical, and their *astral* and *mental* bodies are too unco-ordinated to permit of their receiving impressions and ideas, then they are unwittingly setting up barriers which even the Masters cannot penetrate except on rare occasions. It is for this reason that he who consciously pursues the path of Occultism must in addition to having acquired the spirit of service, learn to control his *higher bodies* so that no truth-distorting fanaticism or other inordinations may render him an unfitting instrument. For although a certain fanaticism may have been useful in the past, it is both unnecessary and harmful at the present stage when important transformations are taking place. Indeed it cannot be sufficiently stressed that the methods of one generation are no longer suited to the next, and that those who adopt them under the assumption that a "truth" once uttered is a truth for ever, are bound to court failure, or at any rate, delay.

§

The *subtler bodies* having through a change of mental outlook become more luminous—which co-

incidentally produces a happier state of consciousness—and the attention of the Masters having been attracted, the potential pupil may make progress in accordance with the difficulties with which he has to contend—those concerned with his individual temperament and his racial Karma. For, as regards the latter, we must not forget that each individual is born into a particular race or nation for karmic reasons. He is therefore, if not consciously, at any rate, subconsciously under the influences of his race which, unbeknown to him, affect certain centres in his *etheric body* and which at his present stage he can neither understand nor control. Thus during the early stages of his occult development he is to a varying degree both assisted and handicapped by the race-spirit; inspired by its higher aspects and limited by its conventions and collective fears. This manifests outwardly in the fact that for a longer or shorter period he vibrates, so to say, at the same rate as the average intellectual or cultured type of his generation, and his general outlook, his interests, even his emotions are largely coloured by those of his contemporaries. Even though he may be an advanced soul, the conventions of the generation to which he belongs often appear to come athwart his freshly awakened desire for occult knowledge and development. It is during this early period that he is invisibly watched and assisted by a group of accepted disciples. Although he has attracted the attention of the Master, he is not ready nor capable as yet of making a direct and conscious contact with him spiritually on the higher planes. As to contacting him on the physical, such contact is only

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permitted at a much more advanced stage. This is a policy which must be adhered to, for seeing there are so comparatively few Masters, it would be impossible to contact, in the flesh, pupils living in various parts of the world, save in exceptional circumstances. Moreover, the vibrations of a Master's aura are so powerful that unless the pupil had acquired wellnigh perfect balance, the effect would be disorganizing to his entire personality.

We have said that the pupil is watched over by a group of disciples, this being essential in the early stages. For, as already implied, the idealistic and over-enthusiastic tend to lose their poise, and through a fanatical desire to benefit humanity or gain spiritual experiences or occult knowledge, may not only retard their own development, but do harm to their cause rather than good. And there are others who are torn between conventional and occult concepts and who find themselves on a sea of shifting values poised between two extremes. It is here again that the disciples endeavour to aid them in adjusting the balance: but should the conventional strain be uppermost and intractable, then their efforts will prove fruitless. Indeed, to advance along the Path, a marked degree of moral courage is indispensable, and those who come completely under the domination of racial convention will naturally fail at the first test. The reason is obvious, seeing that Occultism is concerned with fundamental concepts and embraces the whole of humanity. Therefore the occult student requires to transcend his own individual race-consciousness and

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develop an international consciousness, for this is the goal which must eventually be attained.¹

§

And here a note of warning must be sounded. As many of those who are drawn to Occultism in their present incarnations have practised one or other of its various forms in the past, they will doubtless have already acquired certain of the necessary qualities. It therefore stands to reason that all occult instruction must be adapted to the individual needs of the pupils. Thus we see the necessity for the Masters, who being able to perceive their *higher bodies* know exactly the most expedient methods to adopt for their individual advancement. This fact, however, is unfortunately not recognized by those who possess but a limited knowledge of Occult Science. Hearing of various self-appointed teachers—of whom there are many—they frequently enrol themselves as disciples and are taught systems of meditation and breathing-exercises quite unsuited to them. These teachers, who often come from the East, are as unaware as the pupil himself that Eastern methods are seldom applicable to Western bodies and types of minds. They are only suited—and then much modified and adapted—when the pupil has recently had an Eastern incarnation: and even then, for karmic reasons it may be quite inexpedient for him to pursue similar methods to those he has pursued in the past. He has taken a

¹ In order to counteract the tendency to become absorbed in the individual race-consciousness, travelling is encouraged by the Masters, that the international standpoint may be acquired.

