

# The Irish Theosophist.

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## LETTERS TO A LODGE.

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### V.

COMRADES,—This moot question, as to whether Masters (Mahâtmas) descend upon or manifest upon this material plane, is at present acting as a kind of ferment in many minds. And I would, in many cases, let it continue to ferment in order that students may, as is beneficial, reach their own conclusions.

Yet there are members of the T. S. who are undergoing much searching of soul upon this point, a point which, it appears to me, has been raised artificially and before its time. And it was not improbably raised for controversial and destructive purposes. This probability appears to me as very great, for the reason that members who have spoken to me upon the subject have in every case gone on to say that decision upon points now in controversy hung upon the answer.

But we shall never arrive at truths relating to spiritual evolution by seeking for them as controversial weapons. The cause of search, the spirit in which any search is undertaken and the thing really looked for (whether truth, or mere argumentative success), will infallibly colour the result, as Mind colours all it looks upon. It is not with the Mind, but with the Intuition that spiritual truths are discerned. Mind reports what Intuition has seen, in cases such as this.

It would appear sufficient that the student should accept the idea of the existence and functions of the Mahâtma in evolution as a bright hope, a light in the darkness, a beacon upon the hills of the hereafter. Whether They do or do not descend upon this plane would seem to be of small moment to him, as he, assuredly—were he of the student nature in the least, were he ever so little of a seeker after truth—would not expect their aid to extend to matters purely of this material plane, at all. This is to some extent true. And being a half-truth, it is used to

colour the personal conclusions of some minds, and to lend to incomplete expositions a weight not properly their own. Yet the question is raised before its due time, in my opinion, and for this opinion I have the following reason, to wit: Almost all Theosophists are content with the ideal of the existence of Great Souls who help the upward course of the race, and I find them caring but little about the exact plane from, to or by which that help comes. Students who are striving to live the life, to help themselves and others, mystics seeking deeper and ever deeper, ever more inwardly, for the hidden Self, are very rarely scholiasts or precisians. The Mahâtma *is*. Intuition has revealed thus much to Mind. The humble seeker bends his head, reaches upward and inward, aspires, loves and believes. What to him are planes? He knows that he *is* helped, and knows no strife to verify the exact point in Mother Space from which that god-like aid descends to fill his brimming soul. He hears that the Mahâtma may be that help and yet be also a living man, and in the fact—if fact it be—he sees new proof of great Nature's mysteries. Withdraw the fact—he feels no sense of loss; you have withdrawn from him a body, not a soul, and it is Soul he seeks, and would penetrate, even to those hidden deeps where the All-Soul merges into the One-Spirit.

Thus the mystic who seeks alone. But all mystics do not seek thus. Others there are who received the initial impulse from without, rather than from within; some soul in casement other than their own passed on to them the vibratory music of the spheres, causing them thus to tremble into consciousness of their interior world. This office was filled—for many of us—by a Soul whom we name H. P. B.

It will be evident that those who have followed such a messenger, whether as followers, as students, as pupils or as observers, will be more or less affected, according as her office as witness and messenger is clear or obscure to their eyes. And H. P. B. did most clearly assert, both in print and in private letters, that the "Masters" were also "living men." The present denial of that statement has its origin, as has so much else, in a more or less organized effort to destroy H. P. B. as messenger. Let us, therefore, keep this fact well in view. I have myself seen letters from India which put the statement very clearly as follows: "these high beings do not ever descend to this plane." The pupils of *modern* India are also repeating the statement in writing and otherwise, and it does absolutely contradict the teaching of H. P. B., which teaching I accept.

It is necessary to put this point very plainly, for the reason that it explains why I shall not put forward any statements by H. P. B. at all.

Nor shall I quote from eastern literature. This has been done before; moreover, translations may be questioned. Long ago I pledged myself to speak only to you of what I knew; that is to say, of things discoverable within my own consciousness, coupled with an explanation of their bearing and the method or mode of their existence, as this came before my mind.

Now I believe that the Mahâtma is possible; that He is necessary in evolution; that He exists; that He may or may not be using a human body amongst men. It is, to my mind, quite true that the Mahâtma, *as such*, does not descend upon this plane; but you must lay stress upon those words "*as such*." Atma, spirit, does not *directly* function upon this plane. What does that mean? It means that when you are dealing with the things of Spirit you are not dealing with this material plane, nor yet when you are dealing with the Intuition, nor when you deal with Mind, nor even when you deal with nerve fluid. None of these things are of this physical plane. Take a sentence attributed to a Master: "Buddhi does not act on this plane, where the acting agent is Manas." This is simply saying that the action of Intuition—any grade of its action—is not of the material plane, and that the Intuition acts through the Mind, which again is not of this plane, but is an acting agent for this plane, just as Intuition is an acting agent for spiritual truths. The Mahâtma, or great Spirit, touches from afar the fire-soul of man, and truths are born into the womb of the hidden, mystic brain. Whether the Mahâtma is or is not inhabiting a human body in full and conscious volition, this mode of action above described is the same. You and I deal with one another after the same fashion, though so far less potent for good. Mental intercourse, spiritual perceptions, the widening experience of love or art or duty are none of them attributes of the material body; they are seen by the Mind, they are verified by mental experience, they are not of the earth, earthly. On the physical plane, as such, they are not observable. Occultism also teems with examples of bodiless entities, disembodied entities, minds of a kind, all invisible to us, yet all eyes, as it were, to see our surroundings and our physical selves. Is it not, then, clear that, in very truth, the Mahâtma *as such* descends not to this material plane?

This does not mean, however, that the Mahâtma may not be using a human body. I take it that the conscious and perfected soul may use and does use some particular body, or several bodies in as many different places. It is a question of degrees. The Spirit acts through Intuition, and that through Mind, and that again through body by means of a reflecting mirror, or brain. Just as the Breath may or may not have

condensed itself into a planet or world, formed and visible, so the Maha-Atma may or may not have adopted a human form.

