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# THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST

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No. 12.

DUBLIN, SEPTEMBER 15TH, 1893.

VOL. I.

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## THEOSOPHY IN PLAIN LANGUAGE.

### X. REINCARNATION.

“WHERE have I come from?” “How did I get here?” We have all as children put the question to our omniscient seniors, and have all, doubtless, been well snubbed for our inordinate curiosity, or silenced by an answer, which, given with a confidence quite proportioned to its incomprehensibility, has perhaps silenced for ever all further enquiries in the same direction. For whether we are put off with the nursery myth of a cabbage-stalk origin, or left to ponder over the mysterious “God made you,” an equally fatal blow is struck to any infantile speculations in which we may have indulged about the matter; and so we grow up to the strange, so-called, Christian notion about the soul as an immortal being, created suddenly to animate a body, and sent to school for a brief period on earth to gain everlasting reward or punishment at the final examination, all for the good pleasure or “glory” of the much-dreaded, watchful, though invisible Schoolmaster. Many remain, or profess to remain, content with such a view of life’s origin, meaning, and destiny. Others begin to think the terms and conditions of the Great Examination too arbitrary and opposed to their sense of justice, and try at first to believe in a final state of beatitude for everybody, without any punishments at all. But this theory, though more comforting, is no less unreasonable than the other, and the great difficulty still remains as to the origin and source of this mysterious “I” which is to endure eternally. Then science comes with its proclamation of a uniform law and harmony throughout Nature, opening up a vast conception of the complexity and extent of the forces which have gradually built up the Universe we see around us. The old crude teaching of our childhood fails to accommodate itself to the new revelation. Its gaps and inconsistencies now appear hopeless, and on the other hand, science itself cannot inform us about the problem which has haunted and baffled us from the beginning—the *source, meaning, and object of existence*. Then, perhaps, we fall in with some statement of Theosophic teaching, and now for the first time we know that a real clue has been put into our hands.

The idea of pre-existence and re-birth is one so logical, so explanatory of many difficulties that beset alike the moralist and psychologist, that one wonders how a belief once will-nigh universal, should in Europe and America have fallen into disfavour and almost oblivion. But the ecclesiastical nightmare of the middle ages has taken long to shake off; and of the thousands who profess belief in the existence of a “soul” to-day, how many give a half hour’s thought to the mystery of its nature, its origin?

How many are simply possessed of a vague notion that this wonderful complex of thought, will, emotion, perception, memory which we call *mind*—had its beginning in a microscopic egg-cell derived from our parents' bodies, and that by some strange miracle it will pursue an independent existence for ever? No wonder that with doctrines like this—even if implied and not expressed—the churches are filled with atheists and agnostics in disguise.

Theosophy, believing mind and soul to be inherent in all nature, denies the need of miracles; teaches that, parallel with physical evolution, there is also a quite distinct *psychic* evolution always in progress; that our "I" is a ray from the one Soul of things, perfecting itself and gaining self-knowledge by a long pilgrimage through all the kingdoms of nature; hence that it has lived before many times upon this earth, and will live again many times, and in many higher forms. "As a man," says the Indian scripture, "throweth away old garments and putteth on new, even so the dweller in the body, having quitted its old mortal frames, entereth into others which are new."

This "clothing" of the soul with bodies which die, and are succeeded by others, Theosophy holds to be part of the great cyclic law of alternate activity and rest, waking and sleep, out-breathing and in-breathing, which ramifies all through nature. In another part of the poem already quoted, Krishna, typifying the spirit of God within man, is represented as saying: "I build up by my power, and again dissolve the universe." We must remember this wider aspect of Reincarnation before we can rightly understand its bearing as applied by Theosophy to man.

One great difficulty which meets us in the west in grasping the idea of re-birth, comes from our lack of introspection, and our consequent failure to apprehend the great subtlety, depth, and complexity of the consciousness within. When we say "I" we mean the every-day commonplace changeable "I" who drives a bargain, reads the newspaper, or gossips about the weather. Even when we talk of the "next world" no very different conception of our "immortal souls" presents itself. This is the "I" who is so incredulous and amused at the idea of pre-existence—and not without reason. For being born and developed with the body and its desires, the personal "I" cannot, as a rule, discern within and behind its own narrow circle of consciousness, the greater entity who is the real, undying Ego, the true Soul. This immortal "I" or Higher Self, the Watcher and Remembrancer of our deeds, the "divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will"—has been known to mystics of all ages and creeds and described by various names, such as God or daimon, good genius, guardian angel, and the like; and in the seven-fold Theosophic analysis of man it corresponds to the three higher principles of Atma, Buddhi, and Manas. Popularly, of course, no such duality of life, no such co-existence of a higher and lower self is recognized, hence one great difficulty in accepting Reincarnation.