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Western body to learn such lessons as the Occident can teach and to gain such experiences as the Occidental type of life has to give. But instead of learning those lessons, he adopts a system of training which, far from advancing his spiritual evolution; may only act as a mode of escape from his responsibilities. He, of course, does not recognize it as such, neither does his teacher, but so it is. By his breathing exercises and meditations ¹ he may induce blissful states of consciousness which may make normal life and its activities appear so trivial, and worse still, so unnecessary in comparison, that he is apt to neglect his duties, become quite unpractical and imagine he has reached the goal!

But what may happen in the end? If he is an advanced soul and in touch, albeit unconsciously, with a Master, he may meet a pupil who contrives to persuade him that he is pursuing the wrong course, or else he may have a severe illness which puts an end to his meditations and breathing-exercises along those lines. During that illness the Master may endeavour to impress on his higher self that he has not been fulfilling the purpose of his present incarnation, with the result that when he recovers he may never wish to resume his previous practices. For some reason which he cannot explain he feels disinclined to do so; or it may, on the surface, be from a sense of disappointment, since his "guru" will probably not merely have promised him happiness but also perfect health.

¹ An interesting account of the grave danger to health accompanying the premature attempt to arouse the higher centres is given by an Indian Yogi in Paul Brunton's *A Search in Secret India*, page 71.

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The necessity then for discrimination will be apparent to the student, for it has not been sufficiently realized that although the fundamental laws governing the occult life are the same all the world over, the preliminary stages, at any rate, must differ in method according to the line of development as well as the particular nationality of the pupil concerned. This fact, even at the risk of repetition, it has been necessary to emphasize, especially in view of what follows. Namely, that in the immediate future, as already implied, an effort will be made to comprehend the subconscious mind in all its ramifications. This will necessitate a repolarization of those forces employed to inspire those pupils of the Masters who are working in the outside world. Consequently a different type of teaching has recently been evolved suited to the requirements of occult students during the next forty years.¹ This teaching is more elastic than that of the past, with its rigid discipline unsuited to the varying requirements of differing individuals. It enables the student to contact the Master in a more direct manner by his own efforts, rather than via the medium of some leader or teacher. It will furthermore help to dispel the remaining force of that constrictive assumption that the Masters can solely be contacted by members of this or that occult organization; an attitude which obviously tends to sectarianism and self-righteousness, both of which are pronouncedly hostile to spiritual evolution and Brotherhood.

¹ We learn that finally about 1975 yet another Teaching will be put forward which will enable the student to master the subconscious by means of a new form of Yoga.

§

The new teaching advocates the following method of approach to the Masters: the student having turned his mind away from the small personal self to the larger Self of Mankind as a whole, he now desires to become receptive to those impressions from the Masters by means of which he may acquire either greater knowledge or greater capacity to aid in the process of evolution. In a word, he aspires to be an instrument in their hands. He desires to evolve, not for the selfish motive of acquiring personal spiritual happiness, which none the less he will attain, but that he may be a more perfect factor in the perfection of the whole. He desires knowledge not merely to benefit himself, but that he may pass it on to those who may need it. He desires greater capacity along his own line of endeavour, not for reasons of ambition and vanity, but that he may enrich the world with his talents, whatever their nature. He may be a scientist, an artist, a novelist, a doctor, a financier, it matters not; all these lines are compatible with occult development. He is not asked to concentrate for hours each day or to perform difficult exercises or feats of mental or physical endurance. He is merely asked to keep the necessary attitude of mind and to devote five minutes a day to a certain type of meditation. Knowing there is a Master who aids along each line of reputable endeavour, he or she will first project a powerful thought, or better said, aspiration towards that Master, and then having done so will endeavour to