There is a reason for this adoption and a very simple, because a very natural one, having to do with evolution. The races evolve, but require the aid of the Spirit in evolving. The Elder Brothers turn and help. But how? Not all men are to be reached by purely psychical and spiritual methods, making of the world a vast forcing-house and developing a race of irresponsible mediums. The self-evolved and self-initiated (though really naught is done by self alone), require to be met at a certain point with instruction in the orderly training of the bodies and the minds they use. It is clear that, if we omit from the chain of human development which stretches from man to the Arch-angels or Chohans, one stage of development which we may call a perfected soul using a body and acting upon and for men with that body, we miss out one of the links of that chain. It is as if we missed out Buddhi acting through Manas; as if we omitted Manas and said that Buddhi must act through body or not at all; or that Mind, having freed itself from the trammels of bodily necessities and limitations, must become Atma without passing through the fire-mist of the electric Intuition which alone receives from Spirit the light of the world.

There is a further reason. A perfect body is at once a reflector and a dynamo. The fully conscious soul inhabits it, and observes through its medium all the currents affecting the race. In even the most perfect body there is, locked up in its molecules, that force which represents the karmic tendency of that race. Upon the mirror of the body these forces and currents are reflected, and the Great Soul is "*in touch*" with the men of the race. He does not identify himself with his body, not in the least; but it is to him as a harp upon which the cyclic forces play and by means of which he is able to verify the notes which move the human beings of that race and period. It is a difficult idea to put clearly, but you can all the better work it out for yourselves. Body—a house to dwell in—is at first useful to the evolving soul itself; later on body becomes, to the fully evolved soul, a thing useful to the evolution of other souls, a medium by and through which to act upon and aid them. While there are men living in bodies, they will be accessible to psycho-physiological force; they cannot neglect it, it is one of the steps; hence the need, on the part of a Great Soul intending to meet and help them at a certain given point, for a storehouse or dynamo.

All the same, that Maha-Atma is not *itself* acting upon this plane or descending upon this plane. It is like a general who acts through the private soldier by means of a graded series of officers. It is also

true that the *highest* office of the Mahâtma lies upon the spiritual plane and is not experienced by the disciple *when in the body*. True, too, that a man may live with or near a Mahâtma—say as a servant, being a man of a type and order as yet quite unevolved—and never come in contact with the Mahâtma *as such* at all. This servant may be, so to say, one of the necessities of the situation, as much as food, or clothes, or a shelter may be so. Undoubtedly there are Mahâtmas who need none of these things: they are appendages to certain conditions of life, which conditions are, in their turn, necessary to that situation which I have called being “in touch” with mankind. For to touch Maha-Atma you must be Maha-Atma. You only touch, in the Mahâtma, those planes which you have developed within yourself.

We think at once too much and too little of body. The soul *needs* no body. Some birds need no nests. Yet the body and the nest are alike necessary to a certain set of conditions. Those whose most interior need it is to help the evolution of mankind, atoms of that One-Spirit-Soul which evolves all things, require a vehicle of action, a means of communication, of a certain kind, because at certain stages of progress some given evolutionary link is necessary, and the free, perfect, conscious Soul, acting through a series of vehicles of which body is one, is just that specified link. Of course these bodies would be very perfect engines and of a higher order of “matter” than that which we take up in our present bodies. And it is one of the duties of the Great Souls, one of the many duties which arise along the pathway of evolution, to evolve just such perfect atoms of “physical” matter by becoming their indwelling force or evolver: which atoms are taken up again and again by the building forces, ever at work to provide forms composed of a higher order of matter for the higher orders of men as they evolve.

For “body” is a term for a congeries of forces; the human body is the highest achievement of the building forces, and by the means of a perfect body these builders themselves may be guided (by the perfect and conscious Soul indwelling) to a still higher development of their building powers. These powers, too, must evolve: building higher and still higher forms for the evolving races to inhabit. Do not forget that Soul owes a duty to matter; that these physical atoms, so-called, are not really physical at all and are Lives, and that the sublime and perfect Maha-Atma owes a duty to all that is, for all is Himself and He is, not body or soul or even spirit, but That Self; That thou art.

JASPER NIEMAND.

(*To be continued.*)

## TEACHINGS OF A WESTERN OCCULTIST.\*

I.—THE NEOPHYTE (*continued*).(*Continued from p. 70.*)

## II.

To call a man a coward is the greatest insult we can give him; yet we are *all* cowards to a greater or less degree. A coward is a man who mistrusts the omnipotence and wisdom of his divine Self and allows himself to cringe to the forces of nature and of fate. Although it is perfectly natural to fear and to flee in the presence of danger, we despise the man who does so, because our intelligence recognizes a higher law—that of defiance and command. Hence courage amounts to an affirmation of the Higher Self, and cowardice to a denial thereof. There are many professed materialists who belie their own professions by their noble and heroic actions, which demonstrate their *real* trust in something higher than their body. There are not a few professed believers in higher law and the spiritual nature of man, whose timid and calculating policy in actual life proclaims their failure to realize the trustfulness they teach. How hard it is for the poor neophyte to yield his fate entirely into the hands of God—of the Law—and to relinquish all anxiety, all precaution, all worry over details! Yet only cowardice prevents him; cowardice born of his blindness. The life of Socrates is a priceless lesson to us cowards. We profess to believe that our chariot is driven by a trusty charioteer, yet how often do we grab the reins!

“Every man who is ready to die sooner than forswear truth and justice is truly alive, for he is immortal in his soul.

“All the ancient initiations had for their object the finding or forming of such men.”