Yet we have not far to look for facts of consciousness, which, though not in themselves conclusive, still go far to discourage hasty denial of the doctrine of the dual ego, however paradoxical it may seem. The familiar phenomenon of dreaming might alone convince us how little we know of the self and its nature, and how partial and misleading is our superficial sense of waking identity. Still more clearly do facts like somnambulism, clairvoyance, thought-transference, telepathy, and others which science is now investigating, point to the existence of powers and faculties included in the soul, although unperceived as a rule by the waking brain. So much has this been felt of late that already in the west, which unlike the east has neglected these questions for so long, we find the old materialism giving way, and a marked return towards the old conception of the soul as an entity, distinct from the body, using the latter as instrument or agent on this "plane," but with other instruments and faculties of its own which could by no possibility originate in the physical germ-cell.

But, it will be asked, does this prove Reincarnation? Not directly, certainly. Yet if we are right in recognising (as everyone is coming to recognise) in evolution a universal law of being, it becomes surely not merely difficult, but impossible to imagine that any so subtle, complex, and powerful an organism as the soul, could originate suddenly in a physical process. And if it did not originate thus, what but a long evolution can have brought it to be what it is?

It may still, however, be maintained that, even granted pre-existence, reincarnation in human bodies does not logically follow. In reply we may say: Consider the present connection with earth-life. Is it a caprice of nature, a unique and complete phase of experience, or not rather a chapter, a page, a fragment, of a long and consistent purpose? We have all some dim ideal of human life and its possibilities; some shadowy faith, perhaps, in a "far-off divine event," toward which humanity is tending. All know, too, how utterly inadequate is one short life for the gaining of such knowledge, moral excellence, completeness, as that ideal implies. Is it therefore vain and meaningless save for a select and distant few?

Reincarnation justifies and explains all. Lifetime after lifetime the soul gathers experience. By slow degrees the mind of man becomes receptive and retentive of its garnered wisdom and knowledge. Ultimately the higher and the lower consciousness shall become one, and in some few great ones called in Theosophy Masters or Mahatmas, this connection has already taken place. But they are only the advance-guard of an advancing host, and one day all mankind shall be illumined and ensouled by the same inner light. Therefore must all "be born again."

(To be continued.)

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### A TRAGEDY IN THE TEMPLE.

I HAVE often thought with sadness over the fate of that comrade. That so ardent and heroic a spirit, so much chivalry and generosity should meet such a horrible fate, has often made me wonder if there is any purpose in this tangled being of ours; I have hated life and the gods as I thought of it. What brought him out of those great deserts where his youth was spent, where his soul grew vast knowing only of two changes, the blaze of day and night the purifier, blue, mysterious, ecstatic with starry being? Were not these enough for him? Could the fire of the altar inspire more? Could he be initiated deeper in the chambers of the temple than in those great and lonely places where God and man are alone together? This was my doing; resting in his tent when I crossed the desert, I had spoken to him of that old wisdom which the priests of the inner temple keep and hand down from one to the other; I blew to flame the mystic fire which already smouldered within him, and filled with the vast ambition of God, he left his tribe and entered the priesthood as neophyte in the Temple of Istar, below Ninevah.

I had sometimes to journey thither bearing messages from our high priest, and so as time passed my friendship with Asur grew deep. That last evening when I sat with him on the terrace that roofed the temple, he was more silent than I had known him before to be; we had generally so many things to speak of; for he told me all his dreams, such vague titanic impulses as the soul has in the fresh first years of its awakening, when no experience hinders with memory its flights of aspiration, and no anguish has made it wise. But that evening there was, I thought, something missing; a curious feverishness seemed to have replaced the cool and hardy purity of manner which was natural to him; his eyes had a strange glow, fitful and eager;

I saw by the starlight how restless his fingers were, they intertwined, twisted, and writhed in and out.