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still the mind and hold it receptive.¹ This may be practised each day for many months, perhaps years, without any noticeable results during the meditation itself; nevertheless, the student will be slowly forming as it were a line of communication between him or herself and the Master. If the student is a woman, results may accrue more quickly, because women being negative are more receptive, but this depends on their previous development. Yet if no appreciable effects accrue *during* the meditation, others will be perceptible. A greater receptivity to ideas will result at times when the student is not actually meditating. His intuition will tend to become operative, he will receive definite impressions which appear to come from without, and then gradually he will begin to obtain those impressions during the meditation itself and will find himself possessed of a new faculty—the power mentally to “listen-in.” He has at length established a natural “mental wireless” which he can learn to operate at will.²

And yet a warning is here necessary. Just as in ordinary wireless the wrong station may be contacted, so is it with mental wireless, with the added danger, however, that the operator may be unaware of the fact. If the student should attempt to “tune in” with any selfish motive or actuated by curiosity, he will not succeed, for his projected thought will never reach the high plane of consciousness on which the

¹ The student would do well to read *Through the Eyes of the Masters* by David Anrias. In this book are the names and portraits of the various Masters working along given lines. They permitted their portraits to appear solely to facilitate the setting up of such *rapports*.

² See Appendix, Note 6.

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Masters normally function. Thus he may be liable to contact a thought-form or entity on a lower plane and become the recipient of false knowledge. The necessity for complete balance and discrimination therefore becomes increasingly obvious as the student proceeds; having become sensitive to impressions, he must acquire such a marked degree of discrimination that he may differentiate between the true and the false. If he perseveres, being neither depressed by failure nor over-elated by success, he will not only be enabled to distinguish between genuine and spurious communications, but will even come to know from which of the various Masters the communications proceed. Thus he will become a medium in the higher sense for the use of several Masters who may wish to impart knowledge along various lines of constructive endeavour.

§

It is an occult fact that no force is wasted and that those who sincerely desire occult knowledge with selfless motives will "never be turned empty away." But all those who work in the interests of the Masters may not possess the type of body suited either to the development of the higher clairvoyance or the power to "listen-in," or again they may possess that type of body which makes "listening-in" exceedingly difficult. They may have other faculties very useful to the Masters, but not these particular ones. In this case they are brought into contact with pupils who are either further advanced than themselves and hence can guide and help them, or who have

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acquired the faculty we have previously described. This coming together may on the face of it appear like chance, but in Occultism there is no such thing as chance in the usually accepted sense of the word—and even in this connection the student must learn to discriminate. For there are enthusiasts who, lacking this discrimination, instead of fulfilling social duties, for instance, may look upon “all that sort of thing,” as so much waste of time, when, as they think, they could more profitably be sitting at home reading occult books. And yet how many “links” have not been made in the most unexpected places and apparently the most unlikely environment? Chance-meetings to all outward appearance, it is true, but often very important from the Masters’ standpoint. Indeed, through these chance-meetings groups may be formed whose work will perhaps have far-reaching results. For instance, there is a tendency among enthusiasts to say, “such and such persons do not think along our lines, therefore it is no use mixing with them.” This, however, is a subtle piece of occult snobbery, if the phrase be pardoned, over which the student would do well to reflect. For let him always remember that many a man or woman who is not consciously interested in Occultism as such, may be a far more advanced soul than many a professing occultist. Should he forget this possibility because it is not immediately apparent, then he will be in grave danger of developing those two most insidious and disastrous of human failings—self-righteousness and spiritual pride. For when once these gain the ascendancy, until they are overcome they act as

Pathway towards Attainment

impenetrable barriers to the receiving of all further knowledge. As a Christian divine once pithily remarked: "A swollen head is too heavy to ascend to heaven." And although occultists, of course, do not believe in the ultimate resurrection of the body, metaphorically regarded, the saying is profoundly true.