But, adds Lévi, when the dark age came the initiators became few, and the initiations degenerated into mere ascetic practices and macerations. The blind led the blind, and both fell into the ditch of greater doubt and despair.

“On the path of the great science it behoves us not to set foot rashly; but, once on the march, we must arrive or perish. To doubt is madness; to stop is to fall; to recoil is to be hurled into a gulf.”

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\* From *Doğme et Rituel de la Haute Magie*, by Eliphas Lévi. Paris: Félix Alean, 108, Boulevard St. Germain. 18 frs.

Our author warns the reader to beware how he reads further, for the book will be a blessing or a curse to him, according as his motives are pure or impure. In either case, once read it cannot be forgotten or ignored. Let us remember the fate of Glyndon in *Zanoni*, and beware how we set a soiled foot on the ladder's first rung.

Eliphas Lévi then speaks of the relation of words to ideas and to forms, enunciates the aphorism, "As above, so below," and dwells on the correspondence between the macrocosm and the microcosm; a procedure which will at once recall the teachings of H. P. B. In man the creative powers are the Intelligence and the Will; but these twain have an ally "too little known and whose all-potency belongs exclusively to the domain of magic"—the Imagination, called by Kabalists the "diaphanous" or "translucid." The functions of the Imagination, and its connection with the two other powers, are of primary importance in the study of occultism. It is the eye of the soul, with which we see the reflection of the work we are to execute. It determines the form of the child in the mother's womb. It embodies the will and enables it to affect our body and our actions. "Are you in danger in a battle? Believe yourself invulnerable like Achilles, and you will be so," says Paracelsus.

The chapter ends with some remarks on faith and superstition which, though invaluable for export, may safely be recommended to Theosophists for home consumption also. The man of faith is accused by the sceptic of superstition, and by the superstitious of credulity. The Theosophist, who knows better, will recognize that no man of real faith can be either sceptical or credulous.

"To believe is to acquiesce in that which we do not know yet, but which reason assures us beforehand that we shall know, or at least acknowledge, some day.

"Absurd, then, those pretended philosophers who say, 'I will not believe that which I do not know.'

"Poor fools! if you knew, would you have any need to believe?"

"But can I believe on hazard and without reason? Certainly not. Blind and rash belief is superstition and folly."

H. T. EDGE.

*(To be continued.)*

## A FAMILY OF MYSTICS.

WHILE all the world has heard of H. P. Blavatsky, and while the talent of her sister, Madame Jelihovsky, and of her niece, Mrs. Vera Johnston, has appreciators upon two continents, the deep vein of mysticism, with its poetical and spiritual insight, which runs through this family, is less widely known. Therefore the following letter from Mrs. Johnston, with its enclosure, will doubtless interest your readers. What mysterious karmic lines, threading this material existence as a silver vein threads the dark one, has led these several Egos, with their spiritual tendency already formed and glowing, into the one family? Who can answer? The question is wrapped up in the underlying subject of the relation of souls to their vehicles. However, here are the letters.

“*Hallein, Jan. 10th, 1895.*”

“I enclose a letter I got from my brother when in India in 1889. As it was written about things your heart holds dear, I have translated it and send it to you and to all who may be interested to read it. My brother does not know any English and so the theosophic literature, except *Light on the Path* and part of the *Stanzas of Dzyan*, which I have translated for his especial benefit, is a closed book for him. In spite of this he certainly is one of us. I found this letter, arranging my things before leaving London, and thought it especially interesting, as it really seems to be a kind of prophecy as to things which are going on in London, six years after it was written. My brother is generally appreciated, for soldiers and officers alike love him in his regiment—but as to being understood, this is a luck which seldom befalls him. And no wonder. His interior life is so intense as not to leave him much outward energy. I have just read for the first time *Letters that have Helped Me*, with your commentaries, and so I know you will understand what my brother is talking about. When we were children, we each of us had our little garden in Tiflis, and I remember, once we were watering our flowers, and the waterdrops coming out of the can sparkling in the sunlight, he said to me: ‘Look up into the sky—the sun is God, and all these little reflections in these little drops are human souls.’ This probably happened a quarter of a century ago, and yet I often think of it as if it were only yesterday. Is it not a splendid illustration of the oneness of the human race, that he, who lives thousands of miles away, all alone in the mountains of the Caucasus, should



find such a ready echo of his thoughts in you, who never knew of his existence up to now. He was greatly amused when I asked his permission to send his letter to you, and says I may do what I like about it, as it could not do either good or harm unless people have it all in themselves already, when they would not, he says, want any of his rubbish."

*"St. Petersburg, Jan. 10th, 1880.*

" . . . As usual, I have been a very long time about writing to you. Now I have begun, at last, but I do not know in the least what news to give, as there is none. As before, I go to my school,\* ride and stay at home. To be frank, it is in the latter occupation that I find the most interest and variety. I think, were I to live by myself in St. Petersburg, I would have forgotten how to speak, as it would be perfectly superfluous. At school, during lessons, the art of talking is practised very little, and even this as an unnecessary luxury, having nothing to do with real business. But out of service, communion with fellow creatures fast loses its attraction for me. And unfortunately so.

"I begin to understand that, when withdrawn into one's own shell and examining it closely, one may find in it a world much wider and brighter than the one outside; but still I say unfortunately, because I am only catching glimpses of it, and God alone knows whether I shall ever find it.

"The only thing one may rely upon is: 'Ask and ye shall receive; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you.'

"I firmly believe that, as soon as that world is able to influence a man, be it ever so slightly, it will give him peace before all other boons that it may reveal after. This beginning is the most important; the rest being altogether dependent upon the man's greater or lesser capacity of reflecting light, that is to say, his personal powers and gifts from above.