We sat long in the rich night together; then he drew nearer to me and leaned his head near my shoulder; he began to whisper incoherently a wild and passionate tale; the man's soul was being tempted.

"Brother" he said, "I am haunted by a vision, by a child of the stars as lovely as Isthara's self; she visits my dreaming hours, she dazzles me with strange graces, she bewilders with unspeakable longing. Sometime, I know, I must go to her, though I perish. When I see her I forget all else and I have will to resist no longer. The vast and lonely inspiration of the desert departs from my thought, she and the jewel-light she lives in blot it out. The thought of her thrills me like fire. Brother give me help, ere I go mad or die; she draws me away from earth and I shall end my days amid strange things, a starry destiny amid starry races."

I was not then wise in these things, I did not know the terrible dangers that lurk in the hidden ways in which the soul travels. "This" I said "is some delusion. You have brooded over a fancy until it has become living; you have filled your creation with your own passion and it lingers and tempts you; even if it were real, it is folly to think of it, we must close our hearts to passion if we would attain the power and wisdom of Gods."

He shook his head, I could not realize or understand him. Perhaps if I had known all and could have warned him, it would have been in vain; perhaps the soul must work out its own purification in experience and learn truth and wisdom through being. Once more he became silent and restless. I had to bid him farewell as I was to depart on the morrow, but he was present in my thoughts and I could not sleep because of him; I felt oppressed with the weight of some doom about to fall. To escape from this feeling I rose in adoration to Hea; I tried to enter into the light of that Wisdom; a sudden heart-throb of warning drew me back; I thought of Asur instinctively, and thinking of him his image flashed on me. He moved as if in trance through the glassy waves of those cosmic waters which everywhere lave and permeate the worlds, and in which our earth is but a subaqueous mound. His head was bowed, his form dilated to heroic stature, as if he conceived of himself as some great thing or as moving to some high destiny; and this shadow which was the house of his dreaming soul grew brilliant with the passionate hues of his thought; some power beyond him drew him forth. I felt the fever and heat of this inner sphere like a delirious breath blow fiercely about me; there was a phosphorescence of hot and lurid colours. The form of Asur moved towards a light streaming from a grotto, I could see within it burning gigantic flowers. On one, as on a throne, a figure of weird and wonderful beauty was seated. I was thrilled with a dreadful horror, I thought of the race of Liliths, and some long forgotten and tragic legends rose up in my memory of these beings whose soul is but a single and terrible passion; whose love too fierce for feeble lives to endure, brings death or madness to men. I tried to warn, to awaken him from the spell; my will-call aroused him; he turned, recognized me and hesitated; then this figure that lured him rose to her full height; I saw her in all her terrible beauty. From her head a radiance of feathered flame spread out like the plume of a peacock, it was spotted with gold and green and citron dyes, she raised her arms upwards, her robe, semi-transparent, purple and starred over with a jewel lustre, fell in vaporous folds to her feet like the drift over a waterfall. She turned her head with a sudden bird-like movement, her strange eyes looked into mine with a prolonged and snaky glance; I saw her move her arms hither and thither, and the waves of this inner ocean began to darken and gather about me, to ripple through me with feverish motion. I fell into a swoon and remembered nothing more.

I was awakened before dawn, those with whom I was to cross the desert were about to start and I could remain no longer. I wrote hurriedly to Asur a message

full of warning and entreaty and set out on my return journey full of evil forebodings. Some months after I had again to visit this temple ; it was evening when I arrived ; after I had delivered the message with which I was charged, I asked for Asur. The priest to whom I spoke did not answer me. He led me in silence up to the terrace that overlooked the desolate eastern desert. The moon was looming white upon the verge, the world was trembling with heat, the winged bulls along the walls shone with a dull glow through the sultry air. The priest pointed to the far end of the terrace. A figure was seated looking out over the desert, his robes were motionless as if their wrinkles were carved of stone, his hands lay on his knees, I walked up to him ; I called his name ; he did not stir. I came nearer and put my face close to his, it was as white as the moon, his eyes only reflected the light. I turned away from him sick to the very heart.

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### THE ELEMENT LANGUAGE (*concluded*).