§

We have considered both the qualifications that are necessary and some of the methods by which the Occult Path may be approached. On the way to attainment the student will be subjected to certain tests; the more assiduously he has striven to perfect his character, the less difficult will those tests be to pass. Yet even if he fail, in the very attempt to pass them he will gain experience which will be productive of good. He will also go through certain initiations, each of which will confer added powers of perception or added capacities to work in the service of the Masters. But the essential knowledge regarding these initiations will be imparted to him as he advances along the Way. Suffice it here if we state that when he has passed through the Fifth Initiation he attains to Masterhood. His karmic debts will all have been paid, he will have acquired that perfect clairvoyance which precludes all possibility of delusion, and he will have achieved what in Occult Philosophy is termed Liberation. He will finally have reached the Goal and will be under no necessity of reincarnating any more. His consciousness which has ever been expanding will then be one of perpetual Joy. It matters not where he

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may be or what his activities, that Joy-Consciousness will be his, for he will have emerged from the prison of the separated self and become unified with the All-self which is Love, Knowledge and Bliss. And yet, although in the highest sense unified, he will ever retain his own individuality. Thus he may elect to become one of those Officials who form the Inner Government of the world, or he may not ; for he is perfectly free to make his choice. Yet whatever that choice, it will not be inaction, but the highest and most joyful kind of spiritual activity of which it is possible to conceive.

AFTERWORD

AFTERWORD

As there is no further object in trying to conceal what is now an open secret, I have permitted my publisher to state that I am the author of *The Initiate* and its sequels. My position was becoming an awkward one ; moreover, so many misconceptions have arisen in regard to these books that it is best to reveal as much of the truth as is compatible with discretion. I also owe it to my readers, who have shown quite an unexpected interest in them, judging from the many letters I have received.

To dispose of the first misconception, although it was my hand which wrote those books, the material was given to me by someone else whose identity cannot be revealed. In other words, I am not the pupil who goes under the pseudonym of " Charles Broadbent," but another pupil mentioned in *The Initiate in the New World* and again in *The Initiate in The Dark Cycle*. There are certain similarities between Charles Broadbent's occult life and my own, but on the other hand there are considerable differences, and particularly so in our outward lives, and in some of our characteristics.

And now as to *The Initiate* himself. He was originally a disciple of the English Master referred to, but camouflaged in *The Initiate in the Dark Cycle*. This Master actually does live in the south-west of England, watches over the English nation and for

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that purpose has undertaken to reincarnate therein until it has fulfilled its destiny. More I am not permitted to reveal. His disciple, the Initiate as portrayed in the first book, was at that time chiefly concerned with the practical application of occult knowledge to the difficulties of every-day life. By means of direct contact with ordinary men and women he acted, so to say, as a bridge between the Masters and those people who had earned the karmic right to receive such assistance as he was able to give. The various situations in the book were correctly portrayed, but the characters for obvious reasons had perforce to be camouflaged. Thus a certain admixture of fact and fiction was unavoidable.

In the second book, *The Initiate in the New World*, teachings were given out in connection with specific phases of occult development. One of these was the necessity for taking a much broader and more unselfish view of marriage and all it entails. The idea of mutual enslavement and the exalting of conjugal jealousy into a tacitly accepted virtue not being compatible with occult progress, much of the Master's teaching on that subject was incorporated, as also the story of Broadbent's own "occult marriage." This cryptic term implies a state of matrimony entered into for higher motives than are usually associated therewith. Two pupils engage to marry at the suggestion of the Master, that in conjunction they may the better carry out his work and also provide the finer type of bodies for certain souls who, under his guidance, may wish to reincarnate. Broadbent was one of the pupils who

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was asked to contract this more unselfish form of marriage, as those who have read the book in question are aware. The Path is a steep one to tread, but fully repays the pupil in the end.