"You write that the theosophical movement in India looks considerably different† when one is near to it. It is always so. Examining a picture at a distance, you lose the greater part of details and receive an impression of a more perfect finish. Theosophy—or rather what we long to find in this word—is bound to exist in a limited circle only, not conditionally, but because of its very essence.

"The Society may be scattered all over the world, but in spirit it

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\* The writer is a dragoon officer and was at the time master of riding at a cavalry soldiers' school.—V. J.

† I was greatly disappointed with it. I was young and foolish, don't you see, still expecting help from outside, not understanding that the "kingdom of heaven is inside us."—V. J.

has gathered into a very limited body, lit up with the light of truth, reflecting light like silver; the light in whose disjointed rays wander all kinds of human societies from the days of Adam, seeking the path to this light in knowledge, religions, sciences and various systems. But it is rare for a man to turn to the one instrument that can give knowledge, and, entering the road of painful reconstruction, to find the path within himself. Only having conquered oneself, only having reached the depths, and felt oneself in one's reality, one may give light-sensitiveness to the *feeler*, or organ, if you like it better, which is hidden deep within us; is crusted all over with our coarse materiality, is hardly ever recognized.

"Only then we shall be given free entrance into the mysterious body, which is the earthly abode, one of the many in the house of 'the Father.'

"This mysterious body exists, has existed, and will pass away only with humanity.\* Where it is I do not know, because that is to be known only by him who has entered it. But I know that its work is in spirit and truth, and also that it is in spheres far above all religious sub-divisions. In spheres which may be opened to an uneducated man, who has unconsciously followed the path of religion only through the strength of his own faith, and has reached one of the promised abodes, having got rid, at last, of his own flesh, this accumulation of living cells, of the so-called microbes and bacillæ, which teem in a heap of all kinds of rubbish, to the wonder and sometimes the delectation of our scientific world. This accumulation of all kinds of substances and organisms† carries on an independent work: it has soiled all that makes a man; it has spread a thick cloud over all our finest organs of highest perception.

"To get rid of this 'original sin,' to wipe the dirt off the receptacles of the light of truth is possible only through the path of faith, which purifies our interior reasoning, or through the path of constant labour within oneself, which shall reveal to us, at the end, the man in us restored to sight in the light of truth; that light which is to show us the essence of true being in every archi-microscopic particle. Not every one is able to carry on this kind of labour, for it is hard and obscure, and difficult it is to get access into the mysterious body.

"I am little acquainted with the Theosophical Society and know it mostly on its exterior side. And yet I am in sympathy with it, and yet it seems to me it is an old story being told over again. The career of

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\* "*The Louige*," where people are to ask for Chelaship, as I understand it.—V. J.

† The so-called elementals?—V. J.

this Society will be similar to those of many preceding ones: it is not itself which is meant to go ahead, but a *few are meant to progress through it*. As to itself, it will remain, having lost its precious kernel, a mere empty shell in the hands of lodges, which have multiplied and divided until they have become perfectly unlike each other. And its very essence will become an unintelligible hieroglyph, with no more meaning to it than the key of Peter the Apostle in the keeping of the Pope of Rome.

“The same thing happened to the Freemasons, the Rosicrucians and many other societies that existed still earlier. Can it not be that Theosophy is also this sort of filtering? Besides, religions also are filters, only with a more constant basis. But I have written so much, I may be writing nonsense. . . .”

Here ends the letter. But the thoughts it awakens are not thus ended!

J. C. KEIGHTLEY.

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## THE LEGENDS OF ANCIENT EIRE.

### II.

IN the recently published *Story of Early Gaelic Literature*, attention is directed to the curious eastern and pantheistic character of some archaic verses. Critics are for ever trying to show how some one particular antique race was the first begetter of religion and mystic symbolism. Perplexed by the identity between the myths and traditions of different countries, they look, now here, now there, for the original. But it was not in any land but out of the Christ-Soul of the universe that true wisdom at all times was begotten. Some ignorant peasant, some Jacob Boehme, is pure and aspires, and lo! the God stirs within him and he knows the things that were taught in elder days and by unknown people. Our own land, long ago, had its Initiates in whom the eye of the seer was open. This eye, concealed in the hollow of the brain, is the straight gate and the narrow way through which alone the mortal may pass and behold the immortal. It is now closed in most men. Materialism, sensuality and dogmatic belief have so taken the crown and sceptre from their souls that they enter the golden world no more knowingly—they are outcast of Eden. But the Tuatha De Danmans were more than seers or visionaries. They were magicians—God and man in one. Not alone their thought went out into the vast, but the Power went along with it. This mystic Power is called the Serpentine Fire. It is spiritual, electric, creative. It develops spirally in the ascetic, mounting from centre to centre, from the navel to the

heart;\* from thence it rises to the head. He is then no more a man but a God: his vision embraces infinitude.

The action of this Power was symbolized in many ways, notably by the passage of the sun through the zodiacal signs† (centres in the psychic body). A stone serpent was found a little while ago in Ireland marked with twelve divisions. The archaic verses alluded to have the same meaning:

“I am the point of the lance of battle. [The spinal cord, the Sushumna nadi of Indian psychology.]

I am the God who creates in the head of man the fire of the thought.

Who is it throws light into the meeting on the mountain? [The meeting of the mortal and the immortal on Mount Meru, the pineal gland.]

Who announces the ages of the moon? [The activity of the inner astral man.]

Who teaches the place where couches the sun?” [Spirit.]