IT has been said that before we can properly understand the character of any deity we would have to know the meaning and the numbers attached to each letter in the name, for in this way the powers and functions of the various gods were indicated. If we take as examples names familiar to everyone, *Brahma*, *Vishnu*, and *Rudra*, the three aspects of Parabrahm in manifestation, and analyse them in the same way as the roots, they will be found to yield up their essential meaning. From the union of *B*, life, *R*, breath, and *Ma*, the producer, I would translate *Brahma* as "the creative breath of life." *Vishnu* similarly analysed is the power that "pervades, expands, and preserves;" I infer this from the union of *V*, whose force is pervasion, *Sh*, expansion, and *N*, continuation. *Rudra* is "the breath that absorbs the breath." *Aum* is the most sacred name of all names ; it is held to symbolize the action of the Great Breath from its dawn to its close: it is the beginning, *A*, the middle, *U*, and the close *M*. It is also an affirmation of the relation of our spiritual nature to that universal Deity whose aspects are *Brahma*, *Vishnu*, and *Rudra*. I shall have more to say of the occult power of this word later on. Taken in conjunction with two other words, it is "the threefold designation of the Supreme Being." *Om Tat Sat* has a significance referable to a still higher aspect of Deity than that other Trinity ; the *Om* here signifies that it is the All ; *Tat* that it is self-existent or self-evolved ; I think the repetition of the *T* in *Tat* gives it this meaning : *Sat* would signify that in it are contained the seeds of all manifestation. H. P. Blavatsky translates this word as Be-ness, which seems to be another way of expressing the same idea. The mystic incantation familiar to all students of the Upanishads, "*Om, Bhur, Om, Bhuhvar, Om, Svar,*" is an assertion of the existence of the Divine Self in all the three worlds or *Lokas*. *Loka* is generally translated as a place ; the letters suggest to me that a place or world is only a hardening or crystalization of Fire or Light. In *Bhur Loka* the crystalization of the primordial element of Fire leaves only one principle active, the life principle generally called *Prana*. *Bhur Loka* then is the place where life is active ; we have *B*, life, and *R*, movement, to suggest this. In the word *Bhuhvar* a new letter, *V*, is inserted : this letter, as I have said, corresponds to the Astral world, so that *Bhuhvar Loka* is the place where both the Astral and Life principles are active. It is more difficult to translate *Svar Loka* : there is some significance attached here to the letter *S*, which I cannot grasp. It might mean that this world contains the germs of Astral life ; but this does not appear sufficiently distinctive, *Svar Loka* is generally known as *Devachan*, and the whole incantation would mean that the Deity is present throughout the Pranic, Astral, and Devachanic worlds. It is interesting to note what is said

in the Glossary by H. P. B., about these three words (p. 367): they are said to be "lit by and born of fire," and to possess creative powers. The repetition of them with the proper accent should awaken in the occultist the powers which correspond to the three worlds. I think by these examples that the student will be able to get closer to the true significance of incantation; those who understand the occult meaning of the colours attached to the letters will be able to penetrate deeper than others into these mysteries.

I may here say something about the general philosophy of incantation. There is said to be in nature a homogeneous sound or tone which everywhere stirs up the molecules into activity. This is the "Word" which St. John says was in the beginning (the plane of causation); in another sense it is the Akasa of occult science, the element of sound, it is the Pythagorean "music of the spheres." The universe is built up, moulded and sustained by this element which is everywhere present, though inaudible by most men at this stage of evolution. It is not sound by the physical ears, but deep in the heart sometimes may be heard "the mystic sounds of the Akasic heights." The word *Aum* represents this homogeneous sound, it stirs up a power which is latent in it called the *Yagna*. The Glossary says that this "is one of the forms of Akasa within which the mystic word calls it into existence:" it is a bridge by means of which the soul can cross over to the world of the Immortals. It is this which is alluded to in the *Nada-Bindu Upanishad*. "The mind becoming insensible to the external impressions, becomes one with the sound, as milk with water, and then becomes rapidly absorbed in *chidakas* (the Akasa where consciousness prevades). The sound \* \* \* serves the purpose of a lure to the ocean waves of *Chitta* (mind), \* \* \* the serpent *Chitta* through listening to the Nada is entirely absorbed in it, and becoming unconscious of everything concentrates itself on the sound." We may quote further from another Upanishad. "Having left behind the body, the organs and objects of sense, and having seized the bow whose stick is fortitude and whose string is asceticism, and having killed with the arrow of freedom from egoism the first guardian, \* \* \* he crosses by means of the boat *Om* to the other side of the ether within the heart, and when the ether is revealed he enters slowly, as a miner seeking minerals enters a mine, into the hall of Brahman. \* \* \* Thenceforth, pure, clean, tranquil, breathless, endless, imperishable, firm, unborn, and independent, he stands in his own greatness, and having seen the Self standing in his own greatness, he looks at the wheel of the world."