The third book, *The Initiate in the Dark Cycle*, deals partly with a situation which has arisen owing to a pronouncement emanating from the Theosophical Society. The Masters with their extended vision, perceiving the unfortunate and even devastating effects which this pronouncement had had, even if only indirectly, upon hundreds of occult students, were desirous of counteracting it. The book was used as a means to this end, and its most valuable portions were contributed by the Initiate's Master, who permitted his utterances on the subject to be incorporated in its pages. It finally deals with the Initiate's retirement from the outside world, which was necessary in view of the exigencies of this changing age. Thus it became expedient for him to withdraw into the inner worlds in order to comprehend those manifold problems connected with the future of the race; for such a procedure is essential towards the end of every cycle. This being so, as conveyed in the book itself, it is not possible to approach or invoke him at this critical period of transition. Other avenues of approach to the Masters were therefore suggested for those seekers who are untainted by curiosity, ambition or self-seeking.

In conclusion, it is worthy of note that for the first thirty-five years of this century a direct appeal to the conscious mind of the race regarding occult matters was inspired by the Masters through appro-

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priate currents of occult force. Thus for instance, from 1900 to 1935 was a period of considerable occult activity as well as one of vast changes in all developments associated with our modern civilization. From the present year (1935) to 1975 will become a period of in-breathing or turning inward of the life-energies of the race as a whole, preparatory to the final flowering of occult forces at the close of every century.

APPENDIX

NOTE 1

It occasionally happens that people with psychic tendencies develop an intense admiration for a given historical character. Believing in reincarnation, they may argue, "how is it possible to entertain such profound sentiments towards a person so long deceased unless one had been that person or very closely connected with him. Thus the thought may engender the wish (or perhaps vice versa) the wish the belief, and finally the belief the conviction.

The appropriate comment upon the foregoing is that although the assumption might be correct, certitude could only be arrived at if a Master would condescend to investigate the matter, or failing that, a number of advanced pupils *independently*, conditions for proof being that they should all arrive at the same conclusion.

NOTE 2

Let us illustrate with the case of a man who suffered acute nervous distress during thunderstorms and a similar form of distress while riding in a quickly-moving vehicle such as a motor-car, or even a dog-cart. On looking into his past lives it transpired that he had been one of the victims of the great Pompeian earthquake. At the time of the disaster he had been riding at great speed in a chariot, when suddenly amidst thunderous noise, the earth had opened and he, together with chariot and horses, had been swallowed up and killed. Another case is that of a woman who possessed a peculiar horror of sand. On investigating her past lives, it came to light that in one of her incarnations she had suffered a particularly painful death in a sand-storm in the desert. Psycho-Analysis had failed

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to cure her, but she was finally cured of this phobia among other ailments by a metaphysical healer who was also an Occultist.

NOTE 3

This policy, first adopted by Mme. Blavatsky, and influenced by certain schools of Indian mysticism, was not a wise one, seeing that members of the Society were recruited from various nations, each requiring different methods. Moreover, if the celibate life were a pre-requisite to the serious study of Occult Science, then the latter would become a menace to the State. Far from celibacy being indispensable, Master-occultists have said that marriage with its obligations, sexual and otherwise, is one of the finest educative agents that exists. Both bachelordom and spinsterhood are more than liable to produce, or at any rate increase selfishness, which is the great obstacle on the occult path. Nevertheless, as the result of Mrs. Besant's admonitions, wives who had become enthusiasts suddenly and selfishly denied husbands their conjugal rights, thus causing the very name of Theosophy to be anathema to them for ever after. Indeed, as "injure no man" is one of the first precepts of occult as well as ordinary ethics, it seems superfluous to add that she or he who makes a solemn contract and then suddenly refuses to fulfil its conditions acts entirely at variance with that precept, deluding herself or himself in addition that the motives are lofty.