The Serpentine Power is the couch of the sun, the casket of spirit. Hence the Druids or Magi who had mastered this power were called Serpents. Though St. Patrick is said to have driven the serpents out of Ireland, traces still remain of the serpent wisdom. Lest the interpretation given above should seem arbitrary I will trace further explicit references to the third eye. Diarmuid, the hero and darling of so many story-tellers, whose flight with Grania forms one of the most mystic episodes in Celtic romance, is described as having a spot in the centre of his forehead which fascinated whoever gazed. He is called the “Son of the Monarch of Light.” He is the Initiate, the twice-born. This divine parentage has the sense in which the words were spoken, “Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again.” In the same sense a Druid is described as “full of his God.” From the mystic Father descends the Ray, the Child of Light. It is born in man as mind, not reasoning; earthly nor sensual, but as the heaven-aspiring, thinking mind. In itself it is of the nature of fire. The man who knows it become filled with light, aye, he moves about in light within himself.

The following description of a giant, taken from the story of Diarmuid, refers to still another aspect of our occult nature.

“He has but *one eye only* in the fair middle of his black forehead. . . . He is, moreover, so skilled in magic that fire could not burn him, water could not drown him, and weapons could not wound him. . . . He is fated not to die until there be struck upon him three blows of the iron club he has. He sleeps in the top of that Quicken tree by night, and he remains at its foot by day to watch it. . . . The berries of the tree have the virtues of the trees of faeryland.”

The Quicken tree is the network of nerves in the magnetic astral body. Readers of the Upanishads will remember the description of the arteries, thin as a hair split a thousand times, which proceed from the heart, and in which the Ego rests during deep sleep. It has just the same significance in the legend. The meaning will be still better

\* “He that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of *living waters*. This spake he of the Spirit.”—*John*, vii. 38.

† “The twelve signs of the Zodiac are hidden in his body.”—*Secret Doctrine*, II. 619

understood by a comparison of the youthful Finn in his encounter with a similar one-eyed Titan. There is a most interesting version of this in Curtin's *Irish Myths and Folk-Tales*. Too long to quote in its entirety, the story runs as follows. Finn meets a giant who carries a salmon in his hand. This Titan has "but one eye as large as the sun in the heavens." He gives the fish to Finn to cook. The moment the giant closed his eye he began to breathe heavily. "Every time he drew breath he dragged Finn, the spit, the salmon, and all the goats to his mouth, and every time he drove a breath out of himself he threw them back to the places they were in before." While Finn is cooking the salmon he burns it, and in trying to hide the blister he burns his thumb. To ease the pain he put his thumb between his teeth, and chewed it through to the bone and marrow. He then received the knowledge of all things. He was drawn up the next minute to the giant's eye, and plunged the hot spit (a bar of red-hot iron, says another account) into the eye of the giant. He passes the infuriate giant at the door of the cave something after the fashion of Ulysses, by driving the flocks out and himself escaping under the fleece of the largest goat or ram.

The meaning of this story, with all its quaint imagery, is not difficult. It is an allegory describing the loss of the third eye. The cave is the body. The fish is a phallic symbol, and the cooking of it refers to the fall of the early ethereal races into generation and eventually into gross sensuality. The synthetic action of the highest spiritual faculty, in which all the powers of man are present, is shown by the manner in which everything in the cave is dragged up to the giant's head. When Finn destroys the eye by plunging into it a bar of red-hot iron, it simply means that the currents started in the generative organs rose up through the spinal cord to the brain, and, acting upon the pineal gland, atrophied or petrified it. The principle of desire is literally the spirit of the metal iron, and a clairvoyant could see these red fires mounting up by the way of the spinal canal to the brain and there smothering any higher feelings. The escape of Finn under the fleece of the ram means that, having destroyed the spiritual eye, he could only use the organ of psychic clairvoyance, which is symbolized here, as in the mysticism of other countries, by the ram.

This symbolism, so grotesque and unmeaning to-day, was once perfectly lucid and was justified in its application. A clairvoyant could see in the *aura* of man around every centre the glow, colour and form which gave rise to the antique symbol. One of the Gods is described as "surrounded by a rainbow and fiery dews." Cuchullin, whose hair, dark (blue?) close to the skin, red beyond, and ending in brilliant gold, makes Professor Rhys elaborate him into a solar myth, is an adept who has assimilated the substance of the three worlds, the physical, the psychic and the heavenworld; therefore his hair (*aura*) shows the three colours. He has the sevenfold vision also, indicated by the seven pupils in his eyes. Volumes of unutterably dreary research, full of a false learning, have been written about these legends. Some try to show that much of the imagery arose from observation of the heavenly bodies and the procession of the seasons. But who of the old bards would have described nature other than as she is? The morning notes of Celtic song breathe the freshness of spring and are full of joy in nature. They could communicate this much better than most of their critics could do. It is only the world within which could not be ren-

dered otherwise than by myth and symbol. We do not need scholarship so much as a little imagination to interpret them. We shall understand the divine initiators of our race by believing in our own divinity. As we nourish the mystic fire, we shall find many things of the early world, which now seem grotesque and unlovely to our eyes, growing full of shadowy and magnificent suggestion. Things that were distant and strange, things abhorrent, the blazing dragons, winged serpents and oceans of fire which affrighted us, are seen as the portals through which the imagination enters a more beautiful, radiant world. The powers we dared not raise our eyes to—heroes, dread deities and awful kings—grow as brothers and gay children around the spirit in its resurrection and ascension. For there is no pathway in the universe which does not pass through man, and no life which is not brother to our life.

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### MRS. BESANT AS A PROPHET.

*“Sydney, Feb. 17th, 1895.”*

“DEAR JASPER AND JULIUS,—I address you in this way, for these are the names of the friend I have long respected and have grown to love. As the years roll on the bonds get closer, till now the time has come when this old silent friendship must take phenomenal expression. Just a word to express grateful thank-you’s for the help you have given to aid me in seeing reflected that part of the Universal Soul I may call my own. I think Herbert Coryn’s true ideal of a friend is a beautiful one (see “Heavenworld”). So here I am passing you the countersign right in the heat of the day of battle, for it is a glorious privilege to range oneself heart, soul and mind under the banner of our chief W. Q. J. Since then many letters have passed between us in which he honours me by calling me his friend.