Let no one think that this is all, and that the mere repetition of words will do anything except injure those who attempt the use of these methods without further knowledge. It has been said (*Path*, April, 1887) that Charity, Devotion, and the like virtues are structural necessities in the nature of the man who would make this attempt. We cannot, unless the whole nature has been purified by long service and sacrifice, and elevated into mood at once full of reverence and intense will, become sensitive to the subtle powers possessed by the spiritual soul.

What is here said about the *Aum* which is the name of our own God, and the way in which it draws forth the hidden power will serve to illustrate the method in using other words. The Thara-Sara Upanishad of Sukla-Yajur Veda says "Through *Om* is Brahma produced; through *Na* is Vishnu produced; through *Ma* is Rudra produced, etc." All these are names of gods; they correspond to forces in man and nature, in their use the two are united, and the man mounts upwards to the Immortals.

I have been forced to compress what I had to say in these articles, I have only been able to suggest rather than put forward ideas, for my own knowledge of these correspondences is very incomplete. As far as I know the subject has been untouched hitherto, and this must be my excuse for the meagre nature of the information given. I hope later on to treat of the relation of sound and colour to form and to show how

these correspondences will enable us to understand the language which the gods speak to us through flowers, trees, and natural forms. I hope also to be able to show that it was a knowledge of the relation of sound to form which dictated the form of the letters in many primæval alphabets.

G. W. R.

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### DEEP SLEEP.

Heart-hidden from the outer things I rose,  
The spirit woke anew in nightly birth  
Into the vastness where forever glows  
The star-soul of the earth.

There all alone in primal ecstasy,  
Within her depths where revels never tire,  
The olden Beauty shines; each thought of me  
Is veined through with its fire.

And all my thoughts are throngs of living souls;  
They breathe in me, heart unto heart allied  
With joy undimmed, though when the morning tolls  
The planets may divide.

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### DAY.

In day from some titanic past it seems  
As if a thread divine of memory runs,  
Born ere the Mighty One began his dreams,  
Or yet were stars and suns.

But here an iron will has fixed the bars;  
Forgetfulness falls on earth's myriad races,  
No image of the proud and morning stars  
Looks at us from their faces.

Yet yearning still to reach to those dim heights,  
Each dream remembered is a burning-glass,  
Where through to darkness from the light of lights  
Its rays in splendour pass.

G. W. R.

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“THE FIRST STEP.”

IN those gold-mines of luminous thought the Upanishads, two brief statements gleam brighter than the rest. They place on record the brief biography of a soul pilgrimage, and he who has but insight enough to read between the lines, will find there all he needs to know concerning the valley of Quest and the steps that he must tread to reach and enter into the realms of the real, and find the “small old path that stretches far away.”

Across the lapse of ages a comrade’s voice seems borne to us from heights of achievement to the levels where we dwell; a seeker for freedom he, convinced that there is only one thing worth the seeking. Calm, strong, encouraging, the words thrill through our inmost being, and we know without a doubt that what one attempted others can; that what one achieved others may; and that the initial effort if not already made in former lives, can be made right here and now despite all circumstances, and surroundings, in the whirl of the nineteenth century, as it was then in calmer grander ages.

“Seeking for freedom I go,” we read, and our hearts respond and beat for a moment in unison with all who have trodden the unknown way; weak as we feel ourselves, unsuitable as we are, black as we know our lower nature to be, we too would go; for pondering over the words old memories seem to awaken dim shadowy recollections of resolutions made in spirit and forgotten all too long; flashes of light that half reveal ways already trodden when we “journeyed with Deity;” things relating to the True alone, striven for and partly gained; a hidden chord in the heart is touched, vibrations not registered in the mind, or translatable into terms of brain consciousness are set up; the intellect cannot respond, but soul speaks to soul, and we recognise the language—for the soul is the same in all ages, the “immortal pilgrim ever faces home again,” and “the yearning to go out into the infinite” is more intense, perhaps, now than ever; longing hearts frame questions that the lips never utter; the soul’s tragedy since the beginning of time is this—the God within refuses to be satisfied with illusive, transitory things.