But again it must be emphasized that such aberrations are not the direct result of Occultism ; they are the result of character combined with that little knowledge which is so dangerous a thing. In many cases they are yet another, if indirect, consequence of personality-worship. Novices with no general knowledge of Occultism follow the leader of one or other school and fail to realize that he or she may be prudish, narrow or fanatical on one particular point.

NOTE 4

Psychologists being unaware of the existence of the *etheric body* believe that after conception the fashioning and nourishment of the foetus is entirely dependant on the mother. This

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in the light of occult knowledge is only partially true. Clairvoyant vision reveals the fact that certain *devas* manipulate *etheric* matter and assist the soul in building the physical body. Where that soul is especially desirous of inheriting certain characteristics from the father, it appropriates matter from his *etheric body*, with the result that if he has not strong recuperative powers, he may at times during his wife's pregnancy feel depleted or suffer from a series of minor ailments or even nausea. This fact has frequently been noticed by observant physicians, who have attributed it to a species of sympathy!

NOTE 5

In this connection we should mention that most valuable method of healing medicine known as the *Biochemic System of Medicine*.¹ This highly effective system is much approved of by the Masters since it is free from those disadvantages which pertain to so many other methods. In Dr. Carey's own words: "An analysis of the blood shows it to contain organic and inorganic matter . . . the inorganic constituents are water and certain minerals commonly called cell-salts. . . . Not until recently were the inorganic cell-salts understood and appreciated. Being little in quantity they were thought to be of little importance. But now it is known that the cell-salts are the vital portion of the body; the workers, the builders. . . . Should a deficiency occur in one or more of these workers, of whom there are twelve, some abnormal condition arises. . . . Health and strength can be maintained only so long as the system is properly supplied with these cell-salts."

But unfortunately owing to an unnatural diet, the system, where most people are concerned, is *not* "properly supplied with these cell-salts." Not only do most people eat the wrong food but they do not masticate it sufficiently, and hence too much of it goes to form waste matter instead of going to the proper nourishment of the different tissues. Thus the requisite amount of inorganic salts is not absorbed. How may this deficiency be counteracted? By taking these various salts into

¹ See book of that name by G. W. Carey, M.D. (of the United States of America).

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the system, not in large doses, but "in the same delicate form in which nature uses them." If they are to be "absorbed" by the microscopic corpuscles, they must themselves be finer than the corpuscles. This is a fact which the orthodox physician is liable to overlook. Nevertheless Professor Liebig wrote in his *Chemical Letters*: "The smaller the particles of a prescribed medicine, the less physical resistance they meet in their diffusion in the tissues. It may be possible that a tissue can reach such a degree of density (become so clogged) that it is rendered impenetrable to the salt-solutions of the blood. But if . . . a solution of salt be administered so diluted that all molecules of the salt are set free, no hindrance will be in the way of these molecules to enter the abnormally condensed parts of tissue."

This being so, practitioners of the "Biochemic System" administer their remedies, as do homeopaths, in the triturate form, *i.e.* a minute quantity of each salt mixed with a very much larger quantity of sugar or milk. As none of the remedies are poisons, even if the wrong ones be given, no active harm results. This fact renders the Biochemic System perfectly safe in the hands of laymen. It further possesses the great advantage that its remedies can be taken concurrently with any palliative doctors may prescribe.

Students of Occultism who are interested in healing, would do well to study this Biochemic System which offers no difficulties of comprehension and is founded on perfectly natural laws.

NOTE 6

Apart from the practice of mental "listening-in," those students who do creative work will find the following exercise very useful to facilitate inspiration:

They should relax the body and imagine the whole of their aura suffused by a pale but intense golden light like that of the sun. They should hold this thought for a minute or two before starting to work. Or they may practice it anywhere at any time—in a train or a bus. It tends to purify the *subtler bodies* and render them more receptive to impressions from the higher planes.

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