“This *is* a big struggle, Jasper, isn’t it? A struggle for the awakening of the soul in man. ‘The spot of our own,’ as Krishna says, that no one in the world can wrest from us. All the dark, abject centuries of blind authority, *form* and prejudice are rallying up for one wild, mad attack on the calm, still power of the awakening of Manas to rightful ownership in each one of us. But we can defy the hosts of superstition and credulity if we have but one grain of that immortal golden philosophy made verily *our own*, if we have not turned its power aside by doubts and suspicions.

“Ah, me! it is easy for us to write in this way from the free shores of America and Australia, where the evolutionary tendencies of a grander and better race are all helping us; with a crop of Irish elements to aid us also in acknowledging no authority that does not pass the countersign to our own hearts. The racial difficulties of the English people are tremendous; the ‘pious business,’ the supposed immaculate virtues, the sole right to open heaven for the universe and to have *scapegoats*. The Englishman that pulls through all this is indeed a hero! I enclose a copy of our little piping shout from Australia that says we prefer to think for ourselves, and my own individual declaration of principles, which I have forwarded to Mead and Olcott and which I hope will see light in *Lucifer* and *The Theosophist*. At present a dual debate has been going on, and now Australia claims to have a say with

no uncertain sound—at least, those who have found voices to speak in this country.

“In a few words, the whole situation is explained from A. B.’s present position, ‘I am Sir Oracle, and when I speak let no dogs bark.’ But the ‘lion’s whelps’ will growl, even if they are forced to keep pretty silent so as not to play too much into the hands of the crafty ones.

“My salutations to all comrades, especially Archibald Keightley, Herbert Coryn, H. T. Edge, and that doughty old knight of the Middle Ages, James M. Pryse.

“I believe, after all, ‘the sticks’ will keep together in the bundle, and what a grand time we will have binding up each other’s wounds and laughing at the whacks we gave each other in the dark.

“Ever eternally yours,

“T. W. WILLANS.”

The above letter was followed on March 26th by the following cablegram, which, with other letters of the same tenor from New Zealand and Australia, are in sufficiently amusing contrast with Mrs. Besant’s prophecy upon Australian matters as confidently expressed to the Adyar Convention last December.

“Vigilate, London. Sydney Branch votes in confidence Judge.”

Foregoing received from Sydney.—*Reuter*.—[ED.]

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#### SOME QUOTATIONS.

FOR some time past we have heard a number of statements which may be summed up as follows:

1. H. P. B. never taught Western Occultism.
2. H. P. B.’s interest lay chiefly with India and the East.
3. Mr. W. Q. Judge has attacked the Brahmans as an entire caste and has tried to foment discord.
4. The idea of Mr. Judge, to wit, that the cyclic wave of evolution has at present forced America forward to a position of primary importance, is a part of the wily schemes of that gentleman.

In the light of these statements put forward by Mrs. Besant, Mr. B. Keightley and others, it may be of a curious interest to read the following quotations. Mohini and Damodar were very high caste Brahmans.

*Occult World*, p. 83 (Master K. H.):

“I cannot endure for any length of time the stifling magnetism even of my own countrymen. I have seen some of our proud old Sikhs drunk and staggering over the marble pavement of their sacred temple. I have heard an English-speaking Vakil declaim against Yog Vidya and Theosophy as a delusion and a lie, declaring that English science had emancipated them from such degrading superstitions, and saying that it was an insult to India to maintain that the dirty Yogees and Sunnyasis knew anything about the mysteries of Nature, or that any living man can, or ever could, perform any phenomena. I turn my face homeward to-morrow.”

*Lucifer*, V. 86, October, 1889 (H. P. B.):

“These teachings [Theosophy] are most undeniably the back-bone of the Theosophical Societies *in the West*, but not at all in the East, where such Branch Societies number almost five to one in the West. Were these special doctrines the ‘heart and soul’ of the whole body,

then Theosophy and its T. S. would have died out in India and Ceylon since 1885—and this is surely not the case. For not only have they been virtually abandoned at Adyar since that year, as there was no one to teach them: but while some Brahman Theosophists were very much opposed to that teaching being made public, others—the more orthodox—positively opposed them as being inimical to their exoteric systems.’

*Isis Unveiled*, I. 589:

“When we say indiscriminately ‘India,’ we do not mean the India of our modern days but that of the archaic period. In those ancient times countries which are now known to us by other names were all called India. There was an Upper, a Lower, and a Western India, the latter of which is now Persia-Iran. The countries now named Thibet, Mongolia and Great Tartary were also considered by the ancient writers as India.”

*Man : Fragments of Forgotten History*, p. xi (Mohini):

“Man! man is thy brother! Give to thy brother what he has not and supply thy own deficiencies from what he offers thee. The right hand must aid the left; the East must unite with the West: the young must join hands with the old and the beauty of harmony will smile on the face of the earth.”

*The Theosophist*, I. 196-7, May, 1880:

Damodar K. Mavalankar leaves his caste, saying: “I saw that, if it were not for this distinction [of castes], India would not have been so degraded, for this distinction engendered hatred among her sons. It made them hate and quarrel with one another. The peace of the land was disturbed. People could not unite with one another for good purposes. They waged war with one another, instead of devoting all their combined energies to the cause of ameliorating the condition of the country. The foundation of immorality was thus laid, until it has reached now so low a point that, unless this mischief is stopped, the tottering pillars of India will soon give way. I do not by this mean to blame my ancestors, who originally instituted this system. To me their object seems to be quite a different one. It was based, in my opinion, on the qualities of every person. The caste was not then hereditary, as it is now. This will be seen from the various ancient sacred books, which are full of instances in which Kshatriyas and even Mâhârs and Châmbhârs, who are considered the lowest of all, were not only made and regarded as Brahmans, but almost worshipped as demi-gods simply for their qualities. If such is the case, why should we still stick to that custom which we now find not only impracticable but injurious?” Damodar belonged to one of the highest castes of Brahmans.