By intuitive prescience, we see the difficulties to be overcome if we would start upon the one quest worth a thought; the heights to be scaled, the battles won. It will not do to start upon the unknown way scarce knowing what we seek, but like Arthur’s knights, we “follow wandering fires, lost in the quagmire.” Our vows must not be lightly taken like theirs, because others swore, nor must we limit the search to twelve months and a day. Life after life if needs be, unceasingly, uncomplainingly, with no thought of abandoning the self-imposed task, we must press as if we would conquer; we must be willing to lose ourselves to find ourselves; to sacrifice self to self impersonal; to give up happiness and instead thereof find blessedness, and the freedom from self which is freedom to serve humanity.

Well may we pause and consider; the foes to conquer are not those without alone, they are “those of our own household”—our lower self. And that truly is a task from which all but the bravest may well shrink, but it need not be finished in a day or hour; the whole of time is ours, and “whether we come to our own to-day, or in ten thousand years, matters little.” This alone matters, not whether we achieve, but whether we *attempt* to-day. Vices may be conquered one by one; the battle waged inch by inch; we can “rise on stepping-stones of our dead selves to higher things”; we know we are not bound save by the fetters of our own forging, we impose our own limits, we weave the strands of illusion that bind us fast. Anywhere, anytime, with one determined effort we can free ourselves, at least partially. And what we need is determination, courage, will, and a conviction that the path lies just where it always did; “that it is well to tread it now; that the gates of gold exist, and



that our hands can lift the latch." What is needed then? simply this—courage to abandon all things else and take the first step. We do not, cannot, doubt that those who live but to serve humanity, are waiting to give us all the help the Good Law permits, if we but open up our way to their plane. We know that the Great Lodge exists, and that Master hears every heart-beat in the right direction; all hindrance lies with us, and if we are but loyal to Him, and true to our highest thoughts, we must overcome all obstacles sooner or later. To one who would serve, and whose motives were all unselfish, the answer was given—"Until the Master calls you to be with Him, be with humanity; to live to benefit mankind is the first step." H. B. Blavatsky taught us in the words she translated for our daily use—"the first step is sacrifice, the second renunciation."

We read, "here then lies the beginning of the way, this is the first step to help humanity, whilst striving to drill out the sense of separateness; to live but for this one object, that we may serve others as they serve the Law. In the first hot glow of enthusiasm we would all be approved disciples, all chelas if we could, that is surely of the lower self a courted distinction we have not merited; our work lies ready to hand, our appointed task is just where we are, we are not wanted anywhere else; we cannot scale the heights where they dwell yet awhile, nor can our longing, alone avail to bring them near to us; first we must "raise ourselves by ourselves" by a life of purity and meditation; "we can endeavour to become divine and set our final hopes no lower than that supreme condition; we can free our consciousness from desire of ought for self, and learn *to be*; we can at least try to realize all the help we have had; we can strive to maintain a fixed habit of one-pointedness in thought; we can by repeated effort keep a note of spiritual consciousness sounding within the heart and listen to that, and by continuous thought of the Master and loyalty to Him become channels through which (even unconsciously to ourselves) His words may reach others; and those who do all they can, and all they know how to do, do enough."

Be with humanity:—there is misery enough to relieve; tears enough to dry; we can recognize and entertain an "angel unawares" in the beggar at our door; we can see the divine in every creature if we look deep enough. In the feeble cry of childhood there is a call to duty; in the unexpressed misery of the dumb animals a plea for pity.

On the thought plane too, so much remains to be done, and the time is short. Our efforts may not be needed later on; they are now. We should study the truths contained in our literature and be able to state them clearly, so that we may give sound reasons for "the faith that is in us"; we should cultivate intellect as well as intuition; we should be prepared, when necessary, to meet and confute materialistic views, and correct erroneous scientific ones.

Lastly, if we would "help humanity" we must *live* occultism. So shall we find that strength will come to us as units, and as a Society, and the first object of the T. S. be more than accomplished. K.

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#### NOTES ON THE ADWAITA PHILOSOPHY.

*Compiled from 'Monism or Advaitism,' "Vasudeva Manana," "The Theosophic Glossary," etc.*

THE Adwaita is one of the six Darsanas or Hindu Schools of Philosophy. The word Darsana means Consciousness, and this a very significant fact, as showing that the systems of philosophy were supposed to be developed from the inner consciousness, that is to say they were produced by concentration and meditation.

In Theosophic literature one often meets with allusions to Hindu writings under various names, and short definitions of these may be useful.

The *Vedas* are the Hindu Scriptures, all the most ancient Hindu sacred writings. The word is from the root *vid* to know, and the Vedas are Divine knowledge. The Hindus say that they were first taught orally for thousands of years, and then compiled and written down in Thibet.

The *Upanishads* are the most important, and the esoteric part of the Vedas. The Hindu pundits say that the word Upanishad means that which destroys ignorance and thus produces liberation of spirit through the knowledge of the supreme truth. Just as Christ said "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." The Glossary says that the Upanishads treat of very abstruse metaphysical questions, such as the origin of the universe, the nature and essence of the unmanifested Deity, and the manifested gods, the connection of spirit and matter, the universality of mind, and the nature of the human soul and ego.

The *Vedāntas* are writings in explanation of the Vedas. The word Vedānta means the end of all Vedic knowledge, the last word about the Vedas.

To return to the Darsanas or Schools of Philosophy. These are all founded on the Upanishads. The most important of them are the Saukyia School, the Yoga School and the Advaita School—the subject of this paper.

The *Saukyia System* is sometimes called the materialistic. It is an enumeration or analysis of the Universe. It treats of the evolution of matter in all its various stages, and may be said roughly to correspond to that aspect of Theosophy which is set forth in Esoteric Buddhism.

The *Yoga System* aims at reaching knowledge by self training, so that the Saukyia and the Yoga systems are each incomplete in themselves, but are complimentary to each other. That is to say both systems are needed to make one complete system.

The *Advaita Philosophy* appears to be the most important of the six systems, and to be complete in itself. The word Advaita means *non-dual* and the leading idea of this system is the oneness of the Universe, the Unity of Nature, or in other words the omnipresence of Atma in all stages of manifestation and on all planes of being. It asserts that Atma is the only Reality, and that the realization of this truth is right knowledge whereby man is freed for ever from illusion, and enabled to rise above flesh and matter. By some strange delusion we go on imagining the physical universe to be real. Our perceptions are held in bondage by the physical senses and by the force of the convictions of those around us. Our fellow men, believing matter to be a reality, exert as it were a vast hypnotic influence on our minds, and from this hypnotic influence we are unable to free ourselves. Once realise clearly that the existence of matter is entirely owing to false perception, to a wrong mode of thought, and we are on the way to right knowledge by which final liberation is obtained. A man who is hypnotised will imagine a rope to be a snake, and as long as he is under the hypnotic influence will be unable to free himself from the delusion. In the same way we are hypnotized into imagining the One Reality to be many, and as long as we imagine it to be so, so it will be for us.

The Unity of Nature, which is the root idea in the Advaita Philosophy, is being daily illustrated in many ways, from the scientific aspect, by the progress of modern science. Many instances of this are given in Haeckel's History of Creation. There is, in fact, nothing in nature but Pure Spirit, the Central Truth, and to realise this and gain freedom it is right knowledge that is required. Now how is this right knowledge to be gained?

The Advaita Philosophy says that it is the force of individuality which prevents persons from realizing their true nature, by enveloping them with intense mist; but also that it is this individuality alone which is the cause of final emancipation

(Vasudeva Manana). I take this to mean that the stage of individuality is a necessary stage through which humanity must pass, but that it is necessary to emerge from it before mankind can be finally emancipated. The statement appears to be analogous to the statement made in the Key to Theosophy, that the human Ego is divine in its essential nature, yet not pure enough to be one with the All, and has therefore to pass through the Cycle of Necessity or Reincarnation which will make it fit for conscious union with the Universal Spirit.