As it has been said by several persons, in public and in private, that H. P. B. never taught Western Occultism as such, but only spoke of the Eastern School, let us look at *The Idler* for March, 1895. We shall find there, on p. 280, in a review of Mr. Solovyoff’s book, the following from the pen of W. L. Alden, who knew H. P. B. in the States and was present, I am told, when the T. S. was first formed. The gentleman is by no means a believer in H. P. B., which makes his testimony less suspicious, perhaps, to those who might doubt her friends. Mr. Alden says:

“Growing tired of spiritualism, she next pretended that she was a member of the Mediæval Society of the Rosy Cross, which, according to her, still existed and had its headquarters in Amsterdam, whence the brethren, who presided over the Society, frequently came to America to visit Blavatsky in their ‘astral forms.’”



## A PROPHETIC MESSAGE.

H. P. B. TO THE AMERICAN CONVENTION T. S., 1891.

"SISTERS and brothers of America, I thank and I bless you for your unremitting labours for the common cause so dear to us all. Let me remind you all once more that such work is now more than ever needed.

"The period which we have now reached in the cycle that will close between 1897-8 is, and will continue to be, one of great conflict and continued strain. If the T. S. can hold through it, good: if not, while Theosophy will remain unscathed, the Society will perish—perchance most ingloriously—and the world will suffer.

"The critical nature of the stage on which we have entered is as well known to the forces that fight against us, as to those that fight on our side. No opportunity will be lost of sowing dissension, of taking advantage of mistaken and false moves, of instilling doubt, of augmenting difficulties, of breathing suspicions, so that by any and every means the unity of the Society may be broken and the ranks of our Fellows thinned and thrown into disarray. Never has it been more necessary for the members of the T. S. to lay to heart the old parable of the bundle of sticks—divided, they will inevitably be broken one by one; united, there is no force on earth able to destroy our Brotherhood.

"On some . . . the effect is generally disastrous . . . at the present crisis of the Society a lack of self-control and watchfulness may become fatal in every case.

"If every F. T. S. were content to be an impersonal force for good, careless of praise or blame so long as he subserved the purposes of the Brotherhood, the progress made would . . . place the ark of the T. S. out of danger."

The last time I referred to H. P. B.'s words Mr. Sinnett replied, in effect, that she was an impetuous speaker and writer, and that the importance attached to her words was often much exaggerated. It may be so. But I think they have, even more frequently, been underestimated. To many the words quoted above will afford further evidence, if such were necessary, of the "wonderful insight and prophetic vigour" of H. P. B. Others may attach no significance to them. Some good brother "suspected something." He whispered his suspicions abroad. Everywhere they spread with amazing rapidity, gaining fresh impetus on the way. Mrs. Besant, whom we all loved, was chosen to voice these suspicions. They had now the required force. One brother is not satisfied. Mrs. Besant may fail in her duty, so he secures certified copies of the "evidence" without permission. He thinks he is justified in doing so. And for the good of the T. S.!

On it goes. All is done that can be done. A point is reached where the Constitution of the T. S. does not provide for further prosecution. Still suspicion must find some justification (so far it has had none). The "builders" of the Constitution did not foresee this deadlock to "truth and justice," so-called. It must, therefore, be amended or altered, so that penalty may be inflicted on a brother *suspected* of fraud.

Happily, recent events have proved that there exists in each Section (apart from America, which is solid) a nucleus, united in their loyalty,

love and devotion to William Q. Judge; who have been guided by theosophical principles in this matter, and who are prepared to carry the T. S. into the next century as H. P. B. left it. We have been asked to sacrifice one of our Founders, close up our ranks and go on without him. No, brothers, not this time.

Bales of "evidence" may be scattered around, but it does not *prove* guilt. That will be found impossible, I verily believe. If you wish to continue the prosecution outside the T. S. Constitution, you can, of course, do so. Fume, storm and rage as you will, you cannot destroy the "ark of the T. S." The real T. S. exists, and will continue to exist, prophecies to the contrary notwithstanding. It will expel no one. It will welcome all who wish to enter its ranks in the true spirit. That is the issue. The battle has been fought and won.

Those who clamour for a new Constitution and new Society should think twice before severing their connection with the old. They may form a new T. S., but I venture to prophesy it will be a "flapdoodle."

D. N. D.

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### TOLSTOI AND KARMA.

[Letter written by Count Tolstoi to the Editor of *The Northern Messenger*, in Russia.  
Translated by V. J.]

"I SEND you a Buddhist tale entitled *Karma*, which I have translated from the American magazine *Open Court*. This tale has greatly pleased me with its naivety as well as with its profundity. The best part of it is the exposition of the truth, so often obscured in later times in various ways, that the getting rid of evil and acquisition of good can be got only with personal effort, that there is not and there cannot be any contrivance through which could be attained either individual or common good, save one's own personal effort. This exposition is especially good in this, that it immediately demonstrates that the good of every separate man holds true only in case it is common good as well. As soon as the brigand, climbing out of hell, wished good only for himself—his good stopped being good and he dropped back again. This little tale seems to shed light on a new side of the two fundamental truths revealed by Christianity: that life exists only in the renunciation of one's personality—'he that loseth his life . . . shall find it' (*Matt.*, x. 39), and that the good of men is only in their unification with God and through God with each other, 'As thou art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us' (*John*, xvii. 21).

"I read out this tale to children and they liked it. And amongst grown-up people its reading always gave rise to conversation about the gravest problems of life. And, to my mind, it is a very good recommendation."

COUNT LEO TOLSTOI.

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### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

*To the Editor of THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST.*

I DESIRE to address a few words to your readers on the subject that is in all our thoughts. We must not lose sight of the future in the kâmic whirl of the present. The present is the vortex out of which the T. S. is to be reborn, if it is to exist at all in the coming century. We

in America have no shadow of doubt of that existence, as we stand squarely on the platform and are working persistently on the lines laid down for us by H. P. B., and that work is not interrupted by the present troubles. The reason for this solidarity is not far to seek. It is this sentence, backed by many others to corroborate and support it, from H. P. B., "The day W. Q. J. resigns, H. P. B. will be virtually dead for the Americans. W. Q. J. is the Antaskarana between the two Manas(es), the American thought and the Indian—or rather the trans-Himālayan—esoteric knowledge." In America to retain confidence in H. P. B. and stand squarely by Mr. Judge means exactly the same thing, and America is a unit on this point. The question, then, is simply: what relations can we sustain, if any, in the future to our brothers of other Sections. If such association is to be determined by our joining the assaults on Mr. Judge, then the separation has already come, and more bitterness and criminations are worse than useless; they will only react on their authors. Much has been said in regard to a "committee of honour," and Mr. Judge has been charged with evading it. I declare and can prove that this is not true. He evaded it no more than did those arrayed against him, for all agreed that it would be *useless at that stage of the proceedings*, as the result in any case would be accepted by one party only. Had a committee of brothers been suggested and arranged, or even *tried*, before Mrs. Besant appeared as public accuser, can anyone doubt that matters would have taken very different shape? Should extreme measures among *professed* brothers be resorted to *first*, or after all other methods have failed? I leave each to answer this question from his own code of ethics. The *methods* employed from the beginning have been the most mistaken that could have been suggested. My object in saying this is not to locate blame, for when the karmic records are open none of us may be found without blame; but to suggest whether it be wiser to continue in evil lines fraught already with so much bitterness, or to let wiser counsels prevail. One of the latest offences charged against Mr. Judge is that he accuses Mrs. Besant of using black magic, and with great eloquence our Indian brothers were carried indignantly and "unanimously" by this point. But, my brothers, Mr. Judge *has made no such charge*, and believes no such thing. Can capital made inadvertently or designedly out of a charge that has no existence do anything but harm to all? Let anyone with a fair knowledge of English read what Mr. Judge *did* say, and let him read dispassionately that which contains no passion, and judge for himself.

But, say my English and Indian brothers, you in America may condone fraud and feel no shame in upholding and associating with it, but *we* will have none of it. Is, then, *accusation* equivalent to *proof*? Do you desire to be so adjudged yourselves? Does the shore of the ocean, be it east or west, determine the honesty or dishonesty of a race? Are all "dishonest" who disagree with you, my brothers, and is this where the ethics of brotherhood has landed you? If so, then had we not better return to barbarism at once?

Now what do your American brothers expect or desire? So far as I know, that you shall stop this crusade of accusation and denunciation. It will not "purge" the Society, it has already divided it, and if persisted in will make that breach irreparable. When passion has subsided and wiser counsels prevail, we may adjust our matters, perhaps, to the satisfaction of all; at least, adjust them like brothers and not like politicians.

Last June I wrote to a very dear friend in London a letter containing this sentence, *based on that friend's view of the case*; not mine, as it regarded Mr. Judge: "I would rather take myself the karma of *condoning a fault* in Judge than to see him broken and humiliated so he could work no more, or to see the T. S. divided on the question of his guilt or innocence, as it is very likely to become if we are not very wise and prudent." Have we been very "wise and prudent"? And now do you wish with eyes wide open to make the division permanent? Let each answer this question dispassionately for himself, and act accordingly.—Faternally,

J. D. BUCK.

124, W. 7th Street, Cin., Ohio, Feb. 15th, 1895.

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### REVIEW.

PHANTASMS. By Wirt Gerrare. [The Roxburghe Press, Westminster. Price 3s. 6d.]

THE significance of the phrase, "taking the book by its cover," will be understood in future generations when reviewers, psychically trained, will be able to detect at a glance the nature and value of any book by its *aura*. The aura of this book is sooty; I can find no other word which quite describes it. There is plenty of ability in *Phantasms*, and much cold analytical power. But why the author should have stationed himself on these ghastly outposts of life—where not one feeling of human brotherhood warms, and where no shadow even can be found of that unearthly beauty which lights up the wildest tales of Poe—I cannot imagine. I feel like imploring him for his own sake to discontinue his gruesome nightmare thoughts, which glow like the interior of a chimney. The spook of such a person let loose in Hades would be a horror worse than anything he has imagined. To preclude any possibility of the author haunting me, I remain,

ANONYMOUS.

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### DUBLIN LODGE, T. S.

THE meetings lately have been much better attended, and the discussions have improved in consequence. The paper on *Cagliostro* was full of instruction and information, provoking much dissent from some visitors, who blindly accept Carlyle's garbled account of this servant of the Great Brotherhood.

A discussion at a local club on the witch-burning at Clonmel enabled a member to show that the belief in elemental spirits never died, and that it could not so long as they existed; the much-abused peasants being nearer the truth, if lacking in discrimination. Bro. Pryse has taken himself off for a short trip; he is much missed.

The Wednesday evening meetings during the ensuing month are as follows: April 17th, *The Resurrection of the Body*; 24th, *West and East*; May 1st, *The Life Everlasting*; 8th, *Original Sin*.

FRED. J. DICK, Hon. Sec.