The Adwaita Philosophy also says that this individuality which prevents right knowledge is annihilated by spiritual wisdom, which arises from the discrimination of Tattvas or spiritual vibrations.

(To be continued.)

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### LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

ALL that we are is the result of what we have thought; it is founded on our thoughts; it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him as the wheel follows the foot of him who draws the carriage.

All that we are is the result of what we have thought; it is founded on our own thoughts; it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him like a shadow that never leaves him.—*Dhammapada*.

Neither by the eyes, nor by spirit, nor by the sensuous organ, by austerity, nor by sacrifices, can we see God. Only the pure, by the light of wisdom and by deep meditation, can see the pure God.—*Upanishad*.

“Lead me from the unreal to the real! Lead me from darkness to light! Lead me from death to immortality!”—*Saman and Yagur Vedas*.

The small, old path stretching far away, has been found by me. On it sages who know Brahman move on to the heavenly place, and thence higher on, entirely free.—*Yainavalkya*.

For thoughts alone cause the round of rebirths in this world; let a man try to purify his thoughts. What a man thinks, that he is: this is the old secret.—*Maitrayana-Upanishad*.

A delicious fragrance spreads from the leaders of the world over all quarters, a fragrance by which, when the wind is blowing, all these creatures are intoxicated.—*Saddharma-Pundarika*.

When the body sleeps people see the playground of the soul, but It they never see; therefore let no one wake a man suddenly, for if the soul gets not rightly back to his body, it is not easy to remedy.—*Upanishads*.

There is this city of Brahman—the body—and in it the palace, the small lotus of the heart, and in that small ether. Both heaven and earth are contained within it, both fire and air, both sun and moon, both lightning and stars; and whatever there is of the Self, here in the world, and whatever has been or will be, all that is contained within it.—*Chanotoya-Upanishad*.

I know that great spirit of sunlike lustre beyond the darkness. A man who knows him truly passes over death ; there is no other path to go.

Grasping without hands, hastening without feet, he sees without eyes, he hears without ears. He knows what can be known, but no one knows him ; they call him the first, the Great Person.—*Svetasriatara-Upanishad*.

One moment in eternity is of as great consequence as another moment, for eternity changes not, neither is one part better than another part.—*Zoroaster*.

There is one Eternal thinker thinking non-eternal thoughts ; He, though one, fulfils the desires of many. The wise, who perceive Him within their self, to them belong eternal life, eternal peace.—*Upanishads*.

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### NOTES.

The current number of the *Contemporary Review* contains an article by Andrew Lang: "Comparative Psychological Research." The comparatives go back as far as 1665, and the house of Lady Conway. Mr. Lang is "almost persuaded."

In the same Review, August Weimanns (replying to Herbert Spenser) avows himself to be an "Ultra Darwinian," and a believer in "the All-sufficiency of Natural Selection."

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Professor St. George Mivart has accepted and "heartily" submitted to the ruling of the Vatican in regard to "Happiness in Hell;" and the current number of the *Nineteenth Century* may be found a copy of the "Decree," with an account of the "methods" of the "Sacred Congrega-

tion of Cardinals," when they move to declare a book "forbidden": all over the familiar signature of Father Clarke, S.J. British good-nature is just now listening to Rome, as may be noticed by any casual reader of the current numbers.

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Miss Taylor, in the current *National Review*, appears under the title of "An Englishwoman in Thibet."

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Messrs. Macmillan will shortly announce a volume of selections from the correspondence of Matthew Arnold.

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Dr. H. Macleod has published (Burnet) a cheap edition at sixpence, of his "Far East, a familiar Account of a Visit to India."

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### DUBLIN LODGE.

The session now commenced, meeting on Wednesday evenings at 3 Upper Ely-place, has every promise of increased activity, harmony, and solidarity. The transference of the valuable printing plant to the headquarters, which is about to take place, provides increased facilities for the issue of circulars, leaflets, pamphlets, and reprints of valuable articles and books at a low cost, and will afford abundant scope for the surplus energy of our active members. At the meeting on the 30th August, the amount still due on the plant, £22, was promptly subscribed by the members, so that the whole plant now becomes the collective property of the Lodge; thanks to the theosophical action of our North Dublin brethren, who have so strenuously helped forward Masters' cause.

FRED J. DICK, *Secretary